

Road Map for a Permanent Political Solution: 4 Options/Pathways

Preliminary Discussion Draft

(Prepared by Prof Mahendra P Lama for the Civil Society Organisations, July 2026)

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Separate State : 119-Year-old Protracted Demand, Peoples Struggle and Regional Aspirations comprising of Darjeeling District, Kalimpong District, Dooars Region of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar Districts #

Part I : (Concept and Skeleton) @

Order of Priority and Preference	The Best Preferred to the Minimum Possible Solution
1st Most Preferred and best desired permanent political solution historically struggled for since 1907	Full Fledged State as the 29 th State of India Darjeeling district, Kalimpong District, Dooars Region of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar Districts and Chopra in Uttar Dinajpur District@@
2nd Preference as a Starting Point towards permanent political solution	Union Territory as the 9 th UT of India Darjeeling district, Kalimpong District, Dooars Region of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar Districts and Chopra in Uttar Dinajpur District
3rd Preference as a Transitional arrangement in terms of a possible short-term solution A confidence building measure towards a permanent political solution.	Option of "State within a State" "Autonomous State" within the State of West Bengal A provision within the State of West Bengal and without bifurcation, Under Article 244 A (Part X). As was specially designed, legislated and implemented in Meghalaya in 1969 as a constituent part of /geography of Assam ## "The Assam Reorganisation (Meghalaya) Act, 1969 [Central Government Act Number 55 OF 1969 (29 th December, 1969)]. Abiding Condition: Graduation Clause/provision that this arrangement will be transformed into a full-fledged Statehood any time between 3 to 8 years after the final installation/initiation of Autonomous State within the framework of Article 244 A of the Constitution of India.

4th Minimum possible solution - national interest project - wherein North Bengal as a State and/or with the contiguous areas of neighbouring states could be legislated by the Govt of India. Undertaking this venture, will be in the total purview, jurisdiction and decision of the Government of India in the larger national interest.###	North Bengal as a State and/or with the contiguous areas of neighbouring states as a separate state comprising of Darjeeling district, Kalimpong District, Dooars Region of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar Districts and Chopra in Uttar Dinajpur District and also other districts of West Bengal and other contiguous States. If this arrangement is legislated, floated and operationalised by the Government of India, what will fall and come under the purview/jurisdiction of Darjeeling district, Kalimpong District, Dooars Region of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar Districts and Chopra in Uttar Dinajpur District must be upfront and beforehand discussed comprehensively among the crucial stakeholders. Some of these issues that concern the Darjeeling- Dooars proposed separate state including that of its constitutional status, political representation both in the Assembly and the Parliament, its geographical framework; powers and functions; institutional structures and financial devolutions and administrative centres and Governance structures must be discussed beforehand. These should be pre-configured, pre-determined, delineated and must clearly and distinctly be incorporated in the legislative actions that will facilitate the formation of this new constitutional arrangement that would constitute proposed North Bengal state.
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Though it acquired the popularly known acronym of **Gorkhaland Movement** which has been primarily seeking a separate state for the Indian Gorkhas and a distinct constitutional identity of the Indian Gorkhas, this protracted demand has also been the reflections of political aspirations, development requirements and historico-cultural desires of various ethnic groups and other inhabitants including Adivasis, Bengali, Bhutia, Bihari, Gorkhas, Koch-Mech, Lepchas, Marwari, Oriya, Punjabi, Rajbanshi, Santhals and others cutting across multiple faiths like Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Parsis, Sikhs and others.

@ Part II (Flesh and Muscles) discusses in some details the principles, modalities and operational details of all the four options in the order of preference.

@@ Chopra (Uttar Dinajpur District) has been a part of the Darjeeling Parliamentary (Lok Sabha) constituency since 1977 after the Delimitation Act 1972

Meghalaya became a full-fledged and a constituent state of India in 1972

The possibility of creation of North Bengal as a separate state has been widely discussed specifically in various social media channels.

Part II (Flesh and Muscles)
Road Map for a Permanent Political Solution: 4 Options/Pathways

1st Option/Pathway

The Best Preferred Solution	Constitutional Provisions	Features	Special Provisions
1st Most Preferred and best desired permanent political solution historically struggled for since 1907	Full Fledged State as the 29 th State of India Darjeeling district, Kalimpong District, Dooars Region of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar Districts and Chopra in Uttar Dinajpur District	All the powers and functions as given to a State in India including Legislative, Executive, Judiciary and others.	a) Membership of the North Eastern Council (NEC) b) Scheduled Tribe Status to all the 11 left out communities of Gorkhas within 3 years of the formation of a separate State. c) Scheduled Caste and Central Other Backward Classes (OBC) status to all the left-out communities within three years of the setting up of a Separate State d) Establishment of national institutions including Indian Institute of Technology; Indian Institute of Management; Indian Institute of Mass Communication; Central University; All Indian Institute of Medical Sciences; Defence Production Depots and Recruitment Centres; Sainik School; Climate Change Study institutions; shifting of Tea Board Office from Calcutta to Dooars as this state also becomes a Member of the NEC along with Assam; Tea and Cinchona Research Centre; Land Border Trade - Integrated Check Posts and Tourism related institutions; IIIT and major private investment (both national and global) projects and bringing multilateral development institutions including World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Board, UN development agencies and others. e) A pivotal branch office of the National Security Council may be located in this sensitive geography of India surrounded by Bangladesh, Bhutan, China and Nepal. f) 6 Members of Parliament in Lok Sabha and 5 Members of Parliament in Rajya Sabha after the Delimitation Exercise in 2027. g) Protection of the new State and Indian Gorkhas under Article 371. h) Recognition of tribal and other ethnic languages in the 8 th Schedule of the Constitution of India

2nd Option/Pathway

The Second-Best Preferred Solution	Constitutional Provisions	Features	Special Provisions
2nd Preference as a Starting Point towards permanent political solution	Union Territory as the 9 th UT of India Darjeeling district, Kalimpong District, Dooars Region of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar Districts and Chopra in Uttar Dinajpur District	i) Elected Legislative Assembly and Government headed by the Chief Minister ii) Appointment of Lt Governor iii) All the powers and functions as given to a full-fledged Union Territory of India including Legislative, Executive, Judiciary and others.	a) Membership of the North Eastern Council (NEC) b) Scheduled Tribe Status to all the 11 left out communities of Gorkhas within 3 years of the formation of a separate State. c) Scheduled Caste and Central Other Backward Classes (OBC) status to all the left-out communities within three years of the setting up of a Separate State d) Establishment of national institutions including Indian Institute of Technology; Indian Institute of Management; Indian Institute of Mass Communication; Central University; All Indian Institute of Medical Sciences; Defence Production Depots and Recruitment Centres; Sainik School; Climate Change study institutions; shifting of Tea Board Office from Calcutta to Dooars as this state also becomes a Member of the NEC along with Assam; Tea and Cinchona Research Centre; Land Border Trade-Integrated Check Posts and Tourism related institutions; IIIT and major private investment (both national and global) projects and bringing in of multilateral development institutions including World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Board, UN development agencies and others. e) A pivotal branch office of the National Security Council may be located in this sensitive geography of India surrounded by Bangladesh, Bhutan, China and Nepal. f) 6 Members of Parliament in Lok Sabha and 5 Members of Parliament in Rajya Sabha after the Delimitation Exercise in 2027. g) Protection of the new State and Indian Gorkhas under Article 371. h) Recognition of tribal and other ethnic languages in the 8 th Schedule of the Constitution of India

3rd Option/Pathway

Transitional Option as a Possible Short Term Solution	Constitutional Provisions	Features	Special Provisions
3rd Preference as a Transitional arrangement in terms of a possible short-term solution A confidence building measure towards a permanent political solution.	Option of "State within a State" "Autonomous State" within the State of West Bengal Comprising of Darjeeling district, Kalimpong District, Dooars Region of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar Districts and Chopra in Uttar Dinajpur District Under Article 244 A As was specially designed, legislated and implemented in Meghalaya in 1969 as a constituent part of /geography of Assam "The Assam Reorganisation (Meghalaya) Act, 1969 [Central Government Act Number 55 OF 1969 (29th December, 1969)]. Meghalaya became a full-fledged and a constituent state of India in 1972	i) Elected Legislative Assembly and Government headed by the Chief Minister ii) Governor of West Bengal will oversee the governance as a representative of Government of India iii) All the powers and functions (under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution) as given to Meghalaya as an "autonomous state" under Article 244 A in 1969 including Legislative,	a) Graduation Clause/provision that this arrangement will be transformed into a full-fledged Statehood any time between 3 to 8 years after the final constitution of Autonomous State within the framework of Article 244 A. b) Membership of the North Eastern Council (NEC) c) Devolution of resources and other financial matters would be brought under the purview of the Finance Commission of India and Consolidated Fund of India d) Scheduled Tribe Status to all the 11 left out communities of Gorkhas within 3 years of the formation of a separate State. e) Scheduled Caste and Central Other Backward Classes (OBC) status to all the left-out communities within three years of the setting up of a Separate State f) Establishment of national institutions including Indian Institute of Technology; Indian Institute of Management; Indian Institute of Mass Communication; Central University; All Indian Institute of Medical Sciences; Defence Production Depots and Recruitment Centres; Sainik School; Climate Change study institutions; shifting of Tea Board Office from Calcutta to Dooars as this state also becomes a Member of the NEC along with Assam; Tea and Cinchona Research Centre; Land Border Trade-Integrated Check Posts and Tourism related institutions; IIIT and major private investment (both national and global) projects and bringing in of multilateral development institutions including World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Board, UN development agencies and others.

		Executive, Judiciary and others g) A pivotal branch office of the National Security Council may be located in this sensitive geography of India surrounded by Bangladesh, Bhutan, China and Nepal. h) 6 Members of Parliament in Lok Sabha and 5 Members of Parliament in Rajya Sabha after the Delimitation Exercise in 2027. i) Protection of the new State and Indian Gorkhas under Article 371. j) Recognition of tribal and other ethnic languages in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution of India
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4th Option/Pathway

The Minimum Possible Solution	Constitutional Provisions	Features	Special Provisions for Darjeeling District, Kalimpong District and Dooars Region of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar
4th As a minimum possible solution - national interest project - wherein North Bengal as a State and/or with the contiguous areas of neighbouring states could be legislated by the Govt of India. Undertaking this venture, will be in the total purview, jurisdiction and decision of the Government of India in the larger national interest.	North Bengal as a State and/or with the contiguous areas of neighbouring states as a separate state comprising of the Darjeeling district, Kalimpong District, Dooars Region of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar Districts and Chopra in Uttar Dinajpur District and also other districts of West Bengal and other contiguous States. All the powers and functions as given to a State in India including Legislative, Executive, Judiciary and others.	If this arrangement is legislated, floated and operationalised by the Government of India, what will fall and come under the purview/jurisdiction of Darjeeling district, Kalimpong District, Dooars Region of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar Districts and Chopra in Uttar Dinajpur District must be upfront and beforehand discussed comprehensively among the crucial stakeholders. Some of these issues that concern the Darjeeling-Dooars proposed separate state including that of its constitutional status, political representation both in the Assembly and the Parliament, its geographical framework; powers and functions;	a) Membership of the North Eastern Council (NEC) b) Scheduled Tribe Status to all the 11 left out communities of Gorkhas within 3 years of the formation of a separate State. c) Scheduled Caste and Central Other Backward Classes (OBC) status to all the left-out communities within three years of the setting up of a Separate State d) Establishment of national institutions including Indian Institute of Technology; Indian Institute of Management; Indian Institute of Mass Communication; Central University; All Indian Institute of Medical Sciences; Defence Production Depots and Recruitment Centres; Sainik School; Climate Change study institutions; shifting of Tea Board Office from Calcutta to Dooars as this state also becomes a Member of the NEC along with Assam; Tea and Cinchona Research Centre; Land Border Trade – Integrated Check Posts and Tourism related institutions; IIIT and major private investment (both national and global) projects and bringing in of multilateral development institutions including World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Board, UN development agencies and others. e) A pivotal branch office of the National Security Council may be located in this sensitive geography of India surrounded by Bangladesh, Bhutan, China and Nepal.

		institutional structures and financial devolutions and administrative centres and Governance structures must be discussed beforehand. These should be pre-configured, pre-determined, delineated and must clearly and distinctly be incorporated in the legislative actions that will facilitate the formation of this new constitutional arrangement that would constitute proposed North Bengal state.	f) 6 Members of Parliament in Lok Sabha and 5 Members of Parliament in Rajya Sabha after the Delimitation Exercise in 2027. g) Protection of the new State and Indian Gorkhas under Article 371. h) Recognition of tribal and other ethnic languages in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution of India
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