

Regional Movements and Madhese Politics in Nepal

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Regional movements have become a widespread phenomenon in contemporary politics. It is indeed a major force moulding the nature and texture of the politics in the developed as well as the developing countries today. The regional movements are an expression of the emerging needs, aspirations and discontent within a society. Therefore, study of regional movements provides an understanding to the socio-political dynamics of a country. It reflects upon the socio-political problems and challenges brewing up in a society and also the capacity of the state to deal with such problems and challenges. The multi-structured societies with underdeveloped economies are more prone to regionalism of one kind or the other.

The present paper is an attempt to understand the problems and challenges of regionalism in Nepal in the context of Madhese politics.

Region and Regionalism: A Framework

Regionalism is a complex issue and it is difficult to understand the nature and causes of regional movements on the basis of one single theory. Our attempt here is to look into some of the theoretical issues that would be helpful in understanding the problems of regionalism in the context of Nepal.

Before we focus on the issues related to regionalism, let us understand a region because a region is always central to the problem of regionalism and regional movement.

A region may be defined as a distinct territorial unit that has a particular social setting and cultural patterns. It is a sentiment of togetherness shared by the people of a territory.¹ A region needs a biological cycle and an ecological equilibrium.² Thus, a region may be defined as a "perceived segment of space differentiated from others on the basis of one or more defining characteristics."³ These characteristics are identified as geography, economy, social structure and political set-up.⁴ A region also has psychological component as it

is a mental and emotional construction as well.⁵ The international Encyclopedia of Social Sciences also defines a region on the basis of geography, economy, social structure and the pattern of life.⁶

It can thus be said that a region is a homogeneous area with a number of physical and cultural characteristics distinct from those of the neighboring areas. A region possesses a sense of identity distinct from other parts.

A region has two broad aspects: objective that includes territory, physical and man-made environment; and subjective that includes historical background, traditions, beliefs, languages, religion and so on.

It is not necessary for a region to contain all these features. Any one or two of these factors may create a regional feeling. The overlapping of such factors is a common feature in most cases where a region exists.⁷

Regionalism connotes a movement with strong regional feelings based on the quest for self-identity. Thus, conversely it can be said that regionalism is a manifestation of a psyche of alienation from the national mainstream.⁸ A feeling of such a nature may arrive due to excessive centralization or discriminatory attitude of the ruling elite. In this sense, regionalism is a mental construction.⁹

In a simple way, it can be said that regionalism is the mobilization of people of a region to ventilate their grievances.¹⁰ Regionalism as a movement represents regional idea in action.

Regionalism has been viewed as a by-product of modernization.¹¹ Actually in the process of modernization, some people and regions are left behind deliberately or by chance. As the people of such regions realize the discrimination being done against them, it gives a feeling of regionalism and regional movement. They feel that they are being considered as second-grade citizens. Their mobilization to seek their right gives way to a regional movement.¹²

It can be said that regionalism is the manifestation of particularism by various socio-cultural groups generated from a variety of factors such as geography, history, economy, society, culture and polity. A number of factors determine the course of regional movements:

1. Geographic exclusiveness;
2. The politico-administrative framework;
3. Assertion upon linguistic, religio-cultural and ethnic identities;

4. Modernization and development inducing disparities and discrimination;
5. Propagation of sons of the soil theory;
6. Imposition of the phenomenon of mainstream; and
7. Evolution of regional political parties.

Keeping these factors in view, it can be said that the problem of regionalism arises when one or more such factors as geographic specificity, regional economic and political disparities and discrimination, socio-cultural differences exist and are used as political instrument. It is believed that the problem of regionalism becomes serious when the question of lingua-cultural identity is associated with the issues of economic and political disparities.¹³

Regional movements may have three aspects: a cultural movement aimed at protecting its distinct ethno-cultural and linguistic identity; a political movement seeking autonomy or separatism or a movement against imbalanced development or seeking political and economic rights and interests.¹⁴

Two-Dimensional Regionalism

1. Regionalism in the context of international relations: when it is used as a part of foreign policy. The countries of a particular region having common cultural identity or political and economic interests form regional organizations such as SAARC, ASEAN, OAU, NAFTA, NATO, etc.
2. Regionalism as a phenomenon in the domestic politics of a country. There is also a probability of a region within a region, which connotes the notion of sub-regionalism. The sub-regionalism also manifests cultural diversity, imbalanced development and socio-injustice within a region.

"Are regional movements a challenge to the integrity and survival of a nation – state?" is an important issue. It is not necessary that regional movements are a negative feature and that they have always a separatist tendency. Regionalism may also have a positive dimension as well in the sense that it reflects upon the desire of the people of a region for development, equity and justice. In this sense, regionalism would ensure balanced development and social cohesion. Therefore, regionalism per se is not hazardous to national integration. Nor the growth of regional movements is any kind of risk to the nation – states.

Regional movements may turn into a formidable challenge to nation – states if the latter fails in accommodating the regional interests and resolving their legitimate grievances. So the nature, dimension and extent of regionalism would depend on the response of the state to regional issues.

Regionalism in South Asia

Regionalism is a worldwide phenomenon. Irrespective of the higher stages of development, countries like Canada, United Kingdom, France, Spain, Italy and East European countries have faced regional movements of various magnitudes. It shows that the economic development itself is not a sufficient instrument to satisfy the regional sentiments. A powerful country like the USSR disintegrated due to rise of ethno-regionalism. In Asia and Africa too, a large number of countries have experienced regional movements.

Regionalism is a common feature in all the countries of the South Asian region. The regional movements of different kinds ranging from autonomy to separatism have been experienced by the South Asian states. Regionalism has in fact become a major component of domestic politics of India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and other countries in this part of the world. The South Asian societies are multi-structured. There are social, ethnic, linguistic, cultural and religious divides within the societies. In fact, one would say that ‘South Asian states are political conglomeration of several nations.’¹⁵ The internal and regional migrations on a large scale and on a continuous basis have added to socio-cultural complexities of different regions of different countries, thereby giving way to the movements based on ‘Sons of the Soil’. Another aspect relating to migrations is that the larger concentration of migrants in a particular region leads to the emergence of a distinct ethno-cultural group asserting upon its identity such as Nepali migrants in Bhutan. There are strong tribal sentiments and assertions in the Northeast regions of India, Baluchistan and Paktunistan regions of Pakistan and Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. The rise of linguistic regionalism led to the reorganization of states in India while lingua-cultural sub- nationalism was responsible for the disintegration of Pakistan and the formation of Bangladesh in East Pakistan. The ethno-cultural movement of Tamils in Sri Lanka has acquired separatist tendencies. The regional movements arising due to disparities in

development have been an instrument of pressure politics and a source of the demands for regional autonomy.¹⁶ The other economic issues that have been responsible for the rise of regional movements are agrarian structures and conflicts, land relations, conflict over resources, etc.¹⁷ The problem of inadequate political representation, over centralization of state power, majority-minority conflicts, emergence of regional political parties, communal tensions and ethnic-caste based assertions in politics are also potential sources of regionalism in South Asia.

Regionalism and Madhese Politics in Nepal

In Nepal, the problem of regionalism has taken shape in the form of regionalism in Tarai region. Our focus in this paper has been on three issues: the sources of regionalism in Tarai; nature, issues and extent of regional movements; and implications of regionalism on regional and national politics.

A number of factors have contributed to the emergence of Tarai as a distinct region.

Geographical Identity of Tarai

Geography has accorded a distinct identity to Tarai. In fact, geography is a natural factor in providing a regional identity to Tarai.¹⁸ Nepal is divided into two broad geographic regions: Hills and Tarai.²⁰ Hill region extends between Mahabharat ranges up to the great Himalayan ranges in the north. It covers 79.2 percent of the total land area. Harsh climatic conditions, scarce resources, scarce population, and human settlements characterize the Himalayan belt in the north. In the middle hills, there are big valleys such as Kathmandu and Pokhara.

Tarai is a narrow strip towards the southern border along with India. It is a plain area with hot climatic conditions. In geographical terms, Tarai is an extension of Indo-gangetic plains. Tarai contains 23.2 percent of the total land. Out of 75 districts, 20 districts are in Tarai. It has rich and fertile agriculture land and also forms the industrial belt of the country. It is thus the economic backbone of the country.

It is clear that Tarai is different from the rest of the country in terms of landscape, climate, vegetation, resources, land and so on. These factors provide a distinct geographical identity to Tarai.

Demographic Features and Trends

The demography also forms Tarai a distinct region in comparison to the rest of the country. Nepal's total population, according to the 2001 census, is 23151423. Tarai contains 11212453 people, which means that 48.43 percent of the population lives in Tarai. Nearly half of the population resides in 23 percent land area. The average household size in Tarai is 5.75 while the national average is 5.44. Population density is 330 persons per sq. km. in Tarai while it is 33 in mountains and 167 in the hills. The population density is much higher in eastern Tarai and central Tarai. It is lesser in the western part of Tarai. It is in fact obvious that the eastern and central Tarai region is more developed in comparison to the western Tarai. Therefore, the population concentration in this part is higher. Overall, the population concentration in Nepal is in its southern plains. Demographically, mountains are population scarce but Tarai is densely populated.

Migratory Trends and Issues

Tarai was neglected for long due to dense forests, swamps, hot climate, malaria and wild beasts. It was used only for animal hunting. There were Tribal Tharus living in small pockets till the middle of the 19th century from when the Nepali government came up with some plan for the development of Tarai. The hill people were not willing to move into Tarai. Later, Indians were encouraged to migrate to Tarai. As a result, Indians from the border areas flooded into Tarai. They cleared swamps and forests for cultivation. Tarai developed into an agricultural zone. Planned settlement policy attracted more Indians to Tarai to work in agriculture. The open border hugely facilitated migration from India. Thus, Tarai was dominated by the people of Indian origins.¹⁹

The ruling elites of Nepal realized the economic importance of Tarai and its distinct socio-cultural identity, which was more similar to the neighbouring Indian regions. Therefore, hill migration to the Tarai region was encouraged. Economic resources, prospects for development of industries, trade and commerce, etc. encouraged hill migration to Tarai. After 1960, the government of Nepal encouraged hill migration to Tarai by according preferences to them in agricultural land, industries, hotel, business, trade and commerce. It was an attempt towards 'Nepalisation' of Tarai.²⁰ Table 3 clearly indicates that the

internal migration has been largely directed towards the Tarai region. Both the people of hill areas seeking means of livelihood and green pastures migrated to Tarai.

Thus, Tarai has faced a two-way migration: internal migration from hills and mountains and external migrations from India and other countries. It has largely influenced the socio-cultural, economic and political dynamics of Tarai.

Socio-Cultural Milieu

Nepal Tarai has the majority population of Indian origins. It has original inhabitants and hill migrants as well. Indian origins are by and large Hindus. The hill settlers are Indo-Aryans as well as Mongoloids. They are Hindus and Buddhists by faith.²¹

Tarai has a distinct linguistic identity. The major languages spoken in Tarai are Maitihli, Bhojpuri, Awadhi, Tharu, Hindi, Bangali, Urdu, Nepali, Santhali and Rajbanshi. The Maithil constitutes the largest linguistic group. These languages are widely spoken in the bordering Indian regions. The Hill settlers of course speak their own language. Nepali is the official language.

The social complex such as style, social values and dress (Kurta and Dhoti) of Tarai people is different from hill people. Socio-cultural fabrics of neighbouring regions are quite evident. Despite many changes that have occurred in the socio-cultural complex of Tarai over the years, it is still a distinct cultural zone in many respects.

Madhese Identity of Tarai

While geographical identity of Tarai is a natural phenomenon, the Madheshi identity has been a historico-political phenomenon. For, the founder of modern Nepal and his successors invariably made Nepal as a discriminatory state based on caste and narrowly articulated Hinduism. It created a new class of power and other elites denying the same privileges and status to the people of Tarai. the Hill ethnic groups and dalits were also denied due share in power and resources.

The upper caste hill people and the identity with the hill culture became the main pillars of the Shah and the Rana rulers.²² People of Tarai were deliberately kept out of power structure. Since a sizable of section of Tarai people were of Indian origins, there was assumption that the people of Tarai had loyalty towards India. So the ruling elites

did not trust them. In fact, the hill elite wanted its control over power and economic resources. Therefore, they tried to restrict the entry of the Tarai people in power structure. The people of Tarai were viewed as less intelligent and slow. They were termed as *Madhese*. Thus, the *Madhese* identity was a political construct. In fact, these people had no identification with the state.

Discontent and Dissatisfaction

Inequality in State Apparatus

Since the founding of unified Nepal, Tarai people were denied adequate representation in the political and administrative structures of the country. As mentioned earlier, there were strong historical foundations for this discrimination. The Hill *Brahmin*, *Chhetris* and *Newars* formed the core of power structure.²³ Madhesis were not considered fit for higher positions including in the royal army. The *Panchayat* system continued this discriminatory process as its survival depended solely on the traditional power structures. Resentment against these inequalities was always there but it could not turn into a regional movement. Though late, Tarai also came out strongly to join the movement against '*Bahunbad*' in Nepali politics and administration.

After the restoration of democracy in 1990, attempts have been made to end discriminatory policies against Tarai. However, as indicated from the tables, discrimination is still there. Tarai people are not still adequately represented in political institutions.²⁴ Similar are the trends in bureaucracy and armed forces. However, there is a change of perception among democratic elites. In fact, the castewise representation indicates that out of total 72.21% caste representation in 1959 parliament, Tarai had 18.5% representation. In 1994, it went down to 17.9%. Representation of Tarai ethnic groups has, however, increased from 3.1% in 1959 to 7.0% in 1994. Tarai region had 21% representation in the 1991 parliament and 20% in 1994 while it was 22.0% in 1959. Between 1991 to 1997, Tarai was represented in the cabinet by 21 leaders from different parties. It shows poor political representation of Tarai. *Madheshis* representation in various services is about 11.5% while Hill *Brahmins* and *Chhetris* are over 69.5% services followed by *Newars* (15.5%).

Language Politics in Tarai

Language became the part and parcel of the Tarai movement immediately after the 1950 political change. In 1951, National Education Commission recommended 'Nepali' as the medium of instruction in educational institutions.²⁵ It was resented by the people of Tarai because Hindi was largely in use as medium of instructions in schools and colleges in Tarai and a large number of Indian teachers were appointed in these institutions. The Tarai Congress demanded for Hindi as a state language.²⁶

The language issue became more serious after 1956 when systematic steps were taken to develop Nepali as a national language. *Nepali Pracharini Sabha* was constituted to promote Nepali language. Supporters of Hindi launched a Save Hindi Movement in Tarai. It took a violent turn at many places in Tarai.²⁷ The 1959 constitution declared Nepali as the national language.²⁸ In 1959 elections, the issue of Hindi language was raised in Tarai but it could not influence the electoral politics strongly.

With the 1960 royal takeover, more emphasis was given on developing Nepali language as a symbol of nationalism. The Second Education Commission recommended Nepali as the sole medium of instruction in 1961.²⁹

The Nepal Company Act of 1964 made the use of Nepali language compulsory in business. The use of Hindi in radio broadcasting was also abandoned. Language issue became ineffective with the installation of the *Panchayat* system. Though there was resentment in certain quarters in Tarai against the language policy of the government and there were some effort to keep the language issue alive, no organized effort was made in this direction.

The language movement could not sustain in Tarai for three reasons:

1. Linguistic heterogeneity is a reality in Tarai. It is true that Hindi is widely spoken by the people of Indian origins in Tarai but their primary interest is their mother tongue.
2. Due to centralized and authoritarian nature of the *Panchayat* system, no organized political activity was possible.
3. Tarai lacked regional political leadership for taking up language issues

Citizenship Politics

Citizenship has been a contentious issue of the Tarai regional movement. The Public Referendum Act of 1951 provided that any person who had been living in Nepal for more than 60 years would have right to vote.³⁰ In 1952, it was made clear that any person born in Nepal or any woman married to a Nepali citizen and any one who had lived in Nepal for 5 years could be granted citizenship. But the citizenship rules were afterwards made difficult for the foreign born people living in Nepal.³¹ Following the citizenship rules of 1962, the 1990 constitution stated that a foreign born person should have knowledge of Nepali language, occupation in Nepal and 15 years' residence to get Nepali citizenship.

The procedure to acquire citizenship has been quite complicated and bureaucratic. It is very difficult for the rural people to follow the procedures. Moreover, politics plays a guiding role. Gazetted officer or head of village or town or district committee should recommend for citizenship. In the case of citizenship by birth, evidence should be provided. This long bureaucratic procedure has become a problem for Tarai people in particular.

Citizenship is a politicized issue in Nepal. Lots of politics has been involved unfairly in it. Change in citizenship laws follows no scientific methodology. It depends entirely on the attitudes of the ruling elites. The establishment of eligibility for citizenship and the distribution of citizenship certificates evoked a lot of resentment in Tarai during the Panchayat regime.³² It was alleged that a large section of Tarai people were declared non-eligible.

With the restoration of democracy in 1990, *Nepal Sadbhavana Party* (NSP) campaigned for the citizenship rights of Tarai people.³³

Between 1975 and 1993, three investigation committees and five citizenship teams were constituted to look into the citizenship problem. It is believed that by early 1994, 9 million citizenship certificates were distributed in Nepal: 44.5 per cent in hills, 38.4 per cent in Tarai, 8.9 per cent in inner Tarai and 8.3 per cent in mountains.³⁴ In 1990, chairman of *Sadbhavana Party*, Gajendra Narayan Singh, alleged that 20 per cent of Tarai people were denied citizenship. A Deputy Prime Minister of Nepal declared that 40 lac people of Indian origins would be given citizenship.³⁵ In 1994, the UML government constituted a high level Citizenship Commission under the chair of Dhanapati

Upadhyay to study the issues and problems related to citizenship. The *Dhanpati* Commission in its recommendations suggested for changing surname; and easy and quick issuing of citizenship certificates. In 1995, *Mahanta Thakur* Commission was constituted to implement recommendations of *Dhanpati* Commission. In 1995, Citizenship Certificate Monitoring and the Work Evaluation Committee was constituted under the chairmanship of Jitendra Dev. According to the commission, 3-4 million people were to get citizenship certificates. In July 2000, the House of Representatives (Lower House) passed the citizenship 6th amendment bill, which stipulated that:

A person born within Nepal will have the right to citizenship of the country. The children with one of their parents born in Nepal will also have the right.³⁶

The amendment bill made it clear that the children of a person with no citizenship certificate, though eligible on the basis of descent, could obtain it. It was against the existing constitutional provisions, which make father's citizenship certificate compulsory in order to acquire citizenship on the basis of hereditary.

The UML abstained from voting the bill. The Upper House returned the bill back to the House of Representatives. Since it was passed as a financial bill, the king enjoyed no option to refer it back to the parliament.³⁷ The amendment bill created a lot of criticism. There were widespread reactions against the bill. The UML was also criticized for facilitating clearance of the bill by abstaining from the House. The press and some political parties were mobilized to oppose the bill.³⁸ Reactions were made on the assumption that the amendment in citizenship rules would lead to a change in the demographic profile of the country.³⁹

The king sent the bill to the Supreme Court for its advice.⁴⁰ The Supreme Court in its advice mentioned that the citizenship amendment bill was a clear violation of the constitutional provisions on citizenship. Since there was no provision to refer back, the king was advised that he could keep the bill with himself. In another verdict, the court declared illegal the team, which had distributed 34,040 citizenship certificates in 1997.⁴¹ It declared 4040 certificates valid as they were distributed by the CDO (Chief District Officer). The government accordingly issued a direction to the CDO's of 20 districts that these citizenship certificates be cancelled.⁴²

On 15 October 2001, the government decided to withdraw the controversial amendment bill. It was said that a new bill would be tabled later on.

Democracy, Sadbhavana Party and Madhese Identity

The dawn of democracy generated new hopes to the people of Tarai. The people of Tarai believed that they faced discrimination because authoritarian and traditional elites were in power. They aspired for equitable rights and opportunities after the establishment of a democratic government in Nepal. A number of steps were taken after 1991 to accommodate interests of the Tarai people.

The main objective of NSP has been:

- 1 Liberal policy on the issue of citizenship;
- 2 Adequate employment opportunities to people of Tarai in civil services, army and adequate political representation;
- 3 Official status for Hindi language;
- 4 A federal system of government.

The NSP fought three general elections in 1991, 1994 and 1999 and established as a regional party championing the cause of Tarai. But it attained no marked success. Its main success was to find place in the coalition governments formed after 1994.

It is without doubt that the NSP represents the Madhese identity. The question is only with "what degree". The other parties are representing Tarai in one way or another. But regional *Madhese* identity is attached significantly with NSP alone. The *Madhese* identity is assuming increasing significance in the democratic politics of Nepal. In multi-structured societies, regional issues become important sooner or later. In Nepal too, the regionalization of politics has already taken place.

Concluding Observations

Geographical location, history of state formation and socio-cultural factors provide Tarai a distinct region. It has its own socio-cultural construct. But it is in no way socio-culturally cohesive.

Demographic imbalances, cultural identity, citizenship, political representation and equitable distribution of resources are the issues related to Nepal Tarai. Resentment against discriminatory state policies is widespread leading to the emergence of a number of movements

particularly after 1950. The thrust of these regional movements is to seek recognition, accommodation and development. The quest of people living in Tarai is to seek justice by ending discriminatory policies managed by the state itself against them. Regionalism of Nepal Tarai does not contain negative elements as they are found in the other regional movements of South Asia. Neither is it so aggressive.

After 1990, some change in the attitude of the state concerning the problems of Tarai has occurred. It is also true that development of means of communication and cultural intermixing has promoted a better understanding between Tarai and other regions. Yet, a positive attitude should be cultivated towards Tarai. Tarai has all the potentials to give way to a strong regional movement. The Tarai issues are very genuine and important. Thus, they should not be politicized unnecessarily. It will only complicate the situation. This trend is already visible. There is a tendency in South Asia that regional issues are used for regional purposes. Time has not run out for Nepal to draw lessons from these experiences. Nepal can safely solve these regional but just issues by pursuing accommodative and positive policies well before they become very much regional issues of some regional political parties.

Endnotes

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geographic regions: i) Western Hills, ii) Kathmandu Valley, iii) Western Tarai, iv) Eastern Hills, v) Central Inner Tarai vi) Western Inner Tarai vii) Far Western Tarai viii) Eastern Tarai ix) Eastern Inner Tarai. C.B.Shrestha, "Problems of Regionalism in Nepal", *The Himalayan Review*, Vol. II – III, 1969-70 p. 14

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Table No. 1
Regional Distribution of Population

Area	Population 2001 in Number			% Total	Number of House-holds	Average House-holds	Population Density persons sq.km.
	Total	Male	Female				
Nepal	23151423	11563921	11587502	100.0	4253220	5.44	157
Mountain	1687859	837060	850799	7.29	319887	5.28	33
Hill	10251111	5016802	5234309	44.28	1982753	5.17	167
Tarai	11212453	5710059	5502394	48.43	1950580	5.75	330
Eastern Tarai	3299643	1665442	1634201	14.25	616622	5.27	454
Central Tarai	3934080	2033647	1900433	16.99	670909	5.86	422
Western Tarai	1753265	886905	866360	7.57	289128	6.06	333
Mid western Tarai	1230869	619844	611025	5.32	209333	5.88	168
Far western Tarai	994596	504221	490375	4.30	154588	6.43	205

Source: CBS, Kathmandu, 2001

Table No. 2
Distribution of Population in Tarai Districts

S.No.	Districts of Tarai	Total Population			Area in Sq. Km.
		1981	1991	2001	
1	Jhapa	471143	593737	688109	
2	Morang	534692	674823	843220	1855
3	Sunsari	344594	463481	625633	1257
4	Saptari	379055	465068	570282	1363
5	Siraha	375358	460746	572399	1188
6	Dhanusha	432569	543672	671364	1180
7	Mahottari	361054	440146	553481	1002
8	Sarlahi	398766	492798	635701	1259
9	Rautahat	332526	414005	545132	1126
10	Bara	318957	415718	559135	1190
11	Parsa	284338	372524	497219	1353
12	Chitawan	259571	354488	472048	2218
13	Nawalparasi	308828	436217	562870	2162
14	Rupandehi	379096	522150	708419	1360
15	Kapilbastu	270045	371778	481976	1738
16	Dang	266393	354413	462380	2955
17	Banke	205323	285604	385480	2337
18	Bardia	199044	290313	382649	2025
19	Kailali	153135	167168	207066	2025
20	Kanchanpur	257905	417891	616697	3235

Table No. 3
Population Change (%) According to Regions

Regions	1952/54	1961	1971	1981	1991
Mountain	-----	-----	9.7	8.7	7.8
Hill	64.8	63.5	52.4	47.7	45.5
Tarai	35.2	36.4	37.6	43.6	46.7
Nepal	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: CBS, Kathmandu, 1991

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Table No. 4
In - Migrants by Regions 1981-91

Regions	1981		1991		Change 1981-1991	
	Nb.	%	Nb.	%	Nb.	%
Mountain	53628	5.2	39751	2.8	-13877	-25.9
FW	10886	1.0	8464	0.6	-2422	-22.2
MW	7330	0.7	4931	0.3	-2399	-32.7
W	1080	0.1	2584	0.2	+1504	+139.3
C	10425	1.0	11333	0.8	+908	+8.7
E	23907	2.3	12439	0.9	-11468	-48.0
Hill	211927	20.4	267116	18.8	+55189	+26.0
FW	14559	1.4	16349	1.2	+1790	+12.3
MW	31550	3.0	22447	1.6	-9103	-28.9
W	62572	6.0	30452	2.1	-32120	-51.3
C	71873	6.9	157435	11.1	+85562	+119.0
E	31423	3.0	40433	2.9	+9010	+28.7
Tarai	773307	74.4	1111339	78.4	+338032	+43.7
FW	92200	8.9	187393	13.2	+95193	+103.2
MW	54364	5.2	128232	9.0	+73868	+135.9
W	11435	10.7	197915	14.0	+86480	+77.6
C	214473	20.6	235313	16.6	+20840	+9.7
E	300835	29.0	362486	25.6	+61651	+20.5
Total	1038862	1000.0	1418206	100.0	+379344	+36.5

Sources: *Population Monograph of Nepal*, Kathmandu: CBS, 1995

Note: FW (Far-West), MW (Mid-West), W (West), C=Central), E=(East)

Table No. 5
Major Linguistic Groups of Tarai Origin

S.No.	Language	Number	%
1.	Maithili	2797582	12.30
2.	Bhojpuri	1712536	7.53
3.	Tharu	1331546	5.86
4.	Awadhi	560744	2.47
5.	Rajbansi	129829	0.57
6.	Hindi	105765	0.47
7.	Santhali	40260	0.18
8.	Bangla	23602	0.10

Table No. 6
Population Change of Tarai Origins

Language	1952/54		1991		Increase	
	Nb.	%	Nb.	%	Nb.	Times
English	7023	0.6	42021	1.0	34998	5.0
Hindi	67932	5.6	489578	11.7	421646	6.2
Maithili	3221	0.3	71226	1.7	68005	21.1
Tharu	3139	0.3	48603	1.2	45464	14.5
Urdu	597	0.0	22932	0.5	22335	37.4
Nepali	1111517	91.6	3347261	80.0	2235744	2.0

Source: Harka Gurung, *Social Demography and Expressions*, Kathmandu: NEWERA, 1999, p. 79

Table No. 7
Human Poverty Index

Region	Chronic Malnourishment among Children (Under 5s)	Adult Illiteracy rate	Proportion of Population with life	Population without access expeancy less than 40 year	Human Poverty Index to safe water	Relative Value Nepal
Nepal	50.5	51.4	17.74	20.48	39.6	100
Mountain	61.2	63.9	27.40	28.01	49.8	126
Hill	52.7	57.7	12.24	27.70	38.8	98
Tarai	47.1	53.9	15.51	12.10	39.6	100
Eastern Tarai	41.4	49.3	14.46	8.30	35.8	91
Central Tarai	51.5	61.3	14.70	11.30	44.5	112
Western Tarai	53.3	49.8	12.99	12.47	37.7	95
Mid Western Tarai	36.9	51.4	22.22	25.05	38.9	98
Far Western Tarai	43.3	50.8	19.30	12.47	37.6	95

Source: *Nepal Human Development Report 2004*, Kathmandu, 2004

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Table No. 8
Human Development Index

Region	Life Expectancy at Birth	Adult Literacy	Mean Year of Schooling	GDP Per capita (PPP us\$)	Life Expectancy Index	Income	HDI	Ratio to National HDI
Nepal	60.98	48.6	2.75	1310	0.600	0.429	0.471	100
Tarai	63.95	46.1	2.54	1235	0.649	0.420	0.478	101.3
Eastern Tarai	63.65	50.7	3.03	1266	0.644	0.425	0.491	104.2
Central Tarai	61.70	38.7	3.01	1222	0.612	0.418	0.451	95.8
Western Tarai	64.70	50.2	2.60	1277	0.663	0.425	0.484	104.7
Mid Western Tarai	64.80	48.6	2.42	1130	0.538	0.455	0.440	93.4
Far Western Tarai	57.30	49.2	2.34	1244	0.548	0.421	0.450	95.4

Source: *Nepal Human Development Report, 2004*

Table No. 9
Population and Employment

Ethnic / Regional Groups	Population %	Exercise %
Hill Brahmins & Chhettris	32.2	69.5
Dalits	9.5	0.5
Madheshi	31.5	11.5
Newar	6.5	15.5
Tribals	22.5	7.5

Source: Basant Thapa & Mohan Minali (eds), *Madhesh*, Kathmandu, 2006, p. 93

Table No. 10
Education in Tarai % 2001

Educational Degree	No. of Passed	%
IIC	458062	9.6
A	276155	5.8
BA	131909	2.8
MA	30509	0.6

Source: *Ibid*

Table No. 11
Tarai Representation in Parliament

Year	Legislature	Political System	Mode of Election	Percent
1959	House of Representatives	Party system	Direct	22.2
1978	National Panchayat	Partyless	Indirect	15.2
1981	National Panchayat	Partyless	Direct	20.5
1991	House of Representatives	Party based	Direct	21.0
1994	House of Representatives	Party based	Direct	20.0

Source: Harka Gurung, *op. cit.* p. 160

Table No. 12
Tarai Representation in Cabinet (1991-97)

Ethnic Groups	NC	UML	NSP	NDP	NWPP	Total
Hill Caste	33	22		10	1	66
Hill Ethnic	10	8		3		21
Tarai Caste	6		3	3		12
Tarai Ethnic	4	1		1		6
Muslims	1	1		1		3
Total	54	32	3	18	1	108

Source: *Ibid*

Table No. 13
Candidates in Elections by Region

Category	1954	1991	1994
Caste Groups	72.2	65.3	65.9
Hill	53.7	45.7	48.0
Tarai	18.5	19.6	17.9
Ethnic Groups	26.0	31.1	31.6
Hill	22.9	25.2	24.8
Tarai	3.1	6.1	7.0
Muslim	1.0	3.0	2.1
Unclassified	0.4	0.2	0.2
Total Number	768	1345	1442

Source: Harka Gurung, *op. cit.*, p. 130