

Bhutanese ethnic conflict

Bhutanese ethnic conflict has assumed both national and international dimensions because of the alleged violation of human rights by the Royal Government whose accountability and legitimacy before the world community is nil.

Despite its clever propaganda that the minority was out to capture power by raising the bogey of bad human rights records of Bhutan and the discriminatory policy of the Government forcing the Lhotshampas to join the refugee camps in Nepal and India, the Sangrila-la image is being eroded. And the main villain behind such an erosion is obviously the case of the Bhutanese Nepalis or Lhotshampas whose representation has had been made by the BSC since 1952. Now other parties are also in the picture despite the internecine inter-party conflicts between the two groups—The Bhutan People's Party and The Bhutan National Democratic Party.

In the context of the influx of Bhutanese refugees and the violation of human rights by the Royal Government, the official Bhutanese position is somewhat characterized by a sense of paranoia by trying to link the domestic ethnic problem with the alleged support of the present Nepali Congress Government for the anti-regime movement in Bhutan.

The United Towns Agency for North South Cooperation has since adopted Rizal and other six southern Bhutanese as prisoners of conscience.

Many demonstrations were organized in southern parts of Nepal turning ethnic conflict into a full scale movement for democratizing the Bhutanese power structure. The successful anti-regime movement was also an immediate impetus to the Bhutanese dissidents living in exile in India and Nepal. The relations between Bhutan and Nepal were further strained by the swelling refugee population