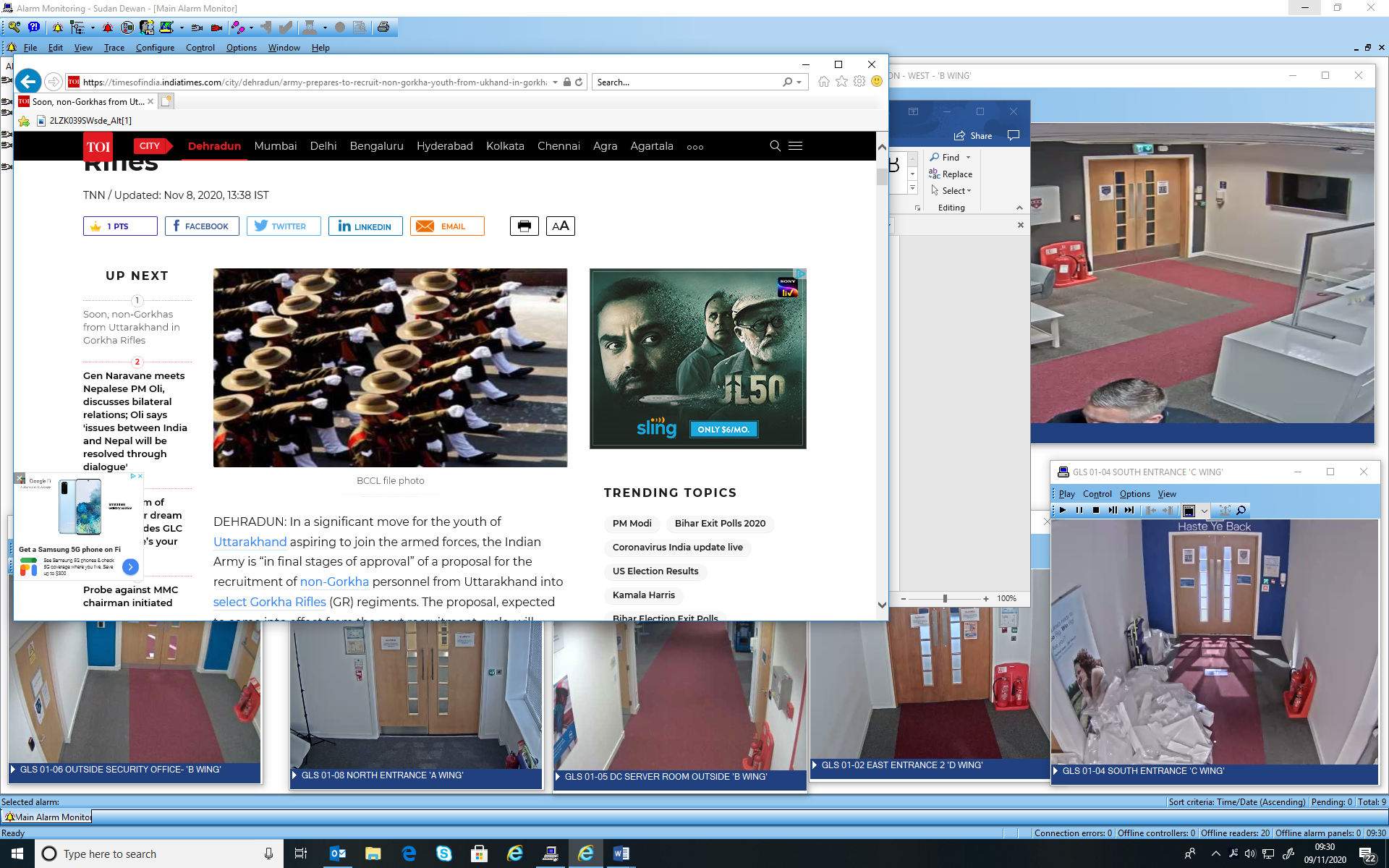
**Soon, non-Gorkhas from Uttarakhand in Gorkha Rifles**

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DEHRADUN: In a significant move for the youth of Uttarakhand aspiring to join the armed forces, the Indian Army is “in final stages of approval” of a proposal for the recruitment of on-Gorkha personnel from Uttarakhand into select Gorkha Rifles (GR) regiments. The proposal, expected to come into effect from the next recruitment cycle, will enable local Garhwali and Kumaoni youngters to join the Gorkha Rifles.

Speaking to Times of India, a senior official from Army Headquarters said, “The proposal has been sent for the final nod of the officials concerned. It will initially be a pilot project for two years for the youths of Uttarakhand and if all goes well, youths from other hill states will also be inducted in the Gorkha Rifles.

The recruitment of Nepalese Gorkhas into the Indian Army was done on the basis of a 1947 tripartite agreement between Nepal, India and Great Britain. Under the agreement, six of the total of 10 Gorkha regiments in the British Indian Army at the time, joined the Indian Army (the seventh regiment was added after independence) while the remaining were transferred to the British Army and were assigned to British colonies like Malaya (Malaysia and Brunei) as well as Singapore. These units still continue to exist in the Brunei and Singapore armies.

A few months back, following the border dispute between India and Nepal over the Kalapani issue, Nepalese foreign minister, Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, had called the tri-partite agreement redundant and called for its scrapping. Defence watchers said that the move to open the Gorkha Rifles for non-Gorkhas from Uttarakhand may also have its backdrop in the frosting of relations between India and Nepal and intended to increase the presence of Indian soldiers in the regiment.

**Army nod to Uttarakhand non-Gorkhas in Gorkha Rifles**

**(The Indian Express, 9 Nov 20) -** Written by [**Man Aman Singh Chhina**](https://indianexpress.com/profile/author/man-aman-singh-chhina/) | Chandigarh | November 7, 2020 3:14:22 am

Till now, only Nepal-Domiciled Gorkhas and Indian-Domiciled Gorkhas were recruited into Gorkha Rifles regiments.

In a major policy decision, the Army Headquarters has sanctioned the recruitment of non-Gorkha personnel from Uttarakhand into select Gorkha Rifles (GR) regiments. The move, which shall come into effect from the next recruitment cycle, will make eligible Garhwali and Kumaoni youth from Uttarakhand to join GR.

At present, the Indian Army has approximately 40 GR battalions.

Till now, only Nepal-Domiciled Gorkhas (NDG) and Indian-Domiciled Gorkhas (IDG) were recruited into GR regiments, with a ratio of 60-40 maintained between Nepalese and Indian troops in a GR battalion. However, an all-Indian Gorkha battalion was also raised in a regiment a few years back.

Highly-placed sources informed [The Indian Express](https://indianexpress.com/) that the approval to induct non-Gorkha personnel has been given for three of the seven GR regiments.

When contacted, a senior officer in Army Headquarters confirmed the development. “There is no shortage of recruits coming from Nepal in the various GR battalions. However, there has been a shortfall of Indian Gorkha recruits for some units and therefore this measure has been adopted to make up the numbers. At present, this induction of non-Gorkhas has been limited to the next two years and thereafter a call will be taken after seeing the numbers of Indian Gorkhas volunteering to join up,” said the officer.

A 1947 tripartite agreement between Nepal, India and the UK allows India Army and the British Army to recruit Gorkha soldiers from Nepal. Under this agreement, of the ten GR regiments at the time, six went to India and four were retained by the UK.

Thus, the Indian Army kept 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, and 9 GR and subsequently raised a seventh regiment, 11 GR. The British Army retained 2, 6, 7 and 10 GR.

Apart from Infantry, Gorkhas are also recruited in an all-Gorkha artillery regiment and a Mechanised Infantry battalion whose origins lie in Gorkha Rifles. Gorkhas also serve in Rashtriya Rifles battalions in Jammu and Kashmir.

Nepal Foreign Minister Pradeep Kumar Gyawali had recently termed the Gorkha recruitment a legacy of the past and had called the 1947 tripartite agreement redundant. The remarks had come in the backdrop of the Kalapani dispute between India and Nepal.

A senior retired Gorkha Rifles officer who did not want to be quoted called the development “unfortunate”. “Maybe the government does not want to fill the shortfall of Indian Gorkhas by recruiting more Gorkhas from Nepal, given the strain in relations,” he said.

The British raised the first Gorkha regiment in 1815 at Subathu, Himachal Pradesh. However, prior to that, Maharaja Ranjit Singh had also recruited Gorkhas after a conflict with the Gorkha Army in Kangra in 1809.