

Maoists demand autonomy for three Bengal districts

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Kolkata: A demand for autonomy for three tribal-dominated districts of West Midnapore, Bankura and Purulia in West Bengal was today made by a top Maoist leader, who also justified the Gorkhaland statehood issue. "We demand autonomy for the three districts on the lines of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council," Maoist leader Kishenji told PTI from an undisclosed location.

He alleged that the West Bengal government had denied the legitimate rights of the people of the districts. "We demand autonomy to protect the language, culture and religious beliefs of tribals." Asked if he meant statehood, he replied, "the people of the three districts are not yet prepared for statehood."

Queried if it was part of the demand for a 'greater Jharkhand', Kishenji said, "That demand is no longer relevant. The scenario has changed. "Moreover the formation of Jharkhand has not solved any problem.

http://www.ptinews.com/news/420403_Maoists-demand-autonomy-for-three-Bengal-districts

[Note added by BannedThought.net: The tribal areas of the 3 districts mentioned here are most generally referred to collectively as the [Jangalmahal](#).]