# End to Darjeeling Blockade

## Why in news?

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The President of the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM), which is leading the separate statehood movement, has called off the indefinite strike in Darjeeling.

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## What led to this blockade?

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- The people of the Darjeeling Hills and the people of Indian Gorkhas in the Northern part of West Bengal have long been demanding a separate state of Gorkhaland.
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- The GTA (Gorkhaland Territorial Administration) was set up in 2012 as a semi-autonomous body to devolve some powers.
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- However, substantial administrative and fiscal authority remained with the state government’s district heads.
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- There is a long pending standoff in Darjeeling as a result of failure of devolution of power to the GTA as promised.
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- The immediate cause for the recent blockade is West Bengal CM's statement to make Bengali a compulsory language of study in the State.
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- The stir started off with this and led to a revival of the demand for statehood.
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- On an appeal from the Union Home Minister and his tentative offer of talks on the issue, the strike was called off.
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## What lies ahead?

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- The tourism sector and the tea industry faced huge losses following the unrest in the region.
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- The end to the blockade comes as a relief to the stalled economy of the region.
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- Now that the strike has been called off, the Union and West Bengal governments and the GJM must urgently begin tripartite talks.
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- An agreement on the empowerment of the GTA can only address the grievances of the residents of Darjeeling and prove to be a sustainable resolution of the issue.
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**Source: The Hindu**

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