



Impact Of Maoist Insurgency

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INTRODUCTIONThe post – 1990 political process and the prevailing socioeconomic conditions in Nepal can be largely held responsible for the Maoist’s armed struggle against the government. Maoists as political strategists have tried to manipulate the conditions in order to attain their political objectives. There were so many causes which were responsible for the insurgency such as:

EXTERNAL CAUSES OF THE MAOIST INSURGENCY:-While seeking the causes of the Maoist insurgency conducted by the Maoist. It is necessary to distinguish those associated with political developments after the establishment of the multiparty system from those associated with the internal thinking and planning of Maoists. Firstly, them an attempt to list the former. The first general election was held in the country in 1992. The Maoist Party was able to win 9 seats in the new parliament, with the held of the CPN (UML). The Maoists had conducted the parliamentary struggle fairly well. The armed struggle might had been in their minds, but political violence would had been confined to the pages of history if the democratic process of the country had develop smoothly. But unfortunately, this did not happen. The Nepali Congress , which had formed the government after winning the majority in the election and had received the accolade of being ‘the only democratic party of Nepali’ from the western democracies, started to lead the country in the opposite direction. It considered the totalitarian practice of its own party to be the correct approach to democracy’. All those who opposed the Nepali Congress became the ultimate

enemies of democracy. There was a naked parade of Nepali Congress power everywhere a ‘white tyranny’. Dozens of people fell victim to the hooliganism of the ruling party. It became a common occurrence for people to be killed in cold blood and the opposition party cadres to be implicated by means of fabricated cases on trumped-up charges. Within 2 years, the local leaders and workers of the Nepali Congress Party had terrorized the people by lodging false cases against more than 10,000 people, creating havoc. Terms such as pluralism and democracy were confined to the pages of books. People forgot the notorious term ‘Mandale’ within 1 year. The first term of the government of the Nepali Congress party was not basically different from the previous panchayat autocracy.

This was the situation in which local elections took place in 1993. That election was a sheer confrontation between state power and the people. It was a violent clash between state terror and civil society. The Nepali Congress misused the election to excess. It was in fact no election at all. It was as autocratic action taken by the state against the people and the opposite parties. These activities of the ruling party provoked the idea, among some, that it was necessary to fight against the dictatorship of the Nepali Congress. The CPN (UML) which had a widespread mass base, decide to mobilize the people against this state terror but other parties reached the conclusion that the should retreat altogether from the parliamentary process. Rolpa, Rukum and other areas, which are now well known as the cradle of armed struggle, were backwards area from

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the viewpoint of political awareness, but the Maoist Party had good support there. The ruling Nepali Congress did not have any organizational base in those areas. In the name of expanding its organization, following the 1990 People's Movement, the Nepali Congress picked up former Panchas and local bullies in those areas among others, and made them local leaders of its party organization. With their help, the Nepali Congress started to mount a concerted attack on those holding dissenting views. This repression was reminiscent of the repression of the previous partyless panchayat system. Because of the suppressive state power of the Nepali Congress, the people of those areas were unable to experience any political change. This strengthened the ideas and influence of the Maoist Party. Both the Maoist Party and the people of those areas were compelled to conclude that it was necessary to take up guns against the guns of the Nepali Congress. This created the deep-seated opposition that the Maoist Party then spread countrywide in the form of armed struggle.

The Nepali Congress made enemies of the people not only because of its suppressive state power. The people were also disenchanted with the multiparty system, among other things, because of their exaggerated perception about its likely consequences. The Nepali Congress started a misleading and unnecessary propaganda about the 1990 People's Movement. It raised expectations among the people that the problems of food, clothes and shelter would be solved as soon as the multiparty system was established in the country. On the one hand, the Nepali Congress raised expectations (freedom from want poverty and unemployment) while on the other, it had the audacity to use the 'democracy' of an autocratic state to suppress the very movements, that were being built for the realization of the hopes of the people. This brought a huge disappointment between 'democracy' and dictatorship became more and more blurred.

A major event, which took place prior to the rise of the Maoist movement, was the Supreme

Court decision of 28 August 1995. This event not only replaced the CPN (UML) government, but threatened many aspects of the constitution, including the supremacy of the constitution, the rule of law and the parliamentary system itself. That event weakened the parliamentary system and gave supremacy to the Prime Minister. The court decision also encouraged such dirty games as belief – disbelief trust – distrust) and 'party conversion' (crossing the floor of the House) in the everyday business of parliamentary politics. It led to power politics and created instability. The ultimate result could not be an increasing turn towards violent insurgency and this is exactly what made the Maoist Party take the path of armed struggle.

INTERNAL CAUSES OF THE MAOIST INSURGENCY:-

External factors alone were not sufficient to generate any kind of revolutionary movement or campaign, though there may be good or bad conditions for its conduct. External causes are important, but the final determinant of such a social phenomenon, its rise or fall was the internal factors. The insurgency conducted by the Maoist Party cannot be explained by external factors alone. The ultimate determinants of the Maoist insurgency are the theory and practice brought by the Party in a specific context to the issue of revolutionary change and progressive action.

It has already been said that the Maoist Party had no correct Marxist approach – no real vision of Nepal society and of the revolutionary process. Its meaning and its significance. Its inability to understand the world, and victory based simply on dogma; the lack of understanding of the gist of Marxism had the effect of obscuring the immediate advantage of the progressive movement. The Maoist, entangled in their turn towards armed struggle by the repressive campaigns of the government against the common people. The Maoist Party was never adequately aware of the ups and downs, progress and setbacks of the revolutionary process. Its opportunism did not even allow it to differentiate

between the thrill of victory and the setback of defeat. The victory they had achieved in 1992 was something they had not expected that was a matter outside the scope of their study². Similarly, the setback that they suffered in 1993 was also beyond their expectation; this was an outcome that they found intolerable. As they had been diametrically different results were both beyond their level of consciousness. Because of this, they jumped to the conclusion that they should go underground and launch an armed struggle.

The Maoist leadership had been excessively dogmatic as regards Marxist consciousness, but it also had an overwhelming desire for quick victory – a petty bourgeois vision with the norms, values and ambitions associated with it. Instead of identifying the basis for revolution carefully, it had an assured intolerance and superiority complex. Such non – Marxist concepts and the petty bourgeois attitudes and practices born from such a vision have led it to stand alone, isolated, arrogant and shortsighted in the movement. The Maoist had also been inspired to take to the path of armed struggle because of their failure to understand the fact that reforms were part of a revolution. They have been marginalized in the jungles far away from the mass of the people for lack of the confidence and courage to make use of the democratic achievements of the People's Movement launched with the widest people's participation and to win the confidence of the people through competition in elections and efforts to persuade them of the correct viewpoint, policies and logic. The setback that the Maoist experienced at the beginning of the 1990s served them all and carried them nowhere. Their creative consciousness did not grow. They did not know how to overcome their setbacks. The people's multiparty democracy was identified as a failure and the emergence of a democratic political movement was seen as an expression of revisionism. They found themselves caught in a system did not accept as new and with which, increasingly, they were not prepared to engage on its terms. Therefore they decided to make

themselves the soldiers of proletarian revolution and became taken up by the theory of armed struggle.

OTHER CAUSES

POLITICAL TURMOIL AND INSTABILITY:-The political chaos that prevailed in the country in the years immediately following the establishment of democracy created conditions for the rise of the Maoist movement. The first general election took place in May 1991 with high hopes and overwhelming aspirations of the masses. But the outcome of the elections was rather disappointing as the Nepali Congress (NC). The largest party recorded only a razor thin majority and formed a weak government. It was not much later that the conflict and contest for power began to take place between different political parties. Leadership conflicts and internal dissensions within the Nepal Congress began surfacing soon after the NC G.P. Kolkata had to resign and declare mid-term polls in 1994. The performance of political parties was more disappointing in the mid-term polls as no party could secure a majority. UML formed a minority government. The first communist government also failed due to inter and intra party cleavages and survived till mid-1995 only. The Nepali Congress again came to power in September 1995 with its second rank leadership at the helm of governmental affairs but party feuds continued. It was indeed the beginning of coalitions and unstable governments in Nepal. None of the incumbent government could retain power for even a year.

The negligence on the part of the subsequent government and political parties on many count generated widespread dissatisfactions. The formation and reformation of political parties proved to be drama of power sharing and power grabbing. The functioning of the government was marked by widespread corruption favoritism and nepotism. Instead of strengthening democratic institutions, there was leaders were more interested in personalized politics than government stability and in delivering goods. As a result, there

was institutional decay and political disorientation parties³ and leaders were interested in personalized politics than government stability and in delivering goods. As a result, there was widespread dissatisfaction with political parties and government.⁴

FAVOURITISM AND PUNISHMENT:-

The democratic government acted in a partial manner by favouring some and taking hard actions against the others. The functioning of the government gave way to corrupt practices. The government favoured criminals and smugglers but on the other hand it began to take strong action against hardcore communists. In Rukum and Rolpa, there were complaints of harassment by district authorities.⁵ In these two districts the government launched Operation Romeo against the Maoists which resulted in action against peasants and communists workers. Many of them were compelled to leave their villages.

DETERIORATING ECONOMIST CONDITIONS:- Much against the hope and aspirations of the people, the Nepalese economy showed a downward trend after the installation of democracy in the country. It has rightly been opined that the Maoist movement is a by product of Nepal successful developmental endeavors.⁶

Nepal was characterized as one of the poorest country in the 1989 World Bank Report. Out of 120 countries, it ranked 115; Nepal's per capita income was US\$220. The UNDP, Human Development Report 2001 stated that 38 percent of Nepal's population was extremely poor and was not in a position to meet its basic requirements. There were sharp Hill versus Terai urban-rural and caste divides in the distribution of land and

economic benefits. There was over concentration of resources and wealth. Many regions were neglected in the distribution of resources and developmental programmes.⁷

SOCIAL DISPARITIES AND DISCONTENT :-

Post 1990, Nepal was also facing sharp reactions from different communities and regions against the hierarchical order of Nepali society. The Monogoloids were feeling oppressed by the high caste dominated Nepalese state structure. There was discontent against the Brahmin-chettri-Newar domination. Therefore, an ethnic upsurge was in the making. The Monogoloid people were against the Hindu character of the Nepali state. There were a number of communities, which never had access to state apparatus. The educated and unemployed youth, who did not have any prospect of finding employment, were getting frustrated. What is more important is that Nepali society had undergone a social change over the years. People had become conscious that they had been marginalized by the power elite.⁸ The government ignored these realities and tried to maintain the existing socio-economic structures for their own vested political interests.

SUMMING UP:- It could be said that there were sufficient socio-economic and political reasons for the emergence of insurgency in Nepal. There was evidence to indicate the Nepal was perhaps moving towards a movement such as the Maoist insurgency. It had also been noted that the movement could have been avoided if the government of the day had been conscious about the socio-economic inequalities of Nepalese society.

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