

MAOIST MOVEMENT IN NEPAL

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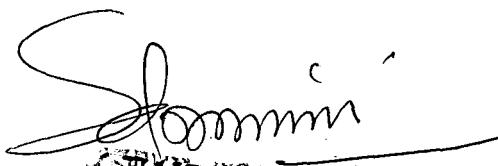
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Dedicated To

My Parents

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INTRODUCTION

Nepal is a landlocked country in the Himalayan range sandwiched between two giant neighbours, in the north lies China and in the south India. Accordingly, it occupies a strategic position in the sub-continent. Historically Nepal was founded by the leadership of King Prithvi Narayan Shah of Gorkha, during the late eighteenth century (1769). In this historical process the rise of princes and chieftains and the feudal ruling class was the main character in the Nepalese history.

The advent of the Rana reign which continued for a century was of great concern. It was in this period that power and feudal character of the feudal state was reflected very clearly. The political system of the Shahs and the Ranas was characterized by a strong hierarchical dominating class. The rigid centralized structure of administration and politics remained intact with the ruling class, which helped them to preserve their personal and familial power till now.¹⁾ Until the people's movement of 1950 when the Rana oligarchy was uprooted, the traditional political system of Nepal had over a period of time gone through various ups and downs. It is no surprise that the modern day Nepal reflects the characteristics and problems of this historical process even today.

The present research is entitled as the "Maoist Movement in Nepal". In the six years of Maoist uprising in Nepal more than a thousand people

¹ L.R,Baral, *Nepal : Problems of Governance*, Delhi, Konark Publications,1993, p.9.

have died. Many civilians have been arrested, abducted and killed by police and Maoist guerrillas. Therefore to understand and deal with this situation it is necessary to establish the root causes of the Maoist Movement. It is necessary to analyze them with a view to every possible way, of the Maoist problem in Nepal. In the first chapter, the emergence of the Maoist Party (CPN) has been discussed. The discussion begins, with the background of the evolution of Communist Party of Nepal in 1949. The emergence of Communist Party in Nepal during its initial phase was influenced by the Indian Independence movement and also the success of Chinese Communist revolution of 1949.² But, the foremost happenings in the sphere of Communist political scenario can be viewed in the latter period. There occurred various ups and downs in the Communist Movement. This resulted in various differences, splits, and realignments among the communist factions.

Although several meetings of the CPN Congress were held from time to time to sort out the differences, but to no avail. Due to conflicting leadership interests, members created different parties to take advantage of the situation. The rise of CPN (Maoists), can be seen as the result of an internal conflict within the CPN. After the People's Movement of 1990, when democracy was established in the country, several political fronts cropped up. It was the front organization known as Samyukta Jana Morcha (United

² N,Khadka, "Factionalism among Communists in Nepal", *Pacific Affairs*, vol.68,no.1, Spring, 1995, p-56.

people's Front) which contested in the 1991 general election, and emerged as the third largest party, and thus the seeds of CPN (Maoist) were planted.

The two communist faction, the CPN (Masal) formed by Mohan Bikram Singh and CPN (Mashal) led by Prachanda got united to form the CPN (Maoist) in the year 1995. Therefore, it was under the new communist party CPN (Maoist), that the revolution of arms was started. In 1995, March, Puspha Kamal Dahal the Chairman of CPN (Maoist) held meetings, and decided to take up arms against the monarchy and existing democratic political system.

The focuses on the socio-economic issues, which stand among the prominent agenda of the CPN (Maoist), to lead the mass rebellion in the countryside. The movement was mainly based in the mid-western hilly region of Rolpa, Rukum etc. This area of Nepal has remained the worst neglected in socio-economic terms in the country. That is why they have control over more than 35 such underdeveloped districts of the hills and Tarai. This regions lies with the fact that 'armed struggle' is carried out in the countryside to liberate the majority from the shackles of feudalism.³ Therefore, the CPN (Maoist) have spearheaded the movement on the basis of social and economic issues in the country.

Besides this, the problem of casteism, class, ethnicity, nationalism are also the part of their agenda. The ethnic and regional issues have emerged

³ Dastider, Mollica, "Towards a Political Crisis." *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol.36,no.26, June 23-29, 2001, Delhi, p.2243.

in a more focused way. People, who support the movement, have asserted for their rights. The policies of establishing caste supremacy, under the fold of Hinduism through religion and language policies,⁴ are being challenged by the Maoists. So, it is a fact that the social issues have affected the system. The deep rooted social problem reflects a kind of discontent in the society against the malfunctioning of the government.⁵

The problem of economic development is the foremost element, which has taken a serious turn to add fuel to the fire in the ongoing Maoist movement. Under the issue of livelihood, they demand radical land reforms. Apart from that the Maoist also ask for writing off of loans of the farmers, increasing wages of the cottage and small industries labour and also to be given protection to them. And of elimination of corruption and black market,⁶ which is existing in Nepal.

It can be opined that the centre of Maoist movement lies in the western hills, which is the poorest of the region in the country. Therefore the Maoists economic goals are concerned with the ordinary people. The people in these areas have remained under the stranglehold of feudal vested interests. Therefore the grassroots support for the Maoists is from these

⁴ B.C,Upreti," Nepal : In Search of Good Governance", *Asian Studies vol.19,no.1*, July-Dec, 2001, p.28.

⁵ Ibid, p.28.

⁶ Paul Harris, "Riots, Bombs and Strikes in Nepal", *Jane's Intelligence Review*,vol.13,no.2, Feb. 2001, p.45.

poorest areas.⁷ So, it is here, in these areas where the Maoists are gradually expanding their strength.

There has also been discussion on the part of the organizational structure and leadership of the CPN (Maoist). The organization of CPN (Maoist) right from its emergence has concentrated fully to give a concrete structural posture to their organization. To run the organization in a proper way the CPN (Maoist) have two different organizational institutions by which it runs the organization. One is the Political Front, in which the party has the Polit bureau members, in its Central Committee, formulating plans and policies and also for the mobilization of funds and political support.⁸ They do have different regional committees, sub-regional committees to operate at the field level. To take care of the arms struggle they have Military Front. In that, they have the Central Military Commission, regional military commission and district military commission.⁹ So, according to the organizational structure requirements, recruits are trained in Maoist concepts, warfare and organizational requirements.

At, last on the part of the political agenda and the strategy to pursue it has been discussed. The Maoist campaign is aimed at gaining political control over the major part of Nepal. Their political agenda consists of the

⁷ S.D, Muni,, "The Maoist Challenge in Nepal," *AAKROSH*, vol.5,no.1, January. 2002, p.53.

⁸ Rohan.Gunaratna, "Nepal's Insurgents Balance Politics and Violence", *Jane's Intelligence Review*, vol.13,no.10,October. 2001, p.33.

⁹ Anju, Susan Alex, *Maoists of Nepal*, www. ipcs. org.

Charter of 40 demands put before the government in February 1996. There are three major categories of their demands, namely, the constitutional transformation, economic survival and Nepal's self respect.¹⁰ The Maoist talks of constitutional transfer of power from the monarchy to the people, and also of drafting a new constitution where there would be no forms of monarchy existing.

To pursue their strategy, the Maoists believe in disrupting the legitimate administration by attacking police stations, local government offices and banks. Therefore their primary aim lies to launch guerrilla activities in their strong holds in remote districts, to create terror and expand their power base.¹¹ Also, they have a unique ways to campaign for political front, that is through street plays and speeches in public gatherings. Thus in all level they are taking political mileage step by step.

Therefore there is need to analyze the root causes of the Maoist people's war in Nepal. Why have Maoists politicians started this difficult strategy for political power and why the people are supporting them? The Maoist problem is the political problem. The Maoist are engaging in armed struggle to establish their political system. Their aim is political and they are guided by a political philosophy, but their methods involve and destruction. An attempt to answer some of these questions has been made in the subsequent pages.

¹⁰ S.D. Muni, no. 7, p-49.

¹¹ Rohan, Gunaratna, , n8, p.4.

CHAPTER-1

BACKGROUND AND EVOLUTION OF THE MOVEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The problem of Maoist insurgency in Nepal is not a days phenomena. Unlike the various movements worldwide, the Nepali Maoist Movement also has to be studied carefully and to be traced out from the seeds of its emergence. The Political Movement in Nepal started after the First World War. "Thousands of Gorkha soldiers were deployed all over the world by the British Government. After the war they came back and settled mostly in the Indian districts in the neighbourhood of Nepal. Many Nepali soldiers were affected by the spirit of enlightenment and democracy, but such spirit had no place in Nepal. These Nepalese settlers in India were the first who established social and cultural organizations,¹ and started some of the movements for democracy in Nepal from abroad. Therefore, All India Gorkha League was the first political organization of the Nepalese settlers in India,² which initiated the movement.

¹ Santwana, Tiwari, *Democratic Movement in Nepal and the Indian Left*, Delhi, Kalinga Publications, 2001., p.21.

² Kanchanmoy, Majumdar, *Nepal and Indian Nationalist Movement*, Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyaya, Calcutta, 1975, p. 27.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF COMMUNIST MOVEMENT IN NEPAL

It can be said, that one of the most striking feature of the Nepalese political movement was that it got heavily influenced by the Indian National Movement. As, a matter of fact one cannot ignore the participation of Nepalese in the Indian National Movement. Apart from the political Movement there were other movements too, like the Education Movement of 1935-36 which was initiated by Fatte Bahadur Chiniyamana Lal. In the year 1935 Praja Parishad was established by Tanka Prasad Acharya who started a pamphlet war against the Rana regime. Side by side with the Praja Parishad, in 1937, a reformist movement under the name of Nagarik Adhikar Samiti was launched by Pandit Sukaraj Shastri.³ Infact, he started the movement under the influence of the ideas of Gandhiji, by criticizing the power elite. It can be said that, until this there were no such broad-based political organisation in Nepal. But the first move towards the formation of political organisation of the Nepalese was after the Second World War under B.P. Koirala, which was named as Nepali Rashtriya Congress. It was in January 25-26, 1947, a conference of the party was held in Calcutta to formulate the aims and objectives, which was to launch a non-violent movement in Nepal for ending the Rana rule and establishing a constitutional monarchy there⁴.

³ Balchandra, Sharma, *Nepal ko Aitihāsik Ruprekha, (Historical Outline's of Nepal)*, Krishna Kumari Devi, Banaras, 1957, p.391.

⁴ A, Gupta, *Politics in Nepal 1950- 1960*, Delhi, Allied Publishing Private Limited, 1993, p. 166-67.

The other episode in the Nepalese Movement came with the Birat Nagar jute mill strike in 1947. According to D.R. Regmi, the strike was launched by Manmohan Adhikari, who was a member of the Communist Party of India.⁵ As can be said, the communist activity in Nepal was the offshoot of the Indian Nationalist Movement. But it derived its ideological inspiration from the Bolshevik revolution, and had organizational linkage with the revolutionary movement in India. It was in the historic year of 1949 that the base of communist party of Nepal was founded, which initiated the communist movement towards the autocratic Rana regime. Here by it is to be noted, is that the Communist Party of Nepal was founded in the Indian soil, in Calcutta, by five Marxist: Pushpal Lal, Durga Devi, Niranjana Govind Vaidya, Nar Bahadur and Narayan Vilash. Pushpa Lal Shrestha became the party's first General Secretary. In their first pamphlet the main slogan was "Civil Liberty for all the classes". Communist Party of Nepal called upon the people, particularly the peasants, to arm themselves to confiscate the land of the landlords and distribute it among the peasantry. It also appealed for strengthening the people's revolutionary army.⁶ The Communist Party of Nepal was also influenced by the Chinese communist's mass line and engaged in extensive political agitation and organization among agricultural workers at Jhapa and some other districts of Nepal, unlike the Chinese Cultural Revolution.

⁵ D,R,Regmi, *Century of Family Autocracy in Nepal*, Banaras,Nepali National Congress,1958, p.194.

⁶ Mohan Dhvaj Gurung, *Notes on the Communist Movement in Nepal*, Varanasi, 1977, p.10.

The history of the emergence of communist party in Nepal cannot be seen as a sudden movement for a political change. Right from its emergence the communist movement has seen many ups and downs. "From the time of its inception to date, the NCP has suffered serious setbacks due to both external and internal factors.⁷ But anyhow the basic aim of the party was to overthrow the Rana regime, which subsequently, amidst great political upheaval, was brought to end in February 1951. Furthermore, to bring stability in the party, the CPN leaders held its first conference with the aim of expanding the base of the party. Thus, the first Congress of the party was held on 30 January 1954. It was in this first Congress that Manmohan Adhikari was elected as the party's first General Secretary. In this Congress the strategy was to mobilize the masses. Several new policies were discussed but due to conflicting views within the members of the party, rifts began to emerge. As it has been rightly underlined,

Ever since the "1950 Revolution", the Nepali communist have been divided on the question of the strategy of revolution to be adopted in case of Nepal, and large number of them have preferred to stay ally with the King in order to keep the Nepali congress out of the corridors of power.⁸

In the meantime the communist party of Nepal was banned on 25th January 1952 on its complicity in the abortive revolt. But after the written assurance given by the communist party of Nepal in 1956, that it would conduct its activities peacefully and constitutionally and accept the King as

⁷ Narayan Khadka, "Factionalism in Communist Movement in Nepal" *Pacific Affairs*, vol.68, no.1, Spring, 1995 p.57.

⁸ P.C,Mathur, "Intellectual foundations of monarchy", in, S,D,Muni (ed) *An Assertive Monarchy*, New Delhi, Chetna Publishers ,1977, p, 64

the constitutional head of the state, the ban imposed on the party by the King was lifted. However, the Communist Movement in Nepal grew stronger in the subsequent years. This actually was due to the importance and the goal set in its manifesto for the masses. As, in the fifties, the main objective of the NCP as started in its policy statement issued in 1951 was to transform Nepal into a republican state through violent revolution.⁹ Going by this argument it can be rightly said that although there were various Communist groups functioning in Nepali political scenario but the prominent goals of the parties from the beginning have been to take arms against the ruling class. Thus, communism as an ideology and as a movement became increasingly intensified especially after the abrupt dismissal of Nepal's first elected government by the late king Mahendra in mid-December 1960.¹⁰

THE KINGS TAKE OVER

As the split widened within the party due to some issues, it gave rise to new leadership in the party. The second congress of the party which was held in Fohara palace of Kathmandu in June 1957, where there was a debate on the document of Keshar Jung Raimajhi. He was elected the General Secretary in the 3rd convention held in 1966 of the pro-Soviet camp, which had drifted away from the parent party. There was debate on his document, "Why the change in the party programme" as proposed by Raimajhi, which was not adopted, by the Congress, instead the Congress

⁹ Narayan Khadka, n.7, p.57.

¹⁰ Ibid, p.57.

accepted outlines of party programme as given by Com. Pushp Lal's. Although there were controversies within the leadership, but still Raimajhi had a grip over the party. For six years there were no Congress meetings. As from the historical facts, it can be traced out, that there occurred a total political gap in the year 1960. When the parliament was dissolved in mid-December in 1960 by the King Mahendra, and he banned all the political parties. It was during this time that Raimajhi issued a statement from Moscow, where he had gone to attend the World Communist Conference, in which he declared the King's action as a progressive step. In this phase we come to the conclusion that due to personal political interest taken by Raimajhi, there was further internal conflict within the party, because other members of the NCP did not want to pursue the strategy of joining hand with the King. It was only to take political advantage against his rivals that Raimajhi wanted to support the King. The communist's main enemies in the kingdom were the democrats and the Monarch. As noted earlier, their strategy had been first to defeat the democrats and then turn towards the latter. Consequently, the communist joined hands with the Monarch in this drive against the democratic elements.¹¹

Furthermore, there occurred internal contradiction within the party. Although the organizational strength of the Communist Movement increased, but there also occurred internal feuds within the party. As rightly described by Khadka, N, "radical extremist want to establish 'New Democracy' through

¹¹ R, S, Chauhan, "Dimension of Student Politics", in S.D,Muni. (ed) *An Assertive Monarchy*, New Delhi, Chetna Publishers, 1977, p.94

people's revolution, while the moderate talk of a multiparty 'people's democracy'. If the former group is divided on ideology and strategy, the latter group is divided on the concept of democracy and its utility in overcoming communism in the long run.¹² (19)

Amidst all these chaos the Darbhanga Convention was held in February 1961 in India, and three different political lines emerged from this convention: Constitutional Monarchy supported by Raimajhi; Pushp Lal advocated a joint mass movement against the dissolution of the Parliament, and Mohan Bikram's political line was for the election to constituent Assembly. This resulted in the split in the communist movement . From this convention the contradictions between Raimajhi and Pushp Lal began to sharpen. In the same year in 1961, August, an Inter Zonal coordinate Committee was formed to take action against the prominent members of the Central Committee and to convene the third party Congress in April 1962.

The third Congress was held in the April 1962. In this Congress a political resolution was moved by Com. Tulsilal Amatya of National Democracy. But Com. Pushp Lal objected to this resolution. With Sino-Soviet controversy, two conflicting political lines became visible in the CPN too.¹³ Infact the biggest plague facing the Nepalese Communist Movement is of talking about utilizing the contradictions of its enemies but without strategically developing independent revolutionary struggle which is creating

¹² Narayan Khadka, n.7, p.57.

¹³ A,S,Verma, *Maoist Movement in Nepal*, New Delhi, Samkaleen Teesari Duniya, 2001p. 24.

grave problems for the success of the revolution even today.¹⁴ Thus, after the Third Party Congress resulted in a split in the Communist Party of Nepal, the committees at different level declared themselves independent. Due to the failure of the 1962 convention, Pushplal and his supporters organized a separate convention in 1968. In this convention Com. Pushp Lal formed a separate party and he was elected as its General secretary. Infact, if we look back at the history of communist movement in Nepal we will see that the royal take over of the democratically elected government in December 1960 divided the communists into two major blocks, those who criticized the king's action and those who supported it¹⁵ (20)

The two communist blocks which formed after the split also had different ideological leanings. One was pro-Soviet and the other pro-China. The pro-China block also had several sub factions. They can be termed as the moderates and the radical groups, and as seen by the trends the radical minority of the pro-Chinese factions have been differentiating themselves from the moderate majority groups. There were strong differences of opinion on a number of issues even within the pro-Chinese faction of the communists party of Nepal.¹⁶ Although at various level there seems to be an effort to organize the various communist sections. Unlike the release of leaders from jail in 1971, a central nucleus was formed to organize and unite

¹⁴ Quoted from , *The Worker*, CPN (Maoist) mouth piece, January. 2002, p. 39.

¹⁵ Naryan, Khadka, n.7,p.58.

¹⁶ Ibid, p.59.

the scattered communists.¹⁷ But this formula did not work out. This was because Com, Sambhu , who initiated the unity talk, asked com. Pushpa Lal to dissolve his party. This suggestion was rejected by Pushpa Lal. Thus the central nucleus itself got split. One group under Com. Mohan Bikram Singh and several new communist parties and the other under Com, Sambhu.

THE JHAPA MOVEMENT

After some time "the struggle of the people of Nepal against the Monarchy based on a partyless Panchayat system became more intense. Influenced by the Naxalbari Movement and Cultural Revolution in China, a militant revolutionary peasant struggle emerged in the Jhapa district in Nepal"¹⁸. It was in 1974 the "Jhapa District Committee of the East Kosi Provincial Committee, defied the decisions of the Kosi Provincial Committee and advocated the Maoist strategy of organizing a guerrilla warfare that was adopted by the extremist variant of the Indian Communists"¹⁹. Infact taking up of arms against the government in the political sphere of Nepal saw drastic changes in the Communist Movement in Nepal. It cannot be ignored that the radical groups were much influenced by the Naxalite movement of India.

One of the radical leader Manmohan Adhikari stated,"what Mao said for the arms revolution. For victory, we need three things, first, arms,

¹⁷ A,S ,Verma, n.13, p.24.

¹⁸ P,C, Mathur, n. 8, p.64.

¹⁹ Naryan, Khadka, n.7, p.60.

secondly, arms and thirdly and lastly arms. Every communist should understand the truth that political power emerges from the barrel of guns.²⁰ 25

Therefore, the Jhapa movement of 1974 enabled the communist movement to adopt the political line of annihilation of the class enemy. It was infact this line of communist thoughts, where there occurred differences. The issue of the Mao's line, where the active members of the CPN created a coordinating body in 1971, but it soon became divided over two issues, the application of Mao's strategy in Nepal and the question of "Constituent Assembly"²¹. Although one member Mohan Bikram had always been advocating for a "Constituent Assembly", since 1961 it broke away from it and took the revolutionary path, and formed his own group known as the Communist Party of Nepal (Masal). He claimed himself and his group to be the true follower of Maoism.

The original theme of the Jhapa Movement was centred on the revolution by the help of arms, which followed with the strategy of organizing the peasants and eliminating landlords. Infact, this movement was opposed by several splinter groups of the communists and even the government tried its best to suppress the movement by arresting several of its leaders. Meanwhile an underground convention was held and the All Nepal Communist Revolutionary Coordination Committee (ML) was formed in 1975. But actual establishment of the Communist Party of Nepal (ML) took

²⁰ R,S,Chauhan, *The Political Development in Nepal*, New Delhi, Associated Publishing House, 1971, p. 289-299.

²¹ Naryan ,Khadka, n.7,p. 60.

place on 26 December 1978. The CPN (ML) held its first convention on 1 January 1979 and came up with a resolution saying;

The Communist Party of Nepal (ML) is formed to carry forward the Nepalese revolution while fighting against revisionism, national reaction and foreign enemies. The party shall carry forward heroically the glorious revolutionary traditions of Nepalese masses, revolutionaries and martyrs.²²

It was in August 1989 that the CPN (ML) organized its Party Congress in Siraha District and elected Com. Madan Bhandari as its first General Secretary. In this Congress the party came up with the resolution with the vision of multi-party system but within a communist political system. Although the CPN (ML) accepted Mao as the sole leader of the revolutionary movement, and class conflict as the basis of struggle, it agreed to continue with the guerrilla warfare, but neither an anti-landlord nor an anti-royal regime armed insurrection was launched.²³ Thus the CPN (ML) group which emerged from the Jhapa movement and led the revolutionary trend in the Nepalese communist movement for about decade, never persisted to follow on what basis the party had emerged.

An interesting fact about the Communist Movement in Nepal is that though there are as many as twenty different factions of the communist party, and some of them infact have very few members, but their ideological and strategical moorings do not show wide divergence. The communist maintained national level prominence because of continued support from the

²² A,SVerma, n.13,p. 25.

²³ Naryan ,Khadka, n.7,p. 61.

peasants and workers organizations and the fact lies that country's poverty and deprivation offered a fertile ground for the communists ideal. The split in the communist's parties was basically due to "the intra-party cleavages in CPN went on widening because of personality clash of leaders, parochialism and regionalism."²⁴ But howsoever diversified in their views, the CPN (ML) for a time being came up as the most influential party in the communist movement of Nepal.

MASS MOVEMENT OF 1990

The major contribution of the fourth congress lies in the formation of United Left Front for the joint mass-movement in 1990 and the functional unity with the Nepali Congress for democratic movement. It was after 1988 onwards, where the efforts for objective thinking and correct policy had been observed in different aspects like struggles in the line of thinking, organizational approach, class struggle, left unity for democratic movement and the process of party unification. As opposed to United Left Front for the anti-Panchayat struggle in 1990 was success. "Subsequently the United left Front organized to fight against the monarchy and its Panchayat system. The following groups joined the front CPN (ML), CPN (Marxist), CPN (Fourth Congress), CPN (Varma), CPN (Manandhar), CPN (Amatya), Nepal Mazdoor Kishan Party, CPN (ML), CPN (Maoist), CPN (Masal) etc."²⁵ It was thus, this United Left Front which played extremely vital role in the historical

²⁴ L,R,Baral, *Oppositional Politics in Nepal*, Delhi, Abinava Publication,1977, p. 83.

²⁵ A,S, Verma, n.13, p.26.

mass movement in 1990. Although, the diversity of thoughts created difficulties in the operation of United Front, it existed for an important period even after the mass movement due mainly to good understanding among the major parties. Historically, because of the joint efforts under United Left Front, party unity would be achieved for the formation of CPN(UML) in 1990.

The People's Movement of 1990, which was a joint movement by all the political parties, which saw a different tune within the political sphere of Nepal. It can be termed as it is not concerned with the change of the policies of the government, but is totally opposed to the existing political structure. It is offered either in the form of a violent revolution or in an attempt at completely transforming the existing political arrangements including personal policies and ideologies of the existing regime into a new order.²⁶ 28

But in the sixth Congress held on 31 January, 1998, the Congress visualised conflict of two political lines. In March 1998, a formal split in the party took place. CPN (UML) under leadership of Manmohan Adhikari and Bamdev Gautam to form CPN (ML).²⁷

FORMATION OF CPN(MAOIST)

The emergence of the CPN (Maoist) in 1995 as the front runner in carrying out the mass movement of arms struggle was not a new phenomena, as described earlier. There were several other factions, which had followed the line of Maoism, but due to some reasons not all could carry

²⁶ L,R,Baral, n,24, p.13

²⁷ A,S, Verma, n.13, p.26..

on with this line of politics. As, far as the Maoist ideological line is concerned it was in the late 1960s that the like minded pro-Chinese Communists held a party conference in India and accepted Maoist thoughts as the main ideological guidelines.²⁸ But this ideology of Maoist was suppressed by the government and therefore it did not gain popularity. Although the CPN (ML) group adopted strategy but the political scenario in Nepal forced it to suspend its revolutionary strategy. Further, there occurred split in parties, which had adopted the Maoist line, because they did not accept the leadership of the violent anti-landlord the above movement. The line of Maoism which prior to the decade of 1980 lacked the correct Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideological orientation and a revolutionary political line.²⁹ The political line of Maoism which was adopted by CPN (Maoist) and some other like minded parties have to be seen as a strong supporter of Mao's line of developed political thoughts. Infact, the "New Democratic Revolution" was which Mao talked was developed during the anti-Japanese war in particular, it was theory and strategy of new democracy and its application to the concrete conditions in China at that time.³⁰

Infact, Mao talked about the New Democratic Revolution: "New democratic revolution is part of the world proletarian-socialist revolution, for it resolutely opposes imperialism, international capitalism. Politically, it strives

²⁸ Naryan, Khadka, n.7p.66.

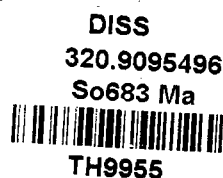
²⁹ Quoted from the CPN (Maoist) mouth piece, *The Worker*, 1998 which was discussed during the Third Plenum of Central Committee, in March, p.3

³⁰ Bob. Avakion, *Mao Tse-tung's immortal contributions*, RCP Publications, Chicago, 1979, p.23.

for the joint dictatorship of the revolutionary classes over the imperialists, traitors and reactionaries, and opposes the transformation of society into a society under bourgeois. Economically it aims at the nationalization of all the big enterprises and capital of the imperialists, traitors and reactionaries and distribution among the peasants of the land held by the landlords, while preserving private capitalist enterprise in general and not elimination the rich pleasant economy.”³¹ But if we analyze the situation in the Nepalese context we find that some of the characters do not match with the Chinese structure. The Nepalese society is semi-feudal in nature. Although the CPN (Maoist) and like-minded political parties claim that India looks upon Nepal as a colonial state, but this is not true. This is just a mere political line of the CPN (Maoist) to keep away the masses from taking Indian side.

When the CPN (UML) took part in the first democratic general elections in 1991, despite that the party was a new player in the political scenario in Nepal, it did figure best as a new party and won 69 seats. It infact created history in the South Asian region, that a Communist government took over power at the national level. But in the midterms election of 1994 some of the communist parties boycotted the elections. But one of the communist leader Mohan Bikram Singh who had boycotted the 1991 elections, participated in the election of 1994. Mohan Bikram Singh was associated with the 'Masal Party', which split on 6th April 1994. The new party formed under the veteran leader Dina Nath Sharma who also named

³¹ Ibid p. 23.



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its party as 'Mashal', declared to be with the Maoist People's War group. The other party which strictly followed the Maoist path was the 'Unity Centre' (Ekta Kendra) which was constituted in 1986. This party changed its name to Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and after long deliberations and discussions developed the present line on ideological and political questions. By adopting Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as the ideological firmament, the party had chosen the path of protracted people's war.³² The CPN (Masal) and CPN (Unity Centre) followed the path of New Democracy that is based on the model of Mao. They were against the UML's multiparty model of New Democracy. Although, at times, there were several small parties which believed in Maoism, but the way they functioned did not succeed.

It can be stated that there emerged various groups within the communist party. But the prime aim of the parties, which followed on the people's warpath, were lenient on some agendas. Like the CPN (Masal), CPN (Mashal), the Unity Centre, the Marxist-Leninist Maoist Party and the United People's Front have been advocating that as long as the monarchy is not overthrown, it will be impossible to establish a Communist regime.³³ Even though in the mean time some of these parties adopted an opportunistic strategy. The CPN (Masal) have also been distancing themselves from the Marxist and Leninist parties, for they abandoned the revolutionary path. The CPN (Masal) has expressed its commitment to the line of New Democracy based on the Mao model, with the leadership of the

³² A, S, Verma, n.13, p.33.

³³ Naryan, Kadka, n.7,p .68.

proletariat and the dictatorship of the people as essential attributes.³⁴ Also, the CPN (Unity Centre) which symbols as a revolutionary communist party and leads the revolutionary front under the People's Army to achieve people's revolution, without getting involved in the constitutional parliamentary system. The other group of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist, which basically represents the worker and peasant class, believe that only through Leninist-type organizational networks and Maoist-type mobilization of the rural peasantry can they achieve true Maoism in Nepal.³⁵

By viewing the several factions of the communists parties of Nepal, and the emergence of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) can be seen from the Masal Faction. In 1983, the CPN (Masal) was formed by M.B. Singh but after two years of its formation this too got spilt, paving the way to CPN (Mashal). Basically CPN (Masal) and CPN (Mashal) were just differentiated only by their pronunciation.³⁶ It was in the CPN (Mashal) faction in which the prominent leader, Pushpa Kamal Dahal (Prachanda) of the CPN (Maoist) who is spearheading the movement in a skilled manner rose on the political scenario of Nepal. The other contemporary and renowned CPN (Maoist) leader Baburam Bhattarai was still with Mohan Bikram Singh for some more time. As, mentioned earlier, it was during the People's Movement of 1990 when all the main political parties of Nepal, the Nepali Congress and the groups of seven left parties, came together to lead the movement, against king Birendra's Panchayat system. Though after the restoration of

³⁴ Nepali Patra , Kathmandu, 13, September 1991.

³⁵ Naryan, Khadka, n.7,p .71.

³⁶ Ibid, p .60.

democracy the left parties pressed for a fresh election to the assembly. In the same month of November 1991, Masal and Mashal merged as communist party of Nepal (Unity Centre) and went for elections, emerging as the third largest party winning 9 seats. In the meanwhile, CPN (Unity Centre) held its first conference in 1991 and came up with the proposal of "Protracted armed struggle in the form of New Democratic Revolution". But by the 1994 mid-term elections there again occurred a division within the Unity Centre, one headed by Nirmal Lama and another by Pushp Kamal Dahal (Prachanda).

The CPN (Maoist), after initiating the people's war path, emerged with a strong ideological line after debate and discussions in the Congress regarding the political line to be adopted. As can be termed "The Maoist tactics of isolating and attacking the enemy by forging a "United Front" of the remaining classes could provide fruitful guidance in this respect."³⁷ Infact, for nearly two and half years against a rightist liquidation clique opposing this ideological orientation and political line, were finally expelled from the party in May 1994. The Party ultimately decided at the historic Third Plenum held in March 1995 to go ahead with the initiation of the people's war and chalked out the strategy and tactics of the people's war in the country keeping in mind the specificities of Nepal. In true sense the people's war aimed for creating a New Democratic state, and then marching towards socialism and then finally towards communism through a continuous series of cultural

³⁷ S,D,Muni,n.8, p .4.

revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, and thus making it an integral part of the world proletarian revolution.

What the CPN (Maoist) aimed in the political scenario of Nepal was to overthrow the Monarchy. Infact all the communists parties of Nepal were well aware that without first overthrowing the monarchy, the possibility of establishing a proletarian regime is almost impossible. As rightly said the Monarchy, which has been associated in the social traditions of Nepalese society, the monarchical institution derives power and authority not only from the feudal elements who support it but also from all economic classes. Therefore, the CPN (Maoist) started the path of complete revolution by firstly starting with the opposition to feudal structure of the society. To make the movement a mass movement, the CPN (Maoist) first took the issues of poverty and social issues. There exists another important factor, which if not discussed would be like discriminating it. Till now, all the Communist movement were active in the Central and Eastern part of Nepal, but only few cared about the southern part of Nepal. As a result of this,

the people of the low land of Nepal called Terai have felt discriminated against by the people of the hills and mountains who dominate the socio-political life of Nepal. They feel that the existing Communist parties have failed to address their grievances.³⁸

Therefore in the Terai region a separate Nepal Terai Communist Party was founded in July 1990.

³⁸ Naryan, Khadka, n.7 p.73.

However, the joint efforts of some of the leading communist parties which followed the path of Maoist, are resolutely marching forward to rejoin the disconnected chains of history with initiative for revolutionary polarization and to make the New Democratic Revolution in Nepal a success. Therefore once it is started, it will follow the objective law of development of people's war through its different strategic stages and take different twists, and any way will not stop until it has attained its final goal, a classless society of universal communism, as thought by Mao in his theory of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat. But the proletarian revolution has both immense challenges and opportunities in the present day. The CPN (Maoist) however going ahead with a leap towards achieving the goal. As confined by the CPN (Maoist) ideological line, some of the communist parties disagreed with its line and left the CPN (Maoist) in 1994. But during the party's Third Plenum in March 1995, it was fully decided to take up arms. Again in the meeting of central committee of the party held in September 1995, a concrete shape was given to the party. It was in this meeting that the name Maoism came to be used, instead of 'Mao-Tse-Tung thought'. Till then, only the communist party of Peru had adopted the term 'Maoism'.³⁹ It was during this period that the party defined its military and political lines.

³⁹ A.S, Verma, n.13, p.34.

NEW DEMOCRACY AND PEOPLE'S WAR

In March 1995 Pushp Kamal Dahal (Prachanda), General Secretary of Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), decided to take arms against the monarchy and the existing symbolic democratic political system. It was on 4th February 1996, Baburam Bhattarai presented the Nepali Congress led government of Sher Bahadur Deuba with a list of 40 demands related to 'nationalism', 'democracy', framing of a new constitution, declaration of Nepal a secular nation, etc. Infact Baburam Bhattarai's letter contained an ultimatum that the government should initiate positive steps towards the fulfillment of its demands by February 17th, 1996, or else they would be forced to resort to an armed struggle against the existing state. But in the meantime, while the Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba was on a state visit to India, the CPN (Maoist) struck on 13th February 1996, before the deadline could expire.

Thus, February 13 marks a historic and decisive victory for the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist-Maoist line over the various brands of revisionisms and neo-revisionism plaguing the Nepalese Communist Movement for long, and in that sense the supreme sacrifice made by the heroic martyrs in this phase of the revolution deserves permanent place in the annuals of proletarian revolution.⁴⁰

The initiation of People's War of February 13, was due to the necessity of prevalent conditions in Nepalese society, and its agenda rested upon yearlong preparations of the Maoist revolutionaries. The new historic initiation of the people' war gave a fatal blow to the revisionist and reformist

⁴⁰ "The first days of People's War in Nepal", *Revolutionary Worker* # 870, August 25, 1996, pp .2-3.

past of the communist parties, which was marked by the achievement on both forms as an organization and also the struggle. This introduced a new era of democratic revolution in Nepal. It focused on all spheres of the society, economic, political, social and cultural. It was the organizational call of "the right to rebel". Therefore the CPN (Maoist) party led the masses all over Nepal, to rebel against the reactionary state, the ruling feudal and bureaucratic class to smash the existing order and build a people's New Democratic state.

On February 13, 1996 the army of Maoists attacked several government establishment. In one of its first operations, a group of party revolutionaries captured a Government Agriculture Bank in Gorkha, subdued the bank staff and took into possession the loan deeds of the farmers, which had affixed their signatures to seek loans.⁴¹ After the advent of the armed struggle, the politically reactionary class was stunned. The launching of the great people's war struck the state of the reactionaries and 'heaven' or their rests with a powerful earthquake and posed a grave threat to them.⁴² Another interesting aspect of the CPN (Maoist) attack was that, a new wave of curiosity and consciousness arose among the masses. The government very often tried to suppress it in various forms. But the revolutionaries set a new trend through sacrifice and dedication. After the declaration of the People's war by CPN (Maoist), a Nepalese Journal Spotlight wrote:

⁴¹ A,S, Verma, n.13, p.34. 31

⁴² Document, n.14, p.47. 32

People's war is a revolutionary strategy developed by Mao Tse-Tung in during the long struggle in China to overthrow Japanese imperialism, semi-feudalism and semi-colonialism. Countries that are semi-feudal and semi-colonial are suited to protracted people's war which under working class leadership mobilizes the oppressed peasants in the countryside in waging armed struggle to liberate the countryside and surround the cities. When the countryside is liberated it is therefore insurrection in the cities to aid in the final taking of cities⁴³

After the Maoists embraced the path of violence, they not only managed to take control of substantial territory in the isolated mid hill regions but also claimed to have people's government in 22 of the country's 75 district. They have influences in all the districts of Nepal, and even the Terai region, which used to be seen, as an isolated politically, has not escaped from their influence. The red rebellion is thus a growth phenomenon in south Asia, inspired by the inability of democratic institutions all over to deliver social and economic progress and attracting the under-educated rural youth with gun-wielding romanticism.⁴⁴ There is no doubt that the CPN (Maoist's) existing unity, during the fierce fighting of people's war has played a leading role which reflects in the Nepalese Communist movement. This unity has been entirely differently from the one in the past in which group wise unity and bargaining would have been dominant. It has been a real unity of the revolutionaries from all perspectives such as ideology, political line and spirit. Thus, guided by this high spirit of selfishness that the great people's war and ideology if conceded by its leadership are the main assets of not only a single particular group but are a collective assets of the whole movement.

⁴³ Spotlight, February 5, 1996.

⁴⁴ Sudheer, Sharma, "Deep red in the heart land", *Himal South Asia*, vol.15.no.1, January, 2002.p.34.

EVOLVING SITUATION

Historically, the revolutionary trend in the Nepalese Communist movement for about a decade has degenerated. But on the other hand, as can be said the CPN (Maoist) sincere and disciplined revolutionaries devising their correct ideological and political line and by uniting all the revolutionaries, have been able lead the people's war in Nepal today. It can be said CPN (Maoist) movement is marching forward by maintaining a new unity and discipline. Although very often in the process of development, one can see, internal conflicts, ups and downs, splits and factions. But the people's war led by CPN (Maoist) which already has completed its 6th year manifest's about the party's unity.

Further more, during these early years of commencement of the people's war, the Maoists were perceived as the only revolutionary party among the masses. On the other hand the other political parties perceived them as terrorist organization. But the CPN (Maoist) in August 1997, initiated a new height by taking guerilla warfare of qualitative military capabilities. Those who had assumed that the people's war is just an act of terrorism were faced with a setback on April 1998, when the party for the first time called for a 'Nepal bandh' which was a great success. The "bandh" was so total that even factories, markets and educational institutions were closed and motor vehicles were off the roads. The strike paralyzed most of the public life in the capital and other parts of the Kingdom. Citing the anecdote of a famed Hindu temple in Pokhara, the most famous tourist destination in

Nepal. The Kathmandu Post wrote, the temple was closed for the first time in history owing to threats from Maoists.⁴⁵ ³⁴ In the same year the Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala attempted to crush the Maoist Movement. Koirala appointed Achyut, Krishna Kharel as the DGP of Police. In May 1998 a police operation was launched as operation "Kilo Sera 2" to exterminate the Maoists. During this period a lot of repressive measures were taken by the police. At that time almost all the political parties had extended their support to the government repression.

It was just not the operations, unlike Kilo Sera 2, but similarly on several occasions the government made attempts to suppress the Maoist movement. But, the Maoist's movement could not be brought to halt, instead it kept the pace of the movement going. However, in the year 2000, the Dy. Prime Minister Ram Chandra Paudel took the initiation for a dialogue between the government and the Maoist to find a solution on the ongoing crisis of people's war which have been running for over five years. According to available reports, the dialogue took place within the constitutional framework and the party raised the demand for amending the constitution and fulfillment of the 40-point charter of demands presented by the United Front five years ago.⁴⁶ But the party General Secretary Prachanda, holds the view that the government used party leaders for its mean political selfishness and for that he withdrew from the talks with G.P.Koirala.

⁴⁵ The Kathmandu Post, April 17, 1998. ³⁴

⁴⁶ A,S, Verma, n.13,p.78.

King Birendra during his regime never tried to use the military against the Maoist. He basically wanted to solve the problem through dialogue between the government and the CPN (Maoist). But the unfortunate massacre at the Narayan Hiti palace sparked off a sudden political vacuum in Nepal. The Maoist in the meantime gained a lot of support from the masses, even the Royal Nepalese Army were not deployed to stop the Maoists for further movement. As noted in Kathmandu Post, a report by an American intelligence firm;

Maoists insurgents have already captured one-third of the country and announced the creation of a provisional government that aims to take over the country within one or two years. The army prefers to stay neutral even if Maoist detachments are nearby. The population in Maoist dominated regions seem to support the insurgents while some sympathies with them... if current trends are unchanged, it would ultimately lead to the Government's collapse and the potential victory for the Maoist rebels.⁴⁷

Thus, a possible victory for the Maoists in Nepal can significantly change the balance of power in South Asia.

Although there were series of talks between the government and the Maoist leaders but eventually, on November 23, the Maoist once again declared war on the government bringing to a bloody end to the four-month old ceasefire. The government invoked emergency and called the army for the first time⁴⁸. Nepal is passing through a period of great upheavals and change, which may forever change the course of Nepalese history. There has been a declaration of countrywide state of emergency since November

⁴⁷ Stratford Report on Nepal, The Kathmandu Post, 4 January, 2001.

⁴⁸ "Why Nepal fears its Maoists", The Sunday Times of India, December 2, 2001.

26,2001 in the light of the raging mass rebellion in the form of People's war led by the CPN (Maoist). There are daily reports of encounters between the two armies the Royal Nepal Army and the Peoples Liberation Army under the leadership of CPN (Maoist). The royal military takeover was completed with the declaration of the countrywide state of emergency and suspension of all political and civil rights of the people. The parliament has been reduced to a rubber stamp. The pathetic state of the parliament and the parliamentary parties was reflected in the way they were forced to grant parliamentary approval to the declaration of emergency by king Gyanendra. With the dissolution of the parliament all the political leaders were put behind bars on corruption charges on February 20, 2002. However, the peoples democratic forces under the leadership of CPN (Maoist) have, raised the resistance struggle against the royal military dictatorship to new heights, both politically and militarily.

It can be said that at present there is an existence of dual power in the country. The government of the king being confined to headquarters, urban areas and accessible areas of the Terai, whereas the rest of the country is still under the control of the revolutionary forces of the CPN (Maoist). According to newspaper reports it can be said that daily skirmishes between the two armies are taking place. However, the clamor for ending violence and a negotiated political settlement has been mounting in recent days. The modality for the minimum political solution to the problem however, appears to be varying. Although the proposal for an interim government and the election to the constituent assembly advanced by the

CPN (Maoist) sounds the most appropriate and also seems to be enjoy wider acceptability, at times there had been attempts to introduce changes in the political and socio-economic system to bring stability in the political scenario in the country. As for the recent attempt to introduce significant constitutional amendments, it would also be fruitful if the abolition of the feudal autocratic monarchy were to be brought under halt. After all if one glances through history the plain fact lies that no form of democracy, whether old or new is feasible and secure in Nepal under the feudal monarchy. Henceforth, the Maoist attempt to break the royal hold of the monarchy and to promulgate the constitution from the traditional monarchy to an elected constituent assembly should be appreciated. This could also ensure peace and stability in they country by all peaceful means.

CHAPTER-2

SOCIO-ECONOMIC BASE OF THE MOVEMENT

It can be said that various theories regarding to social tensions leading to conflicts, and separation use cultural traits, which emerge from social and economic conditions prevailing in the given situation. The subsequent history bears testimony to the fact that the forces of communalism, casteism, class, regionalism, etc continued to cut at the roots of national integration. Religion regulated all the social and political institutions¹. The Maoist insurgency in Nepal, which has threatened peace and stability, is not a sudden development. The emergence of the Maoist insurgency in Nepal is essentially related to the political instability and socio-economic backwardness prevailing in the country for a long time. Going through historical fact, one cannot ignore that the present day Nepal, which was founded under the leadership of a feudal chieftain, has undergone several changes until the establishment of the present constitutional monarchy.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The hierarchical social structure in the Nepalese society is also no less responsible for the ongoing problem. The disparities in the economic,

¹ B,L, Joshi & Leo,Rose, *Democratic innovations in Nepal*, Berkeley, California University Press, 1966, p. 37.

political and administrative spheres, linguistic, racial and cultural difference create serious problems in nation building process². According to the hierarchical social structure, the Brahmins, Chetris and Newars dominate every sphere of social life in Nepal. The religious and social minorities and indigenous people feel discriminated against the political, economic and cultural areas by the ruling elites. The ethnic communities such as the Limbus and Gurungs are treated as second class citizens. One aspect of the domination of the Brahmins and Kshatriyas was that a certain measure of cultural uniformity was tried to be achieved in Nepal, by bringing different tribes under the brand fold of Hinduism as a result of the process of sanskritization³. But this proved to be one of the dangerous exercise in the subsequent days which saw all the minority tribes to gather under the umbrella of the communist party of Nepal (Maoist), to fight for their independence and equality. After the 1990 People's Movement, when the constitution was formulated, it declared Nepal as a Hindu state and Nepali Language as the official language, creating differences between the indigenous ethnic minorities on the one hand and the ruling class on the other, Such discrimination, helped the CPN (Maoists) to mobilize the mass minorities support in the people's war against the ruling class.

Looking back at the history of the communist movement in Nepal, it can be rightly said that every communist party in Nepal, unlike worldwide

² Ramakant , & B,C,Upreti, "Regionalism in Nepal: A study of the Terai region", in Virendar Grover (ed) *Encyclopedia, SAARC,Nations Nepal*, New Delhi, Deep and Deep Publishers, 1997, p.243.

³ B.L.Joshi & L..Rose, n.1, p.11-12

communist parties of other countries, was formed of petty proletariat ,and other oppressed class , fighting against the decaying social evils prevailing in the society .According to the Maoist, the current dictatorship of the bourgeoisie oppresses the majority. Therefore socialism, the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry is necessary step towards a world without inequality or dictatorship in a communist world. As opined by Gupta, in the beginning the CPN's rank and fill came from among the peasantry especially landless and lower middle-class peasants. And the rest of the ranks was composed of students, lower middle class intelligentsia and business community in the cities⁴. Thus from this point of view the politics of Nepal's political parties have left a vacuum, which cannot be filled by any organizations which can accommodate ethnic or regional aspirations. This situation helped the CPN (Maoist) to establish itself as a strong political force in the most backward rural areas of the country within few years.

The fragmented society of Nepal, paved the way for the popularity of the CPN (Maoist) among the masses, and this is due to the social problem which is gravely hampering the cohesiveness of social structure. It can be said that the society was feudal and agrarian with no industries to speak of. The political consciousness was confined to the valley and Terai. The ethnic groups in the hill region were still away from the mainstream. Social and

⁴ A. Gupta, *Politics in Nepal: A study of post Rana development and party politics*, Bombay, 1964 p. 210.

economic inequality was a conspicuous feature of the Nepalese society⁵. As, mentioned earlier, the Nepalese society could be divided into a small ruling elite's, an intermediate-sized group of government officials, large landholders, merchants and most importantly the vast majority of the population consisting of peasants. But what helped the CPN (Maoist) to leap forward and grab the opportunity to lead the mass revolution of people's war are the factors like poverty, deprivation, bad governance and political instability over the years which helped the Maoist emerge as a formidable force.⁶ Besides this, one cannot ignore the fact that due to some serious blunders committed by the rulers and the frustration of the people over power abuse by individual, family, community, partisan interests, and the system's inability to check them, also contributed to the rapid growth of Maoists.⁷

REGIONAL BASE

The Maoist insurgency erupted first in the mid-western region of Nepal, which is considered to be the most backward and poverty torn area. It was mainly in the districts of Rolpa, Rukum and Jajarkot, but as time went by it spread to the adjoining areas and later rapidly to almost the whole of Nepal. The extreme left parties always initiated the movement in the most

⁵ S.P. Misra, "The Growth of Nationalism in Pre-Revolution Nepal", in Virendar Grover(ed) *Encyclopedia: SAARC Nations Nepal*, New Delhi, Deep and Deep Publishers,1997, p. 36.

⁶ K. Pradhan, "Great leap Toward" in The Hindustan Times, (New Delhi) April 21, 2001,.

⁷ M. Lawoti, "Breakdown of Democracy", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.36. no.50, Dec. 15. 2001, p. 4623.

poverty torn areas, especially the mid-hilly regions and the hilly regions, because these areas were inaccessible for the development plans by the government, and were neglected. So, from the very beginning all the extreme left parties concentrated their movements from the underdevelopment districts of the mountain regions, and had powerful base areas in the mountain regions.

It is considered that out of 75 districts of Nepal, 35 districts are the worst affected by the Maoist insurgency. It can be said that the Maoist insurgents are gradually expanding their social base. At one time, the movement was limited to the upper caste but it has now expanded to different caste groups. Even the women have been participating in terrorist activities.⁸ One thing is clear, this is due to the failure of the government to change the socio-economic condition, Nepal now is facing the acute problem of insurgency by the Maoist, which has organized the masses to raise voice against the government. The region of the eruption of Maoist insurgency is considered to be one of the poorest in Nepal. It is estimated that those districts are worst affected by poverty and other social issues. The table below would give proper insight and picture of the social composition in Nepal.

⁸ C.K.Tiwari, "A note on Maoist People's war in Nepal", I *Spotlight*, Part 2, February. 5, 1999, p-32.

NEPAL SOCIAL COMPOSITION (1991)

S. No.	Category and Zone	No. of Group	No.	Per cent
1.	Ethnic	26	6572265	35.5
	Mountain	3	136552	0.7
	Hill	11	4776993	25.8
	Inner Terai	7	206068	1.1
	Terai	5	1452652	7.9
2.	Caste	30	10425518	56.4
	Hill	9	7457.170	40.3
	Terai	21	2968348	16.1
3.	Religious	3	664125	3.6
	Hill (Churaute)	1	1778	0.0
	Terai (Muslim, Sikh)	1	662347	3.5
4.	Linguistic	2	7909	0.0
	Terai (Bengal)	1	7909	0.0
5.	Others	1	813471	4.4
	Mountain	-	1741	0.0
	Hill	-	184216	1.0
	Terai	-	627514	3.4
6.	Other/unstated	-	7809	0.0
	All	60	18491097	100.00

Source: B.C.Upreti, "Nepal: In search of good governance", *Asian Studies*, vol. 19, no. 1, July-Dec. 2001, p. 36

To a considerable extent, Maoists economic goals of 'livelihood' reflect the concerns of ordinary people in these areas that have remained under the stronghold of the vested feudal interests in Nepal for a very long time. Therefore the grassroots support for the Maoists comes from these areas⁹. The government's initiative for development in these areas has never been pursued seriously. There do not exist schools, roads, medical facilities or electricity that are considered as the need of time.

ECONOMIC ISSUES

The lack of economic development helped the CPN (Maoist) to strengthen itself and also mobilize the people in the poverty torn areas. By reviewing the development planning of the five years plan, it can be observed that it failed to improve people's welfare. Infact, the lives of the people did not change, the condition has deteriorated from bad to worse, in these years, The process of development has brought little improvement in the rural areas; development benefits are largely concentrated in the cities. As a result, the basic amenities such as drinking water, health services and transport facilities are lacking and has worsened¹⁰. It can be rightly said diverse economic interest had always given rise to social tension. Economic interest may act either as an accelerator or a brake on separatism. Yet,

⁹ S,D,Muni, "The Maoist Challenge in Nepal", *Aakrosh*, Vol.5,no.4,January.2002 p.53.

¹⁰ Pradyumna,P. karan & Hiroshi, I (ed), *A Himalayan kingdom in Transition*, Tokyo, United Nations University Press,1996,p-15.

among the most frequent and precocious secessionists-backward groups in backward regions economic loss or gain plays the smallest role¹¹.

The CPN (Maoists) aims for economic change and creation of social wealth accompanied by change in every sphere of society, more important in the outlook and thinking of the people. Infact, Maoism emphasizes that economic development by itself is not enough, nor is it the essence of socialism. Growth must serve and be guided by larger political and social goals fundamentally, the quest of the proletariat and laboring people to master all of society and ultimately to eliminate classes on a world scale¹². In the case of Nepal it is clearly visible how the economic conditions prevails, which has helped the CPN (Maoist) to go to the masses and lead the revolution to a new stage. The gap between rich and poor, the scourge of unemployment, the oppression and degradation of women, the subjugation of and discrimination against nations and nationalities, the problems of health care, housing, are other sores of class society in Nepal, which the Government from the initial phase did not look into it seriously.

Right from the Rana Oligarchy social situation in Nepal remained the same. Although there were popular mass movements, but this did not distract the ruling elite's to change their attitude. The semi-feudal structure of the society hampered the social order in Nepal. The feudal order in Nepal

¹¹ Donald, Horowitz, *Ethnic Group in conflicts*, Berkeley, California University Press, 1985, p.14.

¹² Lotta, Raymond, "A new socialist Economy", *Revolutionary Worker* # 1073, Oct 8, 2000 p.2.

not only upheld the interests of the privileged classes but kept the state underdeveloped and weak. The society conservative and orthodox, and the people ignorant and exploited¹³. Infact for the Nepali Maoist's societies, development had to be linked with over coming disparities between various aspects. Agriculture, nationalities, and putting politics is fundamentally making sure that the economic strategy promoted the revolutionary transformation of society. Thus it relied on social mobilization and the spread of social values, as this served the cause of the state. The Maoists have demanded radical land reforms, land of the rich landlords should be confiscated and distributed to the homeless and others who have no land. In addition to this, they have asked for writing off of loans of the poor farmers, minimum industrial wages, protection for cottage and small industry and elimination of corruption and black market. Theoretically, the Maoists did not see any conflict between the rural and urban areas or between agricultural and industrial sectors of the economy¹⁴.

According to the charter of demands, submitted by the Maoist, half of it is centered on the economic aspect. A survey of Nepalese economy gives the picture that it did not make any significant change in these several years. The economic conditions remained unimproved during the various plans.¹⁵ The distribution of resources is not equitable in Nepal. Development is a myth for the people, especially in the western part of the country. Therefore

¹³ R,S,Chauhan, *The Political development in Nepal 1950-70*,N. Delhi, Associated Publishing House,1971 p.10.

¹⁴ S.D. Muni, n.9 p.51.

their demand related to economy points , that the foreign capital which comes to Nepal's industry should be stopped. Infact, the Maoist consider , that sufficient income should be generated within the country. And the economic infrastructure should be developed from this economy. For the economic development in the country, they insist development priority in the backward region, instead of the cities. The labours in industries should be given proper wages. The country's inflation rate should be controlled. In Nepal, there are several cottage and small industries, so they demand that government protection should be given to these industries. On the part of market economy, they insist that brokers and commission agent's property be confiscated and the money invested in industry, and this way the black-marketing could be stopped.

The interesting aspect in the process of economic development can also be traced out from the facts, which is observable, that the Government of the Nepali Congress did not take any appropriate step to change the economic disparities in Nepal. Infact the socio-economic reforms undertaken time to time by the Nepali congress government led to varied reactions in the opposition political parties for their petty politics¹⁵. So, due to the varied personal interests of the political parties, there was no inclination to help the existing governments for any serious issues to solve it. That is the reason that today, Nepal is one of the 49 low-income group of countries, one of the 29 least developed country, and is also considered one of the 45 country to

¹⁵ R.S. Chauhan, n.13, p.121.

be most seriously affected by recent adverse conditions.¹⁶ Although, the Maoist are fighting against the economic disparities of the poverty torn Nepal, very often due to their own-destructive tactics, they are bent upon destroying the infrastructure of Nepal. Ever since their latest campaign of destruction began in mid-March, Maoists have struck unguarded bridges, hydropower projects water supply, irrigation offices, horticulture farms, forestry projects, telecommunications and government buildings. They have destroyed infrastructure that took decades to build, and it has already cost the Nepali nation tens of millions of dollars¹⁷.

From the statements made by various political elite's and also from the monarchy it seems to convey that economic equality is one of the main objectives of planning for development in Nepal. It is intended that caste and class shall not be of any importance in allocating resources, each individual shall be treated only according to his or her merits¹⁸. But this has not been happening in the present economic scenario in Nepal. Nepal in its own geographical specificity's suffers from all these merits. Infact the process of regional uneven and unequal development is giving to sharp regional contradictions in the country. As, Nepal is considered to be a semi-feudal country nearly 90 percent of the population is engaged in agriculture. For agriculture process one needs adequate amount of land. But only 10 percent

¹⁶ George Thomas Kurian, *Encyclopedia of Third World*, Vol. 2, London, Mansell Publications, 1981, p. 1281.

¹⁷ Binod Bhattarai, "Rampage", *Nepal Times*, 5-11, April 2002, p.1.

¹⁸ B.E,Borgstrom, *The Patron and the Pancha*, New Delhi, Nirala Publications,1980, p.64.

of the population own lands. Therefore Nepalese agriculture is extremely backward and also primitive. All the modes of agriculture are also primitive in nature. Particularly in the hilly region, where the CPN (Maoist) have based up its stronghold. The nature of agriculture operation is frustrating and alarming, but in general even today nearly 99 percent of the total investment in Nepalese agriculture is made in land but only about 1 percent in modern means of production¹⁹.

The backbone of the country's economic structure is agriculture. But viewing the parameters of Nepalese society, which still is in the semi-feudal character, there is a lack of land ownership for the peasants. The CPN (Maoist's) through its mass base of the peasantry class also went ahead with the programme of distribution or land rights. Although various land reform programme were initiated but there were never a success. Generally in Nepal the distribution of land is very unequal and a large majority of population is of landless, semi-landless and poor peasant status²⁰. The life of peasantry class is very difficult.. Although due to some land reform undertaken in the 60's it could not liberate society from the degenerated conditions. The feudal ownership of the land is strong in the mid-mountain region, and in the Terai. In the hillsides the farming is carried out by the tribes who barely eke out their living but are still subjected to different forms of

¹⁹ Bhattarai, Bhattarai, "Politico-Economic Rationale of People's War in Nepal", monograph downloaded from the Maoist website. www.maoism.org. p.7.

²⁰ Ibid, p.-7.

exploitation. The table below mentions about the size of land holdings in Nepal and particularly in the mid-western hills.

LAND TENURE DISTRIBUTION AFTER 'LAND REFORM'

Land Tenure	% of Households		% of Cultivated area	Average size of holding (hect.)
	Total HH	HH with land holding		
1 with land holding	92.2	100.00	100.00	-
1. Landlords	1.8	3.31	26.91	18.33
2. Owner cultivators	62.0	65.22	49.11	1.67
3. Owner –cum-tenants	19.1	20.70	15.36	1.64
4. Tenant cultivators	2.3	10.77	8.62	1.74
II landless	7.8	-	-	-
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	-

Source: Baburam, Bhattarai "Politico-Economic Rationale of People's war in Nepal " downloaded from the Maoist website,pp.26

Therefore the CPN (Maoist) did not lag behind, but instead took the issue on hand, and started mobilizing the people of these regions. It is also to be noted that, the CPN (Maoist) were not only the party which had raised the issue of land reforms. But earlier other communist parties to gain advantage of the existing situation had co-opted the issue. But they did not keep the same momentum as shown by the CPN (Maoists) in the current

phase. It can be rightly said that the CPN (Maoists) economic policy helped the party to strengthen itself in this region and keep the tempo going.

The problem of unemployment in the Nepalese society is of great concern. The nature of unemployment can be traced to the nature of existing economic infrastructure such as landlessness and skewness in the distribution of agriculture land. The existence of rampant disguised unemployment and underemployment is both cause and effect of backward agriculture, and without transferring this large scale surplus labour to non-agricultural sector it is just impossible to develop the agriculture sector and the overall economy²¹. Also due to the poor agricultural land, low productivity, lack of alternative employment other than agricultural, lack of market, and high population pressure on the land have forced people to migrate. It can be said that the basic economic base of the Nepalese society is more over depend on agriculture. Therefore 80 percent of the labour force is engaged in agriculture, and the domestic products too, come from the agriculture sector. But, lack of agriculture development in the mountain region leave the people of this region without any job.

Therefore the agricultural economy was marked by rampant poverty. The migration patterns from the hills in large, shows the nature of poverty in the hills. In fact in rural areas, land rather than labour is still the key to subsistence without access to sufficient land, it is increasingly difficult to

²¹ Ibid, p.10.

avoid falling into serious deficit and poverty²². The industrial sector of Nepal is not blooming. Most of the industries are closing down either due to lack of raw materials or because they are not able to compete with foreign goods, therefore less than 55 percent are utilizing their total capacity²³. Due to this the surplus labour of the country especially from the rural areas migrate to India and some to the Terai.

The problem of unemployment in the contemporary Nepalese society, is a core issue. The unemployed local youths either migrated to the other side of the border to India or join the CPN (Maoist's) people war to liberate the society from such discrimination. Due to the economic downturn in what is already one of Asia's poorest nations would push more unemployed, rural recruits towards the Maoists and widen their presently narrow urban support base²⁴. To change the power structure in the affected districts, the Maoists have led the mass movement, and also actively got the mass support. The aspects from where the Maoist's got the fire for the movements, was primarily due to the failure of the government to look upon the interests of the people of poverty torn districts of mid-hilly region. The other parts of Nepal was also ignored by the government. Nepal's efforts toward economic development in recent years have been subdued by increasingly acute and rampant corruption that marginalised the prospects for good governance in

²² David Seddon, "Population and Poverty in Nepal" in Rodgress, Gerry (ed) *Population Growth and Poverty in rural South Asia*, New Delhi, Sage Publications, 1989, p. 208.

²³ Bhattari, B. n.19 p.12.

²⁴ Antony, Davis, "Nepal faces upsurge in violence", *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Vol.12,no.4, April, 2000, p.35.

Nepal. Although good governance requires accountable, legitimate and transparent government, corruption has been the biggest vice that has widened the gap between government and the citizen in the absence of an active civil society²⁵.

SOCIAL ISSUES

Beside the economic deprivation, there exist various other problems in the Nepalese social structure, which are seen to be responsible for the Maoist movement. Historically, looking at the facts of Nepalese society, it can be asserted that there existed diversity in the Nepalese society. Different races of people resided in the same demographic settlements. Interlinked with geography, and to a great extent affected by it, are the demographic features characterized by the congregation of many ethnic groups like Aryans, Mongolians and Indo-Burmans²⁶. Ever since the population have remained well integrated, but what started causing alienation was the dominant role played by the higher castes and class who created dissatisfaction at lower levels within the social order, a division which led the Maoist's to exploit this gap to their advantage.

For centuries, the Nepalese ruling class has inflicted discrimination, exploitation and oppression against other religions, languages and nationalities²⁷. Infact tribal community wanted for themselves a regional

²⁵ B.C Upreti, "Nepal: In search of good governance", *Asian Studies*, Vol.xix,no.1, July-Dec. 2001, p.25.

²⁶ R,S, Chauhan, n.13, p.4.

²⁷ Li Onesto, "Magar Liberation", *Revolutionary Worker*, # 1034, Dec. 12, 1999, p.3.

identity rather than a national identity. Some of them even opposed the central authority, while some supported it, and some preferred to stay aloof from the politics of the country. But here the point that emerges is that the Maoist's were quick to identify all these problems, ethnic discontent and to their purpose, taking advantage of the correlation between ethnicity and poverty, which added ethnic demands as a flavour to their ideological struggle.²⁸

THE ISSUE OF RELIGION AND ETHNICITY

The assertion of the ruling elite's in Nepal, who held that Hinduism, should be the state religion in the country gave many of the ethnic tribes considerable discomfort. The establishment of some sort of a Hindu Hegemony in Nepal gave rise to the emergence of a new hierarchical social order. The rulers and the priestly class occupied the top positions in the society²⁹. Apart from all these, the ethnic tribes of Nepal were not in favour of adopting the new religion, which was imposed upon them. Although, it seems that the issue of Hinduism was not of much concern before the emergence of the movement. But the Maoist in their social agenda gave due importance to this. Therefore this factor of religion boosted the movement when many ethnic tribes joined the movement to safeguard their identity. At various levels the people joined the people's war because of the discrimination they faced from Hindu Chauvinism, and from the reactionary

²⁸ Deepak, Thapa, "Day of Maoist", *Himal South Asia*, Vol.14,no.5, Kathmandu, May,2001 p.5.

²⁹ R.S. Chauhan, n.13, p.7.

ruling class. It is not only the economic repression which was the reason for the people to join the people's war but problems like caste, ethnicity and language were also there due to which the people felt oppressed and consequently joined the People's war to fight against this repression. As, rightly taken from the account of Li Onesti who visited the insurgency torn areas in mid-hills. In her account she stated:

In Rolpa, 80 percent of the people are Magar. In Rukum it's about 65 percent. In Jarjarkot about 40 percent. Solyan is about 40 percent Magar. In the west, as a whole, it's about 40 to 50 percent Magar. All the Magars here are poor peasants. They mainly practice natural Shamanism with local priests (Jhankri). But religion is not that strongly practiced among the Magar people. They have been dominated by Hindu religion, which has suppressed the Magar's indigenous religion and enforced the practice of Hinduism. Earlier Magars used to eat beef but the government banned this³⁰.

At this point, the Magar's felt betrayed by the government's decision and their right to profane their religion, as well the traditions infringed.

The communist party of Nepal (Maoist) has its policy, based for the oppressed nationalities in Nepal. The programmes include the movement against all sorts of exploitation. With the joint participation of all nationalities, they are trying to achieve an end to all forms of oppression and exploitation which may be based on nationality, language, religion etc giving equal treatment and opportunity to all the ethnic groups and their respective languages. An important aspect of the Maoist's support base is the participation in bulk of ethnic tribal minorities (indigenous people) at the grassroots level. In the table it can be clearly assumed what are the distinct

³⁰ Li, Onesto, n.24p. 3.

features of religion in the country. Which fueled the movement and join the people's war for the religious right. The ethnic composition of the Maoist affected region, focus prominently on the ethnic part of the movement.

MAJOR RELIGIONS OF NEPAL (PERCENT)

	1981	1991
Hindu	89.50	86.51
Buddhist	5.32	7.78
Islam	2.66	3.53
Kirat	-	1.72
Jain	0.06	0.04
Christian	0.03	0.17
Others	2.43	0.14
Unstated	-	0.10

Source: B.C. Upreti, "Nepal in search of good governance", *Asian Studies*, vol. 19, no. 1, July-December, 2001, pp. 36.

MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS

Ethnic Groups Percentage	Total Population	
Chettri	2968.082	16.0
Hill Brahmin	2388.455	12.9
Magar	1339.308	7.2
Tharu	1194.224	6.5
Tamang	1081.252	5.8
Newar	1041.070	5.6
Kurmi	963.665	5.8
Yadav	705.137	4.1
Muslim	653.055	9.5
Raj Kirati	525.557	3.8
Limbu	-	1.6
Sherpa	-	0.6

Source: B.C.Upreti, "Nepal In search of good governance," *Asian Studies*, vol.19,no.1,July-Dec,2001,p36-37.

The Maoist had many ethnic,religious minorities to support their movement. Like the Magar, Gurung, Tamang,Newars and Tharus of mid-western region. It also had attracted the minorities of central and eastern Nepal like the Rais,Limbus and Kiratis, who found a ray of hope in the movement. The people of this region are mostly Buddhists who do not follow

the Nepalese language.³¹ That is why for their right to language and religion they supported the Maoist Movement. The Magars and the Gurung, who resides in the hilly region, are generally looked down upon by the ruling elite; but sometimes they are treated well and are allowed to carry and their customs and traditions if they do not go against the basic principles of Hinduism. Thus, the forceful imposition of religion tradition and customs forced the indigenous people to join the Maoist movements and to take it to new heights.

The political leaders of Nepal do not understand the social problem or they are ignorant. They are betraying their own class audience and at times championing the cause of other classes. Even the 1990-constitution defined Nepal as a multilingual state (article 4), but the ethnic tribes are treated differently. Although Nepali, the mother tongue of about 50% of the population is called the national language and also the official language but most of the tribes speak their own mother tongue. The Nepalese national parties have not initiated to solve the problems of the country. Therefore this situation has helped the Maoists to establish themselves as a strong political force in the most backward rural areas of the country within a few years.

The Maoists demand from the Government is on the question of secular state, equal rights, exploitation based on caste language status and land distribution which have made them come closer to the ethnic

³¹ S.D. Muni, n.9, p.53.

organizations of the remote areas. The argumentation is that it has been part of the basic strategy of the Maoist politics in Nepal to win the downtrodden sections of Nepali society as infantry for their political ambitions. And, along the ethnic composition, the leadership of the CPN (Maoists) hardly differs from that of the leading national parties. But one cannot ignore the fact that the minority groups in some cases, due to the feeling of consciousness are also organizing themselves to fight against all these evils. The issues discussed earlier have also emerged in a sharp way after the 1990 democratic upsurge. A large number of minority groups are getting politicized and trying to assert for their rights on the basis of their distinct identity³². Thus the Hindu religion and its creators, the Brahmin and chettris have tried to deprive the fundamental rights and human rights of the minority people in the country and tried to treat them as slaves. Infact "the CPN (Maoists) party has been stressing the development of the United Front, such as the united front of the people's for different classes, castes, nationalities and regions oppressed by feudalism, according to the specific conditions of Nepalese society³³.

CONCLUSION

Therefore the government did not look at the problem, which gave the CPN (Maoists) an opportunity to be in the frontline to go ahead and lead the

³² David Gellner, (ed), *Nationalism and Ethnicity in a Hindu state*, Amsterdam, Harwood Academic Publishers, 1997, p.480.

³³ Com. Prachanda, interview with the "A world to win", that took place in Nepal on 28 May, 2001, p.40.

movement. It should be seen that the successful implementation of such a programme could have meant a radical change in the public administration system to make it more representative of the ethnic diversity of the country and more responsive to the needs of the peasant communities. But all the ruling parties have done nothing in this area. Infact, it will not be fully true to say that the CPN (Maoists) if given the opportunity would be able to solve the problem. It is only the political objective that the Maoist are trying to avail for their popularity and political gain.

The Maoist insurgency has survived for a period of six years and continues to enter into new phases this in itself is a clear indication that the movement is no longer a temporary phenomenon without social bases. Even the Nepali Congress supported 'high caste' groups in their conflict with dalits in eastern Nepal. And on the issue of women's property rights, the Congress stance can be compared to the Taliban's. For its part, the pro-poor, UML too has supported the cause of big landlords when the commission it set up recommended doing away with the rights given to tenant farmers by king Mahendra in the mid-60s³⁴. It can therefore said that all the political outfits, never in sincere terms supported the real cause of the poor.

Due to the 'widespread corruption on all levels social and political instability, bickering parliamentarians and abuse of power, caused frustration among large segments of the population³⁵. The conditions of the

³⁴ "Development vs. the Maobadis", in Nepal Times, March – 02.

³⁵ B. Lintner, " Nepal struggles to cope with diehard Maoist violence", *Jane's Intelligence Review*, vol.11, no.6, June 1999, p.42.

masses have gone from bad to worst due to the lack of proper functioning of the government. In the development of the economic infrastructure the government do not pay any heed to the programmes. There exist a lot of economic reforms that is to be taken. In the present stage, in the Nepalese society due to the semi-feudal structure the main hurdle has grown much bigger. The people's reason to join the people's war is due to the inequality in the society. The main objective, as opined by some of the Maoists leaders, is to enhance promote and advance the culture, language and economic standards. Thus Maoists position and their demand for participation in the revolutionary struggle is basically to fight against the reactionary government, which oppressed them economically, politically and socially. They demanded for the equality of all castes and respect for all religions and culture, as they have not been given the equal rights which every human beings require in all aspects. They proclaimed to the masses to get united and fight for equality, because for centuries, the semi-feudalistic society have created an extremely hierarchical society in Nepal. This kind of discrimination and national oppression had its effects in the Nepalese history and has its own and uniqueness and these are the reasons why the Maoists insurgents have lot of popular support in the villages as they reel under poverty and unemployment³⁶.

It can be argued that the Maoist insurgency problem cannot be overlooked. The problems have to be looked in a broader perspective of the

³⁶ Anju, Susan Alex, "Maoists of Nepal", downloaded from the website of Institute of peace and conflicts studies.p.4.

existing socio-economic relationship and also the causes behind all these. They got mass support for their revolution against government mercenaries, which are non-functional. This seems to be a dangerous phenomenon, which is being reflected in the contemporary profile of Nepalese political, social and economic conditions. It is a deep-rooted social, problem and reflects a kind of discontent in the society against the malfunctions of the governments and their inability in delivering goods to the people³⁷.

Infact the flaws of the government inherent in its policies is hampering the social life of the people of Nepal. It can be said that, because of the helplessness shown by the government to deal with the Maoist have given the Maoist a upper hand with no solution for the government left behind. The Maoists though small in size, have a drastic impact upon the conditions prevailing in the Nepalese society. The fact lies that Maoists have been able to take the advantage of the caste ethnic divisions on a country-wide, champaign in their struggle. It is after all a 'class war' with ideological underpinnings and its roots can be traced to the general sense of discontent in the aftermath of the 1990 movement, when parliamentary exercise proceeded, nothing significant happened in terms of improving the social and economic conditions of the people.³⁸

The Maoists, on the other hand, have initiated social reforms in the society, which include arrest of decadence, i.e., gambling, drinking,

³⁷ B.C. Upreti, n 22, p. 28.

³⁸ D. Thapa, n.25, p.6.

polygamy, child marriage, flesh trade and corruption.³⁹ The reforms undertaken by the Maoist in most of the least developed areas, have atleast assured the masses of some sort of relief – unlike, under feudalism, there occurred several hiccups in the society. The case of common repression is deep rooted in the feudal system. As the peasants have to rely on the land to survive, women are forced to have sex and labor provide to landlords for free. The people's war they aired slogan such as, land to the peasants and for women the right to property. Thus, we see that large participation of women in the people's war proves that all classes of people are involved in the Maoists people's war. In the revolution, several feudal traditions that oppressed women are being scrapped out. It is the assumption of the Maoists that the problem women are facing can only be solved by overthrowing feudalism and all the evils prevalent in the present society.

³⁹ Gen, Ashok, Mehta, "India's security concerns and Nepal" *USI, Journal*, Vol.131, no.545, July-Sep,2001,p.41.

CHAPTER- 3

ORGANIZATION AND LEADERSHIP

INTRODUCTION

The need for organization and able leadership seems to be one of the important factor which would obviously help a revolution leap ahead within a short span of time. Infact;

Organizations which have purposes that can be efficiently reached with the socially possible organizational forms, because both the leadership and organization they can function effectively with organizational forms, and because the forms tend to become institutionalized, the basic structure of the organization tends to remains relatively stable.¹

Therefore any revolution without any sort of organized and able leadership will weather out slowly. According to the Leninist theory of organization. "There cannot be revolution without a revolutionary party. This was opined according to Lenin who was the architect of a true revolutionary working class party, which accomplished the October revolution of 1917 in Russia"² Therefore, it seems clear that without any organization and able leadership any sort of revolution will not be able to succeed. Infact, this means that the party, which is well organized, will do better and will be able to implement its policies and programmes in an able way. The leadership too however plays an important role in running the organization in a better way.

¹ Arthur ,L, Stinchcombe, *Stratification and organization*, London, Cambridge University Press, 1986, p. 196.

² Mandel, Ernest, *The Leninist theory of organization*, Baroda, Antar Rashtrya Prakashan, 1977, p. 1.

The rank of the leader makes it more important to formulate its policies and programmes, to make it more meaningful, to run the organization and to bring discipline into the organizations etc.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF CPN (MAOIST)

The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists), whose endeavor has brought the party to a position of strength and lime light was only due to its able leadership and organizational structure. That is why they are able to mobilize the masses for the revolution. Thus this is only to bring social and economic equality in the Nepal, through its communist movement. The revolution in Nepal broadly themes upon the prevailing socio-economic system. Thus a new system can be achieved only on the basis and as a result of social revolution as aired by the CPN (Maoist). Marx called revolution the locomotives, the engine the history.”³ So a revolution may be ripe, and yet the forces of revolutionary creators may prove insufficient to carry it out, in which case society decays.

There should be a revolutionary consciousness of the masses, their understanding of the objectives of the revolution and of their role in it and their readiness and determination till the death and, also the organizational level of the masses and their vanguard party. Their ability to act in unison, to build and if necessary all rests upon their ranks in accordance with the requirements of the revolutionary process. Therefore the leadership of the

³ Karl, Marx, “The class struggles in trances, 1848 to 1850” in Karl Marx and F. Engels, *Selected works*, volume1, Moscow, Progress Publication, 1977, p. 277.

masses by the party guided revolutionary theory, knowing the laws of the revolutionary struggle, and determination and able to implement their laws would make it a success. Thus, each organization has a number of important characteristics that makes it different from other organization. The degree of centralization can be used in contrasting and comparing organizations.⁴

According to the evolution of the communist movement in Nepal, it can be submitted that it is not the just CPN (Maoist), who according to communism wanted to eliminate Nepal of all oppression. The CPN (Maoist) believed in socialism, which was the path to communism. They believe that socialism, dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry is a necessary steps towards a world without inequality or dictatorship as in the communist world. Thus while USSR under Lenin and Stalin and China under Mao are their models for an ideal social system. It is CPN (Maoist's) opinion that the oppressors will not give up their power without a fight. Ending oppression is only possible by building opinion against them and to seize power through armed struggle. The democratic centralism, the system of unified application of majority decisions is necessary to defeat the oppressors. Therefore this system includes organization, leadership, discipline and hierarchy. The oppressors use weapons and so the revolutionaries should do that too. By building a disciplined revolutionary communist vanguard party, they (the communist movement in Nepal) follow the tradition of comrades Lenin, Mao

⁴ Jerald Hage, Michael Aiken, *Social Change in Complex organizational*, New York, Random House, 1970, p -6.

and Henry Newton.⁵ Before that there were several Communist factions, who emerged to fight the social cause, but their entity did not long among the masses. Therefore, according to the CPN (Maoist) of Nepal, their is that correct tactics flow from correct strategies, which flow from a correct ideological and political line. The fight against imperialism, capitalism and patriarchy goes hand in hand with the fight against revisionism, chauvinism and opportunism, for this they need a well organized organization with a mature leadership⁶.

The communist party of Nepal (Maoists) was set up in 1995 and consists of ultra radicals from the CPN (Mashal) elements who broke away from the CPN (UML) and members of the United People's Front led by Pushpa Kamal Dahal alias 'Comrade Prachanda' (The furious one) and Baburam Bhattarai. It denounced the CPN (UML) and all other above ground factions as renegades and revisionists because of their participation in the parliamentary process.⁷ It has already been discussed in the previous chapter, that the other Communist faction, the CPN (ML) had instigated the arms revolution during the Jhapa Movement. But later on after the movement was over, it never came forward again to lead arms revolution. So in essence, the great process of the initiation of the people's war has made a direct and massive impact on the politics of the country and has

⁵ This has been quoted from the Maoist International Movement document, downloaded from the Maoist website. August, 1996, p-1,

⁶ This has been quoted from the Maoist International Movement document downloaded from the Maoist websites.

⁷ B, Lintner, "Nepal Struggles to cope with diehard Maoist violence", *Jane's Intelligence Review*, vol.11,no.6, June,1999, p. 45.

enhanced the possibilities of utilizing from new heights the contradictions developing in new forms. The base of the revolution, which show the foundations of the state and society, is very much popular. This war organized by extremist communist forces the CPN (Maoist) yet, after the democracy movement of 1990, and after that some extremist splinter groups of the erstwhile CPN joined under the name CPN (Unity centre). It originated infact with the unification of two communist party (Mashal) and CPN (Masal). In the fourth General Assembly in 1994, the Mashal merged with Sarbahara Shramik Organization. There was also another party which was founded by Baburam Bhattarai, named as CPN (Ekta Kendra) and also the Samyukta Jana Morcha. In the coming year in 1995, in a secret meeting of the General Assembly, Prachanda and Bhattarai came together and formed the CPN (Maoist). Prachanda, was elected as the head of the CPN (Maoist) and Bhattarai remained the head of the Samyukta Jana Morcha, which had also contested the first general elections in Nepal.

Under the Samyukta Jana Morcha Nepal (United People's front) as a political wing, they had participated in the 1991 elections wining 9 seat and becoming the third largest party in the parliament. The split of the Unity Centre in 1993 saw the end of the Samyukta Jana Morcha Nepal as a parliamentary force. This split was due to the organizational and leadership failure in the party. In the Third Plenum in March 1995, it was decided that the party must make preparations for launching the people's war while

keeping in view the specificity's of Nepal,⁸ the highly talented ideologist, Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, even calls his party's activities a people's war with the aims of fundamentally changing the economic and social structure of the country and introducing a new kind of democracy. As opined by Baburam Bhattarai,

Transformation of one social system into the other, or negation of the old by the new does always take place by force and in a revolutionary leap. People's War is such a means of negating the old by the new force and of taking a new leap into a new and higher system. There would be two important specificities of the process of New Democratic transformation through the protracted People's war in Nepal⁹.

The Nepali state represented by the Nepali Congress and other political parties on the other hand is speaking about terrorist activities, of the Maoist which have to be appeased forcefully by the state.

According to theoretical theme the communist party of Nepal (Maoists), formulated the strategy of achieving success with dictatorship under the leadership of proletariat based on the unity of workers and peasants against feudalism. It can be seen that the party had various mass base of workers, peasants, women and all the middle-class people. The party went on for the demands of social and economic issue. Therefore the agitation was directed basically for the socially oppressed region and economically deprived class, and the region it chose was the mid western hilly region, considered to be the worst affected. The armed struggle of the

⁸ A.S,Verma,, *Maoist Movement in Nepal*, New Delhi, Samkaleen Teesari Duniya,2001, p 34.

⁹ Baburam's writing on the "Politico-Economic Rationale of People's war in Nepal" downloaded from the website of Maoist.

peasants in mid 70s gave a fillip to the CPN (Maoists), to establish the line of ideology. It was not Nepal's first Maoist uprising. In the early 1970s an extremely peasant rebellion swept across the eastern Terai, the Nepalese lowlands adjacent to India's west Bengal state. Centered in the district of Jhapa in Biratnagar. That movement nevertheless gave birth to the radical communist party of Nepal (Marxist –Leninist) which continued to work under ground during the stormy events of 1990.¹⁰ But the peoples interest did not get fulfilled with the CPN (ML) ideology, because what the peasants basically had dreamt through the armed struggle was not fulfilled. But the CPN (Maoists) succeeded in listing mass support from this basis the peasantry class who saw in the Maoists group a ray of hope to gain freedom from the oppression.

As a result of declining popularity of the other communist parties, who were not revolutionary in nature, CPN (Maoists) got the opportunity to take charge of the revolutionary struggle through the armed struggle. Infact the oppressed peasant felt that without an armed revolution they will not be able to get their rights over the land from the landlord class. Therefore, the failure of other communist parties to fulfill their promises to the masses gave opportunity to the CPN (Maoist) to lure away disgruntled masses towards them. As a result , the CPN (M) received vehement support from the mass. They did not believe in the peaceful protest march or in elections. Thus, the CPN (M) functioning with the help of these masses and its organization strength benefited it and also helped it to strengthen itself. Therefore, those

¹⁰ B, Lintner, n.6, p.44.

who are leading the Maoists people's war have also shown to the people that with no stretch of their imagination liberation could be achieved through the parliamentary path. It was from 1990 to 1994 through public meetings, posters and pamphlets, the Samyukta Jan Morcha leaders had been emphasizing that the parliamentary system serves those who have been exploiting and tyrannizing the common people.¹¹

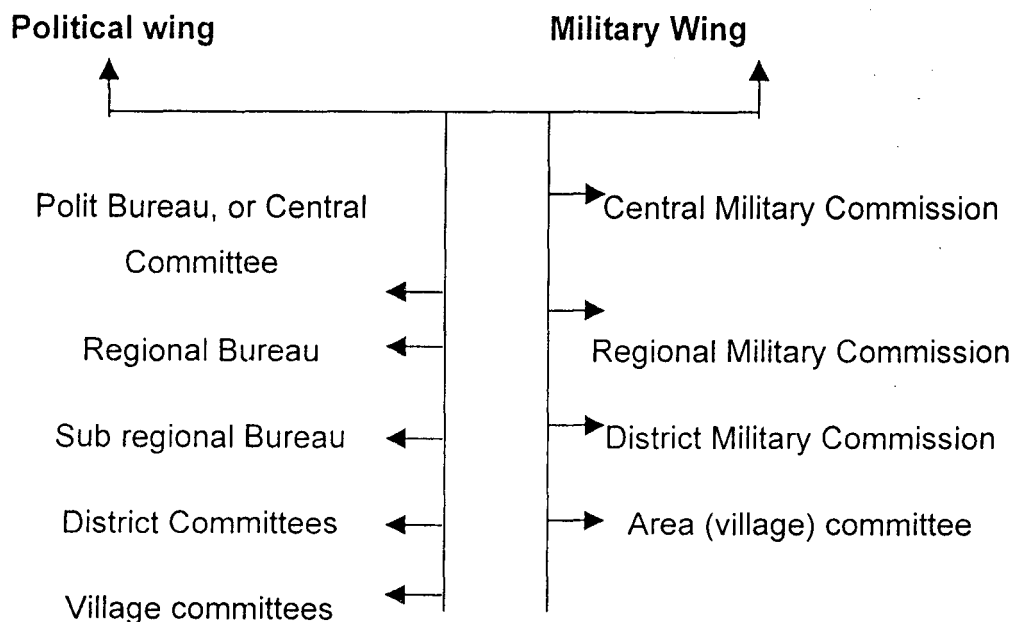
The Maoists first started their action according to classical revolutionary methods, identification of the so called negative state force and deliberate attacks upon the life and property. As a result the law and order situation in the affected areas deteriorated seriously. In 1997 the Maoists used local elections to intensify their actions. In some parts of the country elections could not be held at all, in others they were hindered considerably. The revolutionary forces demonstrated impressively, that their activities were no longer a passing fancy of crazy left revolutionaries.

The organizational structure of the communist party of Nepal (Maoists), from the date of its formation, is basically centered on its General Secretary and his associates. But the organization, which is politically formed as a revolutionary group, has the mass base of all section of the society. The CPN (Maoists) operates from the underground. The revolution is based on four instruments. The party building, second on the formation of Army and military line, third on the new Democratic state and development of the united front and fourth on building the party mass line. As a fact

¹¹ A,S,Verma,n.7,p.32.

spontaneous and militant mass outbreaks mainly happen in working class and poor neighborhoods of the cities around economic demands and oppression by the state. In the case of Nepalese mass revolution the mass is oppressed by the ruling reactionary class in various way. The other trend is that of worker's struggle. In recent years the workers are occupying factories, take officials hostage, shutting down the roads and highways around the factories and engaging the suppressive forces of the state. The issue of peasant's struggle revolves around the landlords and the land. Thus the semi-feudal structure of the Nepalese society is much more responsible for the peasants uprisings, and due to this peasants joined Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists) in large numbers . The structure of the party has Political and Military wings with further divisions as follows.

PARTY STRUTURE OF CPN(MAOIST)



Source : Anju,Susan,Alex, "Maoists in Nepal" downloaded from the website of Institute of Peace and Conflicts Studies.

POLITICAL AND MILITARY WING

While talking of the organizational structure of the CPN (Maoists), one important aspect lies in the fact that they have basic two tier organizational structure. The political and the military, which gives them a boost in their revolutionary struggle. The movement is not that old to give any permanent phenomena of structural dis-fuctioning or show any weaknesses. The well-organized institution of the CPN (Maoists) is in real terms of endeavor. The political wing of the organization is headed by United People's Front (UPF) us by the veteran Baburam Bhattarai. In the political wing the cadres include school and college student, some intellectuals also people from lower castes and relatively a high percentage of women¹². Therefore the organization strength is estimated about 4,000 to 5,000 members , and they have more than 10,000 supporters and sympathizers in Nepal¹³.

It can be said that the these Maoist cadre work on the basis of being Front Organizations. Such as the All Nepal Free Students Union (Revolutionary), of the students from school and colleges . This support can be seen from the strike called in December 2000, when there was nationwide strike, coordinated by the All Nepal National Independent Student's Union. According to the President of the Union, Devendra Parajuli, he told, we morally support the Maoists and People's War¹⁴. Therefore this

¹² Frontline, September 1998.

¹³ Rohan Gunaratna, "Nepal's Insurgents Balance Politics and Violence", *Jane's Intelligence Review*, vol.13, no.10, October 2001, p. 33.

¹⁴ Paul Harris, "Roits, bombs and strikes in Nepal", *Jane's Intelligence Review*, vol,13,no.2, February 2001, p. 45.

student organization work on ground level operating in the schools and colleges. Than the All Nepal Trade Union Federation and National People's Coordination Committee¹⁵. These organization are affiliated with the Maoists but work to build a peaceful mass movement. They create awareness about Maoist ideas, but there is no doubt about that, they work for professional interests. Therefore through these organizations the Maoist organize different campaigns, strikes, pamphleteering, corner meetings signature campaigns and rallies. Therefore the organization on the part of political work such as organization building and awareness raising about Maoist ideology . Their underground committees and cadre work among the people. They are politically trained and have strong will and commitment. They have basic ideas on politics and deep knowledge of Marxism.

The decision making body is the Polit Bureau, which functions as the central organization. The members of Polit Bureau or the Central Committee do not exceed more than 5 or 7 members, but some times according to the requirements some members are included. In the other regional , sub-regional Bureaus whether it be in the political or military wing the number of members are not defined exactly. According to the CPN (Maoist) organizational tier both the political and military wing work on different aspects. But in their organization tier, they have hierarchical system and every committee works on different level. Like in their topmost tier up there exist the Polit Bureau or the Central Committee, which exist in both the

¹⁵ Shom Prasad Luitel, "The Maoist people war and Human Rights in Nepal", 10 October, 2001, Nepalnews .com

political as well as the military wing, but they work separately and have a coordination committee to bring a balance among them. In the other hierarchical order there are the regional, sub-regional, district , village and area committee . This systematic hierarchical order prevails in both the political and military wing whose cadres perform according to their area of work. It activities include to formulate plans, policies and actively mobilizes support. Infact the economic support and political power streamed, out from the politburo to the lower levels. The regional, district are and cell commanders operate, mainly at field level¹⁶. The most important part of the Congress is related to its political programmes, which the party described as ideological synthesis. It expressed the hope that this would play important role in unifying the Nepalese communist movement and in forwarding world revolution in the 21st century."¹⁷ Thus it was through the Second Congress that the CPN (Maoists) had regulated its functioning of the party. The party confined its activities to the guerilla warfare, developing base areas, formation of liberated zones or mobilizing a people's army.

It was during the fifth(1999) and sixth(2000) plans, that there have been qualitative leap in both military and administrative formation in the prospective base areas. The expansion and consolidation of these temporary base areas into relatively stable base areas can only be possible with increased and improved military power of people's armed forces. All the

¹⁶ Rohan, Gunaratna,n.11,p.33.

¹⁷ A.S. Verma no.10, p.84.

decisions of the Third Historic Extended Meeting of the Central Committee transformed the party into a Maoist one that was able to lead the people's war. The meeting strongly raised the fact that the policy, plan and programme should not be based on gradual evolutionist concept of leap, push, discontinuity, break up from the old etc.¹⁸ Therefore the organizational leap was to carry on the people's war through the right direction. In a way the programmes were chalked to rejuvenate the party's programme. The struggle along the political line of the party was based on ideological line systematically. The storms of both internal and external struggle before and after the people's war has qualitatively changed the old structure and working style of the party. New and Young party members from poor peasants, women, depressed communities, nations and indigenous nationality communities, and backward region rapidly came out of the fireplace of the people's war in an unimaginable number. Today there has been majority of the party members developed by the people's war in almost all districts of the country.¹⁹

According to the Maoist organizational structure . The political front basically works to organize, create awareness and also spread Maoist ideas among the communist cadres and people. As discussed earlier, in the political front there are educated people with basic knowledge of politics and leadership²⁰. Therefore members of this political front operate openly.

¹⁸ As quoted from *The Worker*, CPN(Maoist) mouth piece, January 2002, p.53.

¹⁹ Ibid, p.53.

²⁰ As quoted from the website of Nepalnews, a report on Maoist, 2001.

Through the political front they aim of winning support of the masses. Through their military front, which work underground, the CPN(Maoist) have gained lot of popularity in Nepal, and attention all over the world. The military wing attacks mainly the police or other targets. The cadres in the military includes mostly from the rural background . These people are not aware of politics and ideology . But one thing is clear of them that they have strong will and dedication. It can also be said that , at the local level, the cadres do not have enough knowledge of Maoism and its political culture, but they are mostly influenced but their military culture.

According to their Third Extended Meeting the Central Committee they have structured down the military wing into Regional Commands. With a view to turn the people's war into as storm through the armed struggle , a concrete policy of developing military organization, to form defence and volunteers groups at times. In their military units there are 35 to 40 men and 2 women each unit . These women are used to gather intelligence and work as couriers. They also have the women units in their military organization. The Maoist through their military organization unit are capturing weapons from the police and equipping themselves . Politically they loot rich people and gain mass support . Therefore the Maoists are pursuing a two track strategy of pursuing military and organizational strength²¹. But sometime they operate in more than 100 men in a group. Like recently the attack on the army barrack they numbered more than 100.

²¹ Rohan, Gunaratna, n.11,p.34.

THE LEADERSHIP OF CPN(MAOIST)

The leadership of any organization depends on how able the leader acts in a stipulated period. The organization stands as a family, but the leadership is the base, as the head of the family. Therefore, organizations and parties are headed by their most prestigious, experienced, and energetic representatives by leaders. Lenin wrote, Not a single class in history has achieved power without producing its political leaders, its prominent representatives able to organize a movement and lead it.²² But, here the individuals do not matter. The fact lies that the leadership of the organizations does not depend on any individual, but all the other members of the party are responsible to the party. In their organizational leadership they include people from all strata, the peasants, women, indigenous people, and also from the backward class. In the present context, the CPN (Maoists) under the able leadership of Puspha Kamal Dahal and Baburam Bhattraï, have followed the (path of Prachanda) that is to complete revolution through arms. Which has helped the socially and economically deprived people of Nepal to unite under the umbrella of CPN (Maoists) to fight against the semi-feudal system of the state.

The leadership in the CPN (Maoists) lies with the Chairman Prachanda. Infact the CPN(Maoists) are among the first communist group, who gained confidence of the masses. According to the political and military

²² V, L, Lenin, "The urgent tasks of our Movement", *Selected Works*, Vol.2, Moscow, Foreign Language Publishers, 1947, p. 370.

units set up by the CPN (Maoists) and to handle the affair of the movements there are different groups to function as different order. As, accordingly stated by the Maoists a 37 member United Revolutionary's people's council run the new People's Revolutionary Government. The Council is to be headed by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists) number two, leader Baburam Bhattarai.²³ In their organization leadership structure they have different leadership hierarchy in both the political , as well as the military leadership. The General Secretary or the Chairman Prachanda is head of both the political as well as the military wing. In their military wing , their Chief Military strategist is Ram Bahadur Magar and Krishna Bahadur Mahana alias Divaskar who function as the Commander of the army. Besides this in their political wing their have other top leaders are Man Bahadur Thapa, Dev Gurung, Suresh Aley and EK Bahadur Gurung.²⁴ Thus, while analyzing about the leadership one is concerned that the leadership in the CPN (Maoists) have a strong chain within the party . It cannot be termed as the other communist parties leaders who in need of time side away with their personal interests. But to make it a more confined with the leadership, it can be opined that ;

taking into account the future development of the people's war, the security of the leadership at various levels, chiefly the central level, and underground structure of the party should be given more emphasis and the party should be made more organized . Admitting the fact that the security system is not that much scientific and strong, all party committees should further take more initiatives in this direction.²⁵

²³ See, Hindustan Times, November, 25, 2001.

²⁴ See, HindustanTimes, December,1, 2001.

²⁵ *The Worker*, n.11, 2000 p.54.

Given by this statement by the document of the party, it cannot be in future ignored that this may concern, that the CPN (Maoists) have taken a safeguard regarding the leadership in the near future.

But, the fact that leadership of the CPN (Maoists) till the date is one of most striking phenomena, where it has been able to lead the movement in a disciplined way . But there is a possibility that in the near future that the leadership may bring some decisions and differences among themselves.. There is also the possibility of the Maoists getting fragmented due to conflicts at the leadership level. There are two dimensions of such a conflict. One is along the caste and nationality identities, where the ethnic and indigenous second tier of leadership finds itself somewhat uncomfortable with the upper caste leadership of Bhattarai and Puspha Kamal Dahal. Very often there seems to arise differences between the military and political wing. Analyzing the situation on the military point of view , it can be said that the opinion of the armed battalion is to uproot the government through arms rebellion that is forcefully to capture power. But the political leadership insists to develop the movement to a more mature form. It is also willing to join the mainstream political arena, if their demands are met in a proper way. Therefore , the difference between the political and military wings can be viewed from this aspect. A clash of personalities was also being talked about between Bhattarai and Prachanda during the year, 2000 but it did not come in the way of the party's ideological or organizational cohesion.²⁶ But, in near

²⁶ Anthony Davis, "Nepal faces upsurge in violence", *Jane's Intelligence Review*, vol.12,no.4, April,2000, p.36.

future there could be a possibility of tensions and differences in the leadership. The high caste domination in the leadership is not a new phenomena in the revolution of CPN (Maoists) in Nepal. It can be perceived every revolution in worldwide is led by the dominated caste and hierarchy order. Thus in Nepal's case too, the CPN (Maoists) group is led by intellectual Brahmins, referring to the highest caste in the Hindu religions & rigid social hierarchy. The other members or the masses tend to be least educated and more driven by the need for jobs and improvement of their life. The demands senses of unsatisfied desires and expectations with democracy. If anyone provided that it would obviously not be attracted towards its.

CONCLUSION

But, several times there have been reports on difficulties in the leadership within the CPN (Maoists). The differences between the political and military wings of the organization have often been commented upon by the observers from time to time. It can be said that in due course the main agenda of arms rebellion was trying to be sidelined by the political wing leadership when it declared seazefire in April 2001, which was opposed from the military wing. It is believed that the sudden change in the Maoist line from negotiations to people's war in November 2001 was due to differences between the military commander, Ram Bahadur Thapa on the one hand and political leadership of Prachanda on the other. It cannot be said for certain, if this was a factor behind Baburam Bhattarai emerging as the head of the

'Revolutionary People's Government' after the November uprising.²⁷ Thus, if the failure in the leadership exists, there may occur some sort of problem in future after the movement, because the organization structure may slip away. There are instances in Nepali communist movement due to the confrontation of the leadership the organization has lost its strength. Unlike the CPN (ML) which had instigated the Jhapa movement, but in the due nature of time has faded up in the political history of Nepal. Although the party exists but the base has been lost to the CPN (Maoists). But as rightly opined by Muni, even a split takes place the war will not end, the movement will not disappear.²⁸ But maybe some other political party, in the sphere of time take advantage of the situation lead it to its climax. But however, the Maoists have been able to mobilize the people in both overt and covert forms. Their mingling with the masses openly is a regular feature and the manner in which they have been able to mix up with the ordinary people is likely to transform the nature and intensity of the movement into a new situation whose consequences would be far more dangerous for the existing order.

²⁷ S,D, Muni, "The Maoist Challenge in Nepal", *Aakrosh*, vol.5,no.1, January,2002,p.57.

²⁸ Ibid, p. 57.

CHAPTER-4

POLITICAL AGENDA AND STRATEGY

Going through the historical facts one cannot deny that King Prithvi Narayan Shah fought for several years to fulfill his wish to bring Nepal under one banner. Due to his ability he was successful in carving out a sizeable kingdom. Thus late king Prithvi Narayan Shah contributed to the creation of modern Nepal. In 1950 King Tribhuvan allowed limited democracy. He was succeeded by King Mahendra in 1955. In 1958 the constitution of Nepal was promulgated. The first democratically elected government of B.P. Koirala came to power in 1959. The democratic process was interrupted by King Mahendra and the rule of Koirala Government was cut short in 1960 on charges of corruption. The king installed his own rule, which lasted from 1960 to 1989. The new system of governance triggered off widespread public resentment against the authoritarian regime and the arks of freedom for the political parties.

EMERGENCE OF NEPALI DEMOCRACY

Infact the failure of Nepal's new rulers to redress the economic sufferings of the people, by uprooting the old basis of feudal society, fostered them an attitude of defiance to authority. Their people's feeling of helplessness and dissatisfaction with the rulers found expression in committing such occasional acts of violence which has become a part of

Nepalese political behaviour.¹ In the current political scenario, Nepal is desperately trying to get out of its past peripheral status. But the pull of the past is so heavy and the strength of the new state is so weak that it is still finding itself in the shadow of its former center. The cause of most of its internal problems has its root in the interplay of various forces, nature of political modernization and the behaviour of Nepal can be traced back to the hangover of the Rana Oligarchy regime which is in conflict with the present restlessness to assume a new dignity. It can be rightly opined that not all societies have progressed at the same rate. Their in built mechanisms and ideological mooring have often determined the pace with which they have transformed their physical environment and institutions. While some countries have achieved spectacular economic growth without sacrificing their political stability, others have lagged behind both economically and politically.² And Nepal too has deteriorated in all its terms. So Nepali politics have also gone through various changes and ups and downs

In the context of the political emergence of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists), and their political agenda can be traced to the communist advancements in the Nepali context.

The greatest scope for communists advancement would still seem to lie in the infiltration of political and social institutions, and it is success or

¹ Anirudha,Gupta, *Nature of Politics*, Delhi, 1993, p. 215.

² R,S,Chauhan, "Role of political institutions in modernization of Nepal", in Virendar Grover (ed),*Encyclopedia: SAARC, Nepal*,Delhi, Deep and Deep Publications,1997, p.71.

failure in this sphere that will largely determine the party's prospects in the foreseeable future. If permitted an unchallenged opportunity to shape these institutions to their own purposes, which the governments present policy has virtually assured. It is not implausible that the Communists could emerge eventually as one of the feasible alternatives of the royal regime.³

This itself would prove, how the various communist parties in Nepal gained momentum to cash the opportunity to take advantage of the political vacuum created.

After a long span democracy was ushered in Nepal. Therefore taking advantage of the resentment among the people against the regime, the Nepali congress, supported by the United Liberation Front (ULF) launched "People awareness programme" in 1989. The top most agenda of the programme was a nation-wide campaign for democracy, the end of Panchayat system of government, and the restoration of the functioning of political parties. Thus when the campaign assumed the form of a mass movement the government of Marich Man Singh was dismissed on 6th March 1990, and Lokendra Bahadur Chand became the Prime Minister. But on April 16, the Chand government was also dismissed and Krishna Prasad Bhattarai became the Prime Minister of an interim government, as a result of successful people's movement against the Panchayat System.

³ Leo, E, Rose, "Communism under High atmospheric conditions", *The Communists Revolution in Asia*, (ed): A, Robert, Berkeley, California University Press, 1969, p. 366.

But the greatest achievement within government was the royal promulgation of a constitution on 9 November 1990, which declared that the people of Nepal as the source of sovereign authority and the king as the symbol of the Nepalese nationality and the unity of the people. It introduced a parliamentary system of government, a multiparty democracy, adult franchise, rule of law and of course a constitutional monarchy. In accordance with the provisions of this constitution, the first parliamentary election was held on 12 May 1991. But despite, democracy being announced and elections being held if reviewing the political scenario of Nepal it can be opined that all these ushered. Three general elections have been held since 1991 and the majority of the people have participated in the democratic exercise. But it is sad for the fledging democracy in the country, that the political parties have turned out to be too self-centered focusing their entire attention on politicizing⁴. This is a fact, which can be perceived clearly. In a short span of ten years, but though leaders of all the top political parties have come to power, none of them have been able to deliver any thing to improve the status of the people. It can be opined that all political parties have only words to say and have not shown any vision in dealing with matters of national interests. Therefore, in this crises, the gap that was created in the political scenario was exploited by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists), who visioned better future to the masses. Analyzing the

⁴ see, National Herald, 23 July 2001.

facts, it is really sad to see that that the country is facing social, economic and fundamental, democratic challenges.

RISE OF THE MAOISTS

This chapter, would discuss about the political objectives, agenda and the strategy adopted by the CPN(Maoist) to fulfill its goal. From time to time there occurred dissatisfaction among the masses against the feudal Monarch, but at time they also appreciated it and looked upon the monarchy as the symbol of god. This is due to the feudal structure of administration and imposing of the national religion of Hinduism, upon the ethnic tribes. But anyway from the historical context, it can be perceived that the king was the symbol of God. But there are also other factors, which have influenced the movement. As, rightly opined by Muni, "two factors need to be taken note of in the evolution of the Maoists in Nepal. One related to the external influences that shaped their ideology and strategy, and the other was the context of domestic politics in Nepal"⁵. It is to be stated that external political happenings in the neighbourhood have influenced considerably the politics of Nepal. The internal political conflict in the country has shaped the people's war movement to strengthen up further. If we consider the external factors we will find that the neighbourly countries India and China have influenced it very much.

⁵ S,D,Muni, "The Maoist Challenge in Nepal", *Aakrosh*, vol.5, no.1 January, 2002 p. 47.

The Indian Naxalist Movement in West Bengal, Bihar and Andhra Pradesh stimulated the CPN (Maoists). The CPN (M) was also influenced by the arms revolution. It was in the Jhapa district near Birtanagar where the arms revolution was instigated. As , it was influenced by the Naxalite movement of India, which took place in the border of Nepal. The armed revolutionaries of Jhapa movement under the banner of CPN (ML) went on rampage, killing local landlords. This was done because they wanted to confiscate the land holding by the landlords. Also, the mode of operations is very much similar to the Peru's Shining Path" warriors. Therefore in Nepal the CPN (Maoists) type of politics is based on the science of Marxism – Leninism – Maoism. They link themselves with the challenging ideological struggle waged by the communist revolutionaries of the world. It's a synthesis of the proletarian Cultural Revolution.

POLITICAL AGENDA

The major political agenda put down by the Maoists was through the demands made by them in the letter submitted to Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba on 4th February 1996. These are the demand presented to the National Congress Government by Com Bhattarai. The major political agenda put down by the Maoist's were included in their charter of 40 points demand. The issues which has been raised are of fundamental rights. People have been deprived of the constitutional rights given to them in 1990.

Although, the constitution provides the fundamental rights to the citizens, and democracy is the base of all these rights ,which is guaranteed

in the constitution. But in the past twelve years of experiences there has been no amendments to the constitution. Therefore there is a lack of democratic culture. The Maoist's also talk of Intellectual freedom and the repressive acts of the state to be abolished. Their demand include forming of investigating committee for inquiry of the disappeared people from police custody. To declare martyrs those who died during the movement. Also, of the decentralization of power in real terms. Therefore the amendment of the constitution should include the power and functions, of local government and clear divisions of rights between central and local governments.

NEW CONSTITUTION AND NEW DEMOCRACY

One of the reasons for what was the rampant corruption, criminal negligence of economic priorities, misuse of public office for private gains and failure of successive governments to attend to the provision of basic necessities and development. There have all created widespread discontent. This in turn has served as fertile ground for the Maoists to swell their ranks and enlarge the appeal of their in reactionary politics. Thus, one objective of the CPN (Maoists) is to put forward a new alternative to the reactionary state power. This alternative is based on the Marxist- Leninist Maoist philosophy and ideology, which will completely uproot exploitation and ensure equal rights to the people"⁶. One of the topmost priority of the CPN(M) is constitutional reforms, which the CPN (Maoists) wanted it to be

⁶ Parmanand, "Maoist terrorism in Nepal" in V,D,Chopra, (ed) *Rise of Terrorism and Secessionism in Eurasia*, Delhi, Gyan Publishing House, 2001, p. 303.

drafted. So, they are demanding for constitutional transformation, and for the elections for a constituent assembly to draft a new constitution in which they are in favour that no special rights should be granted to the monarch and his family members. Infact, in the initial stages they demanded that the institution of monarchy be abolished but later on this demand have been dropped for tactical reasons. "The Maoist displayed some flexibility when they dropped demands for the monarchy in abolition and the setting up of a republican state. It was a clever move, as they belatedly realized that pursuance of the agenda of king less Nepal would be detrimental to their cause since most Nepalese, particularly is the villages, still worshipped the king"⁷.

Infact, the one-sided cultural and religious politics of the Nepali state has led to the neglect of great parts of the population. So Nepal currently is in a dilemma. On the one hand democracy has entered the country at the beginning of the 1990s, and the parties have played a decisive part in this development, on the other hand this democratization is unfinished. Of course, democracy cannot come over night, but Nepal's special problem is that there has been no socio-political change and no political will on the part of the population as a whole. The people have the right and liberty to elect their representatives for the different state and in by this way, to influence the political development of the country. But the selection of eligible person is still in the hands of members of the same elites who had once been

⁷ See, The Stateman, 28 November, 2001.

steering power in the feudal royal state and who are now dominating the political parties. The poor masses remain excluded and have hardly any chance to show their interests and aspirations through the current parliamentary system. Therefore this has provided a fertile soil for the CPN (Maoists) calling for the boycott of elections and instigating a revolution.

In such circumstances, injustice results not only when equals are treated unequally but also when un-equals are treated equally. Hence, the principle of reciprocity always breaks down. And, these poor people although having their sovereign rights to represent themselves can avail this opportunity in constitution assembly, parliament and local bodies which are also meant for them as promised by the democracy.⁸ There is definitely a solution to the Maoists problem and setting the political scenario, by accepting democracy and sovereignty of the people, which is infact voiced by the CPN (Maoists) to promote their movement. Infact, there never existed a people's constitution promulgated by the monarch. Late king Tribuhvan proclaimed it, but it was never promulgated in a meaningful way and it is therefore necessary to have constitutional assembly. The present constitution has no legitimacy of the people. It is reflected by the sponsored politics of Nepali Congress, the UML and the monarch. So, the CPN (Maoists) demand the constitutional assembly to be elected and

Nagendra, Shrestha, "Politics, Democracy and Constitution", in The Kathmandu Post, March, 18, 2002.

constitutional amendments to be made, where the people's right would be enumerated in a proper and meaningful way.

The CPN (Maoists) demanded for the people's sovereign right, to have the constitutional assembly within the framework of common heritage and fair election systems to the heterogeneous society removing the current polarity of electoral system. Constitutional safeguards to backwards communities including Dalits, to represent in the constituent assembly, parliament and local bodies, binding provisions for checking political and bureaucratic corruption having no nexus with criminals, provisions for national governments on specified national crisis including general elections of constitutional assembly and of parliament.

Excessive centralization is perhaps the most important underlying factor for birth and growth of the Maoists. It alienated the people from the state and provided the environment for the abuse of power leading to the governance problem, which in turn aggravated the situation⁹.

The centralization system has infact alienated different minority groups, because the centre, has been dominated by the elite group who, have formulated policies that are harmful to the minorities. In addition to the alienation of the people, centralization has facilitated and tolerated the abuse of power.¹⁰ Infact, the demand of the Maoists for a constitutional assembly was objected by the government. The claim that the 1990

⁹ Mahendra, Lawoti, "Breakdown of Democracy", *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol.36, no.50, Dec 15, p. 4625.

¹⁰ Ibid, p.4625.

constitution was made by the people, and that there is no need to draft a new constitution, but the 1990 constitution is a compromise document between the leaders of the restoration of democracy movement. Therefore, the democratic forces need not fear a constitution, assembly because the people's wish will prevail through it, but by not occupying the constitution assembly it seems that the palace is threatened. ¹¹

Infact, what I perceive is that a constitution assembly is needed because this may encourage the CPN (Maoists) leadership to go for the electoral politics. ¹² However, the important aspect of the constitution assembly is that it would incorporate people's wishes. Infact the Maoists, demand for drafting the constitution has been given a boost due to the experience of the last decade, which have shown the need for vast amendments or a new constitution in Nepal. The constitution should incorporate some serious issues. The constitutional bodies and other central agencies should be independent in their day to day duties. The issues of minorities and women should be addressed, and this what the Maoists have kept in their top most agenda. The discriminatory provisions in the constitution toward these groups should be removed. Therefore, it is a common feature, that such measures aiming at fundamental social changes are not initiated by political parties. The latter have prepared the way for democracy, but they fail to implement those policies on the basis of which

¹¹ Ibid, p.4626.

¹² Ibid,p.4626.

they have got elected and instead turn to corruption and internal power struggle. In the interest of Nepal's future the only hope are the new democratic leaders, who are willing to enforce the socio-political, participatory and economic changes necessary for the development of civil society, before the radical forces are able to take the lead. Although to some extent the CPN (Maoists) had taken advantage from this situation.

In fact, what is considered to be a just law and order problem is not what it seems to be to the government. The most important aspect is that the new and unprecedented wave of people's support in favour of the movement that has been increasing with every declarations and activities of the government. "The rise of the communists in Nepal could be attributed more to their penetration and integration with the people than to their ideological moorings. Their stress on the principle of rationalism also appealed the masses. Their promises are taken seriously.¹⁰ There upon the aim of the movement is to smash the reactionary state and establish a new democratic order. In fact in the initial stage of the movement, it was seen that nine left parties of Nepal declared their open support for the Maoist's and expressed grave concern over violation of human rights in the name of combating Maoism.¹¹ While analyzing the existing scenario, it can be asserted that a parallel power centre-vis-à-vis the reactionary state is getting created. So the "first step is for sustaining political power locally. The second step involves

¹⁰ Parmanand, "A new era in Nepali politics", in Virendar Grover (ed) *Encyclopedia: SAARC, Nepal*, Delhi, Deep and Deep Publishers, 1997 p-231.

¹¹ A,S,Verma, *Maoist Movement in Nepal*, Delhi, Samkaleen Teesari Duniya, 2001, p.37.

encouraging people belonging to various classes, nationalities and strata, who are opposed to feudalism, to participate in the new political set-up through a democratic process."¹² But the problem with the government could not accord top priorities to end the Maoist popularity. There are problems, problems of poverty, unemployment and the backward communities. But what the Prime Minister Sher Bahadar Deuba said in an interview is also somehow true "they sell dreams to the poor people, less educated people, and to some extent they are successful. After they recruit some of them by selling dreams and brainwashing, they control society under terror."¹³ Politically, the Maoists demand is not for any sort of single party rule in Nepal. Even their General Secretary Prachanda (Puspha Kamal Dahal) expressed.

We are definitely against a one party dictatorship. There will be full freedom to all the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist political parties in the new Democracy. They were prepared to suspend their armed activities and talk if the right to determine their own political future is granted to the people, otherwise their fight would continue.¹⁴

In short, if the government cannot bring the Maoists to the table for talks and end the 6 years long insurgency, the situation in the country would go from bad to worse as the rebels are slowly inching towards the capital. According to Maoists leaders, until few years ago they wanted to be politically recognized but all the successive governments since 1996 labeled them as a terrorist organization.¹⁵ So, as far as political problem of the

¹² Ibid, p.44.

¹³ Interview with P.M. – S.B. Deuba, in Times of India, 5 December., 2001.

¹⁴ The Times of India, (New Delhi) 2 December 2001.

¹⁵ See, Deccan Herald, (Hyderabad), 12 July 2001.

Maoists, is concerned it can only be resolved only if successive governments focus more on poverty alleviation, education and development in far flung areas, the root cause for the Maoists to gain ground, than only the capital can be saved from them.

The issues of livelihood and economic survival and the nation's self-respect is too, very much important to be discussed. These issues have prompted even the rural masses to side-up with the Maoists. Having decided to abandon the electoral path, and having had to revert to developing a ground level power base Maoists were quick to identify discontent in the society and try to ride it further for their purpose. Taking advantage of the correlation between ethnicity and poverty. As was discussed in the previous chapter they thus added ethnic demands as a flavour to their ideological pro-class struggle.¹⁶ After the formation of the state, it can be said that Nepal has been the ground for different civilizations. Different ethnic composition existed in Nepal. According to the present constitution "Article 4(1) of the constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal, 1990 describes Nepal as a multi-ethnic, and democratic."¹⁷ But the discrimination made between the people of Nepal, especially in the Hills and Terai, and also the problem of unequal

¹⁶ Deepak, Thapa, 'Day of the Maoist', *Himal South Asia*, vol. 14, no. 5, p. 5.

¹⁷ D, Bhattari, & P, Khatiwada, *Nepal-India Democracy in Making of mutual trust*, Nirala Publications, New Delhi, 1993, p. 22.

distribution of power among various regions and communities in the national politics,¹⁸ gave a sort of dissatisfaction to the people.

THE QUESTION OF MONARCHY

On the question of monarchy, the Maoists have different version at present. Although they wanted to abolish the institution of monarchy, but keeping in view the popularity of the monarchy in the rural even in the general masses this idea had to be keep out. But, as according to an interview given by Com. Prachanda it seems that they believe that "after the conspiratorial palace massacre of June 1, 2001, the traditional rationale of the institution of monarchy has ended. It is high time that a republic be proclaimed in the country."¹⁹ It is a fact that the late king Birendra, was one of the popular figure, and during his regime, although the ruling Nepali Congress had asked the king to use the Royal Nepalese Army to curb the Maoists violence, but the King had refused to use the Nepalese Army. So this had very often, lead to rumors that the palace was supporting the Maoists secretly. After the 1 June massacre, the Maoists also tried to gain advantage from the incident, as it becomes evident when one of its prominent leader came up with an article in the Nepalese daily 'Kantipur' published in Kathmandu, in its 6th June issue. He said that the massacre of

¹⁸ Ramakant & B,C,Upreti, ., "Regionalism in Nepal : A Study of the Tarai", in Virendar Grover (ed) *Encyclopedia: SAARC, Nepal*, New Delhi. Deep and Deep Publishers,1997, p.261.

¹⁹ see, Times of India , 2, December 2001.

King Birendra and his family members was an international conspiracy in which US intelligence agency CIA and Indian-Counter-intelligence agency RAW had their hands, with the help of Nepali collaborators²⁰ The Maoist claim that King Birendra was a liberal monarch. The Maoists had commanded the nationalist approach and vision of king Birendra.

After the Narayan Hetti palace massacre an initiation for dialogue between the Nepal government and the CPN (Maoists) had been done in August 2001. This is due to the changed political context of the country which has enormously increased the role and responsibility of the government towards the needs and aspirations of the Nepalese people. Therefore, in this sense, negotiation, which is an art and a means of diplomacy, could be implemented properly in solving such problem of national interests. As Prachanda said the Maoists were prepared to suspend their armed activities and talk, if the right to determine their own political future is granted to the people, otherwise their fight would continue.²¹

But other demands such as, formation of a republic, an interim government and election of a constituent assembly to draft a new constitution could not meet out. Although the government said that the proposal for the amendments to the constitution would be under consideration but it was not accepted by the Maoists. In the meantime when the talks was in progress, suddenly on 21 November 2001, the Maoists

²⁰ A,S,Verma,n..p 79.

²¹ The Times of India, 2 December 2001.

broke down the cease-fire and attacked the Royal Nepalese Army. Having all along demanded royalty's removal and a republican state, they did a turn around before the last round of peace negotiations and set up a 37 member people's Revolutionary government giving rise to the suspicion that there was more to it than meet the eye.²² The Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba also talked about it in an interview in the Indian based newspaper (The Times of India);

They spoke about talks. The environment in Nepal was also supportive of talks. The political parties, public opinion all wants talks to take place. I also thought that dialogue would end bloodshed. Initially I thought their intention was good, honest. They agreed to further rounds of talks. But without valid reason they attacked our National army, and looted our banks. I had no alternative but deploy army.²³

LIVELIHOOD ISSUES

The other issues, on which the Maoists have their agenda, include livelihood of the Nepalese society. They are in favour of land reforms, which have seen complex form from centuries. The unequal distribution of land is one of the prominent factor. Nepal is predominantly a rural-agricultural society, where more than 90 percent of the people live in rural areas and depend heavily on farming as a source of livelihood. As, farming is the most important source of livelihood in rural areas, but the scarcity of land placed severe constraints on agricultural development. Therefore in terms of production, they were dependent on large landowners. In general terms landowners engaged wage laborers and benefited from the existence of

²² See, The Statesman, (New Delhi), 22 December 2001.

²³ The Times of India, 5 December 2001.

excess labour, which kept wages low. In general, the situation of landholders was exacerbated by the archaic nature of farming technology and the absence of other resources. It was not surprising that rural poverty was widespread.

Therefore when the Maoists started the movement, they asked for writing off of loans of the poor farmers, minimum industrial wages, protection for cottage and small industry and elimination of corruption and black market. Thereupon, they did not make any distinction between the rural and urban areas or even between the agricultural and industrial sector of the economy.²⁴ But, it is not sure how, far the Maoists have succeeded in putting up the issue of land reforms, because most of the top brass Maoists leaders belong from the upper-caste, and can associated with the landholding class. Thereupon the irony is that none of the leaders have distributed their land to the tillers or peasants, nor have they done anything to lessen socio-economic inequality in their respective areas of residence to set an example of their genuine commitment to communism.²⁵

The Maoists also found support across the country where people were tired of their socio-economic condition, and that too particularly in the poverty-stricken, economically backward areas. Therefore under the

²⁴ Paul,Harris, "Riots, bombs and strikes in Nepal as Maoists", *Jane's Intelligence Review*, vol.13,no.2, February, 2001,p.45.

²⁵ Narayan,Khadka, "Factionalism in the Communist movement in Nepal", *Pacific Affairs*,.vol.68,no.1, Spring,1995,p.74.

leadership of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists) with the proclaimed aim of establishing a new Democratic socio-economic system and state by over throwing the present socio-economic structure and state.²⁶ However, the politics of Nepal's national parties has led the state to the present position of confrontation . This situation has helped the CPN (Maoists) to establish itself as a strong political force in the most backward rural areas of the country within a few years. The programmes of the leading national parties hardly contain any concrete steps to eliminate the basic roots of backwardness, poverty and discrimination. But however, the CPN (Maoists) have accorded to put up the problems of rural masses and promised to solve these.

RELATIONS WITH INDIA

On the part of Nepal's national self respect, Prof. Muni has rightly opined "the thrust of the Maoists goal is on restructuring relations with India."²⁷ It can be stated that the Maoists have an anti-India stand. They say that they have to struggle specifically against "Indian imperialism. They are against the opposition of the recruitment of Gurkhas in the Indian Army, they are opposed of screening of Hindi movies, selling of Indian newspapers and magazines in Nepal. The example of anti-Indian feelings, was portrayed

²⁶ B,Bhattarai, "Politico-Economic rationale of people's war in Nepal",monograph 1998,downloaded from Maoist website, p. 1.

²⁷ S,D, Muni, , n,5,p.51.

earlier in Nepal, the Maoists, when few years back many Indian establishments were damaged.

The Maoists believe that the Indian market is fully exploiting the resources of Nepal. As, according to the Maoist documents semi-colonial relations have multifarious dimensions like economic, political, military, cultural, etc, In Nepal, Indian expansionists exploitation and oppression, too, has multifarious character.²⁸ They see Indian expansionism in the form of keeping Nepal as its captive market through unequal treaties, transportation communication and trade connection. They speak of the Nepal-India trade agreement of 1923, which claimed Nepal to be a common market for India. The treaty of 1950 of Peace and Friendship and also for the abrogation of the Tanakpur Agreement and also abolition of the Mahakali Treaty with India. But one interesting aspect to note down that during an interview with one Indian daily newspaper Com. Prachanda opined "we want to develop good neighbourly relations based on equality and freedom, in accordance with the five principles of peaceful co-existence with India."²⁹ This in terms in itself contradictory position taken by the prominent leader. Therefore, it seems that they turn side as according to the faces of time.

STRATEGY TO PURSUE THE AGENDA

The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists) after its long discussions on ideological and political lines developed the Marxism-Leninism-Maoism line,

²⁸ D, Bhattarai, n. 31, p. 4.

²⁹ The Times of India, 2 December 2001.

and chose the path of peoples New Democratic Revolution. Their basic objective was to make the masses aware of politics of armed revolution for capturing political power and make the people's army as the principal instrument of this struggle. They had parallel committees for various work. The political wing dealt the political set up which went with the campaigning in political sphere. They had the military committee too, The CPN (M) formed its central military commission with the objective of operating the people's war. Com. Prachanda stated, for the proletarian state power, that an army is needed in order that ultimately classes, the state, the army and war may be abolished once for all, according to the scientific principles of dialectical and historical materialism.³⁰

The Maoists are fighting to establish a republic in tiny Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal and are preparing to establish a central government as they intensify their attack on police and public installations, sending a wave of terror throughout the country. The immediate problem to be tackled is the one created by the Maoists, who now control nearly half of the country, and carry out daring raids. In the past six years since they became active, nearly more than 2,000 people have been killed, either by the Maoists or the security forces. They have opted out of the parliamentary democratic system. Their modes of operation is a copy of the Mao's Chinese Cultural Revolution where,

³⁰ Parmanand, n13,p.307.

many of the basic principles of military line and strategy which Mao developed in guiding the Chinese people during the long years of revolutionary war leading up to the seizure of nation wide political power, were applied by Mao to the problems of economic policy and construction both in the liberated areas during the period of the new Democratic revolution and in the country as a whole during the socialist stage which followed.³¹

It is also being considered that the Maoist strategy of taking maximum advantage of political situation is integrated into defined strategy. Analyst says Maoists have devoted considerable time planning to establish new operation zone's in remote areas and to create a good rapport with the people in the rural areas.³²

The Maoists waged propaganda and agitation from the point of view on the questions of nationality, democracy and people's livelihood and it attempted to arouse the masses mainly in the rural areas against feudalism. According to the theoretical directives of Marxism – Leninism. Maoism and the general specificities of the Nepalese society, party has formulated a political strategy of completing new Democratic revolution with a people's democratic dictatorship under the leadership of proletariat based on the unity of workers and peasants against feudalism and imperialism.³³ Therefore it is clear that the nature and orientation of the Nepalese armed struggle will be directed by and committed to by the aims of this political strategy. It is the

³¹ Bob ,Avaikan, *Mao Tsetung's Immortal Contributions*, Chicago, RCP Publications,1979, p. 84.

³² See, News Time, 28 December 1999.

³³ Document adopted by the Third Plenum of the CC of CPN (Maoist) in March 1995, P. 5.

protracted people's war based upon the strategy of surrounding the city from countryside. In order to maintain these liberated base areas and make them as powerful as possible a foundation for waging revolutionary war. In order to unleash the activism of the masses in these areas and ultimately in the whole country in the revolutionary struggle and in order to unite all real friends against the enemy at every point, it was necessary not only to have a correct political line generally and not only in particular, it was also necessary to forge and apply a correct line of questions.³⁴ Therefore, a serious and responsible initiative have been taken to involve various social organizations.

Also, to achieve their political goal, Maoists have different set up in their organization through which they mobilize the masses, against the state machinery. For this purpose the Maoist's have cultural groups, who perform among the masses and interact through cultural activities like street play and speeches in public places. Even once the government had tried to put a ban on three popular music cassettes made by a revolutionary cultural organization led by the CPN (M)³⁵ for the fear of mass support from the people. As, for their strategically development, the Maoists strife for "land to the tiller" and the principle of "women's equal right to property." Wherever they have established power, many widows and unmarried have their land

³⁴ Bob ,Avaikan, n.31, p.83.

³⁵ *Revolutionary Worker*, 994, February 14, 1999.

restored by the people's courts, even villagers have been organized to oversee and run various aspects of village life.

In some cases, the social evils are being rooted out and washed out from Nepalese society. The party opposes the customs of polygamy, because polygamy is seen as a feudal tradition practiced in Nepal. Therefore after implementing all these sorts of reforms, they have become very popular amongst the rural masses, where these kinds of socially evil concepts still prevail. As a result several women's are participating in the ongoing movement. The fight against the oppression of women is woven into the fabric of this people's war." In rural areas women are oppressed by the family, mother-in-law, husband-and some women are killed because of dowries.³⁶ Thereupon when the armed struggle started in 1996, it was like the opening of prison gate with thousands of women rushing forward to claim an equal place in the war.

Therefore, it was on February 11, 1996 that the CPN (Maoists) started the violence path. Since then it has been six years, but no solutions have been brought out to counter the Maoist problem. As, for the list of 40 demands put up by Bhattarai nothing has been done to comply their charter of demands. It is also a fact that "until the Maoists began their "People's war in Feb, 1996, they were quite an unknown entity, began only as one of the more than a dozen factions of the communist movement in Nepal, and

³⁶ Li, Onesta, *Revolutionary Worker*, # 1032, November 28, 1999.

certainly nowhere near being among the major players in the political scene.³⁷

The other aspect is that the government seemed to be interested to solve the problem. Infact the government very often termed the movement as just a law and order problem. Therefore as time went by the insurgents began asserting their authority by levying taxes from the well to do and offering succour to the poorest. Their austere lifestyle and down to earth conduct had its own impact, particularly in the western and far western districts which had suffered from total neglect. Therefore the real seeds of Maoism in Nepal lie in under development and the exploitative old order. If this is not corrected, Maoism will not go away. You wipe them out in one battle and they will come up again because the ground is fertile for them. The Maoist movement has been successful in sensitizing the public about the problems in Nepal.

³⁷ Deepak, Thapa , "Maoist Insurgency" in National Herald, 15 November 2001.

CHAPTER-5

CONCLUSION

The current political and social scenario in Nepal is in turmoil. It is not only on the part of political sphere but also the social and economic aspects of the Himalayan kingdom which had suffered severely due to the violence in the country. It appears that, the failure of the government to deal with the Maoist problem has made the state suffer a lot. Even the “people’s war” movement, initiated by the Maoist, to bring certain changes in the political and social set up is not working, as had been expected by the masses.

The background of the communist movement in Nepal should be viewed in the light of Nepal’s history of communist movement. The ‘People’s war’ initiated by the CPN (Maoist) on February 13, 1996 has its genesis in various factors. Right from the emergence of the communist party of Nepal in 1949, there has been several communists factions, which spearheaded the movements. But the differences in the ideological line led to factionalism and did not allow it to strengthen in the country. The emergence of CPN (Maoist) is also due to the dissatisfaction created within the communist leadership. The CPN (Maoist) was set up in 1995. The party consists of ultra-radicals whose members belonged to the CPN (Mashal) and some other members who had drifted away from the strongest communist faction of the CPN (UML).

The CPN (Maoist) party was formed under the leadership of comrade Pushpa Kamal Dahal (who is also known as Prachanda) and another veteran CPN (Maoist) leader Dr. Baburam Bhattarai. In its initial phase it participated in the parliamentary politics and contested the 1994 mid term elections under the banner of Samyukta Jana Morcha (United People's Front). The party had secured 9 seats in this election and was placed as the third largest party in Parliament. But the genesis of the armed insurgency of the CPN (Maoist) lies, with the demand for a change of constitutional monarchy, the issue of social and economic disparity is the real cause behind the blooming of the movement, so far.

The prevailing political instability, the socio-economic disparity and backwardness instigated the movement to strengthen up in the day to day situation. The disparity in the social order which are in terms of caste, racial, linguistic, ethnicity, nationalism and class prompted the CPN (Maoist) to gain support in the mid western hilly region. Neglected ethnic minorities also provided mass support to this movement. They drew support from minorities unlike Rais, Limbus, Gurungs, Magars etc and have infact succeed in leading the movement to its present status. Therefore the CPN (Maoist) strategy in its initial stages were oriented towards the ethnic or regional issues. This helped the party to establish itself as a strong political force in the rural areas of the country.

The lack of economic development in the poverty-torn districts of the mid-western regions, helped the CPN (Maoist) to strengthen itself and mobilize the masses. The Maoists economic agenda of livelihood, which

concerned the people of these areas is of great significance. Looking upon the development in this area, it can be said that in these regions there does not exist any schools, roads, medical facilities or electricity, and the government paid no heed to the problems of these regions. The semi-feudal structure of the society, where the mass population depends on agriculture for survival do not have proper land rights. Therefore the CPN (Maoist) demanded land reforms, land distributed to the homeless, and to those who have no land. They also demanded the elimination of corruption, and black marketing in Nepal. The problem of unemployment is also another aspect, by which the Maoists in building support. It is basically the unemployed youths, who in the course of time joined the "People's' war" to liberate the society from discrimination, and exploitation.

Since the waging of "People's war" the CPN (Maoist) have sharpened their organizational skills day by day. They also have able and strong Leadership who are leading the movement in a very tactical way. In view of the political front, they constitute the following committees, the Polit Bureau or the central committee, the regional committee, the sub-regional committee, the district committee and at the lowest level is the village committee. These committees perform separate functions for the political front of the organisation. In the political point of view, their aim is to form the people's government at the local level, also to train the people to run administration at the local level and to capture and run the national governments.

With regard, to the “armed struggle”, the Maoists have adopted the military line of Mao-Tse-Tung of inflicting defeat on the army. From the military point of view they believe in tactical defence, balance and attack. For this the military front was constituted on the 2nd anniversary of the party. They have the central military commission, then the regional military commission, the District military commission and the village committee.

The political strategy to pursue its agenda is one of the foremost priority of any organisation. Therefore the CPN (Maoist) has its ideological and political lines clearly defined as the Marxism-Leninism and Maoism. Their objective is to make the masses aware of politics of armed revolution for capturing political power and make the people’s army as the principal instrument. For, this purpose the CPN (Maoist) have cultural groups, who perform among the masses and interact through cultural activities, like street play and speeches in public places. Further to pursue their political goal they have put forward 40 points of demands to the their Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba on 4th February 1996. Their demands are mainly related to Nationalism, for public well being.

The political agenda of the CPN (Maoist) consists of all issues of dissatisfaction present in the current system in the present democratic Nepal. It advocates to complete the New Democratic Revolution with the help of proletariats, worker and peasants. The Maoist are fighting to establish a republican state in the Himalayan kingdom of Nepal. They aim to overthrow the monarchy and establish communist rule throughout Nepal. They now control nearly half of the country. The insurgency that began from

mid-western mountain districts of Rolpa, Rukum and Jajarkot have spread to 68 of Nepal's 75 districts. The six year old "People's War" has created havoc in the social sphere of Nepal. In these six years at least more than 2000 people have been killed, which comprised of the army, civilian and the CPN (Maoist) cadres.

In their campaigning, the Maoist have attacked the police posts and looted several weapons. Apart from bloodshed, they have destroyed communication towers worth crores of rupees. The development activities have been paralyzed. It was in April 2001 there seemed some ray of hope that the ongoing movement could end, when the veteran Maoist leader Prachanda declared ceasefire, and agreed for talks with the Deuba government. Going through the round of talks it was assumed that the insurgency could end. But on 21st Nov. 2001, they suddenly attacked the Royal army. On November 26, 2001, the government of Nepal declared state of emergency. Therefore, it can be seen that the CPN (Maoist) shifted their strategy from negotiations to "People's war" when they did not get proper response from the government. Earlier they never confronted the Royal army but after November 23 incident they attacked several army outposts and are fighting an open and declared war with the state of Nepal.

The other concerned aspect of the Maoist insurgency in Nepal that can be viewed with seriousness is its eternal linkage. Under the initiation of CPN (Maoist) to have a co-ordination of regional network, they have established the co-ordination committee of Maoist parties and organisations of south Asia (CCOMPOSA). The alliance consists of four Indian groups,

CPI-ML (PW), the MCC, RCCI (Maoist) and RCCI (MCM). Bangladesh Samyabadi Dal (M-L), Purbo Bangla Sarbahara Party (CC) and Purbo Bangla Sarbahara Party (MPK) and the Sri Lankan Ceylon communist party (Maoist) which is of grave concern in the south Asian polity in near future.

According to the media reports another important aspect of Maoist movement in Nepal is their approach towards India. In their charter of 40 demands, they have expressed strong dissatisfaction with the Indian government. They have even termed the Indian government as imperialist and expansionist. But what is of serious concern is, that the alliance of CPN (Maoist) links with the PWG of Andhra Pradesh and MCC of Bihar and Jharkhand. Although, their support may be only on moral, ideological and even material content. But there may be a possibility of linkages between the Maoist and the ISI of Pakistan as reported in some press reports. The nexus of the Maoist and ISI may create problems in the open border of India and Nepal. Also, the insurgency torn north-eastern region, where there can be more violence. There upon this can be viewed as a serious implications for India's security.

As discussed earlier, there are many reasons behind this problem. In part, it can be said that it is a state's administrative failure, as it has not fulfilled its duties to the people. The present democratic era has failed to address people's problems. So, the need of hour and find a solution to the people's realities and the democratic system. For people oriented democracy there need to be some change in political and social structures. The Maoists also need to stop violence to seek solution with the state.

ANNEXURE

The Maoist's 40 Demands.

These demands were submitted by the political front of CPN (Maoist) United people's Front to the coalition government headed by the Nepali Congress Party. These are the same demands that were raised during the 1990's people movement. The UPF raised these demands for five years after the so-called democratic negotiation with the monarchy. But the successive government opposed the demands. The demands were as follows:

I. DEMANDS RELATED TO NATIONALISM:

1. Regarding the 1950 Treaty between India and Nepal, all unequal stipulations and agreements should be removed.
2. HMG should admit that the anti-nationalist Tanakpur agreement was wrong, and the Mahakali Treaty, incorporating same, should be nullified.
3. The entire Nepal-India border should be controlled and systematized. Cars with Indian number plates, which are plying the roads of Nepal, should be instituted for the foreigners.
4. Gorkha recruiting centers should be closed and decent jobs should be arranged for the recruits.
5. In several areas of Nepal, where foreign technicians for certain local jobs, a system of work permits should be instituted for the foreigners.

6. The monopoly of foreign capital in Nepal's industry, trade and economic sector should be stopped.
7. Sufficient income should be generated from customs duties for the country's; economic development.
8. The cultural pollution of imperialists and expansionists should be stopped. Hindi video, cinema, and all kinds of such news papers and magazines should be completely stopped. Inside Nepal, import and distribution of vulgar Hindi films, video cassettes and magazines should be stopped.
9. Regarding NGOs and INGOs: Bribing by imperialists and expansionists in the name of NGOs and INGOs should be stopped.

II. DEMANDS RELATED TO THE PUBLIC AND ITS WILL-BEING

10. A new Constitution has to be drafted by the people's elected representatives.
11. All the special rights and privileges of the King and his family should be ended.
12. Army, police and administration should be under the people's control.
13. The security Act and all other repressive acts should be abolished.
14. All the false charges against the people of Rukum, Rolpa, Jajarkot, Gorkha, Kavre, Sindhupalchowk, Sindhuli, Dhanusha and Ramechhap

should be withdrawn and all the people falsely charged should be released.

15. Armed police operations in the different districts should immediately be stopped.

16. Regarding Dilip Chaudhary, Bhuvan Thapa Magar, Prabhakar Subedi and other people who disappeared from police custody at different times, the government should constitute a special investigating committee to look into these crimes and the culprits should be punished and appropriate compensation given to their families.

17. People who died during the time of the movement, should be declared as martyrs and their families, and those who have been wounded and disabled should be given proper compensation. Strong action should be taken against the killers.

18. Nepal should be declared a secular state.

19. Girls should be given equal property rights to those of their brothers.

20. All kinds of exploitation and prejudice based on caste should be ended.

In areas having a majority of one ethnic group, that group should have autonomy over that area.

21. The status of dalits as untouchables should be ended and the system of untouchability should be ended once and for all.

22. All languages should be given equal status. Up until middle-high school level (uccha-madyamic) arrangements should be made for education to be given in the children's mothers tongue.
23. There should be guarantee of free speech and free press. The communications media should be completely autonomous.
24. Intellectuals, historians, artists and academicians engaged in other cultural activities should be guaranteed intellectual freedom.
25. In both the terai and hilly regions there is prejudice and misunderstanding in backward areas. This should be ended and the backward areas should be assisted. Good relations should be established between the villages and the city.
26. Decentralization in real terms should be applied to local areas which should have local rights, autonomy and control over their own resources.

III DEMANDS RELATED TO THE PEOPLES LIVING

27. Those who cultivates the land should own it. (The tiller should have right to the soil he/she tills.) The land of rich landlords should be confiscated and distributed to the homeless and others who have no land.
28. Brokers and commission agents should have their property confiscated and that money should be invested in industry.

29. All should be guaranteed work and should be given a stipend until jobs are found for them.
30. HMG should pass strong laws ensuring that people involved in industry and agriculture should receive minimum wages.
31. The homeless should be given suitable accommodation. Until HMG can provide such accommodation they should not be removed from where they are squatting.
32. The farmers should be completely freed from debt. Loans from the Agricultural Development Bank by poor farmers should be completely written off. Small industries should be given loans.
33. Fertilizer and seeds should be easily and cheaply available, and the farmers should be given a proper market price for their production.
34. Flood and draught victims should be given all necessary help
35. All should be given free and scientific medical service and education and education for profit (private schools?) should be completely stopped.
36. Inflation should be controlled and laborers salaries should be raised in direct ratio with the rise in prices. Daily essential goods should be made cheap and easily available.
37. Arrangements should be made for drinking water, good roads, and electricity in the villages.

38. Cottage and other small industries should be granted special facilities and protection.

39. Corruption, black marketing, smuggling, bribing, the taking of commissions, etc. should all be stopped.

40. Orphans, the disabled, the elderly and children should be given help and protection.

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