CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE ON INSURGENCY WITH REFERENCE TO INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION
INTRODUCTION: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE ON INSURGENCY WITH REFERENCE TO INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

SOURCES OF CONFLICT:

Conflict has occupied a prominent feature of history since time immemorial. It is difficult to determine where one should begin to probe and ponder the issue of violence, a phenomenon against which no nation is presently immune. The devastation of the two World Wars bears testimony to the extent of violence man is capable of inflicting on humankind. The existence of conflict in the relationship of man, to a large extent, means that violence dominates such relationships. Violence is an elastic goal-directed phenomenon that can be viewed as either agitation in enforcement, and is perpetuated to influence the behaviour, attitude or predisposition of its targets.

Conflict, at the same time, does not arise simply because of man's conflicting nature. It is also politically motivated, nothing to do with the nature of man. At the base of political conflicts, there must be genuine social and political conflicts, and by removing these, we can sort

2. Ibid.
out the cause of conflicts. Groups with little or no direct political power have demonstrated repeatedly in recent years that by employing certain tactics, central to which is the use of directed terror, they can achieve effects on a target community which are out of all proportional to their numerical or political power. Such tactics attract world-wide publicity, create widespread panic or apprehension and cause national governments to concede to demands of small sub-groups within society. These effects in themselves create a demand for an understanding of the use of terror for political ends. 3

INSURGENCY AND OTHER FORMS OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE SHORT OF WAR:

In our fragmented social structure, violence has emerged as a dominant mode of social interaction and this emerging mode is mostly influenced by politics. 4 The influence of politics is evident in the process of daily life and even apolitical situation of the society and non-political sentiments of the people are exploited by the political


incumbent to wield their own power and finally they get political flavour.\textsuperscript{5} It reveals the exploitative nature of politics when it is used as a means to realise the selfish ambition of those in political power.

Political violence, also, stems from the masses, when conditions exists which are no longer conducive for the existence of normal life. Aggressive domestic political conflict is a process manifested in outbreaks of protest and violence that may or may not evolve into rebellion (a form of violent power struggle threatening the overthrow of the regime), which in turn may or may not end in revolution (successful rebellion).\textsuperscript{6}

Political violence manifests itself in three basic forms: (i) revolutionary, (ii) insurgency, (iii) terrorism.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines revolution as 'a complete overthrow of the established government in any country or state by those who were previously subject to it: a forcible substitution of a new ruler or form of government.' Revolution may be seen as an essentially political act the changing within a state not just of a Government hut

\textsuperscript{5} ibid.,

of its accompanying social order. Revolution is a great upheaval which brings radical change in government.

In international law, the concept of insurgency has recently been accepted as a basis for defining the legal rights and obligations of states in public orders more serious than mob violence and less serious than civil war. Insurgency, in international law is used to describe an internal political revolt which the withstanding state does not wish to recognise as war and which other states are not ready to consider as belligerency. Insurgency is smaller based and is a gradual process which adopts the art of guerrilla warfare to confront its enemy. It involves the use of armed force, without which it cannot achieve its purpose.

Insurgency has been considered as an armed struggle between a ruling authority and non-ruling group in which the armed struggle is carried out side by side with political movements, demonstrations or passive resistance as an instrument to establish legitimacy for the armed struggle in


8. Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences.
the eyes of the common man. Insurgency movements use violence to pursue their goal and adopt guerrilla warfare in tactics. Moreover, 'terrorism can be effectively employed indirectly to mobilise a quiescent populace and to build an insurgent movement.'

Insurgency, according to Maj. Gen. Afsir Karim can be broadly divided under the following categories:

i) **Secessionist insurgency**: When a minority group rejects the existing political system or community of which it is an integral and formal part and wants to establish a new autonomous entity, secessionist may resort to insurgency. This insurgency may take various forms and may be based on religious, ethnic or racial differences.

ii) **Revolutionary insurgency**: Seeks to impose a new order based on an ideology. It aims to mobilise public opinion to radically transform the social structure within an existing political community. However, such revolutions can be imported or supported from outside with a view to create a centrally controlled structure which will be in favour of the sponsors.


10. ibid., p.8.
iii) **Restorative insurgency**: May be used to displace a regime and change the existing political order.

iv) **Reactionary insurgency**: May seek to change the regime with a view to reconstruct a past political or religious order; their struggle generally relates to an idealised, golden age of the distant past.

v) **Conservative insurgency**: To maintain the existing system or regime and resist changes in economic or political policies.

vi) **Reformists insurgents**: To gain more political, economic or social benefits without rejecting the existing political system. They are concerned with policies which they consider to be discriminatory.11

Insurgency, in its secessionist form has come to be closely associated and fought by its adherents. They carry on with the struggle with the belief that the purpose of its existence is justified and the means to be endured.

Terrorism has been defined by Chalmers Johnson as political goal oriented action involving the use or threat of extraordinary violence, performed for psychological rather than material effect, and victims of which are sym-

11. ibid., pp.8-9.
bolic rather than instrument. According to the Encyclo- 

paedia of Social Sciences, "Terrorism is a term used to 

describe the method whereby an organised group or a party 

seeks to achieve its vowed aims, chiefly through the system 

use of violence. Terrorist acts are directed against per- 

sons who as individuals, agents or representatives of au-

thority interfere with the consumation or the objectives of 

such a group. The terrorists do not threaten; death or 

destruction is part of his program of action and if he is 

cought his behaviour during trial is generally directed 

primarily towards spreading a knowledge of his doctrines.

Terrorists derive their strength from the threat of use 

of extreme force and terror. Terrorism and terrorist acts 

are mostly politically motivated. Political terrorism is 

the use, or threat of use, of violence by an individual or 

group, whether acting for or in opposition to established 

authority, when such action is designed to create extreme 

anxiety and/or fear inducing effects in a target group 

larger than the immediate victims with the purpose of coer-

cing that group into acceding to the political demand of the 

---

12. Chalmers Johnson, "Perspective of Terrorism", an arti-

cle in the Terrorist Reader: A Historical Anthology, 


1974, p.268.

13. Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences, Vols.13-14, pp.575-

579.
When the use of violence is involved for the achievement of goals and ambitions, there arises confusion to the nature of insurgents and terrorism. According to Ved Marwah, "the terms terrorism and insurgency are frequently used to mean the same thing. Undeniably, the two are very closely connected. Both are a form of unconventional war to gain political objective. But there are important points of distinction between the two concepts. Insurgents mostly target security force and vital installations. They are more selective in choosing their targets than terrorists, and more discriminate in the use of violence."

Violence, as a means is utilized by insurgents and terrorists. However, violence as perpetrated by insurgents are more controlled and selective - 'They prefer to attack specified targets and avoid mass murder and butchering of innocent civilians for that would erode their grassroot support. The use of terror includes torture as well as murder. However, the selectives but not indiscriminate, absolute, but not lenient, use of terror is a common prac-

14. ibid., n.3, p.16.
Terrorists do not hesitate the use of indiscriminate violence and terror. They aim at spreading the psychosis of fear. "Terrorism is violence for effect. The actual physical damage it causes is often not all important - the aim is to have a dramatic impact on the audience." The whole and gruesome murders committed by terrorists are usually not adhered to by insurgents. But this is not to conclude that insurgents are incapable of such acts when they deem it necessary. The randomness is, however, avoided.

Insurgents, operate mainly in the area of their struggle. The friendly terrain is their greatest asset and outside its zone, operational activities are difficult to carry out. They, of course, make use of border territories, adjoining to their area of operation for training camps, base and safe-sanctuaries. Terrorists on the other hand, are more mobile. They are capable of carrying out transnational terrorist acts in the pursuit of their aims. The citizens of other nations are terrorised through bombings, hijackings and kidnapping to focus attention on their movement.


17. ibid., n.3, pp.43-45.
Thus, the thin line which divides the acts of insur­
gents and terrorists is the extent of the use of violence to
suit their purpose. Further terrorism is used as a means to
initiate an armed struggle between the authorities and the
people. Once moral isolation of the regime is achieved and
more and more people join the movement and are ready to take
up arms, terrorism is turned into insurgency and guerrilla
warfare. 18

OBJECTIVES OF INSURGENCY AND TERRORISM:

The use of violence and terror by the advocates of
insurgency and terrorism is for a specific purpose. In a
heterogeneous society, where separatism is an issue, this
would involve the attempt at polarising racial or ethnic
groups. In a bicultural setting, communal groups exists in
close or spatial or even social proximity. Here indiscrimi­
nate violence directed at the majority may be perpetrated to
provoke indiscriminate retaliation. 19

The primary aim is to work towards the destabilization
of the country to pursue and pressurise the government to
meet their demands. Insurgent groups are determined to

19. ibid., p.8.
liberate specific areas which according to them has been illegally occupied and forcibly ruled. They set out towards their goal through the medium of armed combat. More often than not it is a struggle to gain power or to achieve a political aim like formation of a separate state or change of the existing system which leads to terrorism.20

The government and the state is targetted through various means - kidnappings, sabotage, hostage-taking, assassinations, killing of innocent civilians and destroying government property and civic facilities. The disruption of normal everyday life takes place incurring severe loss to the government.

The insurgents mainly target the most visible symbol of the government - the security forces against whom a relentless cycle of 'war' is directed. Terrorism is also used to tie down hundred of troops and other agencies, in this regard Thomas Green observes that, "not knowing where terrorist will strike next can immobilise thousands of government troops, constrained to take up a defensive posture by guarding officials, residences, offices, and utilities and communication facilities.21 The basic objective is to drain the government, economically and its resources.

20. ibid., p.7.
21. ibid., pp.5-6.
The internal stability and security of the country becomes seriously threatened with the destabilizing works of insurgents and terrorists.

The level and magnitude of the threat increases when the acts of 'destabilization' is sponsored. As the name implies terrorism which is sponsored and abetted from outside a country involves use of force in support with a view to weakening or destroying the political cohesion of that country. The strike capability and destructive powers of the terrorists and insurgents are enhanced when they receive external help in the form of base, training camps, weapons, safe-haven and financial resources. Sponsored terrorism, takes the nature of a 'proxy war' when conventional war is too expensive and undesirable. The actors become the tools for the sponsoring country to carry out their purpose.

GUERRILLA WARFARE AS A MODEL OF TERRORISM/INSURGENCY:

The prevalence of violence in terrorism and insurgency has been discussed. However, the use of violence as a major weapon does not mean that both are one and the same. Insurgents derive their legitimacy through grassroot level support which terrorists do not convincingly enjoy. Armed

22. ibid., p.6.
insurgency does not take to extreme measures of violence and indiscriminate use of violence against society is avoided.

Insurgency has closest resemblance to guerrilla warfare. The conduct of guerrilla warfare has been regarded as 'political' by some students of war because it covers a wide range of activities which are closer to political manoeuvring than to military campaign.23

'Guerrilla warfare in itself is not necessarily a revolutionary form of struggle. It has occurred in all periods of history as the classic way for less well armed people to fight the organised power of a strong opponent, has often served as an adjunct of regular warfare in the purely military sense, and has at times been employed by reactionary and counter-revolutionary forces as well as by revolutionary movements.24

Guerrilla tactics mainly revolves round the 'hit and run' strategy. Guerrillas, being numerically smaller and less equipped with weapons avoid open confrontation with its enemy. It prefers to engage the security forces in battles where the element of surprise, territorial advantage and easy exit are at his disposal.

23. ibid., n.16, p.29.

According to the Guevara, 'the essence of guerrilla warfare is the miracle by which a small nucleus of men looking beyond their immediate tactical objective becomes the vanguard of a mass movement, achieving its ideals, establishing a new society, ending the ways of the old, and winning social justice.' Guerrilla warfare does not have room for the indiscriminate use of violence against the common man. It also tries to minimize the destruction of public property. Their actions must be people oriented because 'indiscriminate terrorism against groups of ordinary people is inefficient and can provoke massive retaliation.'

Guerrilla warfare has occupied an important part of world politics ever since the outbreak of World War II. The desire of the people, particularly in Asia, Africa and Latin America to be free of their colonial rulers had set off waves of insurgency movements to achieve independence. It has occurred in all periods of history as the classic way for less armed people to fight the organised power of a strong opponent, has often served as an adjunct of regular warfare in the purely military sense, and has at times been


26. ibid., p.118.
employed by reactionary and counter-revolutionary forces as well as by revolutionary movements.27

The practice of guerrilla warfare in insurgency is the most inter-linked, so much so that 'guerrillas' and 'insurgents' have come to mean one and the same. Because like the insurgent, the guerrilla is a social reformer. He takes up arms in response to widespread popular protest against an oppressor, impetuously hurling himself with all his might against anything that symbolizes the established order.28

The essence of guerrilla warfare is the miracle by which a small nucleus of men - looking beyond their immediate tactical objective - becomes the vanguard of a mass movement, achieving its ideals, establishing a new society, ending the ways of the old and winning social justice. Considered in this light, guerrilla warfare takes on a true greatness, a sense of destiny, without the need for further rhetoric.

BASIS OF STRATEGIC STRENGTH OF INSURGENCY MOVEMENTS:

Insurgency movements cannot sustain itself without certain core requirements and the success or failure of any


group depend on the presence of such requirements. There must be an all-round balance to ensure the movements' growth and development. The group must nurture the organization with military precision and co-ordination and this is vital when insurgency groups have to take on the might of an army much superior in number, strength and arms and ammunition and its disposal.

The most important characteristic of any insurgency group is the aim it sets before itself - its goals and aspirations. 'The reason for its existence, moral and political justification. Basically, it is an ideological appeal, carefully tuned to justice, honour, pride and emotion. There must be a clear-cut goal which is perceived to be within the reach of the group. The absence of such, would reduce the insurgents to mere 'bandits' or anti-social elements. The important element of the cause is the mass appeal; the extent of its reach would greatly determine its success or failure. It must be concrete enough to make a heartfelt appeal to the people, yet abstract enough to make easy fulfilment by the ruling elite impossible.

Secondly, insurgent groups must have a base, operating as they are from a disadvantageous position. The support of

29. Singh and Mei, n.16, p.31.
30. ibid., p.16.
the mass is the most important base and having secured it, it is necessary for the group to have a territorial base. The territorial base is not easy to establish within its area of operation due to effective anti-insurgency operations by the authority and due to this factor, the bases have to be mobile. However, the insurgents utilize their disadvantageous position to their advantage at the same time. The thick jungles and uncharted territory they know so well are utilized by them to set up their base. Besides, a friendly neighbour to their cause provide them access to their border areas, which is vital for them to establish camps for training, regrouping and chalking out strategies. Securing a base is a fundamental requirement in any guerrilla struggle. Its establishment assumes a particular importance because guerrilla warfare generally becomes a cruel and protracted struggle. And initially, the guerrillas being the weaker party, they need a safe rear and a hinterland in which they may operate somewhat freely. Base, indeed, is essential to the survival of the guerrillas.31

Thirdly, any insurgency group must have a strong and effective organisation. Insurgency groups operate in small bands and the success of their operations depend on their

31. ibid., p.54.
precise and swift actions. The strategy of 'hit and run' does not permit lax organisation for the insurgents must surprise its enemy and avoid open pitched battles. Furthermore, cause and organisation are inseparable terms for any modern guerrilla movement. 32

Insurgency groups must also maintain a strong and well equipped armed wing. There must be a strong sense of discipline backed by charismatic and capable leadership. The quality of leadership and its hold over its followers and ability to infuse a strong emotional chord plays a major role in strengthening and keeping the movement alive.

The external support also is invaluable to the insurgents in terms of base, arms, ammunition, finance, and training. The psychological boost to the armed insurgents also encourages them to pose a challenge to the bigger and better equipped troops they have to confront. The external support in order to be effective must exist at close quarters, preferably there must be common borders to facilitate easy cross-country movements. The external help usually comes from close but unfriendly countries to the host country who take advantage of the situation, in an attempt to settle its own score. Moreover, it is not feasible nor practical for distant states to render any kind of help.

32. ibid., p.33.
even if they want to. If the guerrillas’ hideouts are far away from the ally and are surrounded by government-controlled territory, the problem of transportation and delivery becomes difficult and risky.

The insurgents are also highly mobile. It is of prime importance that they are not bogged down by sheer numbers, heavy machinery or an unorganised plan. Their mobility is their strength, to quickly disappear into the jungles, making pursuit a daunting task.

Propaganda is also an effective tool used by the insurgents. As mentioned earlier, the important criteria for any insurgent group is to win over the population, and in order to do so, the art of propaganda is widely utilised. Propaganda, when properly conducted, becomes an exceedingly useful weapon in all military operations. In guerrilla warfare, it becomes still more important, because in this unconventional conflict, public opinion can become the most crucial single factor. Though propaganda, psychological offensive and political indoctrination are no substitutes for military operations, they can successfully attain strategical and tactical objectives if well-planned and skillfully applied.\(^{33}\)

\(^{33}\) ibid., p.42.
Insurgents have to work hard in order to win the support of the people. The causes they propagate in justifying their actions must be accepted by the major portion of the population. An absence of their support would render the insurgents as a group of men, no different from bandits, who terrorise the people and inconvenience the government.

Through propaganda, they seek to convince the people and justify their actions. There is an important need to convince the people that all that is being done, is for their own good and through the struggle undertaken their lot would be much improved. An awareness is built up to remind the people of the oppression of the existing system they live under which, its suppression and exploitation. Promises of better living, more opportunities in all areas - social, economic and political are highlighted and emphasised over again and again in order to influence the people's psyche. Propaganda has to be carried out in the most subtle effective manner. Active and outward expressions have the potential of invoking the wrath of the authorities before any real damage can be done. Word of mouth, group discussions, debates, anonymous pamphlets and writings in various forms are put to effective use by the insurgents at the initial phase of their struggle. They have to win over those who are not wholly unsympathetic to their cause and
those who are their opponents. Their aim is to generate support over the majority of the population. Propaganda assumes the nature of psychological warfare, a battle of wits between the opponents.

IMPACT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, COMMUNICATIONS:

The world is continually shrinking with rapid developments in science, technology and communications. As we move closer towards a global village, to bring mankind closer, yet it has had a tremendous effect in increasing the factors which divide men.

Over the years, the pattern of terrorist and insurgency patterns and strategy has undergone a significant change. A consensus is emerging that there are indeed significant differences both in the philosophy and tactics of terror and in the social and political environment in which it operates.34 Difference has been made in the nature of political violence primarily with the advancement in technology. It has become increasingly sophisticated with deadly precision and accuracy.

Because of technological advances society now also faces threats of a different order to those that have exist-

34. Wardlaw Grant, n:3
ed in the past. The threat of violence has increased with access to sophisticated arms, weapons and ammunition. Today, it is no surprise to discover that, advocates of violence as a means are equipped with effective weapons and weapons guidance systems. Terrorists and insurgents require light and sophisticated weapons in carrying out their operations and in there is no dearth of it today. The use of automatic weapons is compulsory and this has been made possible with technological and communication progress. The use of Kalashnikovs, AK-47, AK-46, rocket launchers, RDX, and sophisticated explosives is common in the turbulent areas of India where the insurgents continue their efforts to upgrade the disposal of arms in their demands. In the early phase of 1950s and 1960s, the strike capability of the insurgents were comparatively less as compared today.

Moreover, non-military developments such as digital clocks, day-date watches, and long-lasting power cells have further increased the flexibility available to amateur bomb-makers. The use of explosives has been a common feature of strategy employed by the terrorists and insurgents and its

35. ibid., p.26.

36. Because of the ability to miniaturise weapons and guidance system a completely new range of small, portable, cheap, highly accurate and relatively easy weapons has been created. ibid., p.27.
use has been increasingly destructive.\textsuperscript{37}

The greatest threat, however, comes from the threat of nuclear device. According to Wardlaw, the possession of even a very crude nuclear device would give such a group unheard of publicity and negotiating power, with unknown effects on public confidence. There is the danger of nuclear device being sold and bought for a very high price in the international market. The actual use, remains remote, but the threat of use is a huge bargaining chip.

With the increased effectiveness of weapons, the state become more vulnerable to the attacks of the insurgents. Technology which in the strategic dimension, has led to the need for conflict avoidance, has in the modern internal environment, provided both weapons and targets.\textsuperscript{38}

The tremendous advancement made in the field of telecommunications have also come to play a significant role in the effectiveness of terrorist and insurgent activities. The important objective is to focus media attention on their activities for publicity and to focus world attention on their activities. The perpetrator of violence is assured of

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item ibid. The loss to life and properly of the Bombay Blasts bombings of World Trade Centre and Oklahoma Bombing in recent years speak of the devastating nature of the increased use of sophisticated explosives.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
wide and efficient Press, TV and Radio coverage, however, minute his organisation and marginal his support among the population. In today's world, there is access to any kind of information and free publicity to terrorist activities are guaranteed wide coverage. The insistence of many news directors that they have a social obligation to present the news 'as it happens', without restriction or censorship, while ignoring its potential consequences makes it easy for the terrorists to stage events with assured world wide audience.

Moreover, the development in transport and communications have aided the effectiveness of terrorism effectively. It has increased the dangers and threat of transnational terrorism, and provided risky, by mobility to the leaders and activists. The easier accessibility to air-travel has made travel less cumbersome and hazardous, and at the same time has provided quick mobility.

Unconventional wars, therefore, has become viable and an important tool in power politics. So long, there exists groups of people who harbour dissatisfaction and a strong sense of injustice and alienation against a superior power on home ground, there exists the threat of violence.

39. ibid., p.10.
40. Grant Wardlaw, n.3, p.25.