CHAPTER TWO

Insurgency Movements in South Asia: A Theoretical Overview

Internal political conflicts have become a pre-dominant feature in many heterogeneous nation states in the post-cold war era. These internal political conflicts also take the shape of movements and are generally oppose to a prevailing regime or a government. Political violence in whatever the form can start, basically, under the following pre-conditions; First, over the issue of Legitimacy of a government or a regime. Second, where a consensus on the morality of the political community obtains, there may be grounds for violent internal conflict. Thirdly, in spite of a legitimate regime, sometimes, a specific person in power is rejected and this leads to violent internal conflict. Fourthly, violent internal conflict can be started by the non-ruling groups in an effort to change existing policies that, they believe; have prevented them from to acquiring their fair share of the collective political and economic sphere.

Among the internal political violent conflicts, ‘insurgency’ has been dominant, throughout the world in general and third world countries in particular. It is not uncommon to find the scholars using the word ‘insurgency’ interchangeably, with the words like revolution, guerilla warfare, terrorism, protracted struggle, naxalism, civil war, coup d’état, etc. Because there lies good deal of conceptual confusion on the above mentioned issues. Similarly, the term ‘insurgency’ also invites some of the fundamental questions like- what is an insurgency and how and why does it start? One of the most important factors that lead to the emergence of an insurgency is the legitimization crisis. When a particular regime or government’s legitimacy in parts or whole becomes suspect
for a group there is a possibility that may lead to an insurgency. Legitimacy of a regime can be challenged on various grounds.

‘Legitimacy’ literally means ‘to declare lawful’. Therefore, it confers on an order or command, an authoritative or binding character. Thus, legitimacy transforms power in to authority. Political scientists treat legitimacy as a moral or rational principle, the ground on which governments may demand obedience from the citizens. In a political, sociological term, legitimacy is a willingness to comply with a system of rule regardless of how it is achieved. A regime’s legitimacy is rooted in a number of factors, including the sentiments of the population about the performance capacity (i.e. effectiveness) of government institutions\(^1\) and the nature of governmental authority\(^2\). Four principal sources of legitimacy crisis, according to Lucian Pye, create problem for a government or a regime. They are: first, breakdown of governmental, institutions that occurs because of conflicting or inadequate bases of claiming authority in society. Secondly, ‘excessive’ and ‘uninstitutionalised composition for power’ can create a crisis of legitimacy. Thirdly, faulty ideological justification and faulty predictions of future development bring out legitimacy problems. And fourthly, wrong political orientation or socialization of people lacking in normative political culture can be the basic cause of a legitimacy crisis\(^3\). Thus legitimacy crisis of a regime or a government is one of the major factors that give rise to an insurgency.

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2. Ibid, P. 136
Besides legitimacy crisis, there are other factors responsible for the emergence of an insurgency. The first could be the appearance of a systematic crisis in the political system. The second could be the occurrence of series of precipitants or accelerators. The third could be the emergence of counter elites. And the fourth could be the formulation of an insurrectionist ideology.

Insurgency, whether in a democratic, democratizing or non-democratic policy, is generally caused by systematic crisis confronting a social system. If we take Huntington’s argument (though he has argued this in the context of revolution) an insurgency, “is most likely to occur in societies which have experienced some social and economic development and where the process of political modernization and political development have lagged behind the process of social and economic change”\(^4\). In this situation, insurgency is the product of the break down in the interplay between political institutions and social forces, particularly when new social groups and new elites are blocked from participating in politics and government\(^5\). In this context, an insurgency is caused by the interrelationship between the class interests and the structures of the state. In addition to this, the state apparatus cracks and a political crisis start when the reforms required to meet the needs are prevented or resisted by the economically dominant classes. Secondly, in some countries occurrence of series of precipitants or accelerators takes the form in different forms. They are political repression that alienates powerful groups in society, factional struggles within ruling elite; the rise of new social classes and the refusal of established elites to share their power; a significant economic crisis or the


\(^5\) Ibid, p. 274.
lack of political institutionalization behind economic and social change. Thirdly, the emergence of counter elites is also an important factor to organise and manage the insurgency. This way an effective insurrectionist counter elite is needed to mobilize the disaffected sector of the population against the existing government. However, this precondition is not an automatic process. For this kind of insurgency, the most important precondition is the emergence of the right kind of insurrectionist leader, the adoption of effective strategy and tactics, and a favorable combination of circumstances. Fourthly, formulation of an insurrectionist ideology is also an important factor for the rise of an insurgency. This new counter ideology must appeal to crucial sectors of the disaffected and potentially disaffected population. In addition to this the new ideology must take into confidence particularly those who are willing to lead such a struggle to become an effective counter force to the regime it is challenging.

**Conceptualizing Insurgency**

Conceptualizing the term ‘insurgency’ is a difficult task. Because the very term, most of the times, is intertwined and often confused with other terms, like subversion, coup d’état, terrorism, guerrilla warfare, revolution, civil war etc. The understanding of the term insurgency was first attempted in US in 1960s. They thought that, an insurgency is a political and social discrimination, exploitation and injustice consequence of a country. Hence giving no specific importance to the word as a separate facet of war making or as a separate strategic thought. However, an English translation of the Latin word ‘insurgere’, occurred in 1765 with the gradual usage of the term, it came to be commonly recognized as having to do with, ‘internal political revolution’ perpetrated by a certain group publicly
acknowledged as being ‘nonbelligerent’\textsuperscript{6}. A number of scholars in the subsequent period gave different definition for it. In 1965, Jack C. Plano defined insurgency as a “revolt against an established government not reaching the properties of a full-scale revolution. Under international law an insurgency is a rebellion not recognized as a belligerency or civil war”\textsuperscript{7}. Roger Scruton defined insurgency as a term “used in international law that describes an uprising against a constituted government that falls short of revolution, rebellion or civil war”\textsuperscript{8}.

However, continuous refinement and redefinition of the term could not separate the term from the terms like guerrilla war, rebellion, civil war, or revolution. Wherever it was tried to be studied independent, ultimately all these terms merged with each other. The first ever study to deal with insurgency as a separate concept was attempted by David Galula. In his book \textit{Counterinsurgency Warfare} he defined insurgency as,

“…. an insurgency is a protracted struggle conducted methodically, step by step, in order to attain specific intermediate objectives, leading finally to overthrow of the existing order (China, 1927-49; Greece, 1945-50; Indochina, 1945-54; Malaya, 1948-60; Algeria, 1954-62). To be sure, it can no more be predicted than a revolution; in fact, its beginnings are so vague that to determine exactly when an insurgency starts is a difficult legal, political and historical problem…. An insurgency is usually slow to develop and is not an

\textsuperscript{6} For details see Donald W. Hamilton, \textit{The Art of Insurgency}, (Prager, Westport( London), 1998), p. 14
\textsuperscript{7} See Jack. C. Plano, et.al, \textit{Political Science Dictionary}, as cited in Ibid,
accident, for in an insurgency leaders appear and then the masses are made to move”\textsuperscript{9}.

Though Galula tried to deal with insurgency independently, but he ended up with somehow with the concept of ‘revolution’. His very statement, “insurgency cannot more be predicted than a revolution”, makes it clear. Further, on the one hand he defined insurgency as a vague movement, since the emergence cannot be predicted, and on the other he said, insurgency starts slowly. It shows lack of clarity in the definition. However, his definition, towards the end stated as a planned movement against the government. His definition remains unclear as he does not distinguish between insurgency and other terms like revolution, rebellion, civil war, and guerrilla war.

In the year 1967, Julian Pagets in his book “\textit{Counter-Insurgency Operations}” defined insurgency as “a kind of armed rebellion against a government. Here the rebels have the support or acquiescence of a substantial section of the populace; the method they adopt to achieve their aim to overthrow the government may include guerrilla warfare, but insurgents may equally well resort to civil disobedience, sabotage or terrorist tactics”\textsuperscript{10}. This definition by Paget, also does not clearly mention the nature of warfare the insurgents adopt, though he tells them in an abstract sense. The definition by Bard E O’Neill, states an insurgency as “a struggle between a non-ruling group and the ruling authorities in which the former consciously employs political resources, (organizational

\textsuperscript{9} See David Galula, \textit{Counter-Insurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice}, as cited in Donald W. Hamilton’s, No-1, P. 15.

skills, propaganda and/or demonstrations) and instruments of violence to establish legitimacy for some aspects of the political system it considers illegitimate. In this definition the major focus has been given to the concepts like legitimacy, violent means of struggle and engagement of political resources during the movement. Insurgency, according to Paul Wilkinson, “is a relatively value-neutral concept denoting a rebellion or rising against any government in power or the civil authorities”. By giving this definition, Wilkinson also stressed on the point that, although the idea of rising against the government may appear to imply a large popular movement, in reality many insurgencies have involved very small numbers of rebels. Donald W. Hamilton, in his book defined insurgency as a, “political-military conflict waged against a specific faction(s), implementing irregular military actions in support of a unified political outcome, short of revolution and civil war”. Talking about the methods and forms of warfare used in an insurgency, he said, “while regular military forces may be employed, irregular operations rooted in political subversion, selective terrorism, and guerrilla operations play an integral, if not primary role in the outcome. Political subversion, selective terrorism and guerrilla operations are then tactics that, when combined, may or may not represent an insurgency. Further, on the objectives of an insurgent movement he said, “The objective of insurgency is to force political social upheaval, in an organized

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13. Ibid.
14. See Donald W. Hamilton, No-6, p. 21
15. Ibid.
fashion, for the express purpose of validating a cause, and therefore justifying its violent means”\textsuperscript{16}.

Hamilton’s definition clearly distinguishes between the insurgency, civil war and revolution. The methods used by the insurgents are also clearly mentioned. But when it comes to the objectives of the insurgent movements, he sounds to be very abstract. Because the objectives of insurgent movements are not only to create political-social upheavals, but for a complete change in the system/regime/government or a separate statehood. The methods used by the insurgents do not remain static (only political subversion, selective terrorism, guerrilla warfare) but keep changing depending upon the environment, political system of a country and on the strength and stage of an insurgent movement.

Like Hamilton’s all the definitions discussed above have tried to address insurgency as an independent concept. But most of the definitions addressed the concept keeping in mind how a counter-insurgency operation to be carried out against it. It is interesting to note that most of the definitions given by the Americans had pragmatic interest\textsuperscript{17}. In the cold war period most of the insurgent movements operated against the foreign power’s control over a particular country. But in the post-cold war period, insurgent movements were largely intra-country affairs. Violent movements against a particular government/regime or for a demand of a separate statehood, equal status for an ethnic/religious section of the society, have been predominant objectives of the

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.} \\
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{17} Studying ‘insurgency’ was first initiated by the Military Department of the United States of America. Thus all the above mentioned thinkers addressed and defined the insurgency keeping in mind how the US forces would fight against them.}
insurgent movements. The methods and forms of warfare have changed according to the demands and physical, political and social environments of a country. So taking into consideration all these matters, the term ‘insurgency’ needs to be defined as a separate and independent concept.

There are certain common elements, among the definitions, discussed above. One of the most striking commonality among these definitions is the use of violent means in an insurgent movement. Second commonality is the use of guerrilla warfare and the third being, challenging the authority of a government or regime. Thus, taking these commonalities into consideration and keeping in mind the nature of insurgencies in post-cold war period, insurgency can be defined as a consciously planned violent movement by an anti-establishment group against a government or regime, which it considers as illegitimate, or the movement starts up with a demand for a total change in the system, emancipation of a particular ethnic/religious section or else for a separate statehood. The objective of the very movement is clear from the very beginning. The methods and forms of warfare keep on changing according to the feasibility of the movement. Insurgencies, these days no longer remain to be low scale wars. Because with the process of development of technology and information, availability and accessibility to modern, sophisticated weapons have become easier than before. Large scale poverty and sense of ethnicity feeling have provided the insurgent leadership to draw popular support in both active and passive ways. So the insurgent groups are popular and have their means to wage a war against the state, where/whenever needed. An insurgent movement can be secessionist, nationalist, ethno-nationalist, reformist or conservative in nature. Most of
the insurgent movements are mobilized through an ideology. Thus to substitute the term with the terms like revolution, rebellion, civil war, would be inappropriate.

**Distinguishing Insurgency**

Since the insurgency as a term been substituted with other terms it is necessary to differentiate them between insurgency. When terms like *Coup'Dé’ tat*, putsch or plot are occasionally used interchangeably with insurgency, terms like guerrilla warfare, civil war, revolution and terrorism are frequently used. To start with, the basic difference between a coup d’état, putsch or plot and insurgency is that the masses participate in the case of an insurgency. Whereas, the preparation and time taken in a coup or putsch remains a secret among a few. For example, coup, like a palace revolution the plotters strike at the last lightning act to seize power at the highest level by depriving, over powering or eliminating those in authority. Basically coups take place in an authoritarian regime or by one elite group against other in power. Since insurgency is larger in size, involves masses with it and follows certain ideology and forms of warfare, would no way can be substituted with coup d’état.

‘Revolution’ has been used interchangeably with insurgency more than any other term. The politics of substituting ‘revolution’ with insurgency is that, people who are insurgents or sympathizers of an insurgent movement have a negative notion towards the term ‘insurgency’. The activities of an insurgency would prefer to be called as a revolutionary rather than an insurgent. In this regard, Khimlal Devkote (a Maoist leader of Nepal and member of Interim Legislature/parliament Nepal) said that, the Maoists of

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Nepal should not be called as insurgents but as revolutionaries, since they fought for a cause and brought drastic change in Nepal”\textsuperscript{19}. However, Devkote’s views do not carry sufficient justification for the same. There are some fundamental differences between insurgency and revolution.

Paradoxically, revolution as an English word entered into dictionary in about 1600, meaning ‘restoration of the old order’. But the modern revolution in its crude form means a sudden fundamental change in any field; social-economic-political. Accordingly, in a political sphere, a sudden change in the government/regime or authority can be called as a revolution. So a political revolution can cause the “sudden overthrow of the established authority aimed at fundamental changes in social order”\textsuperscript{20}. Though not entirely unexpected, the outburst in a revolution starts without any clear direction and involves unorganized participation of masses. One cannot undermine the deeper causes of all revolutions. The point here is a revolution does not start planned. But the conditions that cause a revolution can be felt. It is equally difficult to foresee and predetermine its timing of eruption and changes of success. Because the revolutionary environment may continue indefinitely without any stirrings at all. Violence, which plays a pre-dominant role in an insurgency, cannot be an inescapable element of revolution. For example, the ‘Glorious revolution’ in England was carried out without a single drop of bloodshed.

Coming to the concept in the latter half of twentieth and twenty first century, ‘Leftist Revolution’ has been predominant. The ‘Marxist-Leninist-Maoist

\textsuperscript{19} Interview by the researcher with Khimlal Devkote, on 17\textsuperscript{th} February 2008.
revolutionaries’ have set up parameters to be evaluated as a revolution. For the Marxist all the nationalist revolutions against the foreign powers should not be called as complete revolution, since they were fought by the bourgeois and the reactionaries. These days, according to the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ‘A New Democratic Revolution’ to be fought in order to fight against, imperialism, capitalism and feudalism in one go. The proponents of this kind of revolutions like, Lenin, Mao, Giap, Che-Guevera and Derhy consider revolution on the above mentioned lines. the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist of South Asian region in particular and others in general would include any insurgent movement against a non-communist authority as a revolutionary war.\(^{21}\) To put the conceptualization framework of a revolution, one can say, revolution is a sudden phenomena aiming not necessarily a total change in the government/regime, though the factors/causes leading to a revolution may be long pending. Taking the earlier given definition of an insurgency, to substitute the terms, revolution and insurgency would be in appropriate.

Another term, which has been frequently used as a substitute to the term insurgency, is ‘terrorism’. To define the term ‘terrorism’ is a difficult and controversial task. If somebody goes by the literal meaning of the term, use of terror by a group may be called as terrorism. Accordingly, use of terror method is never confined to a non-ruling group. Historically, states/regime/governments have conducted terror on a far more massive and lethal scale than the groups. They have employed terror as a weapon of tyranny and repression and as an instrument of war.\(^{22}\) The politics, as Wilkinsion rightly mentioned, is a state’s use of terror is not referred to as terror, while sub-state terror is


\(^{22}\) See Paul Wilkinson, No-12, p. 19.
referred to as terrorism\textsuperscript{23}. In the similar way, most of the time insurgency is substituted with terrorism because of a tendency by some practitioners in the discipline to politicize the term. They carry out the politics by condemning insurgents by labeling their actions as ‘terrorism’ and the actors as terrorist in order to delegitimize their political struggle and any genuine grievances they may express. But in spite of the wide use of both the terms interchangeably, still both the terms remain to be different.

To give an exact definition of terrorism is a difficult task that has eluded definition till date. But we can make some substantial difference between insurgency and terrorism by analyzing the operative methods and forms of both. To start with the military strategies of both, one would find while the strategies involved in an insurgency are more or less open; in the case of terrorism they remain to be secretive. An insurgency, as mentioned earlier, aims at more or less conventional order of battle. Most of the time the insurgents confront the state armed forces. The organization of an insurgency is large, supported by masses of the people. And an insurgency gets involved in both rural and urban method of warfare. The goal and objective of an insurgency remains to be either change in government or a separate statehood. But in the case of terrorism, the terrorist groups are highly secretive about their infrastructure. Mainly, the infrastructure/organization of a terrorist group is broken into small, compartmentalized cells. At the same time, these small cells carry out their activities as anonymously as possible. The terrorist do not go to engage in a direct combat against the state armed forces. According to Walter Laqueur, this is due to the fact that terrorists invariably are badly defeated in clashes with regular forces. So it is ‘less risky’ for them to “direct their

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid.
operation against the civilian population...”24. Focusing on the aims and objectives of a terrorist military strategy, Walter Laquer says, unlike insurgency, terrorism is a “strategy of provocation, rather than aiming to defeat government forces in battle or seizing political power. It is therefore, intended to cause political, social and economic disruption in the threatened society not its takeover”25.

Whatever may be the military strategy of a terrorist group, the term terrorism has become a much talked political term especially in international arena. Particularly after the 9/11 incident, number of definitions have come out to understand terrorism. One such definition is given by Paul R. Pillar. According to him, “terrorism is a pre-meditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatants by sub-national groups or clandestine agents usually intended to influence an audience”26. Responding to this definition, S.D. Muni was right to mention that, all the key components of this definition (pre-meditated, politically-motivated, non-combatants, sub-national groups or clandestine agents) are prone to subjective interpretation27. As it has already been mentioned, as the above definition suggests, having biases against the non-state actors only responsible for terrorism will be too hard to endorse. The US endorsed interpretation of terrorism, need not to be applied to all sorts of violent movements. Because, US’s policy of fighting against the ‘global terrorism’ was more or less directed against ‘Islamic Terrorism’. Moreover, to understand, terrorism as a violent action against the innocent civilians also does not give a logical argument. Because if at all this interpretation has to be taken, the

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27. For details see S. D. Muni, Ibid, P. 13.
post 9/11 US also employed organized and planned terrorism in the name of global strategic restructuring. At the same time, it is also hard to distinguish between global/universal terrorism and local/domestic terrorism. As the definitions of both kind of terrorism go, the one which involves the citizens of more than one country is called as universal/global terrorism. Whereas a local/domestic terrorism is confined within the border of one country, sometimes within a particular locality in the country\(^{28}\). In reality, however, it is hard to find a significant terrorist group which remains purely domestic. Because, any significant terrorist group actively seeks help in terms of political support, weapon, financial assistance or/and sanctuary beyond its border.

Coming to the South Asian countries like, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Bhutan, one would find, (as declared by the respective governments and called by most of the scholars) many terrorist groups. Groups like Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) in Nepal, Liberation of Tamil Tigers Elam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka, ULFA, NSCN, Communist Party of India (Maoist) in India, Jehadist in Pakistan, are often branded as terrorist groups, not only by the government authorities, but also by the scholars. Prof S.D. Muni divides the South Asian groups into two types. Under the first type, there is Jehadi Terrorism as a source of terrorism. Secondly, there are other types of terrorism like the Naxalites and Insurgencies in India’s north-east, the Maoist in Nepal, the LTTE in Sri Lanka, etc.\(^{29}\). There lies a great deal of confusion among the scholars to distinguish between insurgency and terrorism.

\(^{28}\). See Paul Wilkinson, No-12, p. 19.
It is not surprising that the insurgents also apply terror caused by both the insurgent groups and the terrorist groups may turn to be same. But still there are differences between the two. The insurgent groups, through their guerrilla warfare may sound secretive like the terrorist, but in actual they are not. Because through guerrilla warfare, an insurgent group develops itself to fight a conventional war. Unlike a terrorist group all the branches of its organization act synonymous according to the order of the central order. Whereas the small and compartmentalized cells of a terrorist group fight anonymously. Seizing of power or complete change in a political system is not necessarily an objective of a terrorist group, whereas it remains the main objective of an insurgency.

Like terms like terrorism, revolution, ‘civil war’ is also used as a substitute to insurgency. A civil war splits resources and even territory divided for a further contest of power through conventional process over the entire country. However, all the insurgent groups may develop their strength to a capacity which may cause a civil war in a country. The insurgents can become parallel power force only when there is a weak army, weak government or the insurgent group having extra-ordinary ammunition and people’s support. The Maoist insurgency in Nepal could grow to a level where it was parallel to the Royal Nepalese Army because, they had similar sophisticated weapon and the mass support with them. Civil war also can develop between the traditionalists and radicals, revolutionaries and counter-revolutionaries legal authorities and groups, community and region. So a civil war cannot be substituted as an insurgency, because an insurgency can

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only reach a civil war situation when it has power almost equal to that of a government/regime.

**Types of Insurgency**

As there are different causes for the emergence of an insurgency, there are also different motives and goals of each insurgent movement. The nature of every insurgent movement may not be the same. Thus, depending upon the ultimate goals of the insurgents and relating to the political aspects of them, there could be six types of insurgent movements\(^\text{31}\). First, the **Secessionist** insurgents. Insurgents under this category reject the existing political community and prefer to withdraw from it. And they want to constitute a new autonomous political community. Secondly, the **Revolutionary**. They seek for a radical change in a social structure within a existing political community. The third types of insurgents are the **Restorational** in nature. These insurgents seek to displace the regime, the values and structures they champion are identified with a recent political order. In this case the values are ascriptive and elitist while the structures are oligarchic ones that have little or no provisions for mass participation in politics. Fourth type of insurgents is **reactionary** insurgents. Although, the insurgents under this type seek to change the regime by reconstituting a past political order, their repristination relates to an idealized, golden age of the distant past in which religious values and authoritarian structures were predominant. Fifthly, there are **conservative** insurgents who seek to maintain the existing regime in the face of pressures on the authorities to change it. Finally, there are **reformist** insurgents. These insurgents attempt to obtain more political, social and economic benefits without necessarily rejecting the political community,

\(^{31}\) For details of the *Types of insurgent movements* see Bard E O’Neill, No-11, pp. 8-9.
regime or authorities. They are primarily concerned with policies that are considered discriminatory.

In addition to the above mentioned six types of insurgencies, ethno-nationalist insurgent groups remain to be dominant in present scenario. Despite the Marxist preoccupation with socio-economic class as the prime referent for the analysis of social conflict, it is ethnic identity which has provided a far more durable and powerful influence on human behavior. And moreover, despite all the powerful forces of globalization and talk of a new global ‘mass culture’, the reality is that the ethnic distinctiveness remains as an important factor for insurgency kind of conflict. The factors like discrimination against the ethnic groups, arbitrary fixing of boundaries without taking into the consideration of the homogeneity of the ethnic or tribal groups, rise of charismatic ethnic leaders have encouraged insurgencies throughout the world. These Ethno-Nationalist ethnic insurgent mostly fight either against a state or regime in order to reestablish their ethnic identity or sometimes behave like the secessionists to withdraw from a state and establish their own state. Insurgent groups like Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagalim (NSCN) in India, Magar Liberation Front in Nepal, United Liberation Front of Asam (ULFA) in India, Liberation Front of Tamil Tigers Ealem (LTTE) are some of the examples of this kind.

**Insurgency and Forms of Warfare**

Violence, irrespective of the types of the insurgency, remains to be the constant and main component of an insurgency. Armed struggle, waged through an insurgency, against the

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32. See Paul Wilkinson, No-12, pp. 8-9.
regime or the state are of different types. When we talk about the types of warfare the insurgents employ to reach their goal, two types of warfare come to the picture. They are (1) Guerrilla warfare and (2) Terrorist warfare.

Guerrilla Warfare:

Guerrilla warfare by the insurgent groups can be analyzed as an irregular combatant force employing tactics such as surprise violent action and elusiveness. And these tactics may be supported entirely from resources within the operational areas or in varying degree by external sources. Most guerilla warfare is rural in the sense that it is carried out by a rural-based rebel movement intent on causing the collapse of central government.

However, guerrilla warfare is not a self-sufficient method of warfare for achieving victory. At the same time most of the insurgent movement have moved through a guerrilla warfare phase and have finally developed into a conventional warfare phase. In guerrilla warfare the insurgents target the government’s armed forces, police, or their support units and in some cases, key economic targets. In most cases, the insurgents in this warfare do not target the unarmed civilians. While most of the guerrilla warfare is rural, yet sometimes the guerrillas do attack the urban area as one of their tactics, in a deliberate effort to prove the authorities into a counter insurgent overreaction, thereby inducing an effect on domestic and international opinion favorable to the guerrillas\textsuperscript{33}. Though the guerrilla warfare proved to be effective in many cases, still it has been used as an auxiliary method for the large scale insurgents.

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid. p. 11.
Terrorist Warfare: Unlike the terminology for guerrilla warfare, the definition of the term terrorism is highly controversial. This is not due to any conceptual issues or problems associated with the term as such. But because of a tendency by some to politicize the term, condemning insurgents by labeling their actions as ‘terrorism’ and the actors as ‘terrorist’ in order to delegitimize their political struggle and any genuine grievances they may express. However, terrorist as a form of insurgent warfare is directed against unarmed civilians rather than enemy military units or economic assets. Through this kind of warfare the insurgents are involved in the use of systematic, arbitrary, and amoral violence. Terrorism as a form of warfare of the insurgents, is a ‘strategy of provocation’ rather than aiming to defeat government forces in or seizing political power. It is therefore intended to cause ‘political, social and economic disruption’ in the threatened society, not its takeover.

In addition to the definitional distinction between guerrilla warfare and terrorism warfare, the two forms of warfare are also distinguished by their military strategy. Guerrilla follows a more or less conventional order of battle, rules of engagement, tactics, operations, logistics, training and military objectives, namely, the eventual defeat of government forces on the rural and urban battlefield. In fact, as rightly mentioned by Bard E.O.’Neill, it is the ultimate goal of guerrilla armies eventually to “make a transition into conventional warfare… to achieve success”. Thus there is little mystery concerning the identity or development of guerrilla forces, although guerrilla troops attempt to blend in with local villagers between battles. On the other hand, terrorism as a form of violence

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34. For details see Walter Laquer, The Age of Terrorism, No-23.
is secretive about its organizational structure. It is broken into small compartmentalized cells. Furthermore, while terrorist group might attack members of police forces, it is generally willing to engage units of armed in direct combat, terrorism can be viewed as a weapon of the weak. Compared to the terrorist cells, the guerrilla units are larger.

In spite of these basic differences, there are certain similarities between both types of warfare. In the first place, the guerrilla armies occasionally engage in acts of terrorism. In addition to this both types of warfare hope that, their violent actions will lead to an intensification of repressive political and legal counter measures by the government, in order to alienate the population from the regime, thus resulting in greater support for the insurgents. Moreover, while both types of insurgenies operate outside the democratic political system’s legal and constitutional boundaries, they generally use as surrogates, legal political fronts to agitate for their cause. This political agitation is intended to generate legitimacy and popular support for their movement, generally by espousing certain grievances and goals.

Apart from guerrilla and terrorism as major forms of warfare, conventional warfare and sabotage are also used by the insurgents as their forms of warfare. Whether an insurgent group would move into the conventional war depends on the nature of the insurgency i.e. auxiliary or independent. In the case of an auxiliary insurgent movement, the insurgents do not have to defeat the army. Rather a regular army will be charged with that mission. But an independent insurgent group has its strategic aims and must rely largely on its own capabilities in order to success. Hence, it has pre-conceived that insurgencies are low intensity conflict and mostly avoid following the conventional
warfare. But some insurgent groups have the manpower and sophisticated weapons to enable them to resort to full-scale conventional warfare.

Sabotage, on the other hand, as a form of warfare, used in both low intensity conflict and full scale conventional war. Unlike the other forms of warfare discussed above, it does not aim at loss of life or target any particular individual. Rather, it aims at deliberate destruction, disruption or damage of equipment, power supplies, communications and other facilities, sabotage being an extremely low-cost, potentially high-yield means of inflicting damage on an enemy, has been frequently used as a form of warfare by the modern insurgents.

**Strategies of Insurgencies**

Strategies in an insurgency are skillfully planned to carry out the movement against the enemy state. To have a clear cut ‘strategy’ in warfare is not a recent phenomenon. Rather, scholars like Sun Tzu mentioned about strategies in way back in 300 B.C. However, revolutionary leaders, during 20th century have given importance on ‘strategy’ to wage violent movement against the enemy state, which is supposed to be more powerful than the insurgents. After the successful of the movements guided by left ideologies in Russia, China and some parts of Latin America by the leaders like Lenin, Mao and Che, most of the given by them. Besides, the strategies given by the above mentioned leaders, there are some insurgent movements who follow their own strategies. Taking into consideration of the usage of the strategies followed by the insurgent movements, they can be divided on the following heads. They are:
The Leninist Strategy: Since Lenin advocated an urban insurrection, the insurgents believe in Leninist strategy, concentrate their activities in urban centers which have political and economic power. These insurgents believe that a disciplined, organized small conspiratorial group must have obtained support from major discontent the groups like military and working class. The Leninist insurgents assume that, since the government is alienated from its population, hence it will capitulate when confronted by low-levels terrorism, subversions, government offices and other state institutions. Leninist insurgents give importance to conspiratorial organization combined with active support from selected social groups. However, the regimes and authorities, having substantial legitimacy and effective control over army and police, the Leninist strategy does not appear promising.

The Maoist Strategy: Mao, during the great Cultural Revolution in China, talked about the insurgents strategies in a most elaborative way than any other reader. To look into the strategic ideas by Mao one would find them as highly sequential. Three main elements, the Maoist insurgents give importance are: popular support, organization and the environment. In addition to that, as Mao advocated, these insurgents follow three stages of warfare: terrorism, guerrilla warfare, and mobile-conventional warfare.

To start with, the Maoist insurgents go for creating cellular network around which the guerrilla builds political propaganda groups. These groups try to win popular support and trains teams of terrorist to engage in selective intimidation of recalcitrant individuals. Once these cellular networks are organized, the insurgent, go for the

37. Ibid. p. 28.
recruitment of local leaders. Local leaders, once in the organization, will go forth and attempt to detach people from the government. At the initial phase of warfare the Maoist insurgents prefer to wage the terror methods, where the insurgent organization and the terrain are not suitable or sufficient for guerrilla warfare. However, guerrilla warfare is the second stage in the Maoist scheme. Earlier to this stage, the insurgents fight by armed government control is weak. One of the major tasks through the guerrilla warfare is to secure base area. Deceiving the government, large-scale guerrilla warfare attacks are the main tactical moves by the insurgents during this stage to purpose for the mobile-conventional war. The final stage, the Maoist insurgents follow, is civil war. The objective at this point is displacement of regime and authority. Civil war is a situation where virtually there are two arm forces fighting against each other, the insurgent forces and the state army. However, for the Maoist insurgents, external support has an ambiguous place in their strategic framework. As Mao prescribed there strategic phases for, what he called, protracted war, each Maoist insurgent group more or less follow them. They are: a period of strategic defense and retreat. Secondly, a long period of stalemate, during which the insurgents would build up their forces. And thirdly, a strategic counter offensive phase, where the people’s army would attack the enemies and would achieve victory. Mao’s ideas on the strategies have been widely accepted and practiced by many insurgent groups, particularly in countries like India, Nepal, Burma and Bangladesh.

**The Cuban Strategy:** When Mao’s ideas on strategy are widely accepted, an alternative and different strategic idea was given by Che Guevara. Che Guevara, a much publicized figure in the insurgent folklore, prescribed a different strategy for the insurgents. This is
otherwise known as the Cuban model. Che, in his book *Guerrilla Warfare*, commented on three fundamental lessons for conducting insurgency. They are: (1) popular forces can win a war against the army. (2) It is not necessary to wait until all the conditions for making revolution exist; the insurrection can create them. (3) In underdeveloped America the countryside is the basic area for armed fighting\(^\text{38}\).

From the above ideas, ideas number first and third sound more or less similar to Mao. The way emphasized on the Mass, Guevera spoke of popularity. Mao’s idea of surrounding on the cities from the rural areas concides with that of Che’s idea of starting the revolution from the country side of America. In spite of some similarities with Mao’s idea, the Cuban model by Che differed fundamentally in certain aspects. Contradicting Mao’s idea to wait for the precondition, Che believed, thirty to fifty men, were adequate to start an army rebellion in Latin American countries, given “their conditions of favorable terrain of operations, hanger of land, repeated attacks upon justice, etc”\(^\text{39}\). One of the major characteristics of Cuban model was that, it gave primary emphasis on guerrilla over the party. To, Guevera, the guerrilla forces was a political embryo from which the party could arise. To put it in another way, in the Cuban model military priorities takes precedence over politics. Accordingly, the insurgents, who follow the Cuban strategy believe in the guerrilla warfare and give importance on the military activism to politics.

**Urban Strategy:** As the name suggests, urban insurgents situate their conflict area, at the initial phase, in the cities. Because they assume that the increased size and socio-

\(^{39}\) Ibid, p. 112.
economic differentiation of urban centres make them especially vulnerable to terrorism and sabotage. Similar to the Maoist and Cuban strategy, urban strategy also believes in popular support and erosion of the enemy’s will to resist. So far as the strategy of the urban insurgent is concerned, they like to “turn political crisis into armed conflict by performing violent actions that will force those in power to transform the political situation of the country into a military situation. And that will alienate the masses who, from them on will revolt against the army and the police and thus blame them ‘for this state of things’40. Organizationally, these insurgents rely on small cells with a link man and give stress on organization, propaganda and terrorism as their techniques.

The success and the effect of the urban strategy do not seem clear. Because Marighella, the foremost proponent of this theory, himself acknowledged the function of the urban insurgent strategy is to tie down the government forces in the cities. And this would permit the emergence and survival of the guerrilla warfare, “which is destined to play the decisive role in the revolutionary war”41. This statement of Marghella takes urban insurgents to get the popular support takes them back to the rural areas.

From the above mentioned strategies, it has become clear that, popular support and the guerrilla warfare and the use of terror are common to each category. On the question of an organization, when the Leninist, Maoist and Urban give stress on, the Cubans give stress on the military actions, party has been made a sub-servant to the guerrillas. Irrespective of the difference, one point, every strategy agrees on the use of force against

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the enemy state to displace it. Insurgencies, irrespective of whatever strategy and method of warfare they follow, always aim at victory of the movement. They use these strategies and methods in order to maximize the effectiveness of their political techniques and violence. At the same time along with the strategies and methods of warfare, there are certain other variables which have major impacts on the outcome of the insurgencies. Taking into considerations of the studies on different insurgent movements, Bard E. O’Neill has divided these variables into six categories. They are:

First, the popular support plays an important role in every insurgent movement. Starting from the leaders like Mao to the leaders of Maoists in Nepal, Prachanda has given stress on the popular support/mass. Giving stress on the mass Mao said, “The richest source of power to wage war lies in the masses of the people”42. Popular support can be active or passive in nature. The active supporters do participate actively in waging a war against the state where as the passive supporters only follow the insurgency cause and add the strength of the insurgents as they oppose the regime or the government the insurgents fighting against. There are different means applied by different insurgent groups to draw the support of the people. Leaders like Mao and Lenin had charisma along with the ideological superiority over any other contemporary leaders. At the same time Lenin’s ideas on imperialism also got support from the third world countries. Some insurgent groups use terror methods to force the people to support them. On the other hand, insurgents also get support through the counter-terrorism measures of the government. By showing their potency through demonstrations, the insurgents also get

42 For details see Selected Military Writings of Mao-Tse-Tung, (Foreign language Press, Peking, 1963), p. 260.
popular support. However popular support not only makes an insurgency successful but also it proves the government or regime in power as illegitimate.

Second major factor that enables the insurgents fight against a superior army is their organization. As it has been discussed earlier, Lenin had given too much stress on disciplined and a cohesive organization to wage a war against the enemy state. Mao also gave stress on an organization for his protracted war. For Mao, the organization is superior to the guerrillas in ‘people’s war’. Prachanda, the Maoist leader from Nepal, while taking on the importance of an organization, where, there is no democracy, or structure is based on ‘hierarchy’ can lead towards destruction. Hence in an insurgency, an organization, properly disciplined, extremely cohesive and democratized would lead the movement to victory.

Thirdly, cohesion, among the insurgents’ decides the outcome of the insurgency. Most of the insurgent movements have leaders with ranks. At the same time they have also organizations starting from local level to the central level. Hence, unity among the ranks and different organizations are needed for a smooth functioning of the insurgency. Integrated strategy and discipline also needed for the positive outcome of the insurgency. Though, lack of unity always does not lead to the failure but it may seriously cause the ideological division among the insurgents. For example, separation of col. karuna from LTTE cost heavily to the LTTE leadership in Srilanka. Factors like, recruiting the insurgents of same ideological affection, democratic format of the organization, integrated strategy, would help maintain cohesiveness in an insurgent organization.
The fourth major variable that helps an insurgency is the external support. There are instances of USSR and China’s several insurgent groups. When we talk about the external support to an insurgent group we talk about moral, political, material or sanctuary. When an insurgent movement gets external moral support, hardly the donor country is involved into it. In this case support remains to be public acknowledgement or/and at best recognition of the donor government that the movement is just and admirable. The political support helps the insurgent movement in a great deal. It not only gives open recognition to a movement but also may encourage other countries to render support to that insurgency in some or all aspects. Material external support is one of the best kinds of support an insurgent group gets. Material assistance in terms of weapons, ammunitions, financial, training etc. helps the insurgent to grow the movement larger in size and intensity. Most of the time insurgent groups get this kind of support not only from the external government, but also from the similar kind of insurgent group of neighboring countries. for example, insurgent groups of India like ULFA, BODO, NSCN, get support from similar minded groups of Pakistan, Bangladesh, Burma, etc. similarly, when an external country provides sanctuary to an insurgent group that becomes, can easily organize, plan and execute their operation and better. For example, insurgent groups like ULFA and NSCN are given sanctuaries in countries like Bangladesh and Burma. The Maoist of Nepal was allegedly given sanctuary in India. Thus, external support to an insurgent group gives positive outcome for the movement.

Fifthly, environment is a major variable to access an insurgency, environment, here, means, the terrain, climate, the road and communication network, ethnicity, religion, culture, size of the country and quantity and distribution of the country. This also takes
the political system of that country into consideration. Countries with stable political system, and where the government or the regime has effective control over the army and state machineries, may not be suitable for the insurgencies. Similarly, countries, well connected by road, good transportation system, and good communication are of less suitable for the insurgencies. Physical environment, like rugged terrain, vast mountain, jungles, swamps, forests is usually favorable for the insurgents. Because not only this kind of environment suits the guerrillas but also obstructs the government troops to carry out their operations. Rugged Mountain ranges in western Nepal, forest areas in the north-east of India have provided suitable environment for the insurgents in Nepal and India respectively. Countries, where majority of the population live in the rural areas are suitable for the insurgents. But the countries where, the population is small and concentrated, it is easier for the government to control the people and sever their links with the insurgents. Similarly, the ethnic groups, hence a positive factor for them.

Sixth variable to assess an insurgency is the role of the government. Most of the time success of the insurgency is not determined by how the insurgents operate, but how the government responds it. The insurgents apply various methods like terrorism, guerrilla warfare, and organizational activities to put the government in trouble. At the same time the insurgents also draw people’s support from the counter insurgency measures of the government. So how effectively the government deals with different techniques by the insurgent also matters for the success of the insurgent movement. For example, during the ‘Sija’ campaign by the Maoists in 1995, the government of Nepal lunched ‘Operation Romeo’ to suppress it. But it was counterproductive for the government of Nepal. The Maoist of Nepal was benefitted from this operation as the
common people supported the Maoists’ cause against the repressive state action. Besides, these effective developmental policies of the government would make people have trust in the government countries like Nepal and India, where one of the major demands of the insurgent groups is the issue of land distribution. The alleged claim of the land acquisition in few hands, and uneven distribution of land holding claims more people’s support for them. In these cases effective land reform policies and other developmental policies relating to agriculture would definitely be negative signal for the insurgents.

**Insurgency Movements in South Asia**

South Asia as a region has been prone to violent political conflicts, in the post colonialization era. These violent political conflicts in various forms have existed in almost every movement, religious extremism or terrorism, each country in South Asia experiences them in one form or the other. Religious extremism in countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh and India or the ‘Jehadist Terrorism’ by the Islamic forces is predominant during the recent period. Apart from the religious extremism, there are a number of ethno-nationalist insurgent movements in almost every country in this region. The ULFA, NSCN, MNF, NDFB of India, LTTE of Sri Lanka, Tharu Liberation Front, Magar Liberation Front of Nepal, Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) of Bangladesh, Balochi Tigers movement of Pakistan are some of the examples. When a religious violent movement/extremism in South Asia is carried out it has been, (consciously or subconsciously) branded as a terrorism. So ‘terrorism’ apart, the insurgencies in South Asia have always been colored with ethno-nationalist colour. Because every political state of South Asia is ethnically diverse and heterogeneous. For example in a religiously homogeneous state like Pakistan, there are four major ethnic groups. The Punjabis, the
Pasthuns (pathans), the Sindhis and the Baluchis. In addition to them the Urdu speaking Mohajirs who migrated from India also maintain a separate identity. Thus, forming a fifth ethno-linguistic group. Bangladesh, which looks like the most homogeneous in terms of ethnicity, but even so, there is an important minority of tribal people in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Similarly, relatively small countries like Nepal, is being ethnically more divided than any other country in the world. Sri Lanka has been facing its ethno-religious-linguistic problem in terms of LTTE ever since it became independent. India has been host to more than a hundred ethnic groups. Thus, a region with diverse ethnic-religious-linguistic groups is certainly entitled to experience insurgencies on these grounds.

Apart from the ethno-religious and nationalist insurgent movements, there are a number of insurgent movements on the basis of socio-economic and political development in a particular country. These movements are mostly mobilized or motivated by the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist ideology and call themselves as the Maoists. Though, there used to be a group similar to the Maoist, who used to be known as the Naxalites in India. The Maoist communist centre of Bihar, People’s War group (PWG) in Andhra Pradesh, Maoists in Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Maoist of Nepal are some of the examples of this kind of insurgent Groups. At the same time except the above mentioned Maoist insurgents, almost all other insurgent groups emerged with an aim of secession from the state or from some authority. There are some insurgent movements, like the Naxalism in the West Bengal of India which neither aimed for secession nor complete change in the political system but some fundamental change in the political system.
However, the dissertation, as the title suggests, aims at a detailed study on the Maoist insurgency movement in Nepal. This will be dealt with the following chapters. In this chapter, since it attempts to conceptualize the term ‘insurgency’ into South Asian content, some of the most unified state in south Asia. The source of political conflict in Bangladesh is not an insurgency but a conflict between religious supremacy and secular Bengali identity. Ever since a military coup that overthrow the Awami League government of Sheikh Mujib Rehman, the major struggle has been between more secular Bengali socio-cultural identity and religious identity based on Islam for Bangladesh. Thus, since study deals with insurgency aspect, Bangladesh is excluded in this chapter. Pakistan is different from any other South Asian country when it comes to the insurgency problems. In Pakistan, political violent conflicts are directed on a strong a religious ground, political changes, most of the time, take place through a military coup or a rebellion rather than through an insurgency. Outside actors (religious leaders) play important role than the insiders. Thus, Pakistan is not discussed in this study. So when the case of Nepal will be discussed holistically the followings of this chapter would discuss the insurgencies in Sri Lanka and India briefly.

**Insurgencies in India:**

Soon after the independence of India, it was threatened by a number of insurgent movements from its north-eastern part. These insurgent movements were secessionist in nature and threatened by mainly two states i.e. Nagaland and Mizoram.

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In Mizoram, the Mizoram National Front (MNF) was organized under the leadership of Laldenga demanding independence of Mizoram from India. It was clearly evident from the fact that, on 30th October 1965, Laldenga addressed a memorandum to Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, demanding independence for Mizoram and expressed his willingness to fight for it. The MNF through the Mizo National Army (MNA) raised the insurgency to such a level that, on 1st March 1966, it declared the independence of Mizoram and overran and took control of the entire territory of Mizoram.

To analyze the Mizo-insurgency against, one would find, it was one of the better organized and properly planned insurgencies of India. Started on a demand to be separate from Assam province, it addressed various causes of under development and especially the case of the famine that occurred in 1959. However, to put the variable, discussed earlier, responsible for the success of an insurgency, one would find the ineffective government response and policy that was responsible for this insurgency. The first ineffective policy of the government of India was not to address the famine problem effectively. Secondly, the then chief minister of Assam, Chaliha released Laldenga when he was arrested by the Assam police, on an allegation of his visit to East Pakistan. The other variables that helped the MNF to raise the insurgency successfully, was the external support in terms of arms, ammunitions, money and sanctuary from East Pakistan and China. The third factor suited the MNF was the physical environment of Mizoram. And the fourth factor was the popular support Laldenga gained through relief distribution.

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44. As mentioned by Vijendra Singh Jafa, “Insurgencies in North-East India”, in S.D. Muni(ed), Responding to Terrorism In South Asia, No-25, P.84.
45. For details see, ibid, pp. 82, 95, 97.
during the famine in 1958. However, this insurgency movement was put to an end by a counter-insurgency operation by the government of India.

Apart from the factors important for an insurgency movement, other elements which were necessary were also present in this case. This was a politically planned insurgency directed against the government of India for separation of the Mizo population on the basis of its ethnicity and underdevelopment. The method of warfare used in this case was mostly guerrilla warfare. Thus, Mizo insurgency can be called as an ethno-secessionist insurgent movement.

Insurgency in Nagaland erupted in the year 1955 with high intensity. The insurgents had a demand and objective of a separate Naga state out India authority. Initially in pre-independence period there were three groups who demanded a separate Naga-hill state from India. One group favoured immediate severance of all ties with India and independence of Nagaland. The second group advocated continuance of governmental relations with India till the Nagas were in a position to take up the reign of self government. And the third group wanted Nagaland to be a mandatory state under the British government for a given period. However, in the year 1947, the Nagas under the banner of Naga National Council (NNC) went through various talks with Indian National Congress leaders including Mahatma Gandhi for a separate state of Nagaland. The same was also continued with Prime Minister Nehru in the initial years of post-independence. But dejected with the talks and negotiations, NNC joined an-anti government group in Burma (Eastern Naga Revolutionary Council) under the leadership of council adopted violent means to demand for a separate state for the Nagas. In the year 1956, a parallel

government was formed by the Naga insurgents called ‘Naga Federal Government’. Phizo, the chairman of FGN was successful in having connection with Pakistan and some other western countries like United Kingdom to systematically wage the insurgency against Indian authority over Nagaland.

Starting from the year 1955 to 1975 the intensity of the violent in Nagaland was very high. In the year 1975, initiatives by the church leaders brought ‘Peace Mission’ proposal for the Nagaland problem. The Naga insurgents and the Government of India representatives met at Shillong on 11\textsuperscript{th} November 1975. According to ‘Shillong Accord’ the Naga Federal Government agreed to recognize the Indian constitution. It also agreed to solve the Naga problem within the framework of the Indian constitution and thereby surrender of men and weapons would have taken place\textsuperscript{47}.

However, the ‘Shillong Accord’ gave a setback to the insurgency waged by NNC and Eastern Naga Revolutionary Council. At the same time it also gave to another faction of group leading to the formation of a ‘Maoist’ group. A new militant faction called National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) was formed under the leadership of Thuingaleng Muivah. It set its head quarters in the Burmese jungle territory adjacent to Nagaland. The NSCN led by T. Muivah came out with an attempt to Maoism giving an ideology back-up to Naga insurgency. The demands and activities of NSCN are vast. It uses all the available resources of modern world which are in their disposal. Beyond the demand for a separate state for Nagaland, the NSCN also proposes for a greater Nagaland taking the areas dominated by Nagas in Manipur and other adjunct districts.

To analyze the insurgencies by various Naga groups, one cannot say, those are ethnic by nature. Because, the sub-ethnic identities, these days, play a crucial role among the Nagas. The divided NSCN, (NSCN-IM), NSCN-K) and the Naga National Council and other factional groups do not see themselves as Nagas. Hostilities and killings between different groups have become common factor in Nagaland these days. The initial movement by Phizo can be called as an insurgency, because the objectives and the demand for a separate state were very clear. The groups like NSCN (IM) and NSCN (K) can be termed as militant outfits. NSCN (IM), as mentioned by Vijendra Singh Jafa, is engaged more into money making than to a political commitment, for which it emerged. According to him, NSCN (IM) imposes a ‘house tax’ on every dwelling unit and ‘professional tax’, on every government employee. Militant groups like this cannot be termed as an insurgent group.

United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) is another group which started as an insurgent group in Assam. ULFA is the military wing of the all Assam Student union (AASU). AASU emerged in Assam against the illegal migration of Bangladeshis into Assam. It will be important to note that, during 1950s and 1960s, it was one of the tacit encouragements of the congress government to allow illegal immigrants of Muslims from East-Pakistan to create vote bank. Against these illegal immigrants, AASU was formed and started an agitation in 1979. The main objective of the agitation was to delete the name of the illegal immigrants from the voter list. However, AASU was divided into two parts. One was the Assam Gana Parisad (AGP), the political wing and the ULFA as its

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49. See Vijendra Singh Jafa, No-43, p.94.
military wing. AGP established ULFA because, it perceived the congress might appropriate power illegally in the 1983 election. However, the immediate objective of ULFA was to fight against the Bangladeshi Muslim immigrants and to preserve the socio-cultural ethos of the Assamese. The ULFA grew to its maximum strength during the tenure of AGP government from 1983-1986. But within a period of five years from 1986, in 1991, ULFA ceased to be an insurgent group. it turned to be like any other military outfit existing for its own purpose or to help some political parties. In 1991, the congress party, which banned ULFA in 1990, bribed ULFA to help it winning the election. And it is clear from the fact that with ULFA’s help only, the congress led by Hiteshwar Saikia returned to power in 1991. Moreover, ULFA has its sanctuary in Bangladesh these days. Ironically, it emerged against the Bangladesh refugees and killed many of them. So militant groups like ULFA cannot be called as insurgents.

There are numbers of insurgency movements waged against the political system and authority of India under the communist movements of India. One of them was the Telengana struggle. Initially, the movement started with simple demands against eviction and oppressive feudal extortions. Subsequently, it was also directed against the police and the Nizam’s military. Among the various demands this armed struggle put one of them was for the communist ideology, it waged armed struggle throughout the Telengana region of Andhra Pradesh. Though the movement was called off in October 1951, it was one of the first struggles of this kind to become responsible to force the government to introduce land reforms.
Another type of insurgency problem, India has been facing for a long time is from the groups who call themselves as the Maoists. Influenced by the ideas of Mao, Marx and Lenin these groups carry our guerrilla type of war against the governments of different states of India. Presently, these groups are widespread covering nine states and 76 districts of India. The states where these groups are active are, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal. The most influential among the groups in these states are the Communist Party Marxist Leninist-People’s War Group of Andhra Pradesh and the Maoist Communist Centre (MCC-1) in Bihar. These two groups along with the other similar kind of groups are trying to extend their influence and operation in the newer areas like Tamilnadu, Karnataka and Kerala. The influence and the operation of these groups have extended to such an extent that, they have become a serious challenge for both the central and state governments. According to the Annual report of the Ministry of Home Affairs (2004-2005), Government of India, the Maoists have an assessed strength of 9,300 hardcore underground cadres holding around 6,500 regular weapons besides a large number of unlicensed country-made arms\(^{50}\).

Initially these groups operated separately under different names. In the year 2004 both the MCC and the PWG came under a single banner and created the Communist party of India (Maoist). The creation of the CPI (Maoist) is intended to set in motion a process to “pursue unity measures with all the genuine Maoists in the country”, with the objective of overthrowing the imperialist, the comprador bureaucratic bourgeoisie and the

\(^{50}\) See ‘Naxalism Persists’, *Dialogue*, Vol. 6, No. 4, April-June-2005, P. 15
big land lords\textsuperscript{51}. These Maoists’ ultimate aim for which they have waged an armed struggle is to capture political (state) power and to herald, what they called, a new democratic revolution and not for land or wages or \textit{man-samman}. The Maoist ideology and strategy finds fertile ground in the administrative and political vacuum that extends over vast areas of the country. In these areas the state is systematically and chronically failing to provide the public goods and services that is obliged-including the security of life and property, criminal justice and opportunities for social and economic growth\textsuperscript{52}.

The Maoist groups give decisions on various cases in the areas where they have their control through what they call \textit{jan Adalat} (people’s court). Talking about the methods of the warfare these groups follow are mostly guerrilla warfare. These groups mainly target the government officials like the police and the officers they think to be corrupt and against the welfare of the people. However, there are instances where these groups are also involved in the activities of money making and working for some of the political parties of India. Imposing taxes on the business persons and taking money, ‘professional tax’ from the government servants is also some of the activities these groups are involved in these days. To analyze the Maoists of India one would find, these groups can be called as insurgents. Because these groups fight for the cause of the land distribution, change in the political system and the seizure of power. The Maoists of India from the very beginning are against the constitutional democracy. At the same time their involvement with the activities like money making, helping the political parties winning elections certainly brands them more a military outfit than an insurgency.


\textsuperscript{52} See Ajai Sahani, “India’s Maoist Insurrection: Advancing in Waves”, \textit{Dialogue}, Vol. 6, No. 4, April-June-2005, p. 54
At the end to see the insurgent movements in India one would find except the Mizo insurgency, all other insurgencies have deviated from their stand in the course of time. Initially, the Naga insurgency by NNC was determined to separate Nagaland from India. The basis for the demand was the ethnic and political solidarity of the Naga population. But the emergence of the sub-ethnic identity among the Nagas and the division of the NSCN into two groups and the intra Naga fighting have left the movement by the NSCNs nowhere close to the insurgency. The activities and the operative methods these groups are adopting have forced the scholars to brand them as the terrorists. Similarly the ULFA has ceased to be an insurgent movement way back in 1991 when it helped the congress party to win the election. Thus, Indian insurgent movements start with an objective and in the course of their development there are deviations and detachments from the said objectives. One of the important variables that help all these movements to start and sustain in India is the ineffective administration and the inefficiency in dealing with the insurgents.

**Insurgency in Sri Lanka: The LTTE**

Insurgency in Sri Lanka by the Tamil section of the Sri Lankan population began in the full force in mid-1983. The insurgency in Sri Lanka by the Tamils has been carried out by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). There have been various measures by different Sri Lankan Governments to resolve it have not been successful either militarily or peacefully.
Although the insurgency by the LTTE broke out in 1983, its root causes accompanying tensions and riots began much earlier. To understand the root cause of the insurgency in Sri Lanka, one would find it lies in the strong centralized government which the country inherited from its previous British colonial ruler. The Tamils, both the Sri Lankan and the Indian, as a minority, became disenchanted when they discovered that their representatives had little power in the newly independent state. More specifically, the insurgency has been caused by the conflicting political aspirations over the future of the country’s Northern Province between the separatists, largely Hindu Tamil minority and the ruling Sinhalese Buddhist majority. Although the conflict between the two communities is rooted in the long history, it intensified in the early 1980s. Demands by the Tamils for a separate state called ‘Tamil Eelam’ (Tamil Nation) was raised in the country’s northern province with Jaffna as its capital. To the Tamils, political independence is perceived as a permanent solution to their status as an ethnically and宗教 distinct community that had become second class citizens in a predominantly Sinhalese society. As an example of such second class stature, the Tamils have felt disenfranchised by the emphasis by the Sinhalese as the country’s only official language53. Although, it was not explicitly demanded, the Tamil insurgents preferred that the Tamils who were dispersed throughout the country’s Sinhalese-dominated regions “regroup in areas of Tamil majority as a means of long-term survival”54.

Inter-communal clashes in the violent form between the Tamils and the Sinhalese started in the 1970s followed by the full-scale armed insurgency by the Tamils in the mid-1983. The insurgency movement by the LTTE has been using both the guerrilla and the modern conventional warfare against the Sri Lankan government forces. Within the Five years of its emergence the LTTE became one of the strongest and widely known insurgent movements in South Asia in particular and throughout the world in general. The LTTE could gain the popular support from the Tamil section and rise to the level where it could challenge the Sri Lankan government in all the ways possible. Insurgent movement by the LTTE by the time of 1990s came to such a position where it divided the country virtually into two parts, two armies and two governments. In this case one can say this is the example of an insurgent movement coming to the level of a civil war. The Tamil insurgency by the LTTE can be called as a secessionist type of insurgency. The factors which helped the LTTE growing successively are the popular support from the Sri Lankan Tamil population, physical environment of the northern province of Sri Lanka and the lack of the Sri Lankan government to deal with the Tamil problem and dealing with the LTTE in its initial stage. And lastly the most important factor that helped the LTTE was the moral, physical, financial help and the sanctuary by some sections of Tamils in India.

After discussing the insurgent movements in some of the South Asian countries, it emerges that, most of the insurgent movements are secessionist in nature. There are also the insurgencies based on the ethnic identity like the ones in the north east of India. Insurgencies mobilized by the left ideologies demand some fundamental changes in socio-politico-economic system. With this in mind they attempt at the seizure of power.
South Asia, as mentioned earlier, has been a region of many insurgent movements in the post-colonial period. Some of these movements do not conform to the definitional specificities alluded to by the Western scholars.