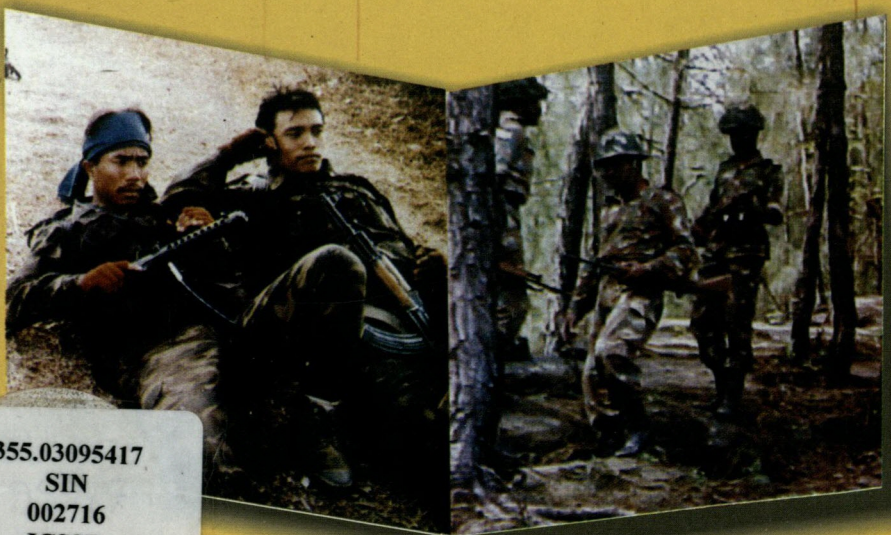


# **NATIONAL SECURITY PROBLEM IN INDIA:**

## **A CASE STUDY OF THE INSURGENCY PROBLEM IN NAGALAND AND MANIPUR**



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Internal security problems are no more a law and order problem in the present setting in most of the developing nations of the Post 1945 era, as it manifests into many forms like rebellion insurrection, terrorism etc. ultimately hampering developmental progress resulting into a fear- psychosis among the masses.

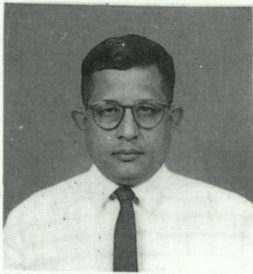
Such a situation is also a very fertile ground for attracting external elements and it has been happening as well. And in this juncture of circumstances, a proper and an adequate concept of the phrase National-security particularly for our country and generally for other newly emerged nations would be important.

There was a general feeling in many quarters that external security and internal security are two different entities. But assessing their inter-relationship in the context of many variables, these two come out as two sides of the same coin.

This work starts with an attempt to concretise an adequate concept of National Security particularly for India and generally for the other developing nations by finding out various parameters and project the status of terrorism in the present international spectrum.

And, reviewing the case study of Nagaland and Manipur situation, it traces the genesis of the two particular cases with an intention to find out probable solution in the form of two combined-approach namely Security policy matters and other options.

This study covers upto the period of the late eighties when the situation of the problem started Sky-rocketed. Further analysis will be covered in the next Volume which the author is now working on.

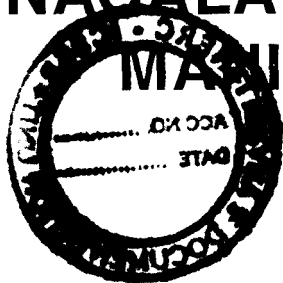


Born in the year 1958 to a family dedicated to a philosophy of pursuit for higher studies, **Dr. L. Randeep Singh**, after graduation from the Guwahati University completed his post graduation securing 2nd position in order of merit from the University of Pune and proceeded to Ph.D. in Defence and Strategic studies. To expand his horizon of knowledge, Dr. Singh had visited many institutions like International Institute for Strategic Studies (I.I.S.S.), (London) Oxford and Cambridge Universities (U.K.).

The present position as graduate and postgraduate teacher in the department of Defence and Strategic studies at Bhonsala Military College, Nashik-5 includes the task of looking after as Co-ordinator at the Bhonsala Research Centre for conflict and peace (B.R.C.C.P.) and side by side, the executive editor of DAKSH, a journal of the above centre on security studies.

The insurgency infested N-E. state of Manipur where he was born stimulated him to do research in the subject culminating into a thesis which is now being published as book. He confidently continues to seek for a permanent solution to this paralysing syndrome.

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# I

## INTRODUCTION

Most developing nations of the post 1945 period have been facing with internal security problems.<sup>1</sup> Internal sources of the national security problem often come up to uncontrollable degrees in these new nations, hampering the developmental activities and even putting the regimes to a stage of destabilization and ineffectiveness to the highest level. Strangely, national security threat perception in these nations has been, more or less, one sided and even conservative with a preconceived notion that national security means 'external defence' only.

Many of the third world nations seem to have ignored the fact that against the backdrop of socio-cultural, economic and political realities and also because of their being in the category of developing status in many sectors, perception of national security has to be assessed from various dimensions i.e. from internal and external exigencies. It can be recalled that in most of the third-world nations, a variety of group or sub-group violence (which can be termed as internal

war situation) have been witnessed from time to time. It is surprising that such a phenomenon are taken almost as a part of life without given a thought that such a conflict acts, may, within a short time, translate into a chronic national security problem. There is a general tendency on the part of the regimes in many third world nations to identify a conflict act only when it has become a violent and somewhat, an uncontrollable national issue. It seems that the authorities in these new nations have not been able to examine the evolutionary process of conflict behaviour within the nation in terms of the possibility of the conflict acts converting into an organized violence in the near future in the form of rebellion, sessionist, and insurgency movements or activities.

The first task of every researcher on national security problems of the third world nations have to start with the understanding as to how he will look into the problem of national security, keeping at the background, the socio-cultural, political, economic, and other realities and their reactions. Thus, in case of India, the first problem which has to be confronted is to identity an adequate concept of national security which can reflect both internal and external threat parameters. Starting with this pre-requisite, the aim of this thesis is to try to formulate a counter insurgency strategy with reference to Nagaland and Manipur in particular and other cases in general.

This thesis takes its course in a historical and analytical way. It does, in a way follow a realist approach. It can be said that national security perception in the third world nations (particularly India) may demand for a realist outlook as far as the external threats are

concerned. However for the internal security issues, it cannot apply the realism as such. It can be a combination of less-idealism and less-realism. From the angle of the overall national security review, it again comes out to be a mixed approach of some ideal aspects and near realist aspects inside the country and realist approach outside the country.

Such an approach may cover the innumerable numbers of security perspectives which most of the new third world nations are facing. In case of India, being a nation of "great diversity" may find the adaptability of such an approach.

When we turn particularly into the problem of internal security, the model which are applying in the form of the deployment of armed forces goes towards a realist approach. Such an approach contradicts the issue of applicability as it goes reversed to the genesis of the whole problems, as the basic originating factors of the internal security issues in India come mostly from the internal aspects of the society. Under these circumstances, it is highly doubtful to find out the applicability of realist model to solve internal problems. However, it can be mentioned that the need for a partial power model cannot be ignored when an internal security problem has erupted in a violent manner. Also such a type of power model cannot be taken as the type of power model in which we imply in case of the external threats. Therefore we may put forward the option of police and para-military forces as the most suitable power model to deal the internal security problems. This arrangement will not contradict the system of the country.

In fact, it is rather tough to work on security issues from many points. Notable amongst them are the problems of getting the authentic materials particularly for the internal security issues like insurgency for which the problem further gets extended. There has always been a fear of getting caught in a cross fire. Thus working in the sensitive area of Nagaland and Manipur on the issue of insurgency and counter-insurgency when the problem is still in a hot situation brings a variety of tensions at mental and physical levels. Moreover, working on such sensitive issue, as a student at any level come across a series of natural hurdles. On the other hand the product has to get applicability as far as possible. It does not mean that the thesis is policy oriented. It is against such background, that the sources of the thesis have been drawn out from all available areas.

It is lucky that the researcher had the privilege of taking interviews with the various former leaders of different insurgent groups which are now operating in the North Eastern India. The interviews which were undertaken are highly valuable to the assessment of the problem. Even though some sort of a personal screening has to be done on the part of the researcher to avoid biased perception of the respondents, such a source material like interview can be considered to be the most authentic source material for the present endeavour.

Secondly, both official and non-official meetings with the people who are directly involving in the process of counter-insurgency is of great help to the researcher.

The researcher never took side on the issue but always maintained as an independent observer to enable to get an unbiased and clear picture of the problem. Another interesting experience is to listen to the two groups (former insurgents and security personnel) who always try to justify and praise their moves and logic on the issue. Cross evaluation of such phenomena indeed gives a true picture of the problem.

As for the books, periodicals, journals etc. it was a bit difficult task for the researcher to depend entirely upon both in foreign and Indian Publications. For a general outlook of the problem, foreign publications were incidentally more useful.

But unfortunately, as for some of the Indian publications, many conflicting reports are given, may be because of the fact that it was difficult for an individual assessor who is from outside the area of the North Eastern India to interact and assess the problem due to the typical nature of a closed society.

It was fortunate that the researcher has been able to get personal diaries and papers from the former insurgents. These original documents are of immense value. Thirdly, it is the visit of the survey site. It is not possible for the researcher to be on the spot when the actual encounter was going on. So, the researcher had to go to the place when the situation has normal. By not taking the reports from the inhabitants of the area, but also by the contacts with the security forces which took part in the encounter a holistic appraisal has been achieved. Thus, it has enabled the researcher to assess

the problem fully. Notable among the places which the researcher visited are Namthirok, Litan and Hundung etc. in Manipur East District and many other places in Manipur Valley area. The researcher spent around one and half month particularly in Manipur East District where the activities of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) is still very active. The help of the few officers, friends of the Manipur Police and Manipur Rifles, was a good help to the researcher. Their personal experience in the actual field and assessment of the problem are interesting and valuable even though the researcher had strong objections to many of their view points.

It is a fact that awareness of the problem in the North Eastern India had come to the media as well as to the general public of the country only few years ago. Such a reflection could be found from the fact that publications of the articles or news items about the problems of the North Eastern India are still very limited. But it is nice, to note that these days, many newspapers and other publications have started writing about the problem, even though without much of an analysis. Such a problem was the first one which had encountered the researcher before beginning the work.

Another problem which had cropped up was that of going from one place to another in a hilly area. For a small piece of information, the researcher had to prepare a lot. And again in a place like North Eastern India, a person from the valley area is quite a stranger to a hill district. And again due to fear of harassment both from security personnel and the insurgents, most of the people

are not in a mood of talking to anybody. If they say something, they may be suspicious by both the parties. The brief meetings with many retired Army Generals from time to time, with the recommendation of the guide was of great help to the researcher to find out a basic fundamental background about the deployment of the army and other related aspects.

As regards to documentation, the documents from the various sources are classified with reference to the main theme and format of the thesis. Then all the documents are further re-classified to match up with the different chapters and headlines. In all the cases, a source material which has no documentary evidence has not been used. Information from the former insurgents having documentary evidence has only been used. These documents are put in their original form to avoid any distortion of fact or deviation from the facts are tested again and again with other sources.

For general reference, books, newspapers and other non-governmental sources are framed properly. And for a more detailed and accurate formation, Government Publications, Personal Diaries of the ex-insurgents, and spot experience etc. are being referred. Of course, it is a systematic filtration with reference to a philosophical foundation (the way of looking into the problem) with a carefully planned format.

Chapter II of the thesis pays special emphasis on the national security parameters of the third world countries with a view to particularly attract attention to the Indian case. The Chapter deals with the concept of

national security by examining the various school of thoughts and generalise the formulation of the concept of national security analogous to the third-world nations and then particularly stressing upon the Indian issue. In the process of analysis, it has been given a multiple characteristics of the pluralistic third-world nations and also touches upon the interrelationship between internal and external conflicts. Hence putting emphasis on India's case, the chapter will project the violent and peculiar problems which have been cropping up from time to time as internal security threats. It has thus portrayed the internal security problems of India from 1947 to date, demonstrating that such a problem of internal security has almost become an inherent problem of India. This in addition to further complexities of internal security issues has resulted in a situation which can be termed as a 'society in crisis'.

Out of many group or sub-group violence, two dasas one concerning riots and the other showing communal violence are being given in this chapter indicating the frequency and intensity of group or sub-group violence in India.<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to note that such a kind of violence are often associated with terroristic acts.

Chapter III, under the name of 'New Dimension of Terrorism' reflects that terrorism in the last decade has become a handy tool of insurgency activities. Views are different regarding the status of terrorism. One school says that terrorism is not at all related to insurgency,<sup>3</sup> that it (terrorism) is for individual gain and is basically an undirected violence. But another school<sup>4</sup> has

immersed in the light of contemporary historical facts claiming that such a concept has undergone changes these days as terrorism has started to be practised by many insurgent groups for political gains resulting in becoming a larger part of insurgency activity<sup>5</sup> in general.

Such a difference in perception has, more or less, been the result of political turmoil. It is seen that in many of the new nations, the regimes often take terrorist acts as non-terrorist acts and even consider the violent acts which are practiced by some of the groups as fighting for freedom or independence going even to the extent of supporting them in many of the national and international forums.<sup>6</sup> But on the other hand, the same violent acts when practiced by group or groups inside their own home-land are termed as terrorism<sup>7</sup>.

Such an ambiguity, sometimes, reflects a difference of perception between internal policy and foreign policy. In this chapter, the changing pattern of terrorism is reflected.

Chapter IV is a case study. Any discussion or analysis can only be complete and properly done with the help of a case study.

Here, the case study of insurgency problem in Nagaland and Manipur (in the North-Eastern India) are specifically taken up. First, the case study of Naga insurgency is analysed, and secondly about the insurgency problem in Manipur by giving the internal details of the problem. This Chapter deals from the early occurrence of the problem of insurgency in Nagaland

and Manipur starting when the symptom of the problem was still in a nonviolent manner.<sup>8</sup> The Chapter further goes towards the various stages of insurgency in Nagaland and Manipur coming down to the phases of factions and actions and also the possibility of further actions. This Chapter further gives the basic roots of the insurgency problem in these areas. Again, it points towards the possible co-ordination among the various insurgent groups in the North-Eastern India and recommends towards the immediate need for an effective solution to the problem.

The final part, that is Chapter V is all about the bringing out of an effective counter-insurgency strategy for Nagaland and Manipur in particular and generally for other cases. This chapter gives various points and suggestions under the two sub-headings i.e. 'security policy matter', and 'other initiatives'.

It is a fact that the best way to tackle insurgency problem is prevention by means of early detection, and analysing properly the conflict behaviour pattern within the nation.<sup>9</sup>

In this technologically advanced world, it is highly difficult to root out immediately a problem which has gone up to an insurgency situation.<sup>10</sup> When a conflict situation comes to the level of an organised group or sub-group fashion with intensive violence, force has to be applied. Such a force should be an effective one (as suggested in the conclusion part of the thesis).

It can be stressed that the entire counter-insurgency operation will be meaningless if the

originating factors like socio-cultural-economic, political etc., are not taken care of.

## REFERENCES

1. Refer to pp. 8-9. Critical view in terms of percentage (Developed and Developing Nations) will need more data but the picture is being projected in Chapter III, p. 4. Works done in this subject are very limited so far. Refer to Chapter III, pp. 1-10.
2. Refer to Chapter II, pp. 24-25.
3. Refer to Chapter III, p. 1.
4. Refer to Chapter III, pp. 3-4.
5. Insurgent groups have political aims. What we imply is that to achieve the political aims the insurgent very often indulge into terror tactics. Refer to Chapter III, p. 7.
6. Refer to Chapter III, pp. 3-4.
7. For example India's perception in regards to Sikh problem in Punjab and insurgents groups in Middle East, Latin America, Tamil militants in Sri Lanka etc.
8. Non-violent manner means (in this reference) the passive line of action taken up Phizo and his men in the early phase of Naga problem in the form of delegations/meetings with Indian leaders. Refer to Chapter IV, pp. 4-7, and also Revolutionary Nationalist Party in Manipur and their role as a political Party in 1960, (Refer to Chapter IV, p. 23).
9. Refer to Chapter IV, pp. 12-13.
10. What we mean is the capability of destruction by a small group in the technologically advanced world.