

The Foreign Hands in South Asian Terrorism

by Ramtanu Maitra

There is a growing body of evidence that Nepal is steadily succumbing to the violent Maoists, the way Peru became a victim of terror and narco-terrorism. As in the case of Peru, Nepali Maoists are getting substantial support from outside.

The mentor of the Nepali mayhem, named the Maoist movement, is the London-based Revolutionary International Movement (RIM). What is ominous for the whole of the Indian subcontinent, is that the foreign-directed violent movement has consolidated its network and has developed direct links to various land-based agitations, indigenous peoples, and the drug- and gun-based secessionist movements. Adding fuel to the fire are some of the militant religious groups, such as the Jamaat-e-Islami in Pakistan, similar groups in Bangladesh, and Shiv Sena in India, among others.

In July, after the Maoists in Nepal had kidnapped 70 policemen and shot down an Army helicopter, Nepal's general secretary of the underground Maoist group, Commander Prachanda, told an Ibero-American newsman that they attributed their success so far achieved in Nepal, to the lessons of the experiences of the Maoist movements in India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Iran, Turkey, and Peru. The Maoist-related violence has already claimed more than 1,400 lives in Nepal.

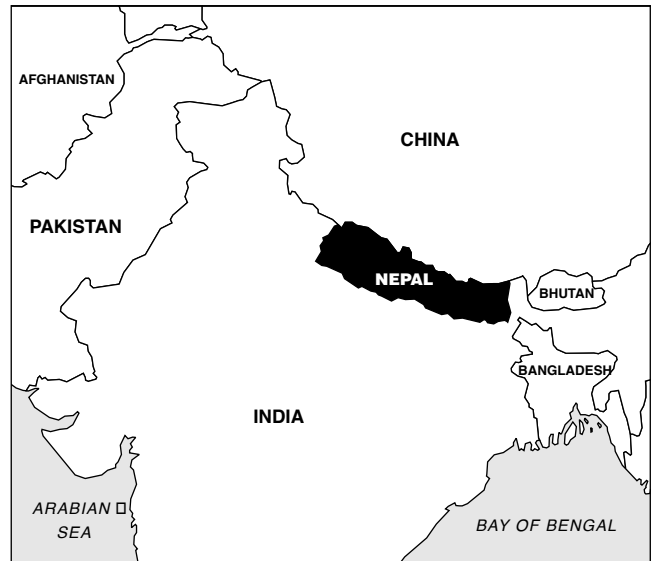
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Prachanda describes the influence of the "international proletariat" on their movement as follows: "In the whole process of this final preparation, . . . there was consistent international involvement. First and foremost, there was the RIM committee. There was important ideological and political exchange. From the RIM Committee, we got the experience of the PCP [Communist Party of Peru, i.e., the Sendero Luminoso], the two-line struggle there, and also the experience in Turkey, the experience in Iran, and the experience in the Philippines.

"Ultimately, we will have to fight with the Indian Army. That is the situation. Therefore, we have to take into account the Indian Army. When the Indian Army comes in with thousands and thousands of soldiers, it will be a very big thing. But we are not afraid of the Indian Army."

Commander Prachanda is not indulging in empty rhetoric. Recently, the Maoists in South Asia have formed the Coordination Committee of Maoist Parties and Organization of South Asia (CCOMPOSA). This group involves nine ultra-

South Asia



left outfits of India, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. Of the nine, the People's War Group (PWG) and the Maoist Coordination Committee (MCC) from India, and the Nepal Communist Party (NCP) are the best armed and most active.

The CCOMPOSA, which models itself on Peru's narco-terrorist Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso), has asked all revolutionary forces in the region to join arms with the Nepal rebels to liberate themselves from the oppressive and exploitative rule in both India and Nepal. It has called up all the forces struggling for "self-determination" to launch a "people's war in South Asian countries."

Observers point out that this is the first time that these radical groups have formed a cross-border confederation. Earlier, such groups in India had fraternal ties with like-minded outfits abroad at an individual level, but not as a part of confederation.

The PWG, which has its influence in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, and Jharkhand in India, forged fraternal relations with the Liberation Army of Peru and the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK).

The CCOMPOSA has also agreed to provide assistance to "organization-based agitation for self-determination." The Maoists extend support to the conflict in Jammu and Kashmir, the Khalistan (Punjab separatist) movement, Bodoland, Gorkhaland, Telengana, and Nagaland in India, and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka, all of which are allegedly waging a war for self-determination. The group's support extends to the ethnic separatist Khambhuwan and the Limbuwan movements for independence in Nepal, the Gorkhaland movement in the hills of West Bengal, and the Kamtapuri movement in the northern part of India's West Bengal State, "besides, liberating the Nepalese people from