

Origin of People's Multiparty Democracy from the Perspective of Patriotism

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ABSTRACT

Madan Bhandari's theory of People's Multiparty Democracy has evolved from a patriotic perspective amidst the intricacies of Nepali geopolitics and contemporary global political dynamics. This theory sheds light on the need-based causes and consequences in the development of PMPD, utilizing historical study as the methodological approach. In this article, the primary argument is in favor of the validity of PMPD within internal geopolitical realities and global political dynamics, considering the perspectives of contemporary Nepali national interests and patriotic values. However, the innovative spirit of Bhandari's political philosophy has yet to be truly transformed into practice. Furthermore, the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) (CPN [UML]) has struggled to maintain a balance between its rhetoric and reality, given that PMPD serves as its guiding principle in Nepali politics. First, there is perplexity in analyzing the character of Nepali sovereignty accurately in the post-Bhandari era. Secondly, the CPN (UML) leadership still needs to exert efforts to advance the implementation of this philosophy. To substantiate the argument regarding the disparity between rhetoric and reality, circumstantial evidence is provided from political documents and statements made by prominent leaders, among others. The Nepali experience of the PMPD political philosophy is explored using qualitative research methodology.

Introduction

Patriotism can be defined as deep love, devotion, and unwavering support for one's country. At times, patriotism is used interchangeably with nationalism. Nevertheless, patriotism holds significant moral value; it is morally commendable and, perhaps, even obligatory, making it something that should not be disregarded. *The Historical Dictionary* contains numerous references to patriotism, primarily by philosophical authors who analyze the term's usage (Busch and Dierse, 1989).

In the context of Nepal, patriotism emerges from the people's profound expression of love

and devotion to their country, rooted within the geopolitical dynamics of an anti-imperialist and anti-expansionist stance.

Within the realm of the Nepali communist movement, certain political concepts, such as patriotism, progressivism, socialism, and democratic politics, carry almost identical implications. During the Panchayat regime (1961–1990), political parties and freedom fighters, home and abroad, were taking incessant rigor for the restoration of democracy under the strict surveillance of the authoritative rulers, including prime ministers and monarchs with absolute power. King Mahendra was concerting

his mission to institutionalize the Panchayat system at the expense of political rights and individual freedom. Top leaders of political parties, especially those of the Nepali Congress (NC) were in exile, and some others were just living a normal life in Nepal. In the meantime, left leaders were consolidating energies when the exigencies of the country demanded some arduous actions. Against this backdrop, the Communist Party of Nepal (Marxist–Leninist) was established from the historical ground, and the Jhapa Movement in the eastern part of Nepal launched an armed revolt against feudal rudimentary practices and authoritarian powers maneuvered by absolute monarchs during 1970–73. At that juncture in history, both internal and external factors influenced Nepal's left movement. On the one hand, many of the left leaders, particularly Pushpalal and Manmohan Adhikari were considering an alliance with the NC to effectively protest the Panchayat regime. On the other hand, it was considerably influenced by the cultural revolution of China as well as the Naxalbari revolt of India (Pokhrel, 2069 B.S.). Eventually, the movement was momentarily suppressed by the then-Panchayat government. However, the impact of the movement surged throughout the country with tremendous influence on the young and educated citizens of Nepal. Consequently, the All Nepal Communist Revolutionary Coordination Committee (Marxist–Leninist) or in short Coordination Center (ANCRCC [ML]) on 7-8 June 1975). It started a rigorous organization campaign along with several clandestine operations to inculcate in people awareness against the Panchayat regime in favor of the left movement. Several leaders were imprisoned while others were chased away. Some of the leaders taking the initiative in the movement fled the prison after breaking the high-security prison. For instance, some of the leaders, including Chandra Prakash Mainali and others broke the Nakkhu jail and on 25 March 1977 after braking it. After this event, the CPN (ML) rapidly spread nationwide with its

popularity among young and educated people. Unified major groups include the Mukti Morcha [Liberation Front], the Rato Jhanda[Red Flag] of Eastern Nepal, and the Shandesh [Message]. They formed a national-level party during its first conference on 26 December 1978 (2035 B.S.), and they named it the Communist Party of Nepal (Marxist- Leninist) (CPN [ML] with its General Secretary, C. P. Mainali. General Secretary Mainali led the party until 1982. At that point, the party set its goal of a new democratic revolution (CPN [ML], 2035 B.S.) for the Nepali context, which was forwarded from the foundation of the Nepal Communist Party by Pushpalal (Pushpalal, 1987). After the people's movement for the restoration of democracy, the Unified Marxist Leninist was formed by unifying the Communist Party of Nepal (Marxist) and Communist Party of Nepal (Marxist–Leninist) in 1991 (8 Magh 2047 B.S.).

The party's Fourth and Fifth National Conventions elected Madan Bhandari as the General Secretary of the CPN (UML). He was the General Secretary of the CPN (ML) from 1989 to 1991, and that of the CPN (UML) from 1991 to 1993 with Manmohan Adhikari as the Chairperson of the unified party. The party organized its Fifth National Convention after the restoration of the parliamentary system in the country in 1990. Before the Convention of the party, Bhandari proposed the strategic program of the party, People's Multiparty Democracy. Some of the other leaders such as Mainali and J. N. Khanal, who were former General Secretaries of the party, opposed Bhandari's views. However, the house of the Convention passed the program presented by Bhandari (Pokhrel, 2007) with an overwhelming majority, which was known as PMPD. General Secretary Bhandari attempted to change the strategic program of the party to PMPD instead of "New Democracy" for the first time in the history of the Nepali communist movement. After that time, PMPD was considered the 'New Democracy' (Bhandari, [n.d.]).

The political program of PMPD was created from the experiences of those movements launched against feudalism, hegemonism, and imperialism in Nepal. It is a creative update of Marxism in the Nepali context, which emerged from practice within the Nepali communist movement to this date. Especially, it was a consequence of the lessons learned in the left political fronts evolved from past experiences of the left practices and international communist movement. It was also a result of insights of the Founder General Secretary of the undivided Communist Party of Nepal Pushpalal, the Jhapa Movement, the period of the national referendum, the people-oriented intervention inside the Panchayat regime, the two-line struggle between X and Y within the Coordination Committee, political conflict of 1982-1983 and the people's movement of 1990. The program of PMPD originated as a lesson from the collapse of communist governments in Eastern Europe which were established during the post-World War II (1945) as well as the disintegration of the USSR which was inceptioned in 1917. Consequently, American imperialists become a single super power of the world (Bhandari, 3 Falgun 2049 B.S. interview).

Bhandari, as a leader of the party, revealed his patriotic feeling on several issues. Not only party leaders and cadres but also royals counted on his strong sense of patriotism. For instance, King Birendra in his condolence message after his death in a mysterious car crash remarked on Bhandari's patriotism: 'devoted nationalist' and a 'strong and high- principled personality' (Radio Nepal, 13 Ashadh 2050 B.S.). Coincidentally, mysteries behind the killing of General Secretary Bhandari and King Birendra have remained unsolved for almost three and two decades, respectively. Bhandari died in a mysterious Dashdhunga car crash on 16 May 1993, and King Birendra was assassinated in a mass shooting in the Narayanhiti Royal Palace gathering on 1 June 2001. Nepal Government has to investigate these two high-profile killings in the recent history of Nepal, both

after the restoration of democracy, have remained (Pokhrel, 2068 B.S.). Against the backdrop, this article explores the evolution of PMPD from the perspective of patriotism.

Numerous research works have already been conducted on trends and evolution of the Communist movement in Nepal. However, those research works on the theoretical postulation of the movement and philosophical backgrounds have yet to be taken in-depth. There are numerous groups of Nepali communists, and among them, the CPN (UML) is the largest one. More importantly, this party has not only officially endorsed the Bhandari-propounded PMPD but also secured leadership in the governments several times. Over the three decades, the CPN (UML) has developed PMPD from its program to a political philosophy. It has recapitulated areas of foreign relations, cultural lives, and organizational norms and values. This article reviews the genesis of PMPD from the perspective of patriotism.

Methodology

Numerous writers and researchers have retraced the history of the Communist Party of Nepal. This researcher conducted a review of the literature to assess research works on the party's policies, programs, and principles. The research unravels major political changes and historical events that have contributed to the left movement in Nepal. This researcher examined pivotal shifts in the political landscape of Nepal, with a particular emphasis on the formation of People's Multiparty Democracy. Within the context of Nepal, patriotism serves as the philosophical foundation of this innovative political thought. To critically analyze pertinent data on relevant political ideas and significant historical events that led to the emergence of PMPD, I have employed interpretative and reflective methods.

To substantiate the assertion of patriotic sentiment as a driving force behind the emergence of PMPD, this article utilizes primary and secondary data

sources. Additionally, archival methods are employed, encompassing historical documents related to Marxist-Leninist philosophy and contemporary political events. Similarly, archival techniques are utilized for non-historical inquiries involving materials like interviews and presentations in both printed and audio-visual media.

Primary data sources are used when authentic records are not identifiable in secondary sources. Furthermore, this study primarily examines texts through the application of narrative inquiry strategies within the qualitative research design.

Results and Discussion

The Communist Party of Nepal was founded in 1949 under the leadership of Pushpalal and it was split into several factions over time. The Jhapa revolt was a part of the division in the divided communist movement of Nepal. This revolt was launched as a result of the young communist leaders in their continuous efforts to reorganize the left forces and the upheavals in the international communist movements, including in India, China, and Russia.

In USSR, Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev undertook the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), after Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin died in 1953. Eventually, Khrushchev forwarded three peaceful principles of peaceful co-existence, peaceful competition, and peaceful transition (Ram, 1971). And it was passed by the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in 1956. Khrushchev formulated “National Democracy” as the party’s program (Sen Gupta, 1972). Mao Tse- Tung, who was the supreme leader of the Communist Party of China criticized the theory, of “peaceful seizure” of Khrushchev and it was said as “revisionism”. After this conflict between CPSU and CPC, the world communist movement was divided into two camps, such as Moscow and Peking.

With this effect of the split in the world communist movement, the Communist Party of India split in 1964 for the first time and in 1967 the next time. When the Communist Party of India and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) participated in the parliamentary election, Radio Peking (now Beijing) broadcast that there was not any communist party in India (Sen Gupta, 1972). It was the time of the popularity of armed struggle among the communists. The October 1965 coup underscored the failure of the Indonesian communist party and Sukarno’s line of reliance on peaceful transition (Ram, 1971). New People’s Army (NPA) was formed to launch the armed struggle by the communist party of the Philippines, Marxist-Leninist (CPP-ML) in the Philippines. Guerrilla warfare was the strategy of that Army organization. Successful guerrilla leaders from humble civilian backgrounds, including T. E. Lawrence, Mao, Josip Broz Tito, Ho Chi Minh, and Fidel Castro could attract, organize, and inspire their followers while instilling in them military discipline. During 1968-69, the NPA launched guerrilla warfare against the regime of President Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines, assassinating government officials and ambushing army troops (Boncayao, 1974). In brief, the time was of popularity and trust of armed revolt among the communists in Asia. The Chinese Cultural Revolution, which was started in 1966 gives a message of armed revolt for the victory of communist rule. In India, all the parties of communists were involved in parliamentary politics in 1964 (Sharma, n.d.), and Radio Peking declared that there was not any communist party in India (Sen Gupta, April-June 1972).

The Jhapa movement was started at that time when every movement with a peaceful process was criticized in the international communist movement. In Indonesia, Al-Haj Mohamed Suharto had come to power in 1967. In 1967, another faction of communists split from the

Communist Party of India (Marxist) declared peasants' armed struggle against the existing system under the leadership of Charu Majumdar. It was started in Naxalbari of West Bengal, India which was known as the Naxalbari movement. After the starting of the Naxalbari movement in India, the Communist Party of China praised it and declared that it was "Spring thunder over India" (Sen Gupta, 1972). Likewise, the official organ of the Communist Party of China, *People's Daily* published an article on 5 July 1967, in which this movement was honored giving the great importance (CPN (ML), Jyestha 2035 B.S.). "Peking Review" a magazine published by China wrote on the Naxalbari movement of India as the Indian revolutionary people's armed struggles, led or supported by the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist), were getting stronger in Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Punjab. In the course of their struggle, the Indian revolutionary people constantly sum up their experience and have raised their political consciousness. Their grasp of the truth that "political power grows out of the barrel of a gun" is becoming more and more firm.

Following the armed struggle started by the peasants in Naxalbari and other areas in 1967 which shook the whole of India, the revolutionary peasants of Andhra Pradesh in the southeastern part of the country took up arms in 1968 to resist the brutal rule of the Indian reactionaries. According to the Indian bourgeois press, their struggle has now expanded from the remote mountainous area inhabited by the Girijans in Srikakulam District to 19 Taluks on the broad plains of Visakhapatnam, East and West Godavari, Krishna, Guntur, Nellore, Anantapur, Warangal, and Khammam Districts. (Anonymous, 6 August 1969).

In this line of development, the Chinese cultural revolution influenced the Indian Naxalbari movement. The latter formed The Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) (CPI [ML]) on

22 April 1969. At one point, its leader Majumdar presents his party's political view:

The old political cadres will no doubt be in such a party, but basically, such a party will be formed with the working class youth, the peasantry, and the toiling middle class, who not only accept Chairman Mao's political thought but also apply his military strategies. Then, they start spreading and propagating the Chinese revolution techniques among the broad masses and build bases of armed struggle in the countryside. Such a party will not be a revolutionary force but it will at the same time secure people's armed forces and the state power. Every member of such a party must participate in the struggle in the military, political, economic, and cultural spheres. (Majumdar, June 1968).

The Indian Naxalbari movement had become one of the factors of the Jhapa communist movement of Nepal. Indeed, a direct link between these two movements is a stereotype. There were several internal and external factors associated with that movement in Nepal. However, Mainali tends that connection. (Mainali, 16 Kartik 2047 B.S. Interview). The Jhapa movement has certain salient features:

1. Naxalbari was the neighboring district of Jhapa and some of the communist cadres of Jhapa had developed relationships with the revolutionaries of Naxalbari.
2. The foreign policy of India and its treatment of Nepal is dominated like a younger brother by India, whereas the leaders and cadres of the Naxalbari movement wanted to establish relationships between the two countries an equal status.
3. Trade and transit treaties between the two South Asian neighbors were causing friction and India was seen as a bullying brother. At the same time, the border conflict aroused negative feelings towards India adding discontent among the Tarai's youths.

4. The Communist Party of India (ML), led by Majumdar and latter time Binod Mishra, was the only party among all Indian political parties which respected the patriotism of Nepali people as well as Nepali communists.

The Jhapa movement was started from the perspective of armed revolution because it was a time of popularity and message of armed struggle for the revolution of communists. The principle of PMPD was postulated after about 20 years of the Jhapa revolt in Nepal.

Over time, the revolt of Jhapa spread nationwide and formed a national organization the “Communist Party of Nepal (Marxist-Leninist) in 1978 under the leadership of Mainali. In the history of the party, different views were prescribed by the party. Now here, we can discuss the major issues on the views of the party prescribed on different occasions in the light of Bhandari’s formulation of “people’s Multiparty Democracy” in the global political dynamics in Nepal and beyond.

Differing views in the party Political views in the initial period

The Jhapa armed movement ran for 30 months from its starting following the path of Majumdar. Some characteristics of the Jhapa movement were different from that of the Naxalbari movement even though it was following the theory of Majumdar. However, the revolution of Jhapa formed a group named All Nepal Communist Revolutionary Coordination Centre (Marxist Leninist) (ANCRCC [ML]), meeting together with the communists of Jhapa, Morang, Ilam, Siraha, and Sindhupalchouk during 7-8 June 1975.

Mainali from Jhapa was chosen as the General Secretary or the main leader of the faction. Likewise, Madhav Kumar Nepal, Govinda Neupane, and Ram Chandra Yadav were from Morang; Amrit Kumar Bohora from

Sindhupalchouk; Jhala Nath Khanal from Ilam; Mani Lal Rai from Siraha; Mukunda Neupane from Bara (Rai, Mani Lal, 18 Marg 2055 B.S. Interview). The communists of Jhapa decided to follow the tactics and policy of Majumdar and extended close relationships with the CPI (ML). The official document of the party reads the tactical policy as:

We shall make basic party units and units of revolutionary people’s organizations adopting the objective to develop the armed struggle of peasant guerillas for the liquidation of the class enemy. We shall capture the rifles and guns under the leadership of guerilla groups to achieve one aim and we shall raise class struggle daily. We shall take the correct action plan of the tactics of “one area, one unit, one squad, and one action” forwarding the concept of development of one. (CPN [ML], December 1975)

This policy could not last long. These types of activities run for 30 months (Pokhrel, 2069 B.S.). However, the party had a strong opposition to feudalism, comprador capitalism, expansionism, and imperialism. It documents:

The campaign of ‘liquidation’ liberates them from the restriction of backward concepts and erases self-interest, caste-interest, local narrowness, racism, and religious bad culture uprooting the poisonous weeds from their mind. Thus, the campaign of liquidation can flow the eastern wind of human dignity and glory. (CPN [(ML), December 1975) .

The party has rejected the elements of “self-interest, caste-interest, local narrowness, racism, and religious indoctrination and wanted in uprooting the poisonous weeds from the mind of the people. Similarly, Bhandari proposed a 12 pages document on race, language, religion, and culture in the Fifth National Convention of the CPN (UML) in 1991. In that document,

Bhandari indicated prevailing discrimination among different castes in Nepali society while highlighting an urgency of socio-cultural courtesy among People from different caste backgrounds and cultural groups for the greater purpose of unity and harmony in the country (CPN [UML], 2049 B.S.). Such a noble idea of peace and harmony among people from varied cultural groups reflects his strong feeling of patriotism inside the view. In the document, Bhandari did not speculate any possibility of conflict among Nepali people on the ground of race, language, religion, culture, and region. However, some other stalwart leaders of the CPN (UML) including Rajendra Shrestha, Rakam Chemjong, and Subash Nemwang presented different views on these issues during the convention (R. Shrestha et al, 15 December 1992). However, this document was not endorsed. Later on, the PMPD successors and Bhandari's followers accepted these issues, such as race, culture, and language under the constitutional provision of inclusiveness. An international Marxist theorist has written about the concept of inclusiveness:

The idea of inclusiveness is generated as an antithesis of the social evolution process, which stands against the scientific theory of dialectical, and historical materialism and class struggle. Such a hypothesis is composed by the western capitalists as a great tortuous trick to make blunt to the razor-sharp thinking power of the proletariat class and to bend the concentration of revolutionary socialists from their philosophical and theoretical aim to the other side. The production of 'Inclusive Democracy,' produced by a machine of conspiratorial mind of European capitalists, is used as a slow poison against Marxist philosophy to make deprave Marxism. (Diemitrachov, April 2010)

From this perspective, the inclusiveness, which is applied in Nepal after Bhandari's PMPD, has been applied without an in-depth study of

Nepali society. Further, such a West-sponsored inclusiveness has promoted anti-Marxist as well as anti-patriotic seeds in the field of nation.

Intra-party debates in the initial period

During the Jhapa movement, Mohan Chandra Adhikari and Ram Nath Dahal were the persons who forwarded the view in the party that the political line of Majumdar should be reformed in the context of Nepal (Adhikari,

M. C., Bhadra 6, 2055 B.S., Interview). In that sense, an opposite view had entered the party. Eventually, the opposite view could not continue after Mohan Chandra Adhikari and Ram Nath Dahal were arrested. After the formation of the All Nepal Communist Revolutionary Coordination Centre, another debate persisted inside the party, which was known as the debate between X and Y. Here X was Ram Chandra Yadav and Y was Rai. For the first time, a political view against Majumdar's line of thought entered. At that point, on the one hand, Rai proposed that the party should initiate to form mass organizations for the mass movement against the existing political system. On the other hand, Ram Chandra Yadav, known as X, advocated Charu's line of thought. During the 2nd conference of the party, Yadav was criticized for his "ultra-leftist" view. Despite Rai's "strong and positive" view, it could not be endorsed with a charge that it was "rightist opportunism" (Mainali, Kartik 16, 2047, interview). In this proposition, Rai remarks:

I thought observing Jhapali's working style that they might be sincere proletariat revolutionary communists and I was impressed by them. Despite it, they had many mistaken views. Though I joined that party yet I had a dissenting view to Charu Majumdar's line, which was the party's authentic political line. But, I thought confidently that all the mistaken views would be corrected in the course of the party's development in the course of time. I studied the view about the formation of the regular

army of the revolutionary party, published in a magazine named “Lok Yuddha” from India appreciating “Pothi Action” and I thought that the party was clearly on the wrong track. Mainali of Jhapa and Madhav Kumar Nepal of Morang were the men who were following Charu’s line blindly. Ram Chandra Yadav was a man who seemed more extremist than them. Therefore, it was natural for the conflict to be there in the party between the followers and critics of Charu’s line. However, we came to the conclusive agreement that anybody could follow it but there was no compulsory to carry the view of the party for the critics. But the party leadership broke the agreement through a circular by writing the words “Marxist, Leninist, Mao-thought and Charu’s revolutionary line” (Rai, Marga 18, 2055 B.S.).

The conference of the party could pass the view neither of X nor of Y. The conference could fail to bring a clear-cut vision. Rai was just left alone and weak in the party and even after his release from jail; his position in the party was not renewed but was neglected (Khanal, 13 Marga 2055 B.S., Interview).

At the high time of the Jhapa movement, Rai proposed a mass movement or peaceful people’s movement for that time. Such an armed revolt could not last long. The communist movement in Myanmar was almost on the brink of failure (Lintner, 1990). Likewise, in the Philippines and Thailand, the communists were in the trap of “cordon and kill” by making ultra-leftists due to arm revolt and declaring martial rule (Simbulan, 18 August 2000). In these lights, Rai had a right view of the course of action the party was adopting. In due course of time, Bhandari would propose the same line of the course in the party:

Ram Chandra Yadav or ‘X’, along with his followers Bishu Bhatta, Ashweshwar

Yadav resigned from the party and published a pamphlet “Gaddhar Chandre Gutke Biruddha Bam barding karo”(blast the bomb against a traitor group of Chandra) (Gautam, Jestha 21, 2055 B.S. Interview). Yadav had come from India and returned to his native country and joined the CPI (ML) but he was executed with death punishment after his return by the Communist Party of India (ML), charging him that he was a spy of the state authority of India (Sanyal, Kanu. 22 January 1998 AD, Interview). In this context, we can remember here that he had joined the “coordination center” including Madhav Nepal and Govinda Neupane from Morang. The matter about Ram Chandra Yadav was also reported by Man Kumar Gautam, a fighter of the Jhapa movement (Gautam, 21 Jestha 2055 B.S.).

Although the party’s in the line of Majumdar, in other words, “armed struggle,” sustain longer. At that time, the party gradually diverted to peaceful politics. The party document mentions the decision of the politburo’s meeting of 31 March–5 April 1979, in which the party cadres were instructed to undertake tasks of people’s affairs and peaceful mass movement. Moreover, they were directed to launch an armed struggle attacking the “reactionary armed forces savage landlords’ agents” adopting a defensive strategy which had to be used offensive action of enemies in the struggle (CPN [ML], (18-23 Chaitra 2035).

At that point, the party was adapting tactics of a transitional phase between peaceful mass movement and armed struggle. In the meantime, King Birendra’s announcement of a national referendum to choose the multiparty democracy or the improved Panchayat system also directly affected the party’s political thought. Against that backdrop, Bhandari shared his political

view, stating that he has taken lessons from history to accomplish goals through a peaceful process. Such a study can be evaluated on his view of whether that was right or wrong. His critic Krishna Das Shrestha in opposition remarked that a communist revolution is impossible from peaceful politics, therefore, the view of Bhandari is not more than reformist or cannot be communist (K. D. Shrestha, 2052 B.S.). It may be discussed from other or different perspectives on the argument of Shrestha. However, the current article concentrates on patriotism as the genesis of PMPD. A theoretician of patriotism explicates that 'Patriotism' is about political allegiance (and, of course, loyalty), commitment, and dedication. In brief, it means love of one's country or nation and is one of the oldest political virtues (Ward, 2008.).

Now we can study the then geopolitical situation of Nepal. Nepal has two immediate neighbors: China to the north, and India to the south, east and west. In Nepal, the Chinese Cultural Revolution had already been under question as an ultra-leftist mistake. It was not a time of Mao that could support the armed struggle. In his view about the communist movement, S. D. Muni examines the triangular relations of Nepal, India, and China: "the principle of US interest in Nepal was to keep off communist influence. As such they had no basic conflict with India's objectives towards the kingdom" (Nepal) (Muni, 1973). Likewise, in a face-to-face talk, an Indian diplomat claims that the interest between India and America in the Naxalbari movement either of India or Nepal was not very different, and both the countries had the same policy of 'Cordon and Kill' them wherever they stayed declaring them 'extremist' or 'terrorist' (Tripathi, 29 September 1998, Interview). If they attack Nepal with weapons upon armed revolt, the sovereignty of the country would be in a crisis due to Nepali politics. Therefore, from the perspective of the security of the nation, the peaceful political process to change the society,

which was applied by Bhandari, was not wrong at that time.

On the Nepal front, B. P. Koirala returned to Nepal from India abandoning all kinds of armed activities against the existing Panchayat Government of Nepal on 30 December 1976. Koirala proclaimed that it was a 'national reconciliation' policy (Adhikari, 2059 B.S.). After the return of Koirala, King Birendra felt international pressure. India's interest was for some reform in the existing Panchayat regime, whereas America was making pressure to change the political system totally to bring Koirala into the state power. In that situation, India appeared seemingly supportive of Koirala. In a real sense, India was never sincere in reviving him to power politics in Nepal. Only some leaders of the Janta Dal were liberal towards him, but only as a pretext. India did not see the multiparty system as favorable for India during the lifetime of Koirala due to his ties with the 'non-democratic elements' of Nepal (Tripathi, 29 September 1998, Interview). Koirala was aware of the Indian interest. It was another lesson in the application of peaceful methods in Nepali politics for Nepali communists.

Period of the national referendum

The student strike reached a climax in Nepal on 1 April 1979. Amidst students' mass protest against the Panchayat regime, King Birendra made a public declaration on 23 May 1979, that a referendum with a universal adult franchise would decide whether Nepali would like to accept the existing partyless Panchayat system with some reforms or respect a multiparty system. (Nepal, 10 Jestha 2036 B.S.).

Rumors spread that the announcement of the referendum was under pressure. However, then Minister for Home Navaraj Subedi declines the claim. Subedi further explicates that King Birendra decided on his own without any consultation with anybody (Subedi, 9 Jestha, 2080, Interview).

In the initial period of the referendum, the CPN (ML) flashed its response that the King's announcement of the referendum was only a 'deceit, conspiracy and drama' which was hatched against the people's revolution. The party, therefore, boycotted it in favor of the armed struggle (CPN [ML], Jestha 2036 B.S.) During the period of the referendum, on 13 April 1980, King Birendra proclaimed that all political prisoners except those who were imprisoned under a criminal offense would be released unconditionally (*The Rising Nepal*, 14 April 1980:1). In line with the King's proclamation, prisoners of the Jhapa revolt were not released. All the leaders of the Jhapa movement were in jail. Almost all of them were in favor of the multiparty system, and they were in favor of using it against the Panchayat regime. After the proclamation, Mohan Chandra Adhikari, a leader of the Jhapa movement urged his party leaders and supporters to utilize the referendum for a better democratic environment, stressing that there was no reason to boycott the referendum (*Nepal Post*, 27 Bhadra 2036 B.S.).

At this point, intricacy suspends everybody. Why did not they release it earlier? In answer to this question, J. S. Tripathi, known as the Indian responsible one, claimed if they were released during the period of a referendum their party would go for participating in the voting process favoring a multiparty system, and the result might have been different if had they had participated. He also exposed the double standard of the Indian establishment. Being a democratic country itself, India implicitly was in favor of the Panchayat autocracy to prevent B. P. Koirala from returning to the state power because he had maintained an anti-India stance (Tripathi, 29 September 1998, Interview). At one point, an administrator of the Panchayat commented:

There was not any reason to keep them in jail at that time if they would go into

peaceful politics abandoning armed protest during the referendum. From the information, I had got at that time, they were retained in the prison due to the pressure from India as well as the interest of the then-political leaders of Nepal (Shahi, 5 Marga 2054 B.S. Interview).

India was not in favor of the multiparty system in the referendum of Nepal. Therefore, the prisoners of the Jhapa movement were not released at that time. The next question can be raised about the party's position on the referendum. If it was true, why/ how the CPN (ML) initially forwarded the view to boycott the referendum.

Likewise, Gopal Shakya, one of the leaders of the party, had met Mainali, the then General Secretary, just after the announcement of the referendum, remarked that he was in favor of participating in the referendum for a multiparty system, but the party decided to go for a boycott. (Shakya, 26 Magh 2055 B.S. Interview). Mainali also accepted it, highlighting that he put forward a view to use the referendum in favor of a multiparty system before the politburo. Moreover, Mainali also faced opposition from parts of Madhav Nepal and Jibraj Ashrit, and he could not take a strong stand, which was his weakness at that time (Mainali, 22 Marga 2055 B.S. Interview.). On this issue, Bhandari shared his position on the issue of the prospect of participation in the referendum:

At that time, I was in the eastern part of the country taking responsibility for the party. There was no possibility to call the meeting of the central committee every time. So, the decision concerning any immediate issue was generally made by the politburo. At first, the politburo decided to boycott and exposed the referendum. Though C. P. Mainali was in favor of using the referendum for political purposes, he lacked the confidence to defend his move.

Despite his positive approach, the agenda of using the referendum for political purposes could not be endorsed because of his weak stand. As a result, the party took the policy of 'boycott and expose.' At that crucial juncture, the party leaders were themselves unclear about the national referendum. About three or four months later, the central committee attempted to correct the course of action. (Bhandari, 3 Falgun 2049 B.S., Interview).

Had the prisoners been released, the party would have favored a multiparty system in the referendum that would not have been in the hegemonic interest of India. In the party politburo, Mainali felt alone and could not go against Nepal and Ashrit. The steps of Nepal can be evaluated in the next issues, too, if the expression of Tanka Prasad Acharya is true.

The meeting of the central committee held on 2 August 1979 made two important decisions in the party's history. First, the party accepted and rectified its mistake (it was written in paragraph No. 3 of the party's Antarty party Nirdeshan No. 2 issuing intra-party circular No. 3). Secondly, the party realized that the view of Manilal Rai was correct, and the party had made the mistake of not accepting his view in the period of "Coordination Centre" (CPN [ML], 17 Shrawan 2036 B.S.). From this decision, the party undertook a peaceful political process. This crucial decision became a seed of the concept of Party Freedom or multiparty democracy.

1982 Contradiction

In 1982, a contradiction surfaced inside the then CPN (ML), making it a severe fault-line in the party's history. The party was just running in the 4th year of its establishment. Mainali was the General Secretary leading the party in such a crucial period. Mainali was one of the leaders of the Jhapa movement, a member of Nakkhu jail-breaking team, and the Coordination Centre

as well as the leader of the party ever since its establishment. However, Mainali was removed from the party's top executive position. The contradiction was related to five theoretical issues: the proposal of the zone of peace, the program of the party, the principal contradiction, the slogan of the party, and the way to fix specific programs. The following section outlines the two issues the "peace zone proposal" and the slogan of the party relating to this study.

Proposal of the zone of peace

24 February 1975 was the coronation day of King Birendra. During this Coronation Ceremony, many distinguished guests and dignitaries from across the world visited Nepal. On this occasion, a farewell reception was hosted in the Narayanhiti Royal Palace on 25 February. Heads of the states and governments of the participating countries joined the program. Also, participating dignitaries were the Vice Presidents, royal members, and government officials and representatives. On this occasion, King Birendra proposed "I stand to make a proposition, a proposition that my country, Nepal, be declared a zone of peace" (Parajuli & Chhetri, 2040 B.S.). Moreover, King Birendra had formally asked the international community to endorse his proposal for a Zone of Peace during his coronation ceremony, giving a new dimension to Nepal's foreign policy of non-alignment. The King Birendra said:

As heirs to one of the most ancient civilizations in Asia, our natural concern is to preserve our independence, a legacy handed down to us by history [...] we need peace for our security, we need peace for our independence, and we need peace for development. And if today, peace is an overriding concern for us, it is only because our people genuinely desire peace in our country, in our region and elsewhere in the world. It is with this earnest desire to institutionalize peace that I stand to make a proposition -a proposition that my country,

Nepal, be declared a Zone of Peace. [...] As heirs to a country that has always lived in independence, we wish to see that our freedom and independence shall not be thwarted by the changing flux of time when understanding is replaced by misunderstanding, when conciliation is replaced by belligerency and war. (qtd. in Duquesne, 2022)

The proposal was instantly endorsed by several countries, and the number reached 116 over a short period (Parajuli & Chhetri, 2040 B.S.). However, India never supported it, and USSR followed its strategy ally of the Cold War. Inside the country B. P. Koirala said “Nepal’s nationality, sovereignty, and independency is aimed in the proposal of ‘zone of peace’ (Parajuli & Chhetri, 2040 B.S.). Likewise, in the same manner, Manmohan Pokhrel and R. Adhikari also were supposed to have supported the proposal (Parajuli & Chhetri, 2040 B.S.). Eventually, the CPN (ML) leader Mainali, expressed his “Shanti Kshetrako Prastab Ra Krantikari Dristikon”:

Thus, we are going to view this “peace zone” proposal from the Marxist revolutionary point of view. We are going to deny the proposal of the Pancha reactionaries, the anti-people, and anti-revolution and anti-nationalistic criminal intention. We also slander on who are afraid and believe the view of reactionaries and come under the umbrella of the bourgeois peace process, inferiority feeling of the small nations’ struggle, sacrifice, and hard labor. We are going to concentrate on the anti-expansionist aspects of the proposal. But we deny this type of explanation of the Pancha reactionaries. In this manner, we are not going to oppose this proposal unconditionally because it is not bad itself and it is not against Nepali Revolution. Maybe with time, it will be clear that it would help the Nepali Revolution. Indian

expansionists have not supported this proposal of Nepal whereas they have opposed it. From this action, it is clear that their view on Nepal is of domineering nature. (CPN [ML], February 1981)

It was a critical support to King Birendra’s proposal for the peace zone or support for sovereignty, independence, and national unity of the nation and condemn the Panchayat regime’s suppression of other anti-Panchayat political ideologies in the name of the proposal.

It was November 1982, a proposal to oppose the ‘proposal of the zone of peace’ reached the meeting of the central committee of the CPN (ML). It was forwarded by Madhav Kumar Nepal for the first time and supported by Pradeep Nepal in the meeting (Mainali, 22 Marga 2055 B.S. Interview.). Pradeep Nepal has also written that it was decided by the meeting, the meeting which was held at the home of Mukesh Chalese’s father, but Mainali requested before the party not to forward the changed view up to the lower committee until six months from the meeting (Nepal, 2054 B.S.). Bhandari has also accepted that a discussion was held regarding the peace zone proposal before they enter into other subjects and even though it was decided, the ideas were not taken to the lower committees immediately (Bhandari, 21 Kartik 2047 B.S.). Madhav Nepal remarks that “The decision of critical support to peace zone proposal was rejected for the purpose to reduce the power of the palace” (Nepal, 8 Magh 2048 B.S.).

Indeed, there would have been a national consensus between the royal palace and the banned political parties ‘proposal of the zone of peace’ in consideration of sovereignty, national unity, and anti-regional hegemony. At that point, B. P. Koirala and Manmohan Adhikari were in favor of the proposal. In this situation, the Indian hegemony inside Nepal could have failed to understand the true spirit

of the proposal. However, the CPN (ML) could not understand and interpret the proposal from the perspective of patriotism. When Bhandari became the leader of the party, he was advocating the program of PMPD along these lines:

The Panchayat Government agreed simultaneously to the unequal treaties and negotiations even after explaining the peace zone proposal. Over time, the party presented its view that the peace zone proposal could not express Nepal's position against the Indian hegemony due to the seven points described by the Panchayat Government. Therefore, it was opposed by the party during the Panchayat system. But, it is not that we have to take the same stand every time. If the Indian intervention increasingly persists in the present parliamentary system, we may raise the proposal again against Indian regional hegemonism. (Bhandari, 3 Falgun 2049 B.S.).

Bhandari was flexible with the proposal, which was never supported by India. In connection with the Indian response to Nepal's peace zone proposal, S. D. Muni, known as an Indian expert on Nepal substantiates that "King Birendra had invited the Chogyal of Sikkim to participate in his coronation functions where the proposal was announced. The King also had a long talk with Chogyal who was allowed to make anti-Indian statements in Kathmandu" (Muni, 1992). In Muni's impression, Nepal infuriated India with her invitation to Chogyal (the King of Sikkim) in the coronation function as the Head of the State because the sovereign independence of Sikkim was going to be collapsed with the Indian intervention. And, the proposal was forwarded on the occasion of coronation ceremony at such a sensitive hour. It was not only a cause for India's rejection. In another place, Muni adds:

In addition to this, the formation of seven points of the zone of peace proposal is disturbing and intriguing for its implications for India's strategic interest in the region,

Nepal's refusal to "enter into the military alliance" or to "allow the establishment of any foreign military base on its soil has been assured within the framework of its policy of peace and non- alignment. (Muni, 1992)

The Indian establishment was inclined to make a military alliance with Nepal, but the proposal and its description of seven points did not support the Indian interest. Eventually, an Indian writer underscored the strategic relevance of the proposal. However, the leaders of the then CPN (ML), including Bhandari could not realize the positive implications of the proposal from the perspective of patriotism. However, the party lost a golden opportunity to express solidarity with the nationalist forces in the best interest of Nepal.

The slogan of freedom of parties

The CPN (ML) made a press release one month before the removal of Mainali from the position of General Secretary of the party:

Now there is little possibility to relieve people from the burden of liquidating the present autocratic environment from the struggle, but no single political force is capable to accomplish this objective. So, the establishment of a democratic environment and political (party) freedom has become the main demand, among others. The CPN (ML) again appeals to and calls all the political forces and individuals and followers of political (party) freedom and democratic environment to form a single political forum based on a minimum common program, if may be temporary, among those forces which are against dictatorship. (CPN [ML], 29 Ashwin 2039)

It was an address to make unity among the anti-Panchayat forces to go against Partyless Panchayat System. Such a move to remove Mainali from the party became a debatable issue, leading to a vertical rift in the party. Even Bhandari, who later propounded the concept of PMPD had

expressed is opposing view to the slogan of “Party Freedom”. Once Bhandari wrote with the pseudonym ‘Rajmoti’ that the demand for ‘party freedom’ might please the Panchayat rulers. It cannot solve the problems related to the people’s livelihood. Once Bhandari said that the “party freedom” is decorated by the acoustic of words, this is a program of the parliament system which exists under the signal of the ruler class (Rajmoti, Marga 2040 B.S.). In response to the question of the party’s freedom, Bhandari explained the party’s position with clarity. The “Party freedom” was opposed due to an understanding as a “specific program” but it was not opposed as a political slogan. It may be Bhandari’s realization of his past mistake in understanding the issue of party freedom.

After taking the leadership of the party, General Secretary Bhandari maintained a balance between the party’s freedom and political freedom for some time for the official ideological line of the CPN (ML). In other words, Bhandari neither followed the line of party freedom as opposed to political freedom nor followed the party freedom as opposed to political freedom. (Bhandari, 14 Bhadra 2047 B.S.). During that period, Bhandari was contemplating the right political position and the course of action. In response to a question of the party freedom or political freedom, Bhandari highlights:

I was in hope that the comrades who were in favor of ‘Party Freedom’ may not go ideologically against the program of People’s Multiparty Democracy. However, the main leader of ‘Party Freedom,” C. P. Mainali himself stood against it. Now, we have to understand that there was no vast difference between political freedom and party freedom. Indeed, the program of PMPD originated from the foundation of these concepts. But, Comrade C. P. Mainali could not understand its reality and reached the other side of the idea.

We have to know the internal condition of the party. If PMPD had been raised by C. P. Mainali, it would have failed. Of course, he was not unacceptable due to his ideology and views. His behavior and approach to other comrades complicated the environment in the party. As a result, a large scale of party leaders and cadres are against him. However, I am concentrating on creating an environment conducive to leadership building and individual development. Further, I like to work for party unity, harmony, and mutual understanding among comrades. I have taken hope if any of the genuine issues of national interest, nationality, the dignity of the nation, and people’s sovereignty come up, we can stand in the same concept in the true spirit of patriotism (Bhandari, 3 Falgun 2049).

It is found as a very meaningful answer. Now it could be concluded that the slogan of “Party Freedom” was the foundation of the program PMPD. Initially, Mainali could not understand it from the perspective of patriotism. Mainali made a blunder by not taking ownership of the PMPD program.

The CPN (ML) held its Fourth National General Convention in Siraha on 25-30 August 1989 on underground conditions during the Panchayat regime. At that time, Nepal had been facing an official embargo from its immediate southern neighbor. For approval, a document was prepared as a political program to present in the Convention, which had already been forwarded to the central members of the party:

In recent days, India has been infuriated by Panchayat rulers in Nepal due to their irresponsible and antagonistic policies. Moreover, the Panchayat regime fails to control Indian migrants to Nepal, implementing concrete and practical policy in line with Dr. Harka Gurung’s

proposition of border regulation. Rather, the regime is using Gurung's idea just as a tool for creating an anti-Indian public attitude at the grassroots, disseminating a lower standard of publicity, and adopting an immoral approach to the public. For instance, indigenous Nepali people in the Terai have been deported to India, carrying them in trucks, considering them as Indians. Further, Nepal has been harboring terrorists in Punjab. The Panchayat regime also fails to adopt a clear vision of the Gorkhaland movement, imports weapons from China to the so-called "peace zone Nepal," and bans the entry of Indian articles to Nepal. Further, Nepal behaves with India, Indian politicians, and Indian citizens disgracefully. (The CPN [ML], 2046 B.S., draft).

However, Bhandari did not agree with these issues. Bhandari's position on these sensitive issues was different. Bhandari thought that the Marich Man Singh-led government made rights moves, including importing weapons from China and provisioning the policy of work permit from the perspectives of national interest and Nepal's dignity. At that point, the import of weapons from China via the Kodari Highway was a kind of challenge to the Indo-Nepal Treaty of 1950. Bhandari also underscored the misconception of offense to the Indian guest. However, it was alleged that the Panchayat rulers misbehaved with an Indian guest, Balaram Jakhad, the then Speaker of the Indian parliament, which was wrong (Bhandari, 3 Falgun 2049 B.S. Interview). Concerning the issue of the work permit applied in the Kathmandu valley, the then Panchayat had adopted the resolution recommended by Harka Gurung. At that point, those Indian immigrant workers in Nepal were obliged to take work permits to work in the Kathmandu valley. Those who did not have work permits were driven away across the border in the initial period of application of resolution. At that time, some of the members of the legislative body, Rastriya Panchayat, were

elected as Janapakshiya (pro-people) members of the left movement of Nepal, and most of them were supporters of the CPN (ML). In the House of Representatives, they demanded strict application of the work permit provision for those foreign workers in Nepal (Tuladhar & Acharya, 12 Marga 2047 B.S. Interview). The left leaders, including Padma Ratna Tuladhar, Rupchandra Bista, Drona Prasad Acharya, and Somanath Pyasi had effectively raised the voices of people in the House.

The above-mentioned draft document was corrected carefully by Bhandari at the time of its publication and published in the following words:

Though the Monarchy and Panchayat rulers are attempting to escape from their responsibility for the present crisis as far as possible by showing the fault of only Indian rulers. They are not bringing out the real problems related between the two countries, and they are not forwarding the complete plan to solve the present crisis. They are just provoking anti-Indian publicity unnecessarily. The unequal treaty of 1950 is the main factor in various problems regarding the relationship between the two countries. (CPN [ML], 2046 B.S.)

The then General Secretary Jhala Nath Khanal and the youth leader K. P. Sharma Oli had the responsibility of preparing the draft document for the Fourth National General Convention (Bhandari, Feb 14, 1993 Interview). Whatsoever, it can now be understood that a political view, which was in favor of India or against the Nepali patriotic stand, had entered the CPN (ML) in its Fourth National General Convention. However, Bhandari vehemently stood for the Nepali national interest and patriotic feeling. Bhandari played a crucial role to save the party from the influence of anti-national regressive forces.

The fifth national convention of the party: adoption of PMPD

On 6-7 January 1990, the CPN (UML) was formed with a merger of the CPN (ML) and CPN (Marxist). In the left movement in Nepal, the formation of the CPN (UML) can be taken as a landmark move in Nepal. It is also significant from perspectives of national unity and political change in the country since it brought together seasoned leaders, including Manmohan Adhikari and Sahana Pradhan, and dynamic leaders, such as Bhandari and Mainali.

The party declared that the “New Democratic Program” will be the guideline of the party with a description of New Democracy (CPN [UML], Poush 2047 B.S.). Before the Fourth National General Convention, India had imposed an economic blockade on Nepal. At the same time, a discussion was started for the ongoing democratic movement in Nepal against the Panchayat system. The NC speculating to start a peaceful movement. In Eastern Europe, most of the communist regimes were collapsing with people’s movements for democracy. Therefore, in the meantime, the Soviet Union was disintegrated, forming several independent countries. At that point, the world communist movement was in a defensive position. The young CPN (ML) leaders were seriously studying complex world political dynamics with the rise of democracy in different countries and the fall of the communist regimes in the West. Closing reading this intricacy, leaders of both of the parties formulated a concept for merger (CPN [UML], 22 Kartik 2048 B.S.).

A kind of discussion was held in the party’s Fourth National General Convention about the ongoing democratic movement against the Panchayat regime. Mainali had proposed a concept with a modality to go against both Panchayat rulers and Indian economic blockade in the Fourth National General Convention. In one sense, it was correct if it was supported

by the. However, the joint movement with the NC was not possible because its leaders were reluctant to speak against the Indian move. Therefore, the idea of the joint movement was rejected at that time (Bhandari, 14 February 1993 Interview). At this point, it is relevant to examine Mainali’s position in these political developments.

In the present context of the Indian position of making use of economic and diplomatic affairs, the question of securing democratic rights has become a primary agenda. In playing a vital role though we are struggling against the Indian hegemony. At the same time, we are struggling against India’s policy of tightening its grip against its South Asian neighbors. At this point, the Nepali people should effectively work for the restoration of democracy and national interest against the Indian embargo. Though the major portion of the strength of the movement has been concentrated against Nepali rulers till now, a considerable part of the strength in the movement should be directed to educate the Nepali people against the Indian hegemony to organize them to oppose and expose it (Sagar Raj [C. P. Mainali], Bhadra 2047 B.S.).

Despite his positive and patriotic view, Mainali got only eight votes in the Convention. After the unification between the two communist parties or the formation of the CPN (UML), the party conducted its Fifth National General Convention. Before the Fifth Convention, General Secretary Bhandari proposed his view on the party line for discussion in the Congress: the party’s further guideline will be “Multiparty Democracy” after PMPD. As Bhandari opposition, other documents were also presented in Congress like Mainali presented Reformed New Democracy (Parimarjit Naya Janabad), Mohan Chandra Adhikari proposed New Democracy, in the

style of the Chinese Revolution, Tulasi Neupane of Sankhuwasabha also presented a handwritten document (unpublished), and Raghu Panta presented Social Democracy. At that point, the PMPD program was endorsed with more than two third majority of the Convention.

In many issues, there are differences among the presented programs in the Fifth National General Convention. However, identifying the character of the state mechanism, the character of the revolution, the maximum target of the revolution, the character of the present society and state as well as the then international situation are the same (Pokhrel, 2007). In other words, there are no differences in those issues. However, they had differences in the processes of revolution. Other programs did not accept a peaceful process of revolution, but PMPD has adopted it (Bhandari, n.d.). It is also said “People’s Multiparty Democracy is not another form of the bourgeois parliamentary democracy; nor is it different from New Democracy. However, the way of revolution to accomplish the goal of the new democracy is different from that of the old style (Bhandari, n.d.). Regarding the issue of a peaceful way for revolution, other leaders and writers regarding the communist of Nepal criticized the “People’s Multiparty System” that it is anti-revolutionary way (K. D. Shrestha, 2052 B.S.) and the destination of the CPN (UML) to be the dead body as well as treacherous thought for the revolutionary people (Singh, n.d.). Before these writings, Bhandari had proposed a peaceful process of revolution in many places with explanations of the then internal and external situation. For instance, Bhandari presented an article at an international conference in Kolkata, where he forwarded his vision of PMPD for the downtrodden working-class people of the world. Moreover, Bhandari highlighted fourteen main features of PMPD (Bhandari, Contemporary World Situation and Validity of Marxism, March 2021).

At one point, Bhandari responds to the question of a peaceful way of revolution:

We have to do what is demanded in the contemporary situation in our geopolitics. In the present context, we have to understand and take lessons from that Gorbachev, Khrushchev, and Boris Yeltsin all were the communist party leaders as well as rulers of the largest communist country. But, they did not expose it until the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Soviet Communist Revolution, and the Communist Party. They attempted to finish the communist rule by being communist leaders. These events happened, as I thought, due to the closeness inside the communist rule and the lack of competition among the different ideologies under the communist regime. Therefore, it is necessary to identify such a situation of the treacherous role for the nation and the people, the party must be open and compete with others.

Next, the imperialist or capitalist power used to collapse the communist rule without using weapons in Eastern Europe. In this situation, we should, therefore, have to use the same weapons to accomplish our goal of PMPD through a peaceful process of revolution. If we raise arms against them, we will be finished, including our nation or its sovereignty in the present world political dynamics. Sometimes, some views have come either knowingly or unknowingly in inviting expansionists or imperialists into the movement. Therefore, we have to be careful at this time (Bhandari. Falgun 3 2049, Interview).

To make a critical appraisal of Bhandari’s argument for a peaceful process of revolution, it can be deduced that the question of the process of revolution comes from people’s failure to understand world politics and Nepal’s geopolitical strategies. From the perspective of patriotism, Bhandari’s concept has validity in the

changing global political context. However, he has left space for speculation and comment for researchers and cadres on the ground of people's "knowingly or unknowingly in inviting to expansionist or imperialist into the movement" (Bhandari. 3 Falgun 2049, Interview) not exposing the name of anybody.

During the 1990 people's movement of a concept was raised in the party for inviting the Indian armed force into Nepal to abolish the monarchy. Mohan Chandra Adhikari provided information that he was sent to India to make a dialogue with Indian authority for armed support to eliminate the monarchy in Nepal but Mainali prevented him from indulging in such intricacies. Later, Adhikari returned to Nepal upon Bhandari's call (Adhikari, 23 Bhadra, 2055 B.S. Interview). At that time, Mainali was taking command of the ML party in India. He had responsibilities for the party. He made the point clear, and Mohan Chandra Adhikari was sent to India to make a dialogue with Indian authorities for armed support to eliminate the monarchy in Nepal. Eventually, it was informed to the party's leader Bhandari who had called him to return to Nepal. Because Bhandari is not in favor of such action (Mainali, 16 Kartik 2047, B.S.. Interview). Right from his formative years, Bhandari was not in favor of taking support from the Indian establishment for movements for democracy in Nepal.

Now a question arises back home in Nepal: Who subscribed to the idea of sending Adhikari to India? According to Radha Krishna Mainali, Madhav Kumar Nepal put the proposal in the meeting to invite the Indian army to remove the monarchy from Nepal, but Bhandari opposed Nepal's proposal at the meeting (Mainali, 2073 B.S.). Now, a question can be raised: Is it true? Providing an interview with a monthly magazine entitled *Mulyankan Monthly*, Nepal said that the then CPN (ML) made a plan to organize and form a militant force and forts across Nepal's

borders with India. Raksoul was chosen as the head quarter and Jayanagar and Jogbani were to be the centers for military training to succeed in a move against the monarchy of Nepal (Nepal, Baisakh 2048: 43, interview). Now it is clear why Bhandari forwarded the view to make the party fully open while Mainali thought of forming a front for open activities and the party should be kept as semi-underground. However, we have found from the patriotic perspective that the view of Bhandari seems correct and feasible. If the party could not work openly, not remaining all the leaders underground, the leaders who were working tools of imperialists and expansionists, or who were working on a plan of invitation to the foreign military inside the country for the struggle against internal domestic affairs, would not have been exposed. In this case, Bhandari was not wrong.

Once Pushpalal wrote that the Indian communists were not in favor of the formation of the Communist Party in Nepal as an independent party. Moreover, they suggested staying as a left group within the NC (Pushpalal, 1953). All the expansionist and imperialist powers maintained the same view. In the Fifth National General Convention of the party, Bhandari also felt pressure to be a junior partner of the NC from Indian leaders, but he rejected such an idea suggesting they should rather not act as a big brother. Later, it was exposed by the leader of the Communist Party of India (ML Liberation), Binod Mishra, while it was the year of 1998, wrote in a place as:

Virtually, Surajit the general secretary of CPI(M), begged me to oblige Madan Bhandari used my influence for tightening the knot with Nepali Congress as its (Nepali Congress) junior partner, he argued that "otherwise, the king would again take over using the conflict of the Nepali Congress and the CPN (UML)." ... I replied to him impudently; firstly, our relation is based on equality. Therefore, I

don't have any right to influence him, and secondly, I agree with the view of Madan Bhandari. (Mishra, May 1997)

The facts, which are mentioned above, show the patriotic stand of Bhandari. Explaining PMPD, Bhandari said that the parliamentary system was not the People's Multiparty Democracy. In PMPD, the leadership of the working class and people's democratic dictatorship as well as its character will be anti-feudal, anti-comprador capitalist, and anti-imperialist (Bhandari, 3 Falgun 2049 B.S.). The main document of PMPD has been furnished with the twelve, thirteenth and fourteenth points of his "main features" (Bhandari, 2021). A question can be raised here: Is Bhandari's party running as envisioned by him? The answer to the question is the next issue for further study. Moreover, it can be concluded that the origin of the PMPD was an experience taken from different issues of the past life of the party as well as from contemporary world politics. Its destination, revolution for people's democracy in a peaceful process seems right and relevant in the contemporary geopolitical dynamics.

During his lifetime, Bhandari emphasized the joint left movement against bourgeois politics in the best interest of the country and people. For an example, we can take instance of the formation of the United Left Front during the people's movement in 1990, the parliamentary election of 1991, the movement against the issue of the Tanakpur Treaty, and so on (Pokhrel & Pounaru, April 2016). Inside the party, Bhandari was careful not to split the party at any cost. Ashok Rai provides information that during the conflict of 1982, a plenum of the party was held in Kaski District, and many of the leaders were proposing to remove Mainali, but Bhandari did not accept it; rather the disciplinary action which was imposed upon Mainali was removed due to the stand of Bhandari (A. Rai, 4 Baisakh 2056 B.S.). Bhandari said:

The action upon Mainali was taken not for his political views, it was for his behaviors and approach with other members. He broke friendly relationships with other comrades, especially those who criticized his activities. For this, in my impression, he was not only responsible for it, but the politburo members were also responsible. Their responsibility lies in their failure to warn him of his wrong move nor did they point out his mistakes from the beginning. However, he is a party leader politically and theoretically, and he has contributed to making the party from its initial phase. The party should not split due to anybody's matter. If it goes to split, the country will fall into a deep crisis of national sovereignty. Therefore, I did not nominate myself for the party leadership until he did not nominate me during the Party's Congress. (Bhandari, Interview).

It was true that during Bhandari's life time, the party neither went against the joint left movement, nor showed an anti-nation stand, nor went towards the step of splitting the party. From this perspective, PMPD originated.

After his demise, for the first time, the CPN (UML) left the joint left movement during the movement launched against the Das Dhunga incident. When the movement against the assassination of Bhandari and Ashrit in a mysterious car crash was at its peak point, on 17 August 1993, Nepal suspended the movement singing alone in an agreement with the government headed by Girija Prasad Koirala while there were 7 other communist parties involved in that movement (The Report, Bhadra/ Ashwin 2050:6). On the issue of the Mahakali Treaty, the party split between the CPN (UML) and the CPN (ML). It is also said that the CPN (UML) could not engage in activities as not more than a junior partner of the NC as its status (Pokhrel, 2069 B.S.). Regarding the Mahakali

Treaty, the then Parliamentary Minister of Britain, William Fox, had visited Nepal and suggested to the leaders of political parties by creating pressure on them. He was urging the Nepali leaders to pass the Mahakali Treaty, luring them with some grants to get more than a million amount of foreign currency. Within one week of his visit, on 5 September 1996, Robbin Raphel, the then American Assistant Secretary came to Nepal and met so many political leaders of Nepal including her Ambassador, Sandra Vogelgesang with a voice “Mahakali Treaty is very important for Nepal which opens the market for power sale which will be a key to international financing in Hydropower Project in Nepal” (The Reporter, 7 September 1996). A question can be raised: What was their interest in Mahakali Treaty while it was a matter of India and Nepal? The answer to this question is the other part of the study. However, it can be considered from these activities, according to the probability theory of history writing, that the Nepali leaders, including the followers of PMPD, might be under temptation and pressure by them. Therefore, they passed the treaty at mid night from the parliament of Nepal. It was negative action from the perspective of Nepali patriotism because the Mahakali Treaty recognized the Mahakali River was common between Nepal and India, whereas the land west of the Mahakali River and east of then Mechi River was decided to be left by Nepal in the Sugauli Treaty (Prescott, 1975). In this document, it is also written “the new boundary was marked with 994 masonry pillars from Phalut peak at trijunction with Sikkim in the east, to Brahmadev Mandi, where the Mahakali River leaves in the mountain in the west” (245). From this perspective, Nepal lost some territorial rights in the Mahakali River by accepting only half rights. In that line of logic, the successors of Bhandari have to respond to the question of their support of the Mahakali Treaty when Bhandari had already clearly stated the CPN (UML) position in the Tanakpur Treaty.

Bhandari’s followers in the CPN (UML), with PMPD as their political philosophy, need to critically review their principles and practices in retrospection. Whereas Bhandari had posed his stance on national interest truly from the perspective of patriotism, the PMPD followers have yet to transform their words into actions. From the facts mentioned above, it can be said that the “PMPD originated from the study of contemporary external and internal situations opposing all kinds of feudalism, comprador capitalism, and imperialism to inculcate the strong feeling of patriotism in Nepali people. The realities of the party’s performances in government as well as the opposition bench can still be questioned from Bhandari’s point of stance.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that PMPD was presented as the party’s program during the Fifth National General Convention of the CPN (UML) by Bhandari. For an extended period, “New Democracy” was the overarching goal of Nepali communists. Bhandari, while presenting certain distinct features separate from New Democracy, explained that PMPD incorporates innovative principles within the context of Nepal’s geopolitical dynamics. Both programs share common principles, including opposition to feudalism, comprador capitalism, hegemonism, and imperialism, with the aim of eradicating these issues from Nepali society. As stated by Bhandari, “PMPD is not limited to a mere parliamentary system.”

At times, it is argued that Nepal’s Maoists were influenced by the PMPD of the CPN (UML) when adopting adult franchises within competitive political practices. There is no debate on this version, as both communist parties, the CPN (UML) and the CPN (Maoist), initially embraced the revolutionary program of New Democracy as their guiding principle in expediting the revolution during the early stages

of party formation. They subsequently shifted towards parliamentary politics. However, PMPD distinctly articulates that while parliamentary practice is a political tool, the parliamentary system itself is not the primary objective of PMPD. Instead, it is a facet of the process dedicated to serving the nation and promoting people's welfare.

The objective is to foster a people-oriented structure that instills a sense of patriotism, safeguards Nepal's communist movement from its defensive stance imposed by global imperialist and hegemonic powers, and exposes internal anti-national elements within the communist movement, among other things. These facets of PMPD affirm its roots in a patriotic perspective. Consequently, it becomes a paramount responsibility for the CPN (UML), which has embraced PMPD as its guiding principle, to intensify unwavering efforts to educate the entire party-line about the essence of PMPD in the realm of foreign affairs. In my view, PMPD has yet to discover capable successors who can steadfastly carry forward Bhandari's legacy.

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