

**LESSONS FROM INDIA'S COUNTER INSURGENCY EXPERIENCE  
AND POLICIES : RELEVANCE AND APPLICATION FOR FUTURE  
OF COUNTER INSURGENCY POLICY**

**INSURGENCY IN NAGALAND (NORTH EAST INDIA)**

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1. The symptoms of a separatist movement which later on developed in to a 'Insurgency' were prevailing in Nagaland right from the time India gained independence from British Rule. However these started surfacing from 1952 onwards; and developed in to dangerous insurgent movement during early sixties. I had visited Assam (another state of North East India) as a young cadet of National Cadet Corps (NCC) and as a college student in 1960. I had a chance to closely interact with students from different states of North East India (NE) for about three weeks during the NCC Camp. As a young student I got to know about the social, cultural aspects of the young generation of that time. (This was the generation, which provided recruits, insurgents, and leadership to insurgent organisations, which emerged in due course of time).

2. Just by chance merely four years later in 1964, I entered Nagaland as a young Indian Army Officer (Captain) to Combat Insurgency. During my four decades of service in Indian Army (up to 2002), I served several times in different ranks combating insurgency, which started from Nagaland and kept spreading in different states of NE namely Mizoram, Manipur, Tripura and Assam. Due to geographical proximity and connectivity the states of Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh (earlier known as North East Frontier Agency NEFA) also got influenced by the insurgency in Nagaland and Assam.

3. I retired from Indian Army as Lt General, with a experience of commanding a corps of Indian Army committed in handling security of line of control with Tibet and China, and international boarder with Myanmar (Burma),

Bhutan and concerned with some portion of border with Bangladesh. I also gained the experience in working closely with various government agencies, intelligence organisations, Para Military Forces (PMF) and State Police, in my capacity of being the head of the operational group of Unified Command combating Insurgency in Assam sponsored and conducted by insurgent groups like ULFA (United Liberation Front of Assam and Bodo, a tribal group demanding separation under the identify as Bodoland).

4. My study is based on more on my practical and ground experience and less on theoretical and general knowledge and concepts. As a student of warfare of different forms (conventional war, guerrilla warfare / insurgency terrorism and other forms of internal conflicts), it is my firm belief that study of conflicts not based on specific cases results in general concepts and denies the originality of perspective emerging out of probing certain indigenous currents that play a subtle role under the crust of generalisations. Generalised discussion bring forth conclusions that are limited in scope for application and tend to ignore aspects having wider ramifications. Therefore, to provide both balance and depth the study of insurgency in Nagaland within the broad context of Indian conditions – is attempted in this paper. Attempt is also made to avoid chronological jumps in this study of almost sixty years during which the Insurgency in Nagaland evolved, climaxed and is now degenerated and is very likely to lapse, for the good of the people of Nagaland and NE.

5. Insurgency anywhere in the world and Nagaland is no exception, did not spring up suddenly on one fine morning. Originating from humble begging it had to pass through again and again with different ideologies and strengthen with psychological and technological innovations through a prolonged period. The revolutionised insurgent of the post world war era is transformed into an instrument of socio-economic and politico military change leading to establishment of a new order and regime. The guerrilla of historical era was a tool capable of being conceptually motivated and psychologically influenced for

the fulfilment of a local or perceived cause! Today's insurgent is a youth, unemployed, highly indoctrinated and brainwashed, prepared to lose his/her life for a cause (he/she is convinced), with love for adventure and craze for wielding weapons. They refuse to accept conventional moral limits. He/she can also be a criminal and psychopath (same is true of a terrorist also), who has been forced into insurgency / terrorism to escape from the Law of the land.