

Engaging Citizens and Communities to Create Peace and Security: The Case of Nepal.

In April 2006, a large scale people's movement, known as the Jana Andolan II, was initiated against the King Gyanendra's direct rule, on the basis of a 12-point understanding reached between the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoists (CPN-M) and the Seven Party Alliance. The Jana Andolan II (or People's Movement II) which lasted for 19 days, ended the direct rule by King Gyanendra, forced the king to return power to the reinstated parliament, and created a conducive environment for the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the government and the rebel CPN-M in November 2006, ending the decade-long insurgency that had affected all parts of the country. The success of the Jana Andolan II has thus been hailed by many as being exemplary of the ways in which engaged citizenry and communities at the local level can have an impact on the resolution and transformation of violent conflict at the national level.

This project seeks to provide an understanding of how communities and citizen groups at multiple levels (local, regional and national) were mobilized across class, caste, ethnic and religious divides to effectively topple the royal regime and help bring an end to the 10-year conflict. More specifically, by using literature on social movements, peace-building and conflict transformation, the project will seek to explore the following broad questions/issues: the nature of the Jana Andolan II, the impact of the movement, and lessons learnt.

The methodology for the case study will involve literature review, a micro-level study and key informant interviews. The literature review will cover relevant social science theories (social movements, peace-building and conflict transformation), the Nepali context (the Maoist conflict, role of the monarchy, socio-economic issues, past popular protests/movements) and media research (Nepali and English). The micro-level study will be conducted in Chitwan district to study local level dynamics that were at play in the period around Jana Andolan. The selection of Chitwan district as a research site is based on the fact that during Jana Andolan II, Chitwan was in the forefront in many ways—high levels of women's participation, the coming together of various issued based community organizations, strong rural and urban linkages, and a vibrant local press which covered the movement extensively. Key-informant interviews will be conducted with individuals from civil society, government, political parties at the local as well as national level.

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The Social Science Baha (SSB) fosters and facilitates the development of the study of the social sciences in Nepal. Established in 2002 to support and enhance Nepal's research community, SSB houses an extensive social science library, courses on contemporary social science issues, lectures and conferences, and produces research publications. Deepak Thapa is the director of SSB and a one-time

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journalist. He edited Understanding the Maoist Movement of Nepal (Kathmandu: Martin Chautari, 2003) and, with Ms.Sijapati, co-authored A Kingdom Under Siege: Nepal's Maoist Insurgency 1996-2004 (London: Zed Books, 2005). Bandita Sijapati is a PhD candidate at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University. Her research involves migration, transnationalism, citizenship, and civil conflicts. She has a master's degree from Columbia University, New York, and a bachelor's degree from Macalester College in Minnesota. She is co-editor of Women Making Peace: Strengthening Women's Role in Peace Process (Kathmandu, 2002).