

FACTIONALISM IN NEPALESE POLITICS: A CASE STUDY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

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Article Info

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Abstract

Since its inception, the Nepalese communist movement has suffered from factionalism and division, ultimately weakening the entire movement. This article by Santa Bahadur Thapa analyzes the causes and effects of this constant factionalism and division using the descriptive and analytical method while covering the history of communism in Nepal, which began in the 1951 pro-democracy struggle and later split into pro-Soviet and pro-Maoist factions. These factions repeatedly attempted but failed to form a unified communist party, leading to the loss of the government by the party, which had represented almost two-thirds in parliament. The article delves into the reasons behind the constant factionalism and division, resulting in political crises throughout the history of the Nepalese communist movement. Understanding the evolution and continuity of political parties' ideologies, structures, and roles is vital to comprehend how political parties position themselves within the contradictory conditions that have arisen over the past thirteen years. The article concludes by highlighting the importance of addressing the theoretical and historical elements of factionalism in political organizations, citing Nepalese history as an example.

1. INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of any association or organization is to gain power, especially to control the means and resources of the state through it. In acquiring power, conflicts occur between different organizations and within the same organization. There are two aspects of any political conflict within an organization. "They pit against each other, competing for power or the favour of those holding power. They set various groups, collectivities, and social elements against another" (Duverger, 1972, 133). When the conflict starts, factionalism begins within the organization. This results in supporting and protesting activities openly, which ultimately leads to division in the organization. The historical scenario of world politics shows that many political organizations or parties have

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been conflicting with each other and creating division. Nepalese political history, right from the Rana rule to the current mushrooming fractions of the communist party, also suggests the same.

2. METHOD

I have made the secondary source of data the fundamental basis in preparing this article on the factions and divisions seen in the communist movement of Nepal. To accomplish the aims of the article, sufficient sources of information were gathered and analyzed. The researcher has referred to several books, journals, newspapers, and other secondary sources of information to address the theoretical and historical elements of the subject.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

To comprehend how the political parties have positioned themselves within the contradictory conditions that have arisen over the past thirteen years, one must first understand the beginnings and history of the Nepalese political parties. It is critical to understand the evolution and continuity of the political parties' ideologies, structures, and roles.

When the communist movement started in Nepal, the principal aim was to finish the Rana rule. After the Rana rule and the establishment of democracy, two streams appeared as the communist movement moved forward. The Soviet Union influenced one, and the other one was by Mao, who led the Cultural Revolution in China. Nepal's communists, divided into pro-Soviet and pro-Maoist factions, have repeatedly tried but failed to form a unified communist party. It is mainly because of the development of these two communist streams and the factions on both sides against the leadership that the communist movement and the communist party seem to be split.

4. HISTORY OF COMMUNISM IN NEPAL

After the establishment of democracy, the Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal split repeatedly because of factionalism. "The leaders of those parties could not think that factionalism may divide a party's elite into organized units, divide a party's general membership, and even divide the larger body of citizens who regularly identify with the party" (Beller and Belloni, 1978: 6). Because of factionalism, they divided the Communist Party of Nepal into smaller groups, which weakened the entire communist movement in Nepal.

Communism originated in Nepal during the 1951 pro-democracy struggle, which ended in the overthrow of the autocratic Rana regime and the establishment of democracy. Nepal's communist movement has split into factions at various points, and different factions have merged to form a single fold. It has a history of opposing open political discourse and promoting guerilla warfare, most notably the Maoist insurgency in the 1990s and early 2000s, which culminated in the Nepalese Civil War and claimed 17,000 lives. Because of Rana's isolationist policy, communism arrived late in Nepal. By 1930, communist literature was being smuggled into Nepal, and two of the country's four notable martyrs, Dashrath Chand and Gangalal Shrestha, had studied communist literature. Nepal's first communist party was formed during the Indian independence movement.

Communism arrived late in Nepal because of the country's isolationist foreign policy, extremely low literacy rate, and the suppression of political movements during the Ranacracy (1846-1951). They banned political parties during the Ranacracy and Britain was the only country having a diplomatic mission in Kathmandu. "As late as 1952, just 9.5% of the male population over the age of ten and 0.7% of the female population in the same age group were reported to be literate" (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2001). In this context, the Indian independent movement acted as a catalyst for the change, and most early Nepalese communists were involved in India's anti-British struggle. The Nepal Communist Movement was started in 1947 and the Nepal Communist Party (NCP) was founded in Calcutta on September 15, 1949, under the leadership of Pushpa Lal Shrestha, the country's founding father of the communist party. Almost four years later, in 1953, Man Mohan Adhikari was elected secretary-general of the NCP by the party's convention. The 1950s in Nepal were a time of great political instability. Following the Rana dynasty's demise, King Tribhuvan signed the "Delhi Compromise," a three-way

power-sharing pact between the Nepali Congress Party and the Ranas in Delhi. He returned home to assume the post of constitutional monarchy, issuing a Royal Proclamation on February 18, 1951, announcing that "based on a democratic constitution framed by elected representatives of the people" (Joshi and Rose, 1966: 83). Although the NCP was technically prohibited, it held municipal elections in September 1963, electing six of its candidates. This was the largest turnout in the nation's capital by any political party and it was an unexpected show of strength in the nation's capital. Within the NCP, divisions occurred over the party's attitude toward monarchy, in a country where the king was still revered as a divinity. Keshar Jung Rayamajhi's reformist group argued for a more conciliatory approach to the monarchy to convince King Tribhuvan to accept the constitutional monarchy.

At the second party conference in 1957, this stance prevailed and Keshar Jung Rayamajhi succeeded Adhikari as secretary-general. Meanwhile, King Mahendra appointed members to a Special Constitution Committee in response to a 1958 all-party campaign of non-cooperation. They drafted a new constitution, which was approved and promulgated by the monarch in February 1959. By vesting in the king an emergency, residuary, and other supreme powers, this constitution solidified the monarch's authority. Despite the constitution's faults, political parties consented to operate under it and it held the first general elections in mid-1959. The NCP's poor performance suggested a division within the party and weakened support for Rayamajhi's monarchical line. The Nepali Congress Party won 74 of the 109 seats and 38% of the national vote, while the Nepal Communist Party garnered only four seats and 7.4% of the vote. Sadly, the first elected government was short-lived. On December 15, 1960, Mahendra, with the support of the military, seized power in a bloodless coup. He dismissed the government, disbanded the parliament, and detained prominent political individuals, all the while claiming legitimacy for his acts through the emergency powers granted to him by the 1959 Constitution. Two years later, he promulgated a new constitution that established the Panchayat system and prohibited the multi-party system. The royal coup caused the NCP to experience its first substantial division. Strong controversy erupted within the NCP after the party general secretary Keshar Jung Rayamajhi issued a statement welcoming the dissolution of the parliament by the king as a progressive step (Mishra, 2058, 17). Rayamajhi's main reason for supporting the king's decision to dissolve the parliament was his party's low presence in the parliament, and, in that context, it could not play any role. So he saw the benefits of supporting the king's move. They then granted Keshar Jung Rayamajhi and his allies' participation in the royal advisory council, the Raj Sabha, in exchange for partnering with the Panchayat system.

After the dissolution of the Parliament, it held an extended meeting of the NCP Central Committee in March 1961 in Darbhanga, India. The meeting saw the emergence of three types of political lines: establishment of the parliamentary system, restoration of the dissolved parliament, and the election of the Constituent Assembly (Mishra 2058, 18). Proponents of Keshar Jung Rayamajhi advocated for a legitimate monarchy and a guided democracy. Pushpalal's supporters advocated for a united front with the Nepali Congress, while Mohan Bikram Singh's supporters rejected both lines and demanded a Constituent Assembly election. The conflict between the Soviet Union and China, which had been raging since 1962, helped to escalate the conflict within the CPN. As the Chinese Communist Party began advocating for a "new democratic" revolution and the Soviet Union for "national democracy", there was a clear division of opinion among communists in Nepal as well (Mishra, 2058, 22). As the controversy escalated, the party expelled Rayamajhi and replaced as secretary-general by Tulsilal Amatya at the party's third congress in Banaras in May 1962. Shortly after Tulsilal was elected general secretary, the antagonism between Pushpalal and Tulsilal grew. Strongly opposing the program of others and justifying his program, Tulsilal published a book titled 'Kun Bato. In response, Pushpalal published a book titled 'Hamro Mool Bato' under the name of Gurung (Mishra, 2058: 21). As the controversy escalated, Pushpalal formed the Communist Party of Nepal (Pushpalal) in 1972. The NCP (PL) was active until his death. Then it was merged

with another moderate left force, the Nepal Communist Party in 1988 and became NCP (Marxist). In 1991, they again merged it with the Marxist and Leninist group and became the NCP United Marxist Leninist Party (NCP, UML) (Khadka, 1995: 60). Even in 1990, the Communist Parties of Nepal existed under different names. There are not only internal reasons but also external reasons for the split in the Communist Party of Nepal. "Especially, the royal takeover of the democratically elected government in December 1960 divided the communist party into two major blocks,... the Sino-Soviet ideological rift of the early 1960s, the Sino-Indian war of 1962, and their divisive effects on the Communist Party of India contributed to further polarization" (Khadka, 1995: 58). The Sino-Soviet division's implications in the mid-1960s shocked the NCP to its core for two primary reasons. The party was in its infancy and it lacked an in-depth understanding of Nepal's peculiar class structure, which was still emerging from feudalism. Rather than understanding that ground reality, modern foreign dogmas swayed its leaders, which they mechanically applied to Nepalese reality. As a result, the communist movement fractured into many opposing factions. "The organizational and numerical strength of the communist movement has increased but so has the increase in internal feuds and factionalism" (Khadka, 1995: 57). As the number of communist organizations increased, they could neither fight against the panchayats nor move toward the establishment of the system according to their goals.

5. THE NEPAL COMMUNIST PARTY: MARXIST-LENINIST

The young party activists led the most significant faction to emerge from the split. "Towards the latter half of the 1960s and early 1970s, the Communist movement in Nepal also developed its extremist sections. The Chinese cultural revolution and the rise of Maoists in India who came to be known as the Naxalite influenced their rise" (Muni, 2004: 3). Mohan Chandra Adhikari, Chandra Prakash Mainali, and Radha Krishna Mainali established the NCPs Koshi Regional Committee in Nepal's south-eastern area. They founded the Jhapa Organization, an underground guerrilla force influenced by the teachings of Charu Mazumdar, the architect of West Bengal's Naxalite rebellion. However, in 1971, their operations were put to an end by the Nepalese army's successful counter-insurgency campaign, which resulted in the deaths of many of their cadres. The guerilla campaign in Jhapa was a complete failure, prompting an in-depth self-critique within this group, resulting in a fundamental distrust of 'imported' political dogmas and a renewed concentration on developing a unique Nepalese road to socialism. The organisation eventually created the Nepal Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist), abbreviated MALE, in 1978 and embarked on a long-term plan of establishing and merging a statewide network of clandestine party cells. MALE, like many other communist organizations, initially opposed the referendum as a hoax, but later reversed its position and became an outspoken backer of the multi-party system movement. Throughout the 1980s, the young MALE increased in prominence, eventually eclipsing the older generation-led pro-Soviet NCP-M. MALE was by far the most powerful and organized wing of Nepal's communist movement by the decade's close.

6. THE ORIGIN OF THE NEPAL COMMUNIST PARTY (MASHAL)

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, MALE expanded and strengthened its organisation. They formed these organizations following the Sino-Soviet split of 1965 when they seceded from the pro-Soviet NCP-M and held a "Fourth Party Conference". This faction, which ultimately became known as it, led the NCP by Mohan Bikram Singh and Nirmal Lama (Fourth Convention). Lama's Fourth Convention faction embraced the new Chinese rule. Unlike MALE, the Fourth Convention and Mashal groupings boycotted the 1980 referendum. Mashal was eager to establish a relationship with the 1976 global gathering of Maoist organizations following the fall of the 'Gang of Four' (1976) in China. Mashal representatives attended the second worldwide congress of Maoist parties and organizations convened by the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) in London in March 1984. The Partido Comunista Peruano-Sendero Luminoso (PCP-SL) was one of the nineteen signatories to the London

convention's declaration of the RIM. The PCP-SLs are rooted in Peru's broader communist movement, akin to the NCP (Mashal), which emerged from a division of Nepal's communist movement. Mashal immediately expressed its unwavering support for the PCP-revolutionary SL's battle in Peru following the formation of the RIM.

7. POLITICAL CHANGE IN THE 1990S AND THE EMERGENCE OF PEOPLE'S WAR IN NEPAL

Jana Andolan's victory brought the autocratic Party-less Panchayat System to an end, and additional concerns arose. The leadership must be cognizant of public opinion and the voice of the people. The political elite was incognizant of the newborn democracy's specific needs. To feed the vast majority of the impoverished in remote and rural areas, Nepal, a semi-feudal country, required a massive reengineering of its socioeconomic structure. But someone frequently exploited it as a pretext for intraparty fighting, sowing the seeds of future conflict and encouraging the emergence of new ideologies as a societal process. The CPN (Maoist) took the lead in advocating for this position. To make everyone "essentially equal" in terms of resource availability while simultaneously making everyone "sovereign" in actuality, significant structural modifications were necessary. In 1996, the CPN (Maoist) proposed a 40-point agenda to the Nepali Congress government led by Sher Bahadur Deuba. They stated that in such a situation, "bourgeoisie democracy" would be incapable of meeting people's needs and would have to be rebuilt. Reforming the feudal and complex culture was not an effortless task. Maoist viewed the palace as the primary political foe of the feudal regime. As a result, they considered "republicanism" as a paradigm for Nepalese social reform. And vowed to reject the CPN's desire to reshape Nepalese society militarily and politically. They began the People's War (PW) with a single 303 rifle on February 13, 1996, by attacking officers. PW quickly developed into a formidable force capable of fighting and seizing weaponry from the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA). Gathered powerful weapons to defend themselves against RNA's attack. During the PW, 17,000 Nepalese were killed or disappeared. "The People's War developed in an orderly fashion, garnering global attention. They began broadcasting using mobile radio stations. By strengthening their troops and establishing bases in villages, they gained control of over 80 percent of the country. The Residents of various locations expressed a sense of "government oblivion" (Nickson, 1992: 171). The Maoist-controlled villages increased their strength while limiting the activities and appearance of other parties.

In 1998, the UML split because of factionalism within it over the Mahakali Treaty with India. Those who were against the Mahakali Treaty formed the CPN (MALE) under the leadership of Bamdev Gautam. Because of the split of the CPN-UML, it won 71 seats in the 1999 general election, while the CPN-ML did not win even a single seat. "The UML-ML split was so self-destructive to both the parties' interests, the cause of the UML-ML split as being cultural rather than ideological" (Thapa and Roka, 1999: 2386). "The main reason for the split of the CPN (UML) was not the ideological and working differences, but the annulment of the post of Deputy General Secretary by the Central Committee on June 27, 1996, saying that there was no provision in the Legislature" (K.C., 2065: 268). When the CPN (UML) won the mid-term elections in 1994, the largest party in the parliament formed a minority government. It gave Bamdev Gautam the post of Deputy General Secretary. After Bamdev Gautam became the Deputy General Secretary, he started strengthening factions within the party and increasing his influence. As a result, other leaders within the party felt threatened. To curb Gautam's growing influence, they removed him from the post of Deputy Secretary-General. After being removed from the post, Gautam felt humiliated. As a result, he split the UML and formed the CPN (MALE) to avenge. "Factional goals as being primarily ideological and/or policy-oriented or mainly based on the material interests of their leaders and members" (Belloni and Beller, 1978: 21). They forced Gautam to choose the path of the party split to secure his political future after they revoked the post, as they gave him the responsibility of the party without making him a minister. Zuckerman's remark about this tendency in politicians is quite relevant here. According to him, politicians "Seek to control cabinet position. Strive to occupy more and "better" positions than previously held

and to defend those already controlled" (Zuckerman, 1975: 40). Because of split of CPN-UML helped the Maoists to expand the people's war and gained momentum only after the CPN-ML cadres were attracted to the Maoists' Party.

CPN (M), was Nepal's largest political party. They found it in 1994 following the breakup of the Nepalese Communist Party (NCP, Unity Center). Times by Pushpa Kamal Dahal led the party was led to power to power three times (2008–2009), Baburam Bhattarai (2013–2015) and 2016–2017. In 2016, the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) supplanted the Communist Party of Nepal (M). In

2008, the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) won 220 out of 575 constituent assembly seats.

The party won 80 seats out of 575 available seats in the 2013 elections, making it third in the Nepalese Constituent Assembly. It dissolved the party on May 17, 2018, following its merger with the Nepal Communist Party (Unified Marxist–Leninist). "The alliance of the NCP (UML) and the CPN (Maoist Center) eventually united after the elections under the joint chairmanship and alternation of the prime ministership between the presidents of the two parties" (Lawoti, 2019: 133). But the unity of the two parties did not last long. The Supreme Court ordered the NCP to have been "dismissed" on March 8, 2021, since they had already assigned the name to a party led by Rishiram Kattel. Nobody had expected the ruling Nepal Communist Party (NCP) to split three years after its formation on the eve of the 2018 elections by K.P. Sharma Oli's CPN (UML) and Pushpa Kamal Dahal's CPN (Maoist Center). President Bidhya Devi Bhandari dissolved the House of Representatives (HoR), Nepal's lower house of parliament, on December 20, 2020, and set April 30 and May 10, 2021, as election dates. Notably, the NCP faction led by Oli expelled Pushpa Kamal Dahal, while the faction led by Dahal expelled Oli. The Dahal-led coalition appointed former Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal as chairperson of the Nepal Communist Party. Each group asserts legitimacy as a political party and has petitioned the Election Commission to register the amendments. The Election Commission determines the legal status of the party and the faction that succeeds it. The power struggle between Oli and Dahal has had a detrimental effect on the working conditions at all levels of the government. Separate meetings of the Oli's faction and Nepal-Dahal's faction were held in Kathmandu lately. They both claimed the majority in the Central Committee of the party. Oli failed to operate in all-party bodies such as the Secretariat, Standing Committee, and Central Committee because of the majority held by the Dahal-Nepal group. Already on the verge of collapse, it claimed the Chinese Ambassador to Nepal HouYangqi to have mediated between the two leaders, thus salvaging the party. Even after the NCPs and two leaders merged in 2018, tensions remained high between Oli and Dahal. The power battle between the two supremos, in particular, affected the government employees at all levels. Initially, they had promised to serve as Prime Minister for two and a half years' turn by turn during the government's five-year term. But Oli didn't live up to his word.

Despite China's worry, media sources show India regards the recent NCP split and parliamentary dissolution as purely domestic. Because the Chinese ambassador was active in resolving hurdles and roadblocks when the merger talks were underway between the two parties (Rae, 2021: 204). China looks dissatisfied with the division of the NCP and the timing of its elections. China opines that if the Communist Party splits, it is certain to lose the election proposed by Oli. "The Chinese have taken a decision that a unified communist force in Nepal is in their strategic interest" (Rae, 2021: 204). If it held the HoR elections in April or May, achieving its aims in Nepal through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and other ways may prove difficult.

8. POWER SHARING AND LEGITIMACY IN THE NCP

On May 17, 2018, there was an announcement of party amalgamation between the CPN (UML) and the CPN (Maoist Center) which had become the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) on May 6, 2018.

Shortly after the formation of the NCP, internal disputes began. The controversy began with the nomination of the post-unity NCP Central Committee. The Maoist faction of the NCP has accused the party leadership of

nominating central committee members on an ad hoc basis, undermining the party's long-honored tradition of ensuring fair representation for women, Dalits, Madhesi, Muslims and other excluded communities (Republica Daily, May 25, 2018). Oli's conflicts with Dahal had primarily been over a power-sharing compromise, which resulted in a vertical split within the party. Oli and Prachanda had agreed on November 20, 2019, that Oli would be the prime minister for the entire term and Prachanda would run the party (Nawayug, 2078: 85). But contrary to the understanding, Oli ignored the other chairperson, Prachanda, and started leading the party and the government alone. After Oli started ignoring Prachanda, the controversy escalated. It convened a meeting of the NCP Standing Committee to resolve the growing dispute. The fifth meeting of the NCP Standing Committee decided Oli would lead the government and focus on its work for the entire term of the House of Representatives. In addition, "Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' focused on conducting party meetings with executive powers, implementing decisions and taking responsibility for the overall party work" (Nawayug, 2021:112). Although the Standing Committee made logical decisions about the responsibilities of Oli and Prachanda, Oli did not put them into practice. Instead of implementing the decision, he declared himself the number one executive chairperson. The controversy continued even after the Standing Committee decided. As it did not resolve the dispute even after the decision of the standing committee, Prachanda requested another chairperson, Oli, to convene a meeting of the secretariat to resolve the dispute. At the meeting of the secretariat on November 13, Prachanda presented a 19-page indictment against the prime minister and another chairperson, Oli.

The allegations leveled by Prachanda mainly include "political and high-level government appointments, including ambassadors, did not consider the party's institutional suggestions in policy matters and discussions at responsible levels". "Most of the appointments are motivated by narrow factional interests without the advice and suggestions of the party committee. Prime Minister Oli appoints people close to him according to his wishes". The major controversy within the NCP seems to have been over the unequal distribution of state resources. The controversy seems to have been escalating after the cadres of Prachanda and Madhav Nepal gave limited space to the political appointments made by the government and Oli started ignoring Prachanda and Madhav Nepal in running the government. Regardless of the allegations made within the NCP, the root cause of the dispute is who will occupy the government resources. Oli, who led the government, had given priority to his party's cadres, ignoring the Nepal and Dahal factions in the political appointments and the resources distributed by the government. The tradition of leading the government and keeping the party under its influence by mobilizing government resources has been in practice not only in Nepal but also in South Asia. "The reason for the development of such a trend, particularly in the ruling parties, is that they often have direct access to the state apparatus and can siphon off money to finance party work and campaigns" (Chambers and Ufen, 2020: 7). After investing financially in the party's work and the programs organized by the party, the influence within the party increases, which makes it easier to establish dominance in the party. "If the party leader finances the party (or controls the sources of financing), he/she will centralize decision-making and prevent opposing factions from arising" (Chambers and Ufen, 2020: 7). After Oli used the government resources alone to create an unchallenged situation within the party, Dahal and Nepal raised the question of power-sharing, realizing that their political future was in crisis.

Several internal political issues have contributed to the NCP's present state of uncertainty. "Internal fissures between Oli and Dahal preoccupied the government throughout 2020, with Oli appearing prepared to split the party rather than concede power" (Eck, 2021: 203). Dahal has accused Oli of ignoring the power-sharing agreement established during the foundation of the NCP, according to which Oli had pledged to hand over the party's premiership or executive presidency of the party to Dahal. In September 2020, both leaders agreed Oli would serve out the remaining of his term as Prime Minister, while Dahal would serve as the party's executive

chair. Oli had shown no sign of retiring from either role, generating a schism in the party. He also put the NCP's senior leader and former Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal on the back burner, pushing Nepal to support Dahal against Oli. As a result, rather than facing a no-confidence vote, Oli dissolved the parliament and seek a new mandate.

While both factions claim to represent the legitimate party, the Election Commission has sought an explanation from both before making a judgement. According to the Political Party Act, a group may be recognized as a valid party if it shows its legitimacy by the submission of signatures from at least 40% of its central committee members. The legally recognized organisation will keep its party and election symbol, while the unrecognized organisation (faction) will be required to register as a new party.

9. GEO-STRATEGY OF NEPAL AND POLITICAL PARTIES

Geopolitical forces and foreign players have traditionally affected Nepal's internal political environment. Recently, to merge his control over the NCP, Oli has tried to improve relations with India-lately strained owing to Nepal's inclusion of disputed regions in its new political map-resulting in recent high-level visits from both nations. Even though India has historically intervened in Nepal's domestic politics, it has characterized the present power struggle as an "internal matter" to minimize the reaction from Nepali policymakers and to cease the spread of political instability.

However, India's historically powerful influence in Nepal has been challenged by China's rise in recent years. Because of concerns about Tibetans possibly using Nepal's land to undertake anti-China operations, China deems Nepal vital to its national security policy. Beijing has historically maintained a non-interventionist attitude towards Nepal; however, this posture is increasingly shifting as is apparent by the Chinese ambassador to Nepal's aggressive attempts to resolve current problems within the NCP. "Nepal's media speculates China is in favour of keeping the NCP intact since the ideological connection between the NCP and the Communist Party of China may enable China to exercise its political and economic influence over Nepal" (Nischal, 2005: 35). Although China is aware of India's traditionally influential role in Nepal, it is also sceptical of growing U.S. interest in the Himalayan state, especially considering Oli's push for parliamentary approval of the \$500 million Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) grant help from the United States to finance the construction of electrical transmission lines in Nepal. In contrast, Dahal has criticized the MCC and has characterized it as part of the U.S.-led Indo-Pacific Strategy to contain China. Given that Nepal is a member of China's Belt and Road Initiative, Beijing may favour development projects within the BRI framework and might push the Nepali government to postpone or reject U.S.-led initiatives.

10. CONCLUSION

Thus, it is observed that factionalism and division in acquiring state power have existed in the parties since their establishment; it is the inference that the communist party divided into different wings as the result of conflicting political leaders for holding power and the communist parties cannot come under one roof because of internal conflicts and the tentacles of foreign forces. They cannot rule Nepal even for a longer period because of their domestic internal party politics. Though they do not have a long history of governing the country, foreign forces being pro-Russian, Chinese, and even Indian largely influenced their fractions. In addition, as long as Nepal's two neighbors, India and China, have a strategy to keep Nepal's communist parties under their influence, there is no possibility of communist parties becoming one party in Nepal. The political instability has unfortunately returned because of a personality clash inside the party. This weakening democratic scenario would be unfavourable to both India and China, as both want to avoid potential spill over effects. Communist parties and the people of Nepal should choose their neighbouring countries wisely. Regardless of the result, Nepali politics will undoubtedly become more unpredictable in the coming time.

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