

Goals and Objectives of Ethnic Nationalist Movements

The goals and objectives of ethnic political movements fluctuate according to the sociopolitical conditions. As a group collectively suffers from discrimination in a state and mobilises to promote self-defined interests, historical specificity and the political conditions determine the nature of goals and the change of goals in ethnic nationalist movements. Gurr (1993) uses two terms for politicised groups: national and minority people. National people are the regional groups that retain their cultural and linguistic characteristics during the threats from expansionist states. They desire to maintain some degree of political autonomy. On the other hand, minority people have a definitive position within society and are focused on protecting or improving their status. Therefore, the primary difference between the two lies in goal-seeking behaviour.

National people can be subdivided into two types: ethno-nationalists, regionally concentrated people with a historical precedent of political autonomy, and indigenous movements. Indigenous people, who are primarily peripheral groups and are distinguished from centres of state authority, are concerned mainly about issues of group autonomy. The minority people also have a classification of ethno-classes, militant sects or politically active religious minorities, and linguistic or geographically distinct groups aiming for a more significant share of power. If minority people face or suspect discrimination, they can transform into ethnic-nationalists.

To borrow two terms and ideas from Gurr (1993), inter-group differentials and outright discrimination precisely determine the objectives of the ethno-nationalist movement. He uses differentials as traits that set each group apart in the larger society and are classified as cultural, political, and economic differentials.⁴ On the other hand, outright discrimination is measured through systematic exclusion from desirable

⁴ Cultural differentials determine whether the groups differed from other groups in an important manner through ethnicity, language, religion, customs, urbanness or rural-ness. Political differentials are focused on how communal groups varied in access to positions of power and to political associations. Economic

economic and political goods available to others. Economic inequality is amplified through social and political conditions that are responsible for creating and maintaining these inequalities. Political discrimination could be seen in under-representation in political participation and a prolonged exclusion from political positions. Additionally, demographic and ecological stress also determines the goals of ethno-nationalists.

Strategies of Ethnic Nationalism

For an ethnic nationalism movement to be durable and visible despite the repression by the state, ethno-nationalists adopt several strategies for which several variables need to be taken care of. The first critical variable is to exist as a group and a potent political movement. The movement should have external support in the form of bases, training, finances, weapons, soldiers, intelligence, etc. Additionally, ethno-nationalists should have visibility and solidarity. Modelska (1954) explains that a movement derives visibility and audibility by attracting external politico-diplomatic support and the attention of the international media. Several ways, like international diplomatic activity to gain sympathisers, could be taken to make the movement long-lasting. Diplomatic support can fetch recognition, acknowledgement, territory for exiles, and diaspora activity. It can also fetch material support such as financial and military backing for training and procuring weapons.

Ethnic nationalists must be extremely careful and practical in accepting aid from external actors. This may involve adopting flexibility in its professed ideology and holding to its core constituency. Choosing an ally is also an important step, as the political image of the ally would impact the image of ethno-nationalism. Another important factor is the efficient articulation of their case. This would involve writing booklets, pamphlets, and articles in newspapers and media. This would restrict the allies and the opposition. Phadnis (1989:30) writes that the ability to

differentials are grounded in economic inequalities, access to higher education etc. For more see Gurr (1993:200).