COERCIVE DIPLOMACY: A STUDY OF SANCTION POLITICS IN NEPAL-INDIA RELATIONS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of

Tribhuvan University in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

POLITICAL SCIENCE

By

BHUWANESWOR PANT

PhD Reg. No. 073/12

Tribhuvan University

Kathmandu, Nepal

February 2025

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

We certify that this dissertation entitled **"Coercive Diplomacy: A Study of Sanction Politics in Nepal-India Relations"** was prepared by Mr. Bhuwaneswor Pant under our guidance. We hereby recommend this dissertation for final examinations by the Research Committee of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY in POLITICAL SCIENCE

Dissertation Committee

……..
Pro. Dr. Gehendralal Malla
Supervisor

……..
Dr. Madan Kumar Bhattarai
Co Supervisor

Date:

LETTER OF APPROVAL

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this Dissertation is my own work and that it contains no materials previously published. I have not used its materials for the award of any kind and any other degree. Where other authors' sources of information have been used, they have been acknowledged.

……

Bhuwaneswor Pant

Date:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to everyone who has supported me throughout my PhD journey and contributed to the completion of this dissertation. This work would not have been possible without the encouragement, guidance, and support of many individuals and institutions.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my esteemed supervisor, Professor Dr. Gehendralal Malla, for his invaluable guidance, constant support, and expert advice throughout my research, which greatly enriched my academic growth. I am also deeply thankful to my co-supervisor, Dr. Madan Kumar Bhattarai, whose vast knowledge, diplomatic perspective, and consistent mentorship significantly shaped this dissertation. Additionally, I extend my heartfelt thanks to Professor Dr. Dubinanda Dhakal, and Profesor Dr. Khom Raj Kharel Dean and Assistant Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences respectively, at Tribhuvan University for his unwavering support, academic leadership, and encouragement, which have been instrumental in my research journey and scholarly development.

I am deeply grateful to Professor Dr. Khadka K.C., Dr. Keshav Basyal, and Professor Dr. Khagnath Adhikari for their invaluable suggestions and expertise as Internal Experts during my Pre-Viva examination, whose profound knowledge, critical insights, and constructive feedback significantly refined my research and enhanced its depth and clarity. I also extend my heartfelt thanks to Professor Dr. Mina Baidhya Malla and Professor Dr. Hemraj Subedi, External Experts during my Final Viva examination, for their profound knowledge, critical insights, and thoughtful discussions that contributed to strengthening and refining my study. Their time, support, and encouragement have been instrumental in my academic journey, and I deeply appreciate their guidance throughout the process.

With deepest love and gratitude, I dedicate my appreciation to my late mother, Mrs. Sanu Devi Pant, whose love and teachings continue to inspire me, and my father, Mr. Tek Raj Pant, whose unwavering support has been the foundation of my achievements.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my former boss, the Principal of Radiant Montessori English School, Tikapur, Kailali, for his unwavering support and encouragement, which have been crucial in my personal and academic development.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the respondents, including Dr. Bhek Bahadur Thapa, whose international perspective enriched my study, Professor Krishna Khanal, whose academic insights grounded my research, and Mr. Surendra KC, whose political perspective provided practical understanding. I am also deeply grateful to the esteemed professors of the Research Committee for their thorough examination, valuable insights, and constructive feedback that significantly enriched my dissertation.

Additionally, I extend my gratitude to the Central Department of Political Science and the Central Library at Tribhuvan University for providing essential resources that were crucial to shaping my research. Their support has been instrumental in enhancing the quality and depth of my work.

Most importantly, I am profoundly grateful to my wife, Durga Rimal, for her unwavering support, love, understanding, and sacrifices, which have been my greatest source of strength and motivation throughout this academic journey. Without her, this achievement would not have been possible.

I would like to express my heartfelt love and gratitude to my dear son, Chiranjivi Pant, whose love, patience, and understanding have been a constant source of joy, inspiration, and motivation throughout my academic journey. His bright future reminds me of the importance of dedication and hard work. I am also deeply grateful to my sister, Mrs. Puspa Pant Bhatta, for her unwavering love, support, and encouragement, as well as her thoughtful advice and understanding during difficult times.

I am thankful to all my relatives and family members for their continuous love, prayers, and encouragement, which have been a great source of strength. Additionally, I extend my deepest gratitude to my friends for their unwavering support, camaraderie, and motivation, which have made this journey more meaningful, especially during challenging moments. I am truly fortunate to have such a caring and supportive network of loved ones.

Eventually I would like to thank to Miss Rina Maharjan of Everest Computer and Photocopy Center, Kirtipur, Kathmandu for her valuable support in formatting, editing and printing my PhD dissertation in APA 7th style.

Bhuwaneswor Pant

ABSTRACT

*The study titled **"Coercive Diplomacy: A Study of Sanction Politics in Nepal India Relations"** investigates the underlying causes, mechanisms, and consequences of India's coercive diplomacy toward Nepal in 2015. It examines how these coercive measures were communicated and perceived, and assesses their effectiveness in achieving India's strategic objectives. This research aims to contribute to the academic discourse on coercive diplomacy and provide insights into the dynamics of power and influence in bilateral relations.*

This study adopts a post-positivist approach to explore the causes and consequences of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015, balancing objective reality with subjective interpretations of state behavior and perceptions. Using both inductive and deductive methods, the research investigates the complex socio-political context of the 2015 blockade through primary and secondary data sources. In-depth interviews with 10 key stakeholders, including policymakers and diplomats, provided valuable insights, while official government documents, diplomatic correspondence, and media reports from both India and Nepal were analyzed to understand public discourse. The study also reviews six academic articles on the topic for broader context.

The study finds that India's coercive measures in 2015 included diplomatic, economic, and psychological tactics, aimed at influencing Nepal's political decisions without escalating into full conflict. The restriction of essential goods created insecurity and psychological pressure, signaling India's intent to politically isolate Nepal and assert its influence over the country's internal affairs. By leveraging power and exploiting ethnic tensions, India sought to align Nepal's policies with its strategic interests, demonstrating the effectiveness of psychological coercion in coercive diplomacy.

Despite India's pressure, Nepal proceeded with its constitution, leading to strained relations and a blockade. India used a mix of negotiations and threats, leveraging its regional dominance and geopolitical interests to influence Nepal's internal affairs. Economic interdependence, particularly Nepal's reliance on India for

energy, played a crucial role, with the 2015 blockade causing severe shortages. This highlighted Nepal's need to diversify energy sources for better security. The sanctions resulted from both internal and external factors, including Nepalese political actors seeking external support and India's influence in Nepal's politics. The blockade, criticized as a diplomatic blunder, further strained Nepal-India relations and raised concerns over Nepal's sovereignty..

India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal involved both direct and indirect methods, using political, diplomatic, and economic pressure to push Nepal into amending its constitution. However, mixed messages and ineffective communication drew criticism and damaged India's regional reputation. The blockade highlighted India's desire to influence Nepal, particularly on the issue of marginalized groups' representation. India's strategy included incremental concessions, such as easing the blockade and engaging in negotiations, but was also motivated by the need to protect its international image and counter Nepal's growing ties with China. Although relations were restored, the blockade fuelled anti-Indian sentiments in Nepal, leading to a more cautious and confrontational approach. The economic impact of the blockade further solidified India's coercive tactics, worsening bilateral ties..

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page No.
LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION	**i**
APPROVAL LETTER	**ii**
DECLARATION	**iii**
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	**iv**
ABSTRACT	**vi**
TABLE OF CONTENTS	**viii**
LIST OF FIGURES	**xiii**
ABBREVIATIONS	**xiv**
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	**1-16**
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	8
1.3 Research Questions	13
1.4 Objectives of the Study	13
1.5 Significance of the Study	14
1.6 Limitation of the Study	15
1.7 Organization of the Study	16
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW	**17-81**
2.1 Reviews on Economic Sanctions	17
2.2 Reviews on Theories in International Relations	21
2.3 Reviews on Geopolitical Studies	25
2.4 Reviews on Foreign Policy of Nepal	31
2.5 Reviews on Foreign Policy of India	36
2.6 Reviews on Nepal India Bilateral Relationship	39
2.7 Reviews on Indian Sanction on Nepal	44

2.8 Reviews on Coercive Diplomacy 51

2.9 Reviews on Economic Sanctions 57

2.9.1 Defining Economic Sanction 57

2.9.2 Overview of Economic Sanctions 59

2.9.3 Types of Economic Sanction 63

2.9.4 Purposes of Economic Sanction 64

2.9.5 The Practices of Economic Sanction 67

2.9.6 The Effectiveness of Economic Sanction 68

2.9.7 Sanction and International Law 71

2.9.8 Theories on Economic Sanction 74

2.9.8.1 Realist View on Economic Sanction 75

2.9.8.2 Liberalist View on Economic Sanction 78

2.9.8.3 Constructivism View on Economic Sanction 79

2.10 Research Gap 81

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 82-92

3.1 Research Design 82

3.2 Research Paradigms of Study 83

3.3 The Epistemological Assumption of the Study 84

3.4 Ontological Assumption of the Study 85

3.5 Axiology of the Study 87

3.6 Methodology of the Study 87

3.6.1 Nature of Source of Data 88

3.7 Data Analysis 92

CHAPTER IV: CONCEPTS AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES 93-102

4.1 Defining Coercive Diplomacy 93

4.2 The Conceptual Framework of the Study 95

4.3 Requirement for Success of Coercive Diplomacy 99

4.4 Case Study on the Success of Coercive Diplomacy 99

4.5 Case Study on the Failure of Coercive Diplomacy 100

4.6 Coercive Diplomacy and Economic Sanction 101

CHAPTER V: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS AND THE CONSTITUTION DRAFTING PROCESS 103-124

5.1 An Overview of Political Events of Nepal Post 2006 103

5.2 Constitution Drafting Process 113

CHAPTER VI: THE SPECTRUM OF INDIA'S COERCIVE DIPLOMACY 125-150

6.1 The Coercive Spectrum 125

6.1.1 Economic Coercion 125

6.1.2 Psychological Coercion 130

6.1.3 Diplomatic Pressure 137

6.1.4 Limited Use of Force 145

CHAPTER VII: THE LEVERAGE OF INDIA'S COERCIVE DIPLOMACY 151-183

7.1 Coercive Leverage 151

7.1.1 Historical Precedent 151

7.1.2 Domestic Political Dynamics 160

7.1.3 Trade and Economic Dependency 167

7.1.4 Energy Dependence 171

7.1.5 Remittances and Financial Flows 174

7.1.6 Political Leverage 175

CHAPTER VIII: THE CREDIBILITY INDIA'S COERCIVE DIPLOMACY 184-197

8.1 Credibility of the India's Coercive Diplomacy 184

8.1.1 International Perception 185

8.1.2 Public Perception 189

CHAPTER IX: COMMUNICATION AND BARGAINING 198-234

9.1 Communication of Demands 198

9.2 Perception of Resolve 204

9.3 Communication and Bargaining 207

9.3.1 Clarity of Demands 208

9.3.1.1 Citizenship 211

9.3.1.2 The Proportional Representation 213

9.3.1.3 Hindu Kingdom 214

9.3.2 Threat of Consequences 219

9.3.3 Negotiation Leverage 227

9.3.4 Incremental Concessions 233

CHAPTER X: EXIT STRATEGY OF INDIA'S COERCIVE DIPLOMACY 235-257

10.1 Exit Strategy 235

10.1.1 Assurance of Compliance Benefit 235

10.2 Escalation and Termination 239

10.2.1 Escalation 239

10.2.2 Termination 247

10.2.3 Restoration in Relationship 251

CHAPTER XI: OUTCOMES AND SUCCESS 258-287

11.1 Outcomes and Success 258

11.1.1 Partial Constitutional Amendments 264

11.1.2 Effects on Bilateral Relations 266

11.1.2.1 Anti-India Sentiment 266

11.1.2.2 Strained Diplomatic Relations 270

11.1.2.3 Economic and Humanitarian Impact 278

11.1.3 Nepal's Quest for an Alternate Transit Country 282

CHAPTER XII: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON INDIA'S UNOFFICIAL SANCTIONS 288-306

12.1 The Sanction as a Reflection of Colonial Hangover 288

12.2 Indian Sanction on Nepal and Democratic Peace Theory 293

12.3 Indian Sanction as an Ethnic Intervention 299

CHAPTER XIII: FINDINGS DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION 307-316

13.1 Findings and Discussion 307

13.2 Conclusion 312

APPENDICES 317-339

Appendix-I: Interview, Open-ended Questions 317

Appendix-2: 12-Point Understanding Reached Between the Seven Political Parties and Nepal Communist Party (Maoists) 319

Appendix-3: Opening Statement Delivered by Hon. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Kamal Thapa on 4 November 2015 at 23rd Session of Universal Periodic Review(UPR) Working Group of Human Rights Council in Geneva. 323

Appendix-4: Press Release on Promulgation of Constitution by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nepal on September 23, 2015 330

Appendix-5: Press Release on The Government of Nepal Concerned over Undue Delay on the Movement and Clearance of Cargo Vehicles on September 26, 2015 332

Appendix-6: Government of India's Official Stands and Statements on Nepal 333

Appendix-7: Statement by External Affairs Minister of India on Calling Attention Motion on "Situation in Nepal and State of Indo-Nepal Relation" in RajyaSabha (Upper House) of Indian Parliament. 334

Appendix-8: Name List of Interviewee 339

REFERENCES **340-366**

LIST OF FIGURES

		Page No.
Figure 1	Research Design	83
Figure 2	Conceptual and Theoretical Framework	98

ABBREVIATION

ACHR	Asian Centre for Human Rights
AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BRICS	Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People's Republic of China, and the Republic of South Africa
CA	Constituent Assembly
CCDRM	Committee on Capacity Development and Resource Management
CCRPOC	Committee on Citizen Relations and Public Opinion Collection
CD	Coercive Diplomacy
CDC	Constitutional Development Committee
CFC	Chloro Fluoro Carbon
CPDCC	Constitutional Political Dialogue and Consensus Committee
CPI	Communist Party of India
CPN	Communist Party of Nepal
CRSDC	Constitutional Records Study and Determination Committee
EO	Executive Order
EOI	Embassy of India
EU	European Union
FPTP	First Past the Post-Election System
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
GATT	The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Production
GOI	Government of India
GON	Government of Nepal

ICG	International Crises Group
IDEA	The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IDSA	Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis
INGO	International Non- Governmental Organization
IOC	Indian Oil Corporation
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence
JNU	Jawaharlal Nehru University
LDC	Least developed countries
LKM	Lanzhou Kyirong Kathmandu
LLDC	Landlocked Developing Countries
MEA	Ministry of External Affair
MJF	Madhes Joint Forum
ML	Marxist Leninist
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affair
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NAM	Non Aligned Movement
NGO	Non-Government Organization
RAW	Research and Analysis Wing
RPP	Rastriya Prajatantra Party
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
RSTV	Rajya Shabha Television
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SAHR	South Asians for Human Rights
SSP	Senior Superintendent of Police
TET	The Economic Times
TKP	The Kathmandu Post

TOI	Times of India
TTA	Trade Transit Agreement
TTC	Trade Technology Council
UCPN	United Communist Political Party of Nepal
UDMF	United Democratic Madhesi Front
UK	United Kingdom
UML	Unified Marxist Leninist
UN	United Nations
UNDF	United Democratic Madhesi Front
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	United States
WTO	Word Trade Organization

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Coercive diplomacy (CD) involves threats and limited force to compel an adversary to cease or reverse its actions. It can be defensive, aiming to stop or undo an act, or offensive, seeking to extract concessions. According to George (1994), CD serves three purposes: halting an action, reversing it, or transforming the adversary's hostile behavior by reshaping its regime structure.

Feaver and Lorber (2010) states that the sanctions are a tool - a particularly important if controversial tool of coercive diplomacy. It refers to any efforts by one international actor to get another international actor to act in a way that the second international actor would not otherwise choose to act (Feaver & Lorber, 2010).

Sanction politics refers to the use of economic, political, or diplomatic measures by one or more states or international organizations to influence the behavior of a target state, entity, or individual. Sanctions are often employed as a tool of coercive diplomacy, aiming to compel the target to change specific policies or behaviors without resorting to military force

(Cortright et al., 2000; Cortright et al., 2002; Kaempfer & Lorwenberg, 2007).

The politics of sanctions involve complex negotiations, power dynamics, and strategic calculations, as well as debates over their effectiveness, ethical implications, and unintended consequences. Sanctions are typically imposed to achieve specific goals, such as: Deterring aggression (e.g., sanctions against Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait in 1990) (Bergeijk, 2009; Hufbauer et al., 1990; Jakobsen, 1998; Peter Rudolf, 2007). Preventing nuclear proliferation (e.g., sanctions on Iran over its nuclear program). Promoting human rights and democracy (e.g. Sanctions on Myanmar or South Africa during apartheid). Punishing states or entities for violating international norms (e.g., sanctions on Russia after its annexation of Crimea in 2014) (Hufbauer et al., 1990; Jakobsen, 1998; Kaempfer & Lorwenberg, 2007; Wallensteen, 2000).

There are four types of economic sanction; Economic Sanctions (Trade embargoes, asset freezes, or restrictions on financial transactions), Diplomatic Sanctions, (Expulsion of diplomats, suspension of membership in international organizations), Military Sanctions, (Arms embargoes or restrictions on military cooperation) and Targeted Sanctions (Measures aimed at specific individuals, entities, or sectors (e.g., travel bans on political leaders (Ahang, 2014; Allen & Lektzian, 2013; Barber, 1979; Nincic & Wallensteen, 1983).

The effectiveness of sanctions is widely debated. Some scholars argue that sanctions can succeed in changing behavior, while others highlight their frequent failure and unintended consequences. Hufbauer et al. (2007) analyze over 200 cases of sanctions and conclude that sanctions are effective in about one-third of cases, particularly when the goals are modest and the target is economically vulnerable. Pape (1997) argues that sanctions rarely achieve their intended goals and often strengthen the target regimes's resolve. Sanctions often have humanitarian costs, disproportionately affecting civilians rather than the intended targets.

Weiss (1999) discusses how sanctions can lead to economic collapse, humanitarian crises, and the strengthening of authoritarian regimes. Gordon (2010) examines the humanitarian impact of sanctions on Iraq, arguing that they caused widespread suffering without achieving in political objectives.

Sanctions are often used as a tool of power politics, reflecting the interests and influence of dominant states. Drezner and Drezner (1999) argue that sanctions are more likely to succeed when imposed by powerful states with significant leverage over the target.

Baldwin (1985) emphasizes that sanctions are a form of economic statecraft, used by states to achieve political goals through economic means. The use of sanctions raises ethical and legal questions, particularly regarding their impact on civilian populations and their compliance with international law.

Cortright and Lopez (2000) the ethical and legal implications of UN sanctions, advocating for more targeted and humane approaches. van den Herik (2008) examines the tension between sanctions and international legal norms, particularly the principles of sovereignty and human rights. International sanctions against South Africa are often cited as a successful example of sanctions contributing to political change. However, some argue that internal resistance and economic pressures were equally important.

Sanctions imposed on Iran over its nuclear program led to the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). However, the reimposition of sanctions by the U.S. in 2018 highlights the fragility of such agreements. Sanctions on Russia after its annexation of Crimea and involvement in eastern Ukraine have had mixed results, with limited impact on Russian policy but significant economic costs (Katzman, 2011; Sedrakyan, 2022).

Sanction politics is a complex and multifaceted field, involving strategic, ethical, and practical considerations. While sanctions can be a powerful tool of coercive diplomacy, their effectiveness is often limited by factors such as the target's resilience, the sender's commitment, and the unintended humanitarian consequences. The politics of sanctions also reflect broader power dynamics in international relations, with dominant states using sanctions to assert their influence and enforce

“Most of coercive diplomacy involves pressure short of the use of force and the use of economic sanctions looms especially large in the history of coercion, dating all the way back to ancient times. For example, when Athens imposed a trade boycott on Sparta’s ally Megara in 432 BCE, they were imposing economic sanctions in the service of coercive diplomacy (hastening the onset of the Peloponnesian War in the process) and in doing so they confronted challenges that would be familiar to any government leader since” (Langenheim, 2002).

“Coercive diplomacy was first used after the Second World War ended in 1995. The two superpower blocs exploited it to prevent a great power war (United States and Russia). It was employed by Western allies to prevent the Soviet Union from attacking Western territories and sparKing a series of wars” (Jakobsen, 1998).

“Following the fall of communism, strategies were developed to combat the emergence of issues like widespread human rights violations within the borders of sovereign states, civil wars within failing states, and the potential for both states and non-state actors to obtain and use weapons of mass destruction. This kind of situation helped shape the principal Post-Cold War goal and difficulty of coercing, persuading, and occasionally even forcing states to modify their behaviour and act with more peaceful intentions in the years after 1945” (Romeo, 2016).’

India's sanction against its neighbors has been a strategic tool of coercive diplomacy to exert influence and achieve political objectives without resorting to outright military conflict. India's coercive diplomacy towards Pakistan has often involved diplomatic isolation, economic measures, and military posturing.

“Following the 2019 Pulwama attack, India not only conducted airstrikes in Balakot, Pakistan, but also worked to diplomatically isolate Pakistan by lobbying international organizations to list Pakistan-based militants as global terrorists. India also withdrew the Most Favored Nation (MFN) status from Pakistan, imposing economic costs” (Singh, 2020)

“While India generally maintains a cooperative relationship with Bangladesh, there have been instances of

coercive diplomacy. Water sharing issues, particularly over the Teesta River, have been a significant point of contention. India has used its leverage to influence Bangladeshi policies, occasionally applying diplomatic pressure to achieve favorable outcomes" (Banerji, 2021).

"India's relationship with Bhutan is marked by cooperation but also elements of coercive diplomacy, such as the 2013 subsidy withdrawal to influence elections and the 2017 Doklam standoff, where India intervened to counter Chinese influence" (Malik & Sheikh, 2016).

"India's coercive diplomacy with Sri Lanka often revolves around the Tamil issue and strategic interests in the Indian Ocean. For example, in the 1980s, India supported Tamil militants to pressure the Sri Lankan government. In recent years, India has leveraged economic and strategic tools to counterbalance Chinese influence in Sri Lanka, including influencing Sri Lanka's port development projects and offering economic assistance" (Aliff, 2015).

"India has used a combination of diplomatic pressure, economic aid, and strategic leverage in its relations with the Maldives. In 2018, India expressed strong concerns over the Maldivian government's emergency declaration and arrest of political opponents, signaling its readiness to take a firmer

stance if democratic norms were not upheld. India also provided economic assistance to counterbalance Chinese influence in the Maldives" (Ramachandran, 2018).

The dynamics of Nepal-India relations have experienced fluctuations over time. Periods of strained interactions between the two nations have often resulted in the disruption of negotiations and a breakdown in diplomatic communication. Conversely, there have also been phases marked by warmth and cordiality, characterized by mutual cooperation and close engagement.

"In case of India Nepal relations, India has employed coercive diplomacy on Nepal on the form of sanction multiple times, particularly in 1962, 1970, 1989, and 2015, tying them to political, economic, and security objectives. The sanctions were lifted when Nepal accommodated India's interests, showcasing a pattern related to Nepal's exercise of sovereignty, including actions like adopting a constitution, removing Indian security checkpoints, and forging ties with China" (Dahal, 2018).

"The unilateral economic dependency was exploited on all four instances to serve India's political interests in Nepal" (Shrestha, 2016). Especially when it comes to initiatives that represent Nepal's exercise of sovereignty, such as removing Indian security checkpoints from Nepali territory, adoption of its

constitution, international recognition as a “Zone of Peace,” and forging trade links with China.

On 28 September, 1961, King Mahendra undertook a 17-day visit to Beijing and other Chinese cities, traveling via Hong Kong and utilizing railway services. During this historic visit, King Mahendra and Chinese President Liu Shaoqi signed the Nepal-China Border Agreement, which marked a significant milestone in bilateral relations. As part of this agreement, the construction of the Kodari Highway, connecting the two countries, was finalized. However, this development was perceived by India as a security concern. Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru expressed apprehension that the agreement would impact India's security policy, while Indian media criticized Nepal’s growing alignment with China, exacerbating tensions in Nepal-India relations.

Amid these strained relations, King Mahendra visited India on 16 April, 1962 BS, at the invitation of Prime Minister Nehru. During this visit, King Mahendra sought to repair bilateral ties through amicable negotiations. He emphasized the importance of preventing anti-Nepal activities within India.

Despite these efforts, India remained dissatisfied with Nepal’s perceived shift in foreign policy, viewing it as an attempt to diminish India’s influence while increasing ties with China. As a result, India imposed an unofficial sanction against

Nepal starting from April 1962 BS, further straining relations between the two nations

"The primary motivation for the imposition of the 1970 blockade by India was Nepal's reluctance to accommodate India's indirect proposals to amend provisions in Nepal's foreign and defense policies in alignment with Indian recommendations. Another significant factor contributing to the economic sanctions was Nepal's decision to remove 18 Indian Army check posts along its northern frontier with China. Furthermore, the Araniko Highway was nearing completion, enhancing Nepal's connectivity with China and reducing its reliance on India" (Shrestha, 2016).

Additionally, the trade and transit treaty between Nepal and India was set to expire on October/November 1970. Nepal proposed separating the trade and transit agreements to facilitate the signing of a new treaty; however, India rejected this proposal. Despite three rounds of negotiations, no consensus was reached, as India maintained its previous stance without any modifications. Consequently, India imposed an economic blockade on Nepal starting 1 November, 1970. This economic sanction causes anti India response. There have been slogans, demonstrations, and fervent speeches expressing opposition to India.

These sanctions were lifted once Nepal accommodated most of India's interests, such as in 1989 after a regime transition" (Chand, 2018). "The sanction of the 1970s was not taken seriously since Nepal was not fully dependent on India because its economy was based on agriculture and the repercussions were not as severe" (Shrestha, 2016). "The sanction, which was issued in March 1990, lasted thirteen months. One of the most widely cited reasons for the sanction is personal hostility, possibly religious, between the late Nepalese King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah and Mr Rajiv Gandhi, India's prime minister "such a personal occurrence in Nepal-India ties was later related to economic, political, and security challenges" (Dahal, 2018).

The second reason is that it is a political issue. India was concerned that the Himalayan Kingdom, which is ruled by a monarchy, would become an ally of China, Nepal's northern neighbor. On the grounds that such a conduct clearly violated the stipulations of the 1950s treaty between the two states, India was deeply concerned about Nepal's attempt to purchase military weaponry from China.

India's security concerns were tied to unresolved personal and political difficulties with Nepal, forcing India to implement a sanction as a means of putting pressure on Nepal's King to

follow India's interests. The third cause is economic, which can be described as Nepal's continued economic reliance on India.

In all these cases, India's coercive diplomacy involves a blend of political, economic, and sometimes military measures to safeguard its national interests and regional dominance, while aiming to avoid the escalation into full-scale conflict.

In the context of coercive diplomacy of India in 2015, Nepal adopted a new constitution in 2015, although the Madhesis, the Janajatis, and the Tharus, who are considered marginalized communities, felt that they were left out of it. The Madhesis, Tharus, and Janajatis claim that the Constitution enacted by the CA does not address their long-standing aspirations.

“These include ethnically based provincial boundaries, the creation of two Madhes provinces, proportional representation of ethnic groups in State agencies and Parliament, equal political rights for those seeking citizenship through naturalization, and the implementation of previous agreements between the State and Janajatis and Madhesis” (Nayak, 2015).

The border points were thereafter sanctioned by these groups, particularly Madhesi immigrants. The Nepalese government, on the other hand, accused India of purposefully aggravating the sanction by refusing to let trucks pass through

checkpoints when no protests were taking place. This was disputed by the Indian government.

“The Indian government denied imposing a sanction, claiming that “Indian truck drivers were refusing to enter Nepal owing to safety concerns raised by the violent protests. The border sanctions, according to India's Ministry of External Affairs, were caused by unrest, protests, and demonstrations on the Nepalese side by parts of their populace” (GOI, 2015d). The Nepalese government refuted India's claim, claiming that there were no significant security issues that would prevent the trucks from entering the country (GON, 2016).

The argument and justification used by India is that there was widespread violence in Nepal's Terai region, and Madhesi people mounted sanction. As a result, India is concerned about the growth of violence in border areas, which poses a security risk to them.

The study aims to unravel the complexities behind this sanction, questioning the extent to which Nepal's internal political crises triggered them and analyzing India's role in shaping Nepal's political landscape. India's actions during the sanction highlighted its desire to influence Nepal's domestic actors to further its interests.

The repeated sanctions have severely impacted Nepal's economy, raising questions about the true motivations behind them. The research seeks to uncover the truth behind the

sanctions, exploring the role of Nepal's internal political crises and India's influence in the coercive diplomacy dynamic between the two nations.

As a result, notwithstanding the vagueness of the reasons for the sanctions, the objective of this research is to discover the truth about it. It seeks to understand the underlying causes, mechanisms, and consequences of this diplomatic maneuver, examining how coercive measures were communicated and perceived, and their effectiveness in achieving India's strategic objectives.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The term coercive diplomacy falls under the theory of coercion as a foreign policy tool. Byman and Waxman (2002) define coercive diplomacy as “getting the adversary to act a certain way via anything short of brute force; the adversary must still have the capacity for organized violence but choose not to exercise it”.

George (1991) provides a foundational definition of coercive diplomacy, emphasizing threats and limited force as tools of persuasion, but his framework assumes that states respond rationally to coercion. This overlooks cases, where nationalism, misperception, or external support lead to resistance. Similarly, Schelling (1970) distinction between "compellence" and "deterrence" is useful but does not fully account for the complexities of asymmetric power dynamics,

where weaker states may resist despite severe costs. While both contributions are significant, they simplify the unpredictable nature of international relations and the agency of target states.

Nye Jr (2008) emphasizes that “coercive diplomacy depends on the credibility and cost of the threat. He states, "If a threat is not credible, it may fail to produce acceptance and it may lead to costs to the reputation of the coercing state. In general, threats are costly when they fail, not only in encouraging resistance in the target but also in negatively influencing third parties observing the outcome”.

Nye overlooks power asymmetry, as weaker states can resist coercion through alliances or resilience, as seen in Nepal’s response to India's 2015 blockade. He also ignores cases where failed threats enhance soft power or where third-party reactions depend on strategic interests. While useful, his analysis lacks nuance in understanding resistance and broader geopolitical dynamics.

While George Art and Cronin (2003); George (1991) outline key elements of coercive diplomacy, their approach oversimplifies its complexity. They assume that policymakers can neatly "fill empty boxes," but real-world diplomacy is far more unpredictable, influenced by misperceptions, emotions, and domestic pressures. Their framework also implies that a well-structured threat will lead to compliance, overlooking cases

where states resist coercion due to national pride, strategic calculations, or external support.

Moreover, the emphasis on credibility and severity neglects situations where even credible threats fail, as seen in North Korea’s defiance of U.S. pressure. Thus, while their model is useful, it lacks nuance in accounting for the unpredictable nature of international relations and the agency of target states.

The literature includes numerous case studies, such as the Cuban Missile Crisis, U.S. interventions in the Balkans, and India's use of coercive diplomacy in South Asia (e.g., the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War). These studies often analyze the conditions under which coercive diplomacy succeeds or fails, emphasizing factors like the balance of power, domestic politics, and international support.

Critics argue that coercive diplomacy can escalate conflicts, undermine long-term relationships, and harm civilian populations. The ethical implications of using coercion in international relations are also debated, particularly in cases where it exacerbates inequality or violates sovereignty.

The 2015 India-Nepal crisis, marked by India's unofficial sanction of Nepal, has been analyzed by several studies studies (Baral, 2016; P. Bhattarai, 2018; Chand, 2018; ICC, 2016; INHURED, 2016; INSEC & DFHRI, 2016; MASUM, 2016;

SAHR, 2016; Singh, 2016), though academic literature specifically focusing on this episode remains limited.

These studies have examined India's motivations for imposing the blockade, linking it to Nepal's adoption of a new constitution in September 2015. The constitution was criticized for marginalizing ethnic minorities, particularly the Madhesi and Tharu communities, who share cultural and familial ties with India (GOI, 2015a, 2015d).

Muni (2016) argument oversimplifies India’s motivations for the blockade by framing it primarily as a response to Madhesi and Tharu grievances. While these concerns were a factor, India's actions also reflected broader geopolitical interests, including its strategic influence in Nepal and concerns over China’s growing presence.

Moreover, his analysis underplays Nepal’s agency, as the blockade fueled nationalist resistance rather than compliance. Additionally, framing the blockade as a rights-based intervention ignores its humanitarian impact, which disproportionately harmed ordinary Nepalese citizens. Thus, while Muni highlights an important aspect, his argument lacks a comprehensive view of India's strategic calculus and the blockade's broader consequences.

Xavier (2016) argument rightly acknowledges India’s strategic concerns over China’s influence but oversimplifies the

blockade's impact. While India aimed to reassert dominance, the assumption that coercion would secure compliance ignored Nepal's historical resistance to external pressure. His analysis also underestimates Nepal's agency in leveraging the situation to diversify its diplomatic and economic ties, particularly with China. Furthermore, while he notes the blockade's consequences, he does not fully address its humanitarian impact or the long-term damage to India-Nepal relations. Ultimately, his argument lacks a deeper exploration of how coercive diplomacy can backfire, weakening rather than strengthening regional influence.

Ojha (2015) and (Baral, 2016) provide valuable critiques of India's coercive diplomacy but focus primarily on its failures without fully considering India's strategic calculus. While they highlight the unintended consequences-such as fueling anti-India sentiment and strengthening Nepal-China tie-they largely frame Nepal as a passive victim rather than an active player navigating regional power dynamics. Additionally, their analyses emphasize the blockade's short-term effects but do not explore its longer-term geopolitical implications, such as how Nepal has balanced its relations with both India and China post-crisis. While their arguments underscore the counterproductive nature of India's actions, they could benefit from a more

nuanced discussion of Nepal's diplomatic agency and regional complexities.

SAHR (2016) report effectively highlights the humanitarian crisis caused by India's unofficial blockade but primarily focuses on the suffering of ordinary Nepalese without deeply analyzing the broader geopolitical and strategic dimensions. While it rightly critiques the blockade's role in straining India-Nepal relations and pushing Nepal closer to China, it does not fully explore Nepal's diplomatic maneuvering or India's rationale beyond coercion. Additionally, while calling for accountability and a humane approach is important, the report does not provide concrete policy recommendations or assess how Nepal and India could have handled the crisis differently. A more balanced analysis would consider the agency of both states in shaping the outcome of the crisis.

Baral (2017b) and Bhattarai (2016) provide valuable insights into how the blockade inadvertently strengthened China-Nepal relations, but their analyses tend to portray India as solely losing influence without considering the nuances of regional diplomacy. While Nepal did seek alternative economic ties with China, logistical and geographic constraints have limited its ability to fully reduce dependence on India. Additionally, their arguments largely frame China as a benevolent actor without critically examining its strategic

interests in Nepal. While the blockade was a diplomatic miscalculation for India, a more balanced perspective would assess how Nepal navigated the crisis to assert its agency rather than simply shifting from one regional power to another.

ICC (2016) report effectively highlights the severe humanitarian consequences of the blockade, but its critique of India's approach as "heavy-handed and counterproductive" lacks a deeper examination of India's strategic motivations. While the blockade undeniably caused suffering in Nepal, the report does not fully address the complex political context, including Nepal's domestic challenges and its reluctance to address India's concerns over the new constitution. Furthermore, by focusing solely on the negative impact on Nepalese civilians, the report overlooks how the crisis affected India's regional influence and broader geopolitical dynamics. A more comprehensive analysis would have included the responses of other regional actors, like China, and the long-term diplomatic consequences for both countries.

Chand (2018) provides a valuable analysis of India's 2015 blockade as a strategic move to exert political pressure on Nepal, but his focus on trade relations as a coercive tool overlooks the broader diplomatic context. While he highlights the economic and social consequences, including disrupted supply chains and rising anti-Indian sentiment, he does not fully

address how Nepal's national resilience and diplomatic maneuvering influenced the outcome. Additionally, while the study emphasizes the destabilizing effects of trade embargos, it could benefit from a deeper exploration of alternative diplomatic strategies and their long-term impact on regional stability.

While the above works provide valuable insights, there are several gaps in the literature. Most analyses are either journalistic or focused on specific aspects of the crisis. A comprehensive academic study of India's coercive diplomacy in 2015 is still needed. None of the studies has applied theoretical frameworks from the coercive diplomacy literature (e.g., Alexander George's work) to analyze the India-Nepal case.

The 2015 India-Nepal crisis is a critical case study in coercive diplomacy, offering valuable lessons about the risks and limitations of using coercion in international relations. While existing literature provides useful perspectives, there is a clear need for more in-depth, theoretically grounded research on this topic. Such studies could contribute to both the academic understanding of coercive diplomacy and the policy discourse on India's role in South Asia.

In 2015, India imposed an unofficial blockade on Nepal during a constitutional crisis, ostensibly in response to Nepal's adoption of a new constitution that marginalized certain ethnic

groups. India's actions were widely interpreted as coercive diplomacy aimed at pressuring Nepal to amend its constitution. However, this episode remains underexplored in the academic literature, presenting a significant gap for research.

The unofficial sanction imposed by India on Nepal presents a significant case of coercive diplomacy in South Asia. Despite extensive bilateral relations, the blockade severely disrupted Nepal's economy exacerbated the humanitarian crisis following the devastating earthquake earlier that year, and strained diplomatic ties between the two countries.

The credibility and success of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015 have been subjects of significant debate among researcher, policymakers, and observers. This coercive episode primarily revolved around India's response to Nepal's adoption of a new constitution in September 2015, which India argued did not adequately address the concerns of the Madhesi community, an ethnic group with strong ties to India. The ensuing blockade, perceived as being orchestrated by India, had far-reaching implications.

India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015, notwithstanding the vagueness of the reasons for the sanctions, the objective of this research is to uncover the truth through academic inquiry within the framework of coercive diplomacy developed by (George, 1991) in his influential work “Forceful

Persuasion: Coercive Diplomacy as an Alternative to War". This framework offers a theoretical foundation for examining India's coercive diplomacy towards Nepal.

It seeks to understand the underlying causes, mechanisms, and consequences of this diplomatic maneuver, examining how coercive measures were communicated and perceived, and their effectiveness in achieving India's strategic objectives. Additionally, the study has explored the broader implications of such coercive tactics on regional stability and international relations within South Asia. By doing so, this research intends to contribute to the academic discourse on coercive diplomacy and offer insights into the dynamics of power and influence in bilateral relations.

In addition to George's theory, India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015 has also been analysed using several prominent international relations theories, including democratic peace theory, neo-colonialism, and ethnic intervention theory. This approach aims to provide a diverse and comprehensive perspective on the nature, motivation, strategy, and outcomes of the Indian sanctions in 2015.

1.3 Research Questions

The following study questions were created to investigate and analyse the causes of sanctions of India against Nepal.

1. What is the nature of Indian coercive diplomacy against Nepal?

2. Why India did used coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015?
3. How did India communicate its demand to Nepal during the 2015 sanction?
4. What are the outcomes and how does the use of coercive diplomacy against Nepal affect the political relations between Nepal and India?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study's overall goal is to investigate the reasons behind India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal. The following are the study's particular goals:

1. To identify find out the nature of Indian coercive diplomacy against Nepal.
2. To examine the motivations behind India's use of coercive diplomacy against Nepal.
3. To analyze the mechanisms, channels, and effectiveness of India's demand communication to Nepal during the 2015 blockade focusing on clarity, credibility, and the role of formal and informal diplomatic channels.
4. To analyse the outcomes of India's coercive diplomacy and assess how it impacts the political relations between Nepal and India.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study provides an in-depth analysis of a critical episode in India-Nepal relations, offering insights into the dynamics of bilateral interactions and the underlying factors that shape them. By examining the specific case of 2015, the research contributes to a broader understanding of how coercive diplomacy is used in practice between neighbouring countries with complex historical ties.

The findings of this study can inform policymakers in both India and Nepal about the impacts and consequences of coercive diplomacy. It can serve as a basis for developing more effective and mutually beneficial diplomatic strategies, potentially leading to more stable and cooperative relations in the future.

This research contributes to the academic literature on coercive diplomacy by providing a detailed case study that highlights the practical application of theoretical concepts. It adds to the body of knowledge on international relations, particularly in the South Asian context, and can be used as a reference for comparative studies with other instances of coercive diplomacy worldwide.

Understanding the motivations, actions, and outcomes of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal offers valuable lessons for conflict resolution and peace building. The study highlights potential pitfalls and successful strategies in diplomatic

negotiations, contributing to the field of peace studies and conflict management.

The research sheds light on the economic and social impacts of coercive diplomacy on Nepal, including trade disruptions, economic sanctions, and their effects on the local population.

This analysis is useful for economists, sociologists, and development practitioners interested in the broader implications of international diplomatic strategies on domestic economies and societies. The study provides insights into the regional security dynamics of South Asia, highlighting how coercive diplomacy affects regional stability.

It helps regional organizations and international stakeholders understand the potential risks and benefits of coercive diplomacy in maintaining or disrupting regional order. This research serves as a valuable academic resource for students and researchers of international relations, political science, and regional studies.

It offers a detailed case study that can be used in academic curricula to illustrate the complexities and real-world applications of coercive diplomacy. The findings of this study identify gaps in the current understanding of coercive diplomacy and suggest areas for future research.

It encourages further investigation into similar cases in different regions or time periods, fostering a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of coercive diplomacy as a tool in international relations.

By examining the coercive diplomacy of India against Nepal in 2015, this study not only enhances our understanding of a specific historical event but also provides broader insights that applicable to the fields of international relations, policy-making, conflict resolution, and regional stability.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

The study is focused on coercive diplomacy in the form of economic sanctions in the context of Nepal and India bilateral relationship. The study has focused on the political relationship. The Coercive diplomacy is often viewed by multiple factors including political, economic, and security concerns, making it hard to pinpoint exact motivations.

The findings of this research are specific to the Nepal-India context and are not generalized to other cases of coercive diplomacy. The historical and geopolitical context of India-Nepal relations is intricate and deeply rooted. Understanding the motivations behind specific actions requires an in-depth analysis of historical events, regional dynamics, and long-term strategies. Simplifying or isolating specific events without considering the

broader historical and geopolitical context may lead to incomplete or misleading conclusions.

The coercive diplomacy employed by India is likely influenced by a complex interplay of political, economic, security, and strategic factors. Isolating and identifying the specific elements of coercive diplomacy in 2015 is challenging due to the multifaceted nature of international relations and state behaviour.

There has been limited publicly available documentation or official explanations detailing India's specific actions and strategies in 2015. The interpretation of coercive diplomacy actions and their motivations is subjective, varying among different analysts and stakeholders. Different theoretical frameworks and analytical lenses lead the divergent conclusions, affecting the consistency of the research findings.

1.7 Organization of the Study

Chapter I : Introduction

Chapter II : Literature Review

Chapter III : Research Methodology

Chapter IV : Concepts and Theoretical Framework

Chapter V : Political Developments and the Constitution Drafting Process

Chapter VI : The Coercive Spectrum of India's Coercive Diplomacy

Chapter VII : The Leverages of India's Coercive Diplomacy

Chapter VIII : Credibility, Communication, Bargaining

Chapter IX : Communication and Bargaining

Chapter X: Exit Strategy of India's Coercive Diplomacy

Chapter XI : Outcomes and Success

Chapter XII : Theoretical Perspectives on India’s Unofficial Sanctions

Chapter XIII : Findings, Discussion and Conclusion

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The systematic discovery of research gaps in the study relies heavily on a literature evaluation. It guides the researcher in the right direction in terms of selecting appropriate methodology, data collection methods, and data analysis. A systematic literature review aids in the consolidation and validation of research topics. The researcher conducted a thorough evaluation of the current literature, which included both theoretical and empirical reviews. The existing ideas on economic sanctions and international relations have been reviewed by the researcher under the topic of theoretical review.

The researcher primarily examined the theories of realism, liberalism, and constructivism in international relations. In addition, as part of the study's core, the researcher studied the literature on geopolitical theories. The study reviews of several international relations theories because the study is aimed at examining the underlying factors that cause economic sanctions and their political consequences, which cannot be addressed within a single domain of theory.

The researcher has reviewed empirical studies on economic sanctions and the Nepal-India bilateral relationship under the category of empirical review. The researcher has gone to great lengths to review both the fundamental literature and

original pieces of writing. The researcher also looked at literature on Nepalese and Indian foreign policies to see if it was relevant to understanding the impact of economic sanctions on Nepal-India relations.

2.1 Reviews on Economic Sanctions

Kern (2009) investigates the domestic legal and regulatory framework for economic sanctions and how they might be used more effectively to achieve public policy goals against companies and third parties. The sanctions regimes of various important states with active economic sanctions programs, such as the US, the UK, and Japan, are examined.

The book is divided into eleven chapters. The history and origins of the major economic and financial sanctions regimes are examined in the first chapter. The main theories of international commerce and finance that drive the global trading system are reviewed in Chapter 2. It argues that policymakers can use the principle of comparative advantage to help them create economic sanctions programs. The third chapter examines the international legal dimension of economic sanctions by looking at the main principles of international law that regulate how nation states apply economic penalties.

It starts with a discussion of the concepts of state accountability that apply to the employment of economic sanctions by a state, as well as the relevant principles of

jurisdiction and how extraterritorial jurisdiction has become a significant part of state practice. The fourth chapter examines at how some of the world's most powerful countries handle economic sanctions.

The legal and regulatory concepts of economic sanctions are examined in Chapters 5 and 6, with a specific focus on the US sanctions regime and how it applies to corporations, third-party professionals, and businesses. The use of private rights of action for civil damages as a tool of economic sanctions policy is examined in Chapter 7. Chapter eight examines the statutory and regulatory responses of a number of important third-country states in their efforts to prevent extraterritorial US economic penalties from having legal effect.

The ninth chapter explores the bilateral agreements that have emerged among the major states for cross-border sanctions implementation and enforcement cooperation and coordination. The legal and regulatory dangers that foreign banks, firms, and their professional advisers face as a result of their engagement in transactions that may violate US financial sanctions and anti-money laundering procedures are discussed in Chapter ten. Chapter eleven broadens the discussion to include multilateral institution building, with a focus on post-9/11 developments at the United Nations, where significant progress has been made in

establishing multilateral institutional structures to adopt and implement an international financial sanctions regime against international terrorism.

Author concentrates on the national execution of economic sanctions and discusses some of the key economic, legal, and regulatory difficulties that arise in their design and implementation. Alexander's main focus is on legal principles and doctrines that affect compliance for businesses, firms, third-party advisers, and investors. Economic penalties, according to Alexander, can be an effective tool of public policy if they are structured to take into consideration the state's economic capacity to apply them and the legal and regulatory measures used are proportional and targeted. It also makes a few modest recommendations for international institutional reform, which are based mostly on a strong local legal and regulatory framework.

To coordinate sanctions implementation, the author argues that international efforts and institutional reforms should rely on existing bilateral and multilateral agreements and institutions. National sanctions programs should concentrate on the loopholes in existing corporation law and territorial jurisdiction that allow businesses and investors to avoid sanctions limitations.

The literature is particularly useful to the researcher in understanding the theoretical viewpoints on economic sanctions as well as the current legal discussion. Apart from its theoretical significance, this literature is silent on discussing on the effects of economic penalties imposed by a powerful neighbour on a landlocked country as a form of compliance. Therefore, it is hoped that the researcher's research work has served as a supplement to the existing sanctioned literature.

Simons (1999) argues that the international economic sanctions are porous, ineffective, unproductive, misdirected, persuasive, effective, and destructive. Sanctions always have an impact, and they may achieve covert goals that differ from those that are openly stated: the people who administer sanctions frequently have secret intentions. There are five chapters in this book. The first chapter depicts the continuity of economic sanctions from antiquity to the present. The second chapter examines the nature and effectiveness of the League of Nations' sanctions on the United Nations. The third chapter examines the economic sanctions in relation to the involvement of the United States. Chapter four examines the ethical and legal issues of economic sanctions, as well as their effects on people's livelihoods. The fifth chapter looks at the Iraqi sanction case.

Economic sanctions, according to Simons, are seldom a legal remedy for an international problem when used alone. They have a propensity of inciting and cementing rebellious regimes, forcing them into repression and self-reliance, as well as inflicting enormous misery on innocent human victims. Economic sanctions, he claims, are more often used as a genocidal tactic, putting hapless civilian populations in a single city or an entire country under siege. And they often have major ramifications for governments other than the target victim. Economic sanctions are a complex ecology that causes slight disruptions, major consequences, and extinctions. They are rarely applied with tolerance or with a morally commensurate impact. They frequently do nothing more than reflect and intensify the unjust system of international power in their successes and failures.

In order to comprehend the impact of literature on civilian life, the researcher finds the literature to be extremely useful. Aside from that, the literature has served as a valuable resource for understanding ethical and legal issues surrounding sanction. Despite these qualities, the literature has not addressed certain topics, such as a thorough and systematic analysis of the socio-political effects of economic sanctions.

Drezner and Drezner (1999) examine the role of economic coercion in international relations and propose a model that

takes into account the opportunity costs of deadlock and the prospect of future conflict between senders and targets. The book is divided into nine chapters. The first chapter focuses on the book's introduction. The conflict expectations model of economic coercion is described in Chapter 2 along with its testable implications.

Economic compulsion becomes less likely and less fruitful as the sender's costs of impasse rise, according to the model. The model also illustrates how conflict expectations affect the dynamics of economic coercion in a contradictory way. On the one hand, a hostile relationship increases the likelihood of a coercion attempt. However, it reduces the utility of the attempt. Economic pressure should be used frequently between opponents, but only to a certain extent. Economic pressure between allies should be less common but more effective.

Chapter three examines the findings of previous statistical investigations to see if existing theories have any explanatory power in comparison to the conflict expectations model. New statistical tests of the conditions under which a sender will threaten sanctions, as well as the extent of the target's final concessions, are presented in Chapter 4.

These findings lend considerable support to the conflict expectations model and cast doubt on the alternative arguments'

broad applicability. The potential of Russia to coerce is examined and analysed in Chapter 5. The instances of economic coercion utilised throughout all fourteen newly independent states are detailed in Chapter 6. In Chapter 7, Boolean analysis is used to examine the differences in attempts and concessions across the fourteen newly independent states. The eighth chapter examines the roles of penalties and inducements in economic statecraft, concluding that the prospect of future war limits the use of both carrots and sticks in bargaining with opponents. The theoretical and empirical findings are summarized in Chapter 9. The robustness of the conflict expectations model offers various policy and theory recommendations.

The findings imply that increased economic power is not always a result of dependency. Furthermore, economic power is not a diplomatic tool that can be used in all situations. The role of international institutions in regulating economic interchange is also called into doubt by these findings. In terms of policy, the findings show that economic coercion has a role in statecraft instruments, but that place is narrowly limited. It is particularly ineffective against opponents. The model proposed here also offers insight on three contemporary policy issues in the United Regimes: whether to engage or contain rogue states, whether the US Congress should mandate penalties, and if extraterritorial sanctions should be used to secure multilateral cooperation

2.2 Reviews on Theories in International Relations

Mearsheimer (2001) argues that the perpetual international peace and cooperation among states is not achievable. He advocates structural realism as an alternative to classical realism, arguing that studying international relations requires an understanding of the changing international system and its dynamics. He has concentrated on great power rivalry for security challenges, arguing that while a calamitous war such as a world war is unlikely to occur in the near future following the collapse of the Soviet Union, anarchic international systems push them to check each other, increasing security costs. He goes on to say that great powers aim to gain power at the expense of others in order to ensure their own survival. According to a realistic perspective of survival, their ultimate goal is to become hegemon.

The author, John Mearsheimer, focuses primarily on the nature of great power competition under the theoretical framework of offensive realism. Criticizing America's liberal philosophy, Mearsheimer claims that China would challenge American policy and seek to grow military strength in order to become hegemon. He advises America to be pragmatic in dealing with its foreign policy, emphasizing the importance of a realistic approach. In a nutshell, Mearsheimer has argued for a

realistic perspective of the world notwithstanding harsh criticism of the liberal approach. The importance of understanding the power interactions between asymmetrical powers is highlighted in the literature. This book was regarded to be useful for the theoretical understanding of international relations through the lenses of realism by the researcher.

Morgenthau (1948) concentrated on the factors and dynamics that shape international relations. He advocates a realism-based approach to international politics and advises a better understanding of the fundamental processes that affect the structure of international relations. Morgenthau focuses on the balance of power in order to better understand state relations and the nature of international politics. He believes that the balance of power and policies are both necessary for the nation's survival and an important stabilizing component in a society of independent states.

According to him, the instability of the international balance of power is attributable to the special conditions under which the principle must work in a society of sovereign nations, not to the concept's inadequacies. He emphasized the importance of national equilibrium for international stability and survival. He warns that unless they achieve harmony, one element will gain dominance over the others, encroaching on their interests and rights, and finally destroying them. He went over numerous balancing approaches and their effectiveness in

terms of sustaining stability and preserving nations in great detail.

The literature is quite useful to the researcher in learning theoretical ideas on how the state attempts to balance the emerging nation in order to protect its national interests. The essential essence of world politics is adequately stated in this literature, despite the fact that it is not concerned with sanction politics.

Waltz (1979) expands on his views on neo-realism. He critiques "reductionist" theories that focus on the behaviour of the system's units (i.e. states) to explain outcomes, instead focusing on how international structure shapes state behaviour. According to Waltz, this approach ignores the international environment's limits on state conduct.

Waltz has put forth some fundamental assumptions that anticipate specific state behaviour’s. These are the assumptions: The international system is anarchic: there is no higher central authority that can impose laws on individual states; states behave on the basis of self-help; and the framework only changes if great powers attempt to modify it. The majority of nations lack the authority to alter the structure. States will try to balance against each other in this situation in order to increase their chances of survival. The balancing might take two forms, according to Waltz: internal and external. External balancing

refers to the development of an alliance of states to confront a greater power, or a hegemon. Internal balancing refers to the investment of military strength. According to Waltz, the system's structure is primarily determined by the distribution of power. The distribution of power, he claims, is a decisive element in international results. States are concerned with their own security and want to increase their relative dominance over other states.

For the researcher's theoretical grasp of neo-realism perspectives in international relations, this material was useful. One of the theoretical elements of sanction is realism; as a result, the researcher finds the literature useful in determining the study's epistemological nature.

Baylis et al. (2001) look at the historical, theoretical, structural, and issue-based components of world politics and compare them. Part One examines the historical framework of societal internationalization and provides four historical viewpoints on world politics: 1900-1945, 1945-1990, and 1945-1990. Part Two lays forth the five fundamental pillars that make up the theoretical framework of international relations. Part Two wraps up with a look at additional major contributions to international relations theory, including historical sociology, normative theory, feminist theory, postmodernism, and post colonialism. Part three discusses global security, international

political economy, international law and regimes, contemporary diplomacy, the United Nations system, and the rise and function of transnational players and international organizations in global politics.

Part four explores environmental issues such as CFC emissions, global commons exploitation, transnational regulation, and over-exploitation, as well as their implications for present international politics. It also covers topics such as terrorism's evolution from a transnational to a global phenomenon, nuclear proliferation and control, nationalism as an ideology and movement, cultural differences and globalization, humanitarian intervention in world politics, European integration and regional cooperation, the internet revolution, and specific issues such as poverty, development, and hunger. Part Five examines the effects of globalization on global politics and international relations in the third millennium. One studies the types of political communities that are forming as a result of globalization, while the other looks at the typology of the current world order.

This literature has been extremely useful in understanding a wide range of global politics concerns and the effects of globalization on state-to-state interactions, as well as in generalizing emerging topics and current events in the area of the study's evolving theoretical framework. The present methods

to international relations have also been thoroughly studied in the study. As a result, researcher gains greatly from this literature.

Andrew (1992) offers a broad assessment and critique of both methodological and substantive components of International Relations theory, arguing, in particular, that International Affairs theory has distanced itself from broader problems in political theory at great cost to both. The book begins by focusing on the ‘problem of order' in international politics, arguing that in the twentieth century, International Relations theory adopted two broad families of approaches, the first of which seeks to find ways to ‘manage' order in international relations, and the second of which seeks to ‘end' the problem of order. Within the first method, it traces three distinct sets of responses to the challenge of order, emphasizing "balancing," "society," and "institutions," and it specifies two replies within the second grouping, emphasizing "emancipation" and "limits." Lastly, the study examines the current status of International Relations theory and proposes a new method of looKing at the problem of order that leads to a new trajectory for a truly global political philosophy in the twenty-first century.

Rengger (2000) argues that the outsiders' opinions toward social science are generally distrustful or hostile, and social scientists themselves are divided about what constitutes a proper

approach to social research. He claims that increasing philosophical issues about traditional ideas of scientific objectivity and progress have exacerbated ambiguity. Arguments concerning whether social science should be like natural science are no longer based on agreement on the latter's nature and techniques. He goes on to say that recent breakthroughs in realist philosophy have provided new and fruitful views in both fields, reshaping the entire debate. In this book, the author explains these concepts and demonstrates how they can help solve some of the challenges that have plagued social scientists.

Students and researchers who are familiar with social science but have little or no prior experience with philosophical and methodological arguments, as well as those who are familiar with them but are interested in realism and method, will find the literature useful. It entails a proclivity to associate realism with extremely narrow social theory tendencies (e.g., specific perspectives on Marxism) and highly constrained areas of social research.

Palmer and Perkins (2012) provide insight into the underlying patterns and important changes in international relations, as well as essential concepts and practices. The authors seek to recognize new trends in international relations research, such as a growing emphasis on interdisciplinary,

comparative, behavioural, and quantitative methods and theoretical approaches. There are six sections to the literature. The first section focuses on the multinational life pattern**.** The second section focuses on mechanisms for promoting national interest, while the third section focuses on interstate relations restrictions. Similarly, the fourth chapter discusses postwar conflict and change, while the fifth portion focuses on the articulation of national interests. The sixth chapter focused on the world community's future in the nuclear and space age.

2.3 Reviews on Geopolitical Studies

Kaplan (2002) focuses on geopolitical issues for the study of international relations and demonstrates flaws in the globalization process, which aspires to create a cooperative and peaceful world. He illustrates the insecurity of human-made artificial borders, citing the fall of the Berlin Wall as an example, and predicts that natural limits will be restored, ushering in a new period in history.

In order to grasp the major axes in history as well as the emerging global scenario, Kaplan draws on the observations, discoveries, and theories of past and contemporary great geographers and geopolitical thinkers. According to Kaplan, the history of the world's major places may be traced by looKing at their climates, topographies, and proximity to other troubled regions. According to Kaplan, Nazi geo-politicians were totally

convinced that the British Empire and the Soviet Union could be absorbed by a larger German state.

Kaplan describes the existing crisis in Europe, Russia, China, the Indian subcontinent, Turkey, Iran, and the Arab Mideast, as well as the next cycle of conflict in Eurasia. He asserts that the future can be understood in terms of temperature, land allotment, and other physical certainty, and that China, unable to feed only 23 percent of its population on land that is only 7 percent arable, has sought energy, minerals, and metals from such brutal regimes as Burma, Iran, and Zimbabwe, putting it in moral conflict with the US.

He claims that Afghanistan's porous borders will retain it as the main invasion route into India, as well as a critical rear ground for Pakistan, India's main adversary. Iran, according to Kaplan, will take use of its unique position as the only country with access to both the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Sea for energy production. Finally, Kaplan warns that the US may come to regret its involvement in such large-scale battles as those in Iraq and Afghanistan.

This literature is more useful to the researcher since Nepal-India interactions can be better understood through geopolitical views rather than simply through the consequences of globalization. Recognizing the relevance of geopolitical viewpoints, the researcher intends to study what types of

geopolitical circumstances have repeatedly produced a sanction on the Nepal-India border.

Khanal (2015) focuses attention on Nepal's geostrategic situation between two superpowers, India and China. He claims that there have been changes in India-Nepal and China-Nepal relations, which have undoubtedly influenced Nepal's internal politics and socioeconomic elements. In this regard, the writer has offered solutions to numerous topics such as what is India and its policy toward Nepal. What is China's position on Nepal? What can these countries' future paths be if Nepal is taken into account? Aside from that, the book has been useful for studying and researching the bilateral relationship between Nepal and India.

However, the author fails to provide an analytical analysis on the topic of border sanction along the India-Nepal border. There are seven chapters in the literature. The first part discusses India as a growing force, while the second chapter discusses Nehru's theory, which calls for India's neighbouring countries to be brought under its security umbrella. The third part examines the 1950 Treaty of Amity, which is a sensitive subject between Nepal and India. The fourth chapter discusses the Bhajapa Party of India's position toward Nepal. The second chapter focuses on Bhutanese refugees as well as other Nepalese phenomena in

relation to India. The Indian influence in Nepal is the subject of the seventh chapter.

Nayak (2014) examines prominent countries' geopolitical interests in Nepal, as well as Nepal's interactions with various foreign powers. The book's first chapter serves as an introduction, quickly outlining what will be covered in later chapters. The second chapter recounts Nepal's foreign policy history, particularly after the Rana regime fell in 1951. It describes how, after 1955, King Mahendra and later King Birendra adopted a multifaceted foreign policy posture that was free of overt Indian influence. The chapter examines Nepal's participation in multilateral forums such as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and advocacy for landlocked developing countries (LLDCs). The chapter finishes with an examination of how foreign forces became interested in the civil war both during and after it.

The third chapter examines India's policy toward Nepal, which is based on Nehru's perception of Nepal as the former's "sphere of influence" that must be protected from any foreign power. In regards to the Madhes movement, the chapter acknowledges that India has been supportive of Nepal's federalist ambitions since 2007. It goes on to explain how, due

of the Madhesi's ties to India, hilly ethnic people have continued to view them with distrust.

In the fourth chapter, Nayak addresses China's connection with India and its impact on Nepal. China's foreign policy goal has moved from Deng Xiaoping's "keeping a low profile and getting stuff done" to Hu Jintao's "multi-directional diplomacy and focused on surrounding nations," according to the chapter. According to Nayak, China's footprint in Nepal is growing as a result of sociocultural programs and foreign direct investment. Nepal has long been a peripheral figure in Chinese foreign policy, but that is changing, particularly in light of China's Tibetan concerns and competition with India and the United States in Nepal.

Since the 1950s, the US has been interested in Nepal to restrict China's communism, according to the fifth chapter. However, as the US pursued a policy of reconciliation with China in the 1970s, it grew less interested in Nepal. As a result, American aid to Nepal decreased from 1970 to 2001, when it resurfaced as a country of interest to the US as a result of the 9/11 attacks. The US, following its anti-communist inclinations, had opposed the Maoists' and the then-2003 government's peace talks. Even though the historic 12-point accord was struck in Delhi in 2005, the US continued to oppose the peace talks.

According to the sixth chapter, during the 1970s, the European Union and member countries (namely, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Norway), as well as Switzerland, have boosted their funding and involvement in Nepal. According to Nayak, EU countries have differing perspectives on the Maoist struggle. Some countries recognized poverty and inequality as the fundamental reasons of the struggle, while others, such as the United Kingdom, followed the US's lead and labeled the Maoists as terrorists. The EU countries did not have a coherent political line until after the peace talks. The Europian countries began to support the peace effort by "offering technical and financial aid," according to Nayak.

The result of this study acknowledges that India's strategy with Nepal has been centered on security. However, the author values Nepal based on its utility for India's relationship with China, rather than Nepal itself, in a classic realist approach.

The most dubious aspect of the literature is that it appears to be prejudiced and inflated the influence of powerful countries in Nepal, even though the author's claim cannot be expressly rejected. The author's analysis tends to favor an Indian security-centric approach to Nepal over just a balanced academic one.

The literature is mute on the topic of India's economic sanctions on Nepal, despite the fact that it has thrown light on the geopolitical interests of the world's most powerful countries,

which would serve as a foundation for the researcher's analysis of India's economic sanctions.

Sharma (2013) analyses the open and hidden schemes devised by main parties India, the Maoists, and the Monarchy to achieve their various interests, finally pushing the Himalayan country into a precarious situation. Sharma claims that India, as the ‘hegemonic' regional player, achieved its ‘strategic' goals by deploying Maoist rebels against the third actor - the monarchy - calling attention to India's role in determining Nepal's political course after the Maoist insurgency began in 1996.

Sharma delves into the significant political events that occurred after 1996, as well as the shifting political landscape in the Himalayan country. The second chapter portrays Maoist insurgents as rational actors who, like "political scientists" and "sociologists," examined the long-standing "contradictions" of Nepali society before initiating the insurgency in early 1996. To begin, the insurgents exploited the rivalry between the army and the police, who were both seeking to outsmart each other for financial gain and clout.

The author states that the King-led army, which had been marginalized by the government, began to ‘sympathize' with the Maoists and refused to combat the insurgents. With the return of Dhirendra Shah, the King's brother, to Nepal from exile in the United Kingdom, the royal palace enters the scene. It was

around the time of the Maoist attack on the Dolpa district headquarters in Dunai in 2000, which was the insurgents' first major operation against the state. Dhirendra and a few army officers were instrumental in creating an ‘informal alliance' between the royal palace and Maoist insurgents in order to protect ‘national sovereignty' against political parties that ‘aligned with India' in 1990 and compelled the monarchy to transfer power.

In 2001, India visibly joined the stage, particularly following the Holeri episode, in which the army refused to fight the rebels. The southern neighbor was displeased with the King's refusal to activate the army in Holeri. The Maoists, according to the author, began to seek refuge in India three months after the uprising began in 1996.

The author uses the links between some Indian academics and officials and Maoist leader Baburam BhatTerai, which were fostered while the latter was a student at India's Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in the 1980s, to illustrate India's involvement in the insurgency. Following Gyanendra's travel to India in June 2002, the author claims that the southern neighbor began to support both the state and Maoist rebels. When the former monarch sought India's support for a takeover, India regarded it as a chance to profit from Nepali society's inconsistencies. After King Gyanendra removed democratically

elected Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba in October 2002, it formally formed links with the Maoists.

After the royal putsch on February 1, 2005, King Gyanendra's relationship with India deteriorated. King Gyanendra began to play the "China card" to force India to accept his coup, rather than sacrificing national sovereignty to meet Indian security interests." However, the King's strategy backfired. The monarchy crumbled under the joint outcry of the political parties and the Maoists, and India facilitated the signature of the 12-point agreement between the Maoists and the political parties that had cornered King Gyanendra.

The remaining chapters detail the growing Indian influence in the nascent nation, as well as the accompanying political turbulence. The author also describes the motivations of each of the major players, including the monarchy, India, and the Maoists, in a concise manner. According to him, the Maoists wanted the monarch to play a "revolutionary" role similar to that of Cambodia's King, and after being ignored by the monarch after the royal slaughter in June 2001, they tried to utilize India against the monarch in their pursuit for power.

Similarly, after shedding the burden of British colonial rulers, India had long sought a pliant administration in Nepal, similar to that found in Bhutan, and the rise of the Maoists as a major force in the late 1990s provided it with a unique

opportunity to put its plan into action. The author claims that the Maoists who sought to utilize India to gain power were ultimately used by India. He quotes former Indian envoy to Nepal Shiv Shankar Mukharjee and SD Muni as saying that Nepal's monarchy had become an "out-dated institution".

The author suggests that the same thing might have happened in Nepal by suggesting that India's political leadership only learned of RAW's clandestine operation in Sikkim in the final hours. However, overthrowing the monarchy does not appear to be the Indian establishment's preferred option, though some Indian officials and researchers may have wished to convert the Hindu Kingdom into a republic. The author's theory is contradicted by a series of events, including the Indian government's bacKing for the first royal proclamation in 2006 and Karan Singh's Nepal visit, which reaffirmed India's twin policy of constitutional monarchy and democracy.

Furthermore, according to the author, RAW desired to maintain a ceremonial monarchy while also playing a significant role in conflict settlement. Simply put, the sequence of events demonstrates that India was only one of several key players, not the pivotal one. While India may have intended to gain concessions from the old regime by helping anti-regime groups,

the events depicted in the book only portray India in a favourable light.

According to the author, Indian intelligence had a constructive role in constitution writing shortly before the Constituent Assembly-1 expired in May 2012, but these efforts were thwarted by some Madhesi activists who incited Madhesi people. So, how should we assess India's role in Nepal's recent political changes? The seeming paradox stems from the fact that both Nepali revolutionaries and Indian actors had the same goal in mind: to undermine the Nepali state in order to accomplish their respective objectives. Because the overthrow of monarchy was neither on India's or the Maoists' agendas prior to 2006, the author should have looked beyond the Indian design to comprehend this complicated phenomenon known as regime transition.

Surprisingly, the author appears to have downplayed the importance of ‘civil society' and its worldwide nexus. By finding the insurgency's causes in "grievances," "civil society" legitimized the insurgency. King Gyanendra's reinstatement to monarchical rule in 2005 further enraged the bourgeoisie. As a result, even though the disgraced political parties were massively unpopular, the urban middle class enthusiastically engaged in the mass movement of 2006. Even though India supported a ceremonial monarchy while the 2006 movement

was in full flow, the people refused to give up. For unclear reasons, the author ignores the monarchy's failure to adapt to new values moulded by globalization forces. And, contrary to the author's assertion, the Maoist leadership, not India, has benefited most from the regime transition. Officials from India said they had a decisive part in Nepal's government change, but now find themselves in an embarrassing scenario since they are unsure of their exact responsibilities in the political shift.

Despite some flaws, the author has done a commendable job of summarizing Nepal's political changes since 1996. *Prayogsàlà* is absolutely packed with citations and data that academics will find useful. The book is written in a straightforward language that will appeal to those who are unfamiliar with Nepali politics. Although Sharma successfully demonstrates that India was a major player in transforming Nepal's political environment, he fails to persuade readers that the regime transition was a deliberate effort by India. Furthermore, his emphasis on and exaggeration of Indian responsibilities in Nepal causes him to overlook other important elements in the regime shift.

2.4 Reviews on Foreign Policy of Nepal

Rose (1971) examines Nepalese foreign policy over the last two centuries, focusing on the influences of China, the

United Kingdom, Russia, and India on that policy. He claims that Nepal's most difficult foreign policy dilemma has historically been how to maintain national independence in the face of external threats. In the first chapter, the author analyses the foundations of Nepal's foreign relations, concentrating on aspects including the country's geographical location, ethnic and cultural variety, historical background, psychological context, and economic restraints. As the author points out in this chapter, Nepal's key placement on the southern system that connects the Tibetan plateau to India's plains has always had a significant impact on the history and foreign policy.

According to him, Nepalese understanding of their role and place in the contemporary world is influenced by the intricate and varied aspects of Nepal's cultural legacy. He also claims that Nepal's modern worldview appears to be essentially a reflection and extension of the country's perceptions of its two gigantic neighbours, India and China. The author states that Nepal's ability to formulate independent foreign policy is severely limited by external economic factors, particularly those emanating from India.

The author analyses Nepal's trade with Tibet in the second chapter, mentioning the Nepal Tibet war (1788-89) and its ramifications. He claims that in the 18th century, Nepal was inclined to use Tibetan discord and instability in order to

resurrect Kathmandu's historic territorial and commercial goals in Tibet. The author examines the Nepal-China conflict (1791-93), as well as its ramifications for Nepal's foreign policy. The failure of Tibetans to enforce the 1789 deal, which led to the Nepal Tibet conflict, is discussed by the author. According to the author, the Nepal Tibet war posed severe threats to Bahadur Shah's hitherto unrivalled clout at the Darbar, where he had a near-monopoly on Nepalese affairs.

He claims that a Nepali political faction attempted for the first time to solicit Chinese assistance in Nepal's international politics. Nepal sought to use Peking as a counterbalance to the British, he claims. He talks about the reasons and effects of the Anglo-Nepal war (1814-16), in which Nepal lost territory between the Kali and Sutlej rivers. Writer states that Bhim Sen Thapa’s political authority deteriorated after the failure of his overture to the British. As he was deposed, the Nepalese opposition fragmented into competing factions, none of which was able to retain a stronghold for more than a few months. According to the author, Nepal had utter dissatisfaction in the areas of foreign policy from 1816 to 1846.

According to the author, by 1846, Nepal had concluded that all of its possible allies in India had fallen under British control, and that China was both either unable or unwilling to provide the kind of aid needed to keep Nepal from succumbing

to British expansion. A new foreign policy was clearly required in such circumstances, and the period 1846-1858 saw the rise of unique foreign policy principles that fundamentally transformed Nepal's role in Himalayan politics.

Jang Bahadur Rana's rise to power, according to the author, led in a substantial reinterpretation of Nepal's foreign policy toward both China and British India. The minister, a pragmatic politician, was well aware of China's rapid fall and knew that distant PeKing was neither willing nor capable of confronting the British in the Himalayan region. Jang Bahadur, the virtual ruler of Nepal, placed the entire armed resources of the country in the Indian Mutiny of 1857-8. After a hard fight that lasted five or six days, Lucknow fell to the British troops.

The author contends that Jung Bahadur and Chandra Shamsher are deserving of the Kingdom's sovereign status in the international community no small feat in the current climate. Whether they were operating in the national interest, the Rana family's interest, or both, is most likely accidental from a historical perspective. In reality, they established policies that were appropriate for the time period in which they lived and executed them with remarkable subtlety and expertise.

According to the author, by the end of 1954, a number of developments had a significant impact on Nepal's foreign policy. The rate of change turned out to be faster than New

Delhi or Kathmandu had anticipated. This was not due to Chinese activities in the early phases, but to changes within Nepal as a result of King Tribhuvan's death on March 13, 1955, and King Mahendra's ascension to the throne. Both temperamentally and in terms of his ideas on Nepal's place in the international world, the new monarch of Nepal proved to be a completely different man than his father. The accession of King Mahendra to the throne on March 13, 1955, had little immediate impact on the content or direction of Nepali foreign policy. Indeed, the two key events of the new reign mission Nepal's to the UN and the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Communist Chinese government represented the culmination of previous governments' initiatives.

The goal of many of Nepal's international and domestic policies remains to diversify the country's political and economic ties with the rest of the world, but the administration now appears to be more aware of the constraints imposed by the country's geopolitical and economic status. However, Nepal's acceptance of a seat on the United Nations Security Council in late 1968 was a notable exception to this general rule, as it may require the government to take stances on specific foreign problems such as the Middle East or Kashmir, a dilemma it would prefer to avoid. The author argues that the glory of serving on the Security Council symbolizes Nepal's full

acceptance as an equal in the international world, was enough to override any apprehensions about the political ramifications that may arise.

Understanding the geopolitical political reality of Nepal and their implications has been aided by the literature. The author has painstakingly examined Nepal's foreign policy development, providing historical accounts of various times. The book is also worth reading for other reasons. The significance of lesser politics in world politics has historically been confined to collective unites of the third world, while social scientists have usually understood modern international relations in terms of the great countries. One of the few researches on such an endeavour can be found in this book.

Sharma (2019) contends that India's involvement in Nepal's political transition from monarchy to democratic republic has harmed bilateral relations. The relationship between Nepal and India is sometimes glorified as one of "roti-beti," but Sharma claims that it has been framed more by Indian bureaucracy and espionage. According to the author, India participated in Nepal's political transition from monarchy to constitutional democracy, but was unable to meet her expectations.

Sharma recounts the intricate history of communism and monarchy in Nepal, as well as the India linkage. He describes

how Nepal's Maoist insurrection was put down through talks between Girija Prasad Koirala and Pushpa Kamal Dahal, two major Nepali leaders. In Gurgaon, two of Nepal's most powerful politicians met. At these discussions in the summer of 2005, Baburam BhatTerai, Krishna Prasad Mahara, leaders of seven political parties were also present. It had to be a challenging conversation because the Maoists have not put an end to their couple of years of insurrection whilst it negotiated for the movement's future mainstreaming. Following the slaughter of soldiers in Pili, a truce was declared, and weeks of talks resulted in the historic twelve-point agreement

While satisfying the democratic aspirations of the Madhesis of the plains, the understanding aimed at constructing a constitutional republic in Nepal had to contend with the palace, Maoist opponents, ethnicities or ancient communities like Tharus and Magars. Two very different Koirala, who led the seven-party coalition, and Prachanda, the Maoists' leader, made significant sacrifices to move Nepal forward. Former head of the Research and Analysis Wing Hormis Tharakan, Prakash Karat and Sitaram Yechury of the CPI(M), and Devi Prasad Tripathi of the Nationalist Congress party, according to Sharma, were worKing behind the scenes. Tharakan was a member of the National Security Advisory Board of India. The engagement of Karat-Yechury suggested the government's direct involvement in Nepal's political truce, with the Left Front extending support

to the Manmohan Singh government at the Centre. Even though India's political landscape changed with the election of Narendra Modi, Nepal remained on schedule to ratify the constitution.

The fundamental issue at this point seemed to be that, notwithstanding the revolutionary aspects of their movement, post-monarchy Nepali democratic leaders desired Nepal's historic center of power to stay Kathmandu-centric. The Indian stakeholders pressed harder for an identity-based criterion to grant the inhabitants of Nepal's plains more rights. Kathmandu feared that India was attempting to maintain a lasting grip over Kathmandu through the Madhesi statement. As the constitution was being finalized, India was surprised to learn that the politicians who had previously been backed by it were not interested in adopting Delhi's wishes.

Meeting of the century at such an historic encounter between current foreign minister Pradeep Kumar Gyawali and his counterpart S. Jaishankar, then foreign secretary, on September 16, 2015, Sharma draws out the astounding disparities between the Nepali and Indian sides. Gyawali had visited as Nepal's representative to tell India about the constitution's acceptance.

National Security Adviser Ajit Doval joined Jaishankar and Gyawali, and the Indian foreign secretary got a phone call

midway through the session informing him that the Constituent Assembly had passed the constitution. Sharma quotes Jaishankar as remarKing at this point, "What is the use of discussing anymore?" India contended that the constitution did not meet the aspirations of the Madhesis, who had share more social and cultural ties with Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Jaishankar flew to Kathmandu to stop the constitution from being accepted.

'India's vengeance,' writes the author. The inability of Jaishankar to stop the constitution resulted in a crushing sanction, which Nepal referred to as India's retaliation. Throughout this time, India claimed that the blockage was established by Madhesi protesters and that it was not its fault. Nepal, on the other hand, blamed Delhi for the hardships that the general people had to endure as a result of the severe action. The horrific experience of the months-long sanction has left an indelible mark on Nepal today. Sharma states that the Oli government, aided by its "northern neighbour," is hell-bent on preventing Nepal from falling back into the hands of South Block bureaucrats.

The sanction of 2015 has been thoroughly investigated and analysed by the authors. He explains the grounds for the 2015 sanction and its significant impact on Nepal-India relations. However, while the author supports India's role in the sanction by referencing multiple sources, he fails to link it to other

concerns that India has been pursuing in Nepal before to the constituent assembly election. Problems such as the Hindu Kingdom and the Madhes issues have yet to be firmly defined. Aside from that, the writer fails to describe and analyse the impact of Indian sanctions on Nepalese politics. The literature may have been geared toward examining the effects of sanction. The researcher's discovery of this gap broadens the scope of the study's investigation.

2.5 Reviews on Foreign Policy of India

(Menon, 2016) recounts five pivotal foreign policy decisions. The first chapter examines the government of Narasimha Rao's determination in 1993 to obtain formal Chinese commitment in order to maintain the status quo on the India-China border. The second chapter discusses the options available under the US-led Civil Nuclear Initiative. The third chapter addresses the Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorist attack on Mumbai on November 26, 2008, which resulted in a large number of casualties. They had clear support from the Pakistan intelligence agency (ISI) and the Pakistan Army, according to Menon. In the last stages of the Sri Lankan civil war in early 2009, when Sri Lanka employed military force to successfully destroy the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam as a fighting force.

Chapter four examines India's choices. According to the author India had to choose between humanitarian concerns and internal political imperatives, which demanded protection for the Tamil people in northern Sri Lanka, and its strategic interest in keeping good relations with the Sri Lankan government in Colombo. In the end, India had to strike a delicate policy balance, the success or failure of which is still being contested in India. In Chapter 5, we look at why India possesses nuclear weapons and why it is one of the few nuclear weapon states that has pledged not to use them against another country first.

The author states that India continues on its path to becoming a modern, rich, and strong state, a big power in the family of countries, its inclinations should become even more prominent in the future.

This material was significant to the researcher's review because it sheds light on how India has faced a number of challenges while making decisions based on foreign policy manoeuvring. How well has it chosen its options? And to what extent has it been satisfactory?

Pant (2008) asserts that India's relations with the rest of the world have reached a divergence in the road since independence. India, as the world's most economically powerful country and home to the world's largest liberal democratic government, is establishing itself as a force capable of reshaping

the global power balance. Pant warns that in the new international order, the lens through which India has traditionally viewed the rest of the world is no longer as pragmatic and sensible. According to Pant, as India's economy grows, the country is fighting to identify itself, to understand not only its own capabilities, but also the possibilities and boundaries of that power.

Pant claims that the old foreign policy framework is no longer suitable in the changing global and regional contexts, and is incapable of tackling the challenges of the day. He also claims that India's time has come to assume global obligations rather than focusing solely on South Asian issues. Pant demonstrates a quandary in making sensible decisions in foreign policy maneuvering, limiting India's status as a global player of international prominence. One of the ideas made by Pant in this book is that India needs a newly constructed foreign policy framework under which it may promote itself as a global participant. In brief, the literature proved useful to the researcher in addressing the study's problem: how far has the traditional foreign policy framework been an irritant in sabotaging long-standing Nepal-India relations?

Muni (2015a) concentrates on India's relations with Nepal, stating that lasting legacy, geographical implications, and regional and global political processes have impacted India's

security interests and Nepal policy. Muni claims that India attempted but failed to develop institutions of mutual security agreements and foreign policy cooperation to emphasize its "special relationship" with Nepal. It was also keen to keep strategically hostile foreign influences out of Nepal, but it was unable to do so as planned. Muni points out that while India was effective in assisting Nepal in resolving the latter's revolutionary political convulsions, it was unable in convincing Nepal to legitimize the changes. Dia's failings in Nepal, according to Muni, were caused by a lack of long-term policy perspective, intrusive and insensitive diplomatic behaviour, the multiplicity of domestic stakeholders, and the presence of aggressive external players like China, Pakistan, and the United States. India's future problems in Nepal may be met if Nepal holds steady and forward-looKing, as well as India's regional policy remains robust.

This was beneficial to the researcher since it detailed the current flaws in India's Nepal policy. The researcher is tying these issues to the study in order to figure out what's causing the sanction on the Nepal-India border. Indeed, a question must be answered here: to what extent have existing flaws in India's Nepal policy resulted in the sanction problem?

Ayres (2017) split the book into three parts: the history of Indian foreign policy till the 1990s, the shift across two decades, and India's changing global objectives. There are some unusual moments in the novel as well. While mentioning India's changing role in global nuclear regimes, climate change, BRICS, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), forays into the Indian Ocean Region, and SAARC, it also mentions cricket, and the power India now wields following the restructuring of the International Cricket Council in 2014.

According to Ayres, the rising India wants a seat at the global power desk and is willing to set its own terms about everything from defense to climate change to trade. She explores how a strong and independent India aims to establish itself as a major power, as well as how the US should react.

According to Ayres, India is closer to becoming a global power than it has been in the last quarter-century. “We are witnessing a country plot its road to power, explicitly wanting not to supplant others but to be acknowledged among the club of world powers, one in which it believes its membership is long overdue,” she writes. India's economic growth has propelled it into the ranks of the world's emerging major powers over the last twenty-five years. A growing India now seeks a seat at the global power table. India is ready to establish its own terms on

everything from defense to climate change to commerce, thanks to its large military and booming economy.

While Ayres makes the case for India's improved global standing, she also emphasizes the country's concerns. As it rises up among the world's great powers, the United States' relationship with democratic India-going from estrangement during the Cold War decades to consortium in the twenty-first-will likely stand as a trying to define policy shift, one that we overlooked in the twentieth century but now have sought in the twenty-first.

The United States' relation with India differs from its relations with long-standing European and Asian allies in that New Delhi seeks a tighter strategic and economic engagement with the US but not the responsibilities that come with an alliance.

Ayres underlines the necessity for global governance reform that creates room for India to assist build this non-traditional cooperation. Her recommendations include supporting India's membership in the Group of Seven, the UN Security Council, and other global security and economic organizations; strengthening bilateral trade and investment ties with India; pursuing stronger regional security cooperation with India; and assisting democratic institutions. Ayres contends that India, as a developing Asian power, should be better recognized

and respected in its own right as a competitiveness issue for US economic and business interests, and as a matter of the demands of a new world diplomacy in which Asia as a whole plays a far larger role.

Although the research topic is not directly linked, the researcher finds this literature to be relevant for understanding India's role in the global sphere in a changing global context. Whereas the research topic is not necessarily correlated, it does provide strong evidence that India has been attempting greater political leverage over regional and global spheres. In this context, the research suggests that Indian influence in adjacent countries be investigated.

2.6 Reviews on Nepal India Bilateral Relationship

Muni (1992) argues that no two countries around the world are geographically, culturally, historically, economically, or strategically as close as India and Nepal. As a result, it's virtually natural for them to have a very close and comprehensive relationship with one another. The tone, mood, and drive of this relationship have shifted in response to shifting regional and international political circumstances, rising economic and patriotic aspirations among the two countries' people, and the dynamics of internal political tensions inside their respective platforms.

The book focuses on the evolving character of India-Nepal relations in terms of crucial areas of mutual interest. After a thorough examination of the connections between each country's internal political imperatives and bilateral ties, the paper delves into the specifics of the deterioration of the Indo-Nepal Treaty of 1950, which has served as the foundation of their relations for the previous four decades. The impact of Nepal's 'zone of peace' proposal, made by King Birendra in 1975, on India-Nepal politico-strategic relations was also explored.

Trade and Indian engagement in Nepal's development projects are among the other aspects of Indo-Nepal ties explored in the book. The study wraps off with a look back at Nepal's transition from King-dominated Panchayat administrations to multiparty democracy under constitutional monarchy. As a result of recent changes in Nepal, as well as at the global and regional levels, the author sees positive potential for Indo-Nepal cooperation.

Dahal (2010) argues that, in order to make Nepal's relations with India more meaningful in the future, the concept of a balanced relationship with its immediate neighbour based on equi-proximity rather than equidistance is essential, according to the aspirations of the people and the needs of the time and situation. Timely and permanent solutions to existing problems between two countries, rather than ad hoc solutions

(for example, open borders, extradition, revision of the 1950s treaty and replacement with a new and equal treaty, and bargains with India by improving diplomatic skills to obtain facilities for LDCs in accordance with international law) are also deemed necessary.

There have been challenges in Nepal-India relations, according to Dahal, for which he advocates for meaningful relations. The researcher is interested in learning more about the causes that have harmed Nepal-India bilateral relations. In Nepal-India ties, what kind of meaningful partnership is required? Why is the concept of equidistance no longer valid? Can the concept of equi-proximity help Nepal-India relations? According to the researcher, in order to find answers to these questions, it would be beneficial to conduct a thorough investigation of the research topic, and it is vital to investigate these questions in order to comprehend the problem of the Indo-Nepal border sanction.

According to Dahal, India has been more prominent in influencing Nepal's domestic and international policy since 2002, notably since April 2006, and bilateral relations between the two nations have taken on an unprecedented and abnormal significance since 2008.

There is no doubt a question here as to why these two countries' ties have been more volatile. As a result, the

researcher is driven to find answers to the following questions: Has there been a significant increase in Indian engagement in Nepal with its interest in recent times? If that's the case, what's the reasoning for it? And it's worth noting that during the constituent assembly's process of creating Nepal's constitution; various vulnerabilities in Nepal-India relations were highlighted. In contrast to what has been said in Nepal, India's role in the constitution-making process has gotten a lot of attention. As a result, Nepal was concerned that India was attempting to impose its agenda on Nepal through this process? The researcher is likely to unearth Indian involvement in the constitution-making process and their efforts up to the date of the constitution's promulgation, as well as their relationship to the 2015 border sanction.

Dahal goes on to say that Nepal's foreign relations need to be mobilized for economic diplomacy in order to lessen the country's significant reliance on its neighbor. He goes on to say that it is critical to conduct and embrace foreign policies and diplomatic practices that will help the country's economic development, peace, and security, as well as its international independence. In this scenario, the writer appears oblivious to how India should be viewed and how she should cooperate with her for economic progress.

Dahal claims that Indian products have a virtual monopoly in the Nepalese market when it comes to trade and business. The

relationship between Nepal and India has been maintained by periodic visits by the two nations' heads of state, governments, and leaders. India's strategy toward Nepal has been unchanged for the past six decades, with its dominance over the country continuously increasing. Here, the researcher wants to see how Nepal may break India's virtual monopoly on products. While India's involvement in Nepal has become increasingly noticeable in recent years. What causes have contributed to India's loss of authority over Nepal? Are these developments beneficial to Nepal-India relations? If not, what is the reason? According to writer, there have been several issues in Nepal-India relations after April 2006. As he points out, political, demographic, economic, psychological, and environmental challenges have hampered Nepal-India relations.

Dahal identifies the boundary dispute with India, border regulation administration, modification of the 1950s treaty, India's heavy emphasis on its special relationship, and India's unilateral and restricted notion of security as political hurdles. Nepal, India's growing interest in Nepal's internal politics and foreign policy, India's reluctance to solve Bhutanese refugee problems, Gorkha soldier recruitment, new extraditing criminals, trans-border problems, and a lack of consensus among Nepal's political parties on Nepal's basic foreign policy principles.

Dahal highlights the migration and immigration of industrial and business organizations as well as other nationals from India into Nepalese cities, as well as their monopolization of Nepal's domestic and internal trade, as examples of demographic challenges. In the face of economic difficulties, Dahal stated that there are a variety of economic issues and obstacles between the two countries, including commerce, transit, and water resources that require immediate and long-term solutions.

Dahal mentions that even small countries in global politics have successfully bargained with larger countries for the national benefit, despite the fact that Nepal is not a small country. He goes on to say that Nepal has the capacity and resources to become a respectable and self-sufficient country. Fear psychology has caused Nepal to lose everything in negotiations with other countries because of lack of preparation and extensive homework on the problem of increasing morale among them.

Dahal mentions that India's unilateral decision to build high dams and canals in Nepal border areas in violation of international law and without consulting Nepal has had negative effects on Nepal's existing environmental status and has created new environmental problems such as inundation, floods,

environmental degradation, and adverse effects on Nepal's fertile lands.

As the writer has studied several challenges in Nepal-India relations, this literature has been quite useful in the study of the research topic. Researchers consider the literature to be an essential source for comprehending the current state of Nepal-India relations, particularly since 2006. Though literature has not identified that goes into greater detail on the sanction, it has been useful to observe India's increased interest in Nepal after 2006 and its relationship to the sanction.

Sarup (1972) states that Nepal's disadvantageous geographical location has stopped it from participating in modern progress and slowed the expansion of its foreign trade because its only access to the main arteries of inter-national transportation is through Indian territory. Almost all of the country's imports and exports must go through India, specifically through Calcutta. India has always provided Nepal with every convenience in this regard, including the unrestricted ability to transport commodities in transit across Indian territory and ports.

Sarup goes on to say that the 1960 Trade and Transit Treaty between India and Nepal replaced the 1950 Treaty of Trade and Commerce. The 1960 Treaty entered into force on November 1, 1960, for a five-year period, but it was agreed that

"it shall continue for a further five years, thereafter subject to such modifications as may be agreed upon, unless terminated by either party by giving not less than one year written notice" through Indian territory and ports. The Treaty came to an end on October 31, 1970.

After a ten-year period in which the Treaty was still in effect, it was clear that both countries would feel compelled to have additional clauses added or a new treaty in lieu of the previous one. Nepal wanted to sign two treaties, one covering transit facilities and the other governing trade. India wanted both of these issues to be handled within one treaty since she believed they were intertwined.

The Nepalese government requested India's government that the status quo of the 1960 Trade and Transit deal be maintained for another year in order for both sides to have more discussions about replacing it with a new mutually acceptable treaty. The Indian government, on the other hand, refused to renew the interim trade and transit agreements with Nepal past December 31, 1970. The two nations' relations deteriorated as a result of the stalemate reached in their negotiations in two key areas: bilateral commerce and Nepal's transit traffic through India.

Nepal, which advocated a unified market with India in 1960, seeing the benefits that would certainly arise from the

expansion of their economies, has strongly opposed this concept in 1970. While Nepal has a highway connecting it to Lhasa, Tibet's communist-controlled capital (the Lhasa-Kothari Highway), Nepal's exports and imports are primarily routed through India. Again, Nepal is economically reliant on India, with India accounting for the majority of its imports and exports.

Until far, India's assistance to Nepal has mostly been based on mutual understanding and friendship between the two countries. He claims that these amenities were not provided by India out of a sense of legal obligation, and that Nepal did not claim them as a legal right. It's probably true to argue that no landlocked country has ever claimed a right of transit that isn't based on friendship and mutual understanding.

In the political context of the problem, Sarup claims that Nepal, whose strategic location is vital to both India and China, has always maintained a very independent line and a warm regard for its southern neighbor, perhaps due to its culture, history, and religion, while maintaining friendly, if cautious, relations with China. Following the 1962 hostilities between India and China, China's influence in Nepal appears to be expanding, which Indian sources believe will lead to further encroachment into Indian land. The main factors may have contributed to these shifts in the political landscape: Nepal,

which advocated a successful economy in 1960, seeing the potential benefits of economic progress.

Due to its relationship to the problem of the Trade and Transit Treaty, this piece was relevant to the study of border sanctions in Nepal and India. It has given a brief explanation of the political conflict between Nepal and India that has resulted in a border sanction, but more research is needed, as are the additional elements producing the border crisis that have yet to be recognized and are influencing Nepal-India bilateral relations.

2.7 Reviews on Indian Sanction on Nepal

According to the SAHR (2016) A four-month sanction of the Indo-Nepal border began on September 20, 2015, immediately after Nepal passed a new constitution. The sanction spanned Nepal's whole southern border with India, spanning the Madhes or Terai region. The movement of goods and petrol into Nepal was hindered at border posts. As a result, Nepal experienced one of the biggest humanitarian and geopolitical crises in the region, with fuel, medicines, and other basic supplies unable to enter Nepal from India.

The restriction, according to the research, has hampered Nepal's economy's recovery from the April 2015 earthquake. The sanction is estimated to have cost Nepali Rupees 200

billion. As a result of India's role as a transit country, Nepal's third-country commerce has been seriously damaged. This article highlights the obstacles that a landlocked country experiences, as well as the rights and entitlements it has under many international conventions.

According to the study, India arranged the sanction after diplomatic efforts to influence the development of the Nepali Constitution failed. For the record, India denied initiating or directing the sanction, but its foreign affairs minister hinted that it was involved by referring to the 1989-90 sanctiones as "the first one," implying that the 2015 sanction was the second. India wants the Madhesis to have more socio-political space under the new Constitution, as they have long had sympathies and links with India and have long complained of being ignored by the dominant Nepalese of hill origin. This reignited concerns about India's threatening and intrusive Big Brother stance toward its neighbours. Sadly, and tellingly, the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) lacks a framework for addressing regional conflicts.

According to the study, Madhesi-centric political parties in Nepal have been lobbying for proportional representation and even autonomy for the province under the new Constitution, alongside groups/parties representing the Janjatis and many other oppressed and minority populations. Across the border, the

Madhesis have geographical ties to the Indian states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

The study states that India has sought to alter, if not intervene, in Nepal's socio-political evolution over the years, but this time it intended to influence the creation of the Constitution itself, which is a Nepalese people's right. It was nicknamed "mean" because it rode the coattails of the Madhesi uprising. Finally, the research concludes that, in addition to the humanitarian disaster, the sanction drove Nepal to seek relief and long-term investments from its other neighbor, China. In the past, India and China had a hostile relationship. This further skews the power equation in the region.

This literature has shown to be significantly more helpful to the researchers investigation. The study addresses the many causes that contributed to the 2015 blockage after a field examination of the main sanctiond points. When researching the literature, the researcher is particularly interested in a variety of sanction-related subjects, such as what is the relationship between the Madhes issue and sanction? Why is India so preoccupied with Madhes issues? Why has India's ruling class been so critical of Nepal's new constitution? Because the researcher is focused on finding comprehensive answers to these questions, the study topic has become more discoverable.

Shakoor (±989) diScusses the economic sanction of 1989, ás`well as the expkratkon of a ôride and0tòansit agreement between two countries(*Îepal and India), and the impact on bilatdral ties. He claims that the conflicts !rose from a disagrdement betwåen the two sides oöer the neootiation of expiring treaties. According to him, N%pal started demanding two setarate treaties, one dealing with trade end the other with transit, arguing that trade and transit are two separate issu%s unrelated to one another, aNd tranóit through the litvoran states is a right recognized by international law for every landlocked country, but India argued that a treaty with India to Nepal is a bilateral matter. According to Shakoor, India used pressure methods instead of appreciating the merits of Nepal's argument.

It imposed a complete economic sanction on Nepal, shutting off all thirteen of the country's fifteen transit points for trade. Shakoor also cites Nepal's valiant resistance to India's economic sanction. There have been no protests against the government's position since the Nepalese people appear to share and understand it. According to the report, 80 percent of Nepal's population lives in rural areas and is self-sufficient. It does not require outside sources for essential commodities. He claims that obtaining basic items is not an issue for those living in the southern part of Nepal, near the Indian border, because the

borders are well-knit and it is difficult to restrict cross-border trade there. According to him, the Kathmandu valley is the worst affected by the Indian economic sanction, with the government ensuring that the region is safe.

According to Shakoor, Nepal's perseverance during the sanction, combined with the assistance of some friendly countries such as China and Bangladesh, each situation is to some extent disputed, with small relief measures, and it is impossible to compensate for the financial loss Nepal incurred as a result of the Indian economic sanction.

The writer has discussed Indian dominance over Nepal's economy, which has been one of the major factors in the worsening of the Nepal-India bilateral relationship, stressing India's pressure on Nepal to reduce customs taxes on its commodities as a condition for the renewal of trade and transit agreements. He goes on to say that Nepal agreed to this, and the two countries' economic and trade ministries were in the middle of negotiating trade and transit agreements when India abruptly changed its mind and insisted on a single treaty.

Shakoor identifies a variety of causes as sanction factors, including the 1950s peace and friendship pact between Nepal and India, Nepal's expanding ties with China for many purposes, and so on. He claims that these issues are enough to produce

misunderstanding and mistrust between Nepal and India, both of which are linked to the 1989 Sanction in some way. The writer goes into greater detail on the treaty of 1950 and Chinese influence in Nepal. According to him, Nepal's predisposition toward China in the face of the country's problems has harmed the country's ties with India. According to him, the binding conditions imposed on Nepal by the 1950 treaty have harmed Nepal's independence and sovereignty. Despite the fact that there are various problems between Nepal and India, neither country has made more meaningful attempts.

As Shakoor points out, India's security concerns about Nepal have frequently infringed on the country's independence and sovereignty. As a result, he proposes that both countries work together to revise the 1950 pact as soon as possible so that ties can return to normal.

Shakoor discusses the growing influence of China in Nepal during the sanction of 1989, which raised India's suspicions. Nepal seems to be persuaded by India not to sign any deals with China. Despite India's warning to Nepal, the latter finds it unbearable and has resolved to strike a balance with both neighbors. When India's efforts to elicit concessions from Nepal failed, and talks between the two nations to improve

their deteriorating ties fell through, India imposed an economic sanction on Nepal.

From a theoretical standpoint, the writer has focused solely on the fact that it is a battle between little states determined to protect their sovereignty and a big brother intent on curtailing it. He claims that India has not only limited Nepal's position in policy matters, but has also been hesitant to recognise Nepal's independence in its internal affairs. Her researcher is eager to investigate why India wishes to limit Nepal's international exposure. Is it possible to do this by imposing an economic sanction?

Singh (2016) has stressed on the flaws in Indian neighborhood policy, specifically in the concept of dealing with Nepal's constitutional issue in 2015. He claims that India's foreign policy is heavily influenced by its neighborhood policy. India has pursued a neighborhood policy since independence. The author claims that the Modi government devised a "neighborhood" first policy, however the absurdity is that India has lost geopolitical space in Nepal as a result of this approach. The New Constitution 2015 has been a major source of friction in bilateral relations between the two countries. They pulled away from each other, giving China more strategic space in the Himalayan state than India.

Singh has discussed the onset of the Indian Neighbourhood within the context of geopolitical and

geostrategic imperatives, stating that in response to this policy, the neighbours have remained suspicious that India has been taking undue advantage of each state's limited bargaining power in bilateral negotiations. They see Indian bilateralism as a tool of coercive diplomacy and hegemony in India. The Nepal constitutional crisis, Singh claims, was the first challenge to put the neighbourhood first concept to the test since its inception. From the perspective of Indian security, Nepal is extremely important. However, prior governments have ignored it. As a result, the Modi government has given Nepal a prominent position.

According to Singh, Nepal is profoundly entangled in India's geopolitical and geostrategic calculus. The current events in Nepal have both direct and indirect implications for Indian interests. Indian security concerns have arisen as a result of the shared and open border with Nepal, including international criminal organizations operating within Nepal, insecure Indian investment, Maoist movements, Islamist terrorism, and cash theft. The author states that aside from these concerns, Nepal is increasingly becoming a safe haven for possible narcotics and arms traffickers. Unstable Nepal has become a threat to Indian interests from a geopolitical and geostrategic perspective, and these worries have figured strongly in Indian policy, necessitating some difficult decisions by Indian policymakers.

In this argument, Singh argues that India is interested in maintaining stability in Nepal because of security concerns.

Singh also discusses the causes of the 2015 sanction and India's role in it. He discusses the ethnic and Madhes movements, as well as their connection to the sanction. He expresses India's hesitation and passivity in lifting the sanction on the Indo-Nepal border in order to assure Nepal's necessary supplies. He also discusses anti-Indian sentiment in Nepal, as well as statements from Indian opposition leaders, academics, commentators, and strategic thinkers. According to various researchers on the sanction, anti-Indian attitude has ultimately impacted Indian interests, and that addressing and decreasing anti-Indian prejudice would be a crucial to resolving the strained relations. In light of this, it would be prudent for India's government to create a comprehensive and long-term Nepal-friendly policy.

In conclusion, Singh suggests that Indian policy toward the Himalayan Kingdom should be cautious and measured. He also suggests that India abandon its big brotherly attitude and treat the tiny Himalayan nation as a partnership on an equal footing.

There were numerous things that needed to be discovered or investigated in relation to the 2015 sanction. What were the diplomatic blunders that led to the sanction? And what progress

has been made in this regard? This literature does not sufficiently explore the answers to these issues. The researcher also wants to investigate why China supports the constitution whereas India has only taken a note of it. The research also uncovers a void in the literature regarding how Nepal-India relations have progressed since 2015, despite a major standstill in relations induced by the sanction. Though China has taken geopolitical space in Nepal as a result of the sanction, is there a potential of long-term Chinese occupation in Nepal? So, what is the future of Nepal's and India's particular relationship? As a result, the researcher's job is to provide answers to these questions in order to conduct a thorough investigation of the research issue.

Sharma (2019) contends that India's involvement in Nepal's political transition from monarchy to democratic republic has harmed bilateral relations. The relationship between Nepal and India is sometimes glorified as one of ‘roti-beti,’ but Sharma claims that it has been framed more by Indian bureaucracy and espionage. According to the author, India participated in Nepal's political transition from monarchy to constitutional democracy, but was unable to meet her expectations.

Sharma recounts the intricate history of communism and monarchy in Nepal, as well as the India linkage. He describes

how Nepal's Maoist insurrection was put down through talks between Girija Prasad Koirala and Pushpa Kamal Dahal, two major Nepali leaders. In Gurgaon, two of Nepal's most powerful politicians met. At these discussions in the summer of 2005, Baburam BhatTerai, Krishna Prasad Mahara, leaders of seven political parties were also present. It had to be a challenging conversation because the Maoists have not put an end to their couple of years insurrection whilst it negotiated for the movement's future mainstreaming. Following the slaughter of soldiers in Pili, a truce was declared, and weeks of talks resulted in the historic twelve-point agreement.

While satisfying the democratic aspirations of the Madhesis of the plains, the understanding aimed at constructing a constitutional republic in Nepal had to contend with the palace, Maoist opponents, ethnicities or ancient communities like Tharus and Magars. Two very different Koirala, who led the seven-party coalition, and Prachanda, the Maoists' leader, made significant sacrifices to move Nepal forward. Former head of the Research and Analysis Wing Hormis Tharakan, Prakash Karat and Sitaram Yechury of the CPI (M), and Devi Prasad Tripathi of the Nationalist Congress party, according to Sharma, were working behind the scenes. Tharakan was a member of the National Security Advisory Board at the time. The engagement of Karat-Yechury suggested the government's direct

involvement in Nepal's political truce, with the Left Front extending support to the Manmohan Singh government at the Centre. Even though India's political landscape changed with the election of Narendra Modi, Nepal remained on schedule to ratify the constitution.

The fundamental issue at this point seemed to be that, notwithstanding the revolutionary aspects of their movement, post-monarchy Nepali democratic leaders desired Nepal's historic center of power to stay Kathmandu-centric. The Indian stakeholders pressed harder for an identity-based criterion to grant the inhabitants of Nepal's plains more rights. Kathmandu feared that India was attempting to maintain a lasting grip over Kathmandu through the Madhesi statement. As the constitution was being finalized, India was surprised to learn that the politicians who had previously been backed by it were not interested in adopting Delhi's wishes.

Meeting of the country at such an historic encounter between current foreign minister Pradeep Kumar Gyawali and his counterpart S. Jaishankar, then foreign secretary, on September 16, 2015, Sharma draws out the astounding disparities between the Nepali and Indian sides. Gyawali had visited as Nepal's representative to tell India about the constitution's acceptance.

Indian National Security Adviser Ajit Doval joined Jaishankar and Gyawali, and the Indian foreign secretary got a phone call midway through the session informing him that the The Constituent Assembly had passed the constitution. Sharma quotes Jaishankar as remarKing at this point, "What is the use of discussing anymore?" India contended that the constitution did not meet the aspirations of the Madhesis, who shared more social and cultural ties with Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Jaishankar flew to Kathmandu to stop the constitution from being accepted.

'India's vengeance,' writes the author. The inability of Jaishankar to stop the constitution resulted in a crushing sanction, which Nepal referred to as India's retaliation. Throughout this time, India claimed that the blockage was established by Madhesi protesters and that it was not its fault. Nepal, on the other hand, blamed Delhi for the hardships that the regular people had to endure as a result of the severe action. The horrific experience of the months-long sanction has left an indelible mark on Nepal today. Sharma states that the Oli government, aided by its northern neighbor, is hell-bent on preventing Nepal from falling back into the hands of South Block bureaucrats.

The sanction of 2015 has been thoroughly investigated and analysed by the authors. He explains the grounds for the 2015 sanction and its significant impact on Nepal-India relations.

However, while the author supports India's role in the sanction by referencing multiple sources, he fails to link it to other concerns that India has been pursuing in Nepal before the constituent assembly election. Problems such as the Hindu Kingdom and the Madhes issues have yet to be firmly defined. Aside from that, the writer has not described and analysed the impact of Indian sanctions on Nepalese politics. The literature may have been geared toward examining the effects of sanction. The researcher's discovery of this gap broadens the scope of the study's investigation.

2.8 Reviews on Coercive Diplomacy

Markwica (2018) delves into an innovative exploration of coercive diplomacy by integrating emotional and affective theory into traditional international relations literature. He challenges the prevailing understanding of coercive diplomacy, which typically focuses on strategic and rational calculations, by emphasizing the role of emotions in shaping diplomatic decision-making.

Markowicz argues that emotions, particularly in high-stakes international negotiations, significantly influence both the actions of state leaders and the effectiveness of coercive strategies. Drawing on psychological theories and empirical case studies, the He suggests that emotional responses such as anger, fear, pride, and humiliation often drive political decisions,

complicating the rational calculus expected from traditional diplomatic strategies.

The book is structured to first introduce the theoretical underpinnings of emotional choices in political decision-making, before applying these ideas to various historical cases of coercive diplomacy, such as the Cuban Missile Crisis and U.S.-Iran negotiations. This blend of theory and practice allows for a nuanced view of how emotions can both enhance and hinder the application of coercive diplomacy.

Markowicz's work is notable for its cross-disciplinary approach, combining insights from political science, psychology, and sociology to deepen our understanding of coercion in international relations. The book's central argument-that emotional dynamics are not just secondary but central to the success or failure of coercive diplomacy provides a fresh perspective on diplomatic interactions that have historically been studied through the lens of hard power and rational strategic interests.

One of the strengths of *Emotional Choices* is its accessibility, making complex emotional theories relevant to both particularly when researchers and practitioners of diplomacy. However, some readers may find the blending of emotional theory with traditional models of coercive diplomacy a bit challenging, it comes to applying these ideas within the broader context of international relations theory.

In conclusion, R. Markowicz's *Emotional Choices* makes a significant contribution to the study of coercive diplomacy by recognizing the importance of emotions in diplomatic encounters. By shifting the focus from strictly rational decision-making to include affective factors, the book offers a more holistic view of international negotiation dynamics, urging policymakers and researchers alike to consider the emotional undercurrents that can often determine the outcome of international disputes.

Franco (2015) offers a comprehensive examination of the intersection between coercive diplomacy, economic sanctions, and international law. He seeks to unpack the theoretical and legal frameworks that underpin the use of sanctions as a tool of international politics and coercive diplomacy, providing valuable insights for researchers and policymakers alike.

Franco begins by establishing a clear definition of coercive diplomacy, contrasting it with other diplomatic strategies such as deterrence or persuasion. He then explores how sanctions both economic and political are utilised as mechanisms of coercion in international relations. The book argues that sanctions are a central component of coercive diplomacy because they can be used to apply pressure on target states, compelling them to modify their behaviour or policies. The key premise of Franco's work is that while sanctions are often seen

as a peaceful alternative to military intervention, their effectiveness and legality are complex and nuanced.

A central theme in the book is the tension between the effectiveness of sanctions and their compliance with international law. Franco draws upon a wide range of international legal principles, including human rights law, the principles of state sovereignty, and the legal restrictions governing the use of force, to critically assess the legitimacy and impact of coercive sanctions. The analysis is particularly timely given the increasing use of sanctions in global politics, from the United States' sanctions on Iran and Russia to the broader use of economic measures by international organizations like the United Nations and the European Union.

One of the strengths of Franco's book is its multidisciplinary approach, blending legal analysis with political science and international relations theory. This provides a thorough understanding of how sanctions function within both legal and political contexts. Moreover, the book includes several case studies that illustrate the practical application of coercive diplomacy and sanctions, such as the imposition of sanctions during the apartheid era in South Africa and the recent sanctions on North Korea. These case studies offer real-world examples

that demonstrate the challenges and complexities of using sanctions as an instrument of statecraft.

However, the book does face some limitations. While Franco provides a thorough legal analysis of sanctions and coercive diplomacy, there are moments when the discussion leans heavily on theory and legal principles, making it less accessible for readers without a strong background in international law. Additionally, although Franco critiques the effectiveness of sanctions in achieving foreign policy goals, the book could benefit from a deeper exploration of the moral and ethical implications of their use.

Overall, *Coercive Diplomacy, Sanctions and International Law* is a valuable resource for those seeking to understand the legal and political dimensions of sanctions and coercive diplomacy. Franco's balanced approach between theory and practice offers significant insights into how sanctions can be designed and implemented within the framework of international law. This book is essential reading for researchers of international relations, international law, and foreign policy, as well as for practitioners involved in the design and enforcement of sanctions.

Hanson et al. (2020) offer an insightful and timely exploration of the methods, motivations, and impact of coercive diplomacy employed by the Chinese government in its foreign

policy. Drawing on both historical context and contemporary examples, the authors examine how the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has increasingly utilised coercive diplomacy as a key tool to assert its interests on the global stage.

The book provides a comprehensive analysis of coercive diplomacy in China’s foreign relations, focusing on how China uses both direct and indirect forms of pressure ranging from economic leverage and military threats to diplomatic isolation and propaganda-to achieve its strategic goals. The authors argue that China's coercive diplomacy is not merely a reactive tactic but rather a carefully designed component of its broader geopolitical strategy. By analyzing specific case studies, such as China's approach to territorial disputes in the South China Sea, its relations with Taiwan, and its interactions with countries like Australia and the United States, the authors provide concrete evidence of how the CCP uses coercion to achieve its foreign policy objectives.

One of the strengths of this work is its ability to situate Chinese coercive diplomacy within the broader context of international relations, particularly in relation to the rise of China as a global power. The book examines how the CCP's approach to coercion is distinct from that of other powers, such as the United States, in its integration of soft and hard power tactics. The authors discuss the CCP’s strategic use of economic dependence and trade imbalances, alongside more overt

measures like military posturing and cyber attacks, to influence the behaviour of both regional and global actors.

Additionally, the authors explore the CCP's domestic motivations behind coercive diplomacy, highlighting the role of nationalism, political legitimacy, and the consolidation of the CCP’s power at home. This internal dimension is critical in understanding why China employs such tactics, as the regime's need to maintain domestic stability and project strength externally are intertwined.

Another strength is the exploration of the evolving nature of China's coercive diplomacy under Xi Jinping’s leadership, highlighting how recent shifts in both domestic policy and global ambitions have led to a more assertive and sometimes aggressive foreign policy stance. They also consider the limits of coercive diplomacy, noting that while it can achieve short-term objectives, it can also provoke backlash and create long-term diplomatic challenges, as seen in some of China's recent disputes with neighboring countries and Western powers.

However, the book's focus on Chinese coercive diplomacy means it could benefit from a deeper exploration of how other countries and actors, particularly regional neighbors, respond to these tactics. The authors provide an insightful analysis of Chinese actions but less attention is paid to the countermeasures taken by affected states or to the potential for multilateral

responses. While the case studies are useful, the book could have further expanded on the broader geopolitical implications of Chinese coercion in global governance.

In conclusion, *The Chinese Communist Party's Coercive Diplomacy* is an important and timely contribution to the literature on China's foreign policy and global strategy. It is a well-researched, accessible resource for those seeking to understand the complex nature of Chinese diplomacy in the 21st century, particularly in light of China's rising global influence. The book offers valuable insights into the tools and objectives of Chinese coercive diplomacy, making it essential reading for researchers of international relations, Asian studies, and foreign policy, as well as for policymakers concerned with China's global rise and its implications for the international order.

Ebaye (2024) the article titled *"Coercive Diplomacy, Military Strategy, and Foreign Policy Projections"* by SEN Ebaye explores the relationship between coercive diplomacy, military strategy, and a state's broader foreign policy objectives. It discusses how states, particularly powerful ones, employ military and diplomatic pressures to influence the actions of other nations. This strategy, which can range from threats to limited use of force, aims at achieving specific foreign policy outcomes without direct confrontation. The article emphasizes

the importance of understanding these strategies in global politics, where the projection of power, both through diplomacy and military might, plays a crucial role in shaping international relations.

Wu and Lo (2024) states that Coercive diplomacy, military strategy, and foreign policy projections are interlinked concepts that shape the decisions of states in the international arena. In particular, coercive diplomacy involves the use of threats or limited force to influence the behaviour of a target state, compelling them to align with a state's objectives without full-scale military conflict. This strategy relies on both military capabilities and strategic communication, aiming to demonstrate resolve while maintaining an element of pressure.

Research indicates that coercive diplomacy's effectiveness is significantly influenced by the military assets a state possesses. A state's military strength often determines how it can project its foreign policy through force when necessary, influencing its power in negotiations and its ability to impose sanctions or threats effectively. States that lack robust military capabilities face challenges in engaging in coercive diplomacy, as they may struggle to convincingly demonstrate their willingness or ability to back up their diplomatic threats with action.

The relationship between coercive diplomacy and military strategy is crucial for understanding how states make foreign policy projections. For example, the possession of advanced military technologies or weapon systems can enhance a state's ability to exert influence and shape international relations by providing the leverage needed to affect the decisions of other nations

A key takeaway is that for a state to be an effective global actor, capable of projecting power and contributing to international peace and security, it must not only develop military capabilities but also demonstrate the political will to back its diplomatic initiatives with force when required. This dual approach allows a state to maintain influence, deter adversaries, and manage international challenges strategically

2.9 Reviews on Economic Sanctions

2.9.1 Defining Economic Sanction

Wallensteen (2000, p. 1) states that there are main strategies of international economic pressure: economic sanctions, trade war, and economic warfare. According to Merli and Ferrell (2002) “the economic sanctions are known by a variety of names, including sanctions, boycotts, and sanctiones, and are sometimes referred to as quarantine or economic coercion.

These terms are nearly interchangeable. Sanctions have been a source of worry throughout the twentieth century under various titles. The economic sanctions, which are also referred to as economic coercion, differ from economic warfare (strategic sanction), economic inducements, and trade war in terms of their forms, aims, and occasions.” Dobson (2002, p. 7) explains that economic sanctions have been a longstanding tool in international relations. While defining sanctions abstractly can be limiting, their application in specific contexts reveals their dual instrumental and expressive purposes, often overlapping with broader economic strategies..”

According to the Oxford Dictionary sanction is an official order that limits trade, contact, etc. with a particular country, in order to make it do something, such as obeying international law. Nincic and Wallensteen (1983, p. 3) define “economic coercion as the imposition of economic pain by one government on another in order to achieve a political purpose." Political authorities execute it, or at least initiate it, when they intervene in the ‘normal' operation of economic relations.” Hufbauer et al. (1990, p. 2) define economic sanctions “The purposeful, government-inspired withdrawal, or threat of withdrawal, of customary trade or financial relations,” according to the definition. 'Customary' does not imply 'contractual'; it merely refers to the levels of commerce and financial activity that would have occurred if sanctions had not been imposed.”

Galtung (1967, p. 379) defines economic sanctions as “actions initiated by one or more international actors (the ‘senders’) against one or more others (the ‘receivers’) in order to punish the receivers by depriving them of some value and/or to make the receivers comply with certain norms the senders deem important.” Lindsay (1986, p. 156) defines “Economic sanctions are defined as "actions in which one country (the initiator) officially suspends a significant percentage of its trade with another country (the target) in order to achieve political goals.”

Baldwin (1985, pp. 12-13) argues that “Economic sanctions are just one type of economic statecraft, which refers to influence tactics based mostly on resources with a realistic monetary value. Economic warfare (strategic sanction), according to the author, aims to impair an adversary's aggregate economic capacity in order to reduce its military capabilities, whether during a peacetime arms race or during a war.”

The author also claims that “economic warfare is a long-term strategy for dealing with opponents, whereas economic penalties are frequently used to achieve short-term political goals. Commercial concessions, technology transfers, and other economic carrots are offered by a sender in exchange for a target's political acquiescence. Positive sanctions are another term for economic inducements. Trade wars are conflicts over

economic policy and behaviour, rather than political or security objectives.”

Doxey (1980, p. 9) defines economic sanction as penalties threatened or applied as a stated result of a target's failure to comply with international norms or responsibilities. Daoudi and Daoudi (1983, p. 8) gives similar definition as Doxey, Economic sanctions are punitive actions by international entities, like the UN, to enforce compliance with international law by penalizing states that violate universally accepted norms.” According to the Pape (1997, p. 99) “economic sanctions aim to reduce a target state's overall economic welfare by restricting international trade in order to force the target government to change.”

Economic sanctions are commonly defined as a threat or act by a state or coalition of states, the sender, to disrupt customary economic exchange with another state, the target, in order to punish the target, force a change in the target's policies, or exhibit to a domestic opportunist, as defined by the above definitions by various researchers. As a result, an economic sanction is the cessation of ordinary trade and financial contacts for the goals of foreign and security policy.

Consequently, the concept of economic sanctions has two essential definitional elements: the coercive measures must be economic in character, and the goal must be political. Economic

warfare, economic enticements, and trade conflicts are not included in economic sanctions.

Economic sanctions are not confined to UN enforcement; instead, they have been shown to be widely used by governments for a variety of reasons. Economic sanctions applied by a state, a group of states, or an international body are essentially a type of power used to influence the behaviour or policy of other countries, which does not always contravene international law.

2.9.2 Overview of Economic Sanctions

"In 432 B.C., Athens restricted Megara's market access, sparking tensions that contributed to the Peloponnesian War. Similarly, Britain stifled trade between American colonies and the West Indies during colonization to exert control" (McGee, 2004, p. 53). "When states are at war or near war with one another, they have disrupted business contacts or attempted to withhold crucial supplies since the dawn of time" (Renwick, 1981, p. 4).

"Sanctiones have been used to settle trade disputes between great countries since the 18th century. For example, in reaction to the British naval sanction during the Napoleonic Wars, Napoleon imposed a large-scale sanction, known as the Continental System or Continental Sanction, which began in 1806.

The second was a trade sanction against the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In response to the hazards to American shipping, Thomas Jefferson and the United States Congress imposed a sweeping sanction against Great Britain and France based on the Sanction Act of 1807" (Ferrand, 2004, p. 55).

Davis and Engerman (2003, p. 188) states that "Pacific sanctions which comprised the deployment of a naval force by a country or coalition of countries to disrupt commercial intercourse with certain ports or coasts of a state with whom these countries were not at war, were the most common form of economic penalties in the nineteenth century.

Despite the fact that most naval sanctions included conflicts, pacific sanctions evolved into a coercive weapon over time, designed to force recalcitrant powers to pay their obligations, frequently reparations, and to resolve other international disputes. Sanctions were usually started by powers with far more powerful armed forces than the countries being targeted." Between 1827 until the commencement of World War I, 21 pacific sanctions were used. In Europe, Latin America, and Asia, these sanctions were usually initiated by powerful European states against smaller, weaker, or even impoverished ones (Davis & Engerman, 2003; Renwick, 1981, pp. 5-6 and).

Domke (1943) (as cited in Kern, 2009) states that "In the 19th century, economic sanctions were typically part of military

strategies during wars. After World War I, nations under the League of Nations began using economic and financial penalties and export controls instead of military action to enforce international agreements."

Author further states that "the In 1940, the U.S. imposed extensive economic and financial sanctions on Japan, Nazi Germany, and their allies, even before joining the war. During World War II, nations like the U.K. and the U.S. implemented export controls and financial restrictions targeting enemy states, residents, and designated third-party corporations."

Kern (2009, p. 60) contends that "under Article 2, paragraph 4 of the United Nations Charter, the twentieth century sounded the death knell for the use of military force, with the exception of self-defense conducted on a temporary basis." "The European Communities and its member states began to apply a larger range of economic and financial penalties on states and individuals targeted by the EC and the United Nations in the 1980s and 1990s," according to the author. In the 1990s, certain states, headed by the United States, began to broaden the scope of their economic sanctions programs to encompass non-state entities such as international terrorists and drug traffickers, as well as foreign governments and regimes.

According to Renwick (1981, p. 14) “the formation of the League of Nations gave rise to the contemporary doctrine of economic sanctions. A formal legal discussion of the propriety of pacific sanctions began inside this organization authorizing the use of coercive tactics, non-military measures included as an alternative to the use of force” (Majlessi, 2002, p. 7). “In the instance of the League of Nations, Article 16 of the Covenant was the source of power for imposing sanctions. The League of Nations imposed collective sanctions on Yugoslavia in 1921, Greece in 1925, Paraguay and Bolivia between 1932 and 1935, and Italy between 1935 and 1936 (Davis & Engerman, 2003, p. 189).”

In an attempt to get Mussolini to remove his soldiers from Abyssinia, the United Kingdom and the League of Nations levied sanctions on Italy (1935-1936). Economic sanctions were enforced by the Soviet Union against Yugoslavia (1948-1955), China (1960-1970), and Albania (1961-1965) to secure approval of Soviet leadership in other socialist countries. The United States imposed a grain sanction on the Soviet Union from 1980 to 1981 in order to force the Soviet Union to leave Afghanistan.

The League of Nations was taken over by the United Nations after World War II. Since the 1970s, economic statecraft has regained favor as a foreign policy weapon (Lenway, 1988, p. 397). “Economic sanctions imposed by the

United Nations on Rhodesia from 1965 to 1979 were intended to compel the country to accept international human rights norms. The United Nations economic sanctions against Iraq (1990-1991) were designed to compel Saddam Hussein to leave Kuwait and, as a result, allow UN armament inspectors to finish their task. Economic sanctions imposed by the United States against India in 1998 were intended to compel India to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty quickly and unconditionally "International economic sanctions have become a prominent and recurring component of international affairs in recent years. Economic sanctions have become a common tool of the United Nations Security Council after the fall of the Berlin Wall" (Caruso, 2003, p. 2).

"Prior to 1990, the Council had only sanctioned two countries: Southern Rhodesia (1966) and South Africa (1990). (1977). Since the conclusion of the Cold War, however, the organization has applied sanctions more than twenty times, the majority of the time targeting parties to intrastate conflicts, such as Somalia, Liberia, and Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Despite this cooperation, penalties are frequently controversial, reflecting conflicting international powers' agendas" (Masters, 2017). Before World War I, there were at least 13 notable incidents of economic sanctions, according to Hufbauer et al. (1990, p. 9). "Sanctions have been used in the past for military goals, destabilizing foreign regimes, protecting human rights, and

retaliating against terrorist operations. They've been used collectively by organizations like the League of Nations and OPEC countries, as well as unilaterally by countries like United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and Canada. Sanctions were employed as often as two or three times per year after 1960" (Tsebelis, 1990, p. 3).

Following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, the UN Security Council imposed sweeping sanctions. Iraq's assets were blocked by the Security Council, and then oil sanctions were applied. These sanctions were imposed in preparation for a new battle (the Persian Gulf War), in which powerful countries such as the United States defeated Iraq in Kuwait.

In 1993 and 1994 AD, the United Nations Security Council placed severe economic sanctions on armed organizations in Haiti that controlled the government. After President Bertrand Aristide was deposed in a military coup in 1991, the American Countries Organization attempted to restore order in Haiti, but insurgents blocked their efforts, so the Security Council placed sanctions on the military, travel, and transportation.

Sanctions were ineffective, and multiple evaluations of sanctions, as well as increased international pressure, according to numerous evidences from the lateral harms of Iraq sanctions, almost a half million children were killed in 1995 AD,

prompting British envoy David Hannay to warn the UN that clever sanctions cannot distinguish between innocent and guilty. Iraq received food in exchange for oil after a period.

During 1997 to 1999 AD, the UN devised a mechanism for imposing smart sanctions on Angola's rebels, which included a travel ban and the freezing of rebel assets. Angola had free elections in 1992, which were recognized by the United Nations. Jose Eduardo Dos Santos was the legitimate president according to the elections, but Jonas Savimbi refused to accept the results, culminating in civil war in Angola.

Immediately after the attack of September 11, 2001, under the influence of the Security Council and the Financial Action Task Force, state economic sanctions practice has changed considerably, with the scope and application of economic and financial sanctions being expanded to include not only targeted states, but also a wide range of non-state actors such as businesses, political parties, and other non-state actors. After the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, US President George W. Bush deployed broad sanctions against terrorists and slapped a ban on all of the group's assets. Sweeping Sanctions against Baghdad were withdrawn in 2003 AD, just two months after the United States invaded Iraq, although the sanctions clearly failed to compel Iraq to change its behaviour regarding WMD.

Sanctions against Libya in the 1980s and 1990s were repealed in 2003-2004 AD because Libya's leader, Muammar Gaddafi, renounced terrorism and demolished his WMD. This Sanction is one of very few that worked and forced the Target to change its conduct.

In 2006 AD, the United Nations Security Council enacted a series of sanctions on North Korea following a nuclear test, with the goal of targeting assets and luxury items covered by North Korean leader Kim Jong Il. From 2006 to 2009 A.D., US Treasury Secretary Stuart Levey made his request for sanctions against Iran at a meeting with roughly 12 foreign banks. Between 2011 and 2012 AD, countries such as China lessened the effects of oil sanctions by blocking the Iranian Central Bank; nevertheless, after a year of Smart Sanctions against Syria, President Bashar Asad stated that Syria does not rely on oil revenue and thus Oil Sanctions cannot damage Syria.

“Economic sanctions are multifaceted tools of foreign policy, utilized by conflicting political entities. They have a long history, influencing international relations, military conflicts, and state interactions during both economic growth and rising tensions” (Simons, 1999, p. xi).

2.9.3 Types of Economic Sanction

Economic sanctions are so diverse - in their type, ambition and manner of application that no general answer is possible (Simons, 1999, p. xi). Doxey (1980) states that the trade controls, suspension of aid or technical assistance, freezing of the target's financial assets, and blacklisting of companies involved in bilateral transactions are the four major tactics used by the sender to impose economic sanctions (pp.14-15):

"First, trade controls (*both goods and services*) by the *sender* include one or more of the following elements: (1) quotas on exports/imports; (2) restrictive exports/imports licensing; (3) limited or total export disruption (*sanction*); (4) limited or total import disruption (*boycott*); (5) discriminatory tariff policy (including denial of most favored nation status); (6) restriction or cancellation of fishing rights; (7) suspension or cancellation of trade agreements; and (8) bans on strategic goods and advanced technology exports.

Second, the sender may suspend aid or technical support if one or more of the following elements are present: (1) credit facilities at concessionary or market rates are reduced, suspended, or cancelled; (2) technical assistance, military assistance, development assistance, and training programs are reduced, suspended, or cancelled; and (3) votes against loans, grants, subsidies, and funding for technical or other assistance from international organizations are reduced, suspended, or cancelled.

Third, the sender may impose one or more of the following conditions on the target's financial assets: (1) the freezing or confiscation of the target government's or nationals' bank assets; (2) the confiscation or expropriation of other target assets, including the target's investment in the sender; (3) the freezing of interest or other transfer payments; (4) the refusal to refinance or reschedule debt repayments (interest and principal); and (5) the suspension or cancellation of joint projects.

Trade restrictions and finance limitations are the two main types of international economic weapons, both of which can be used with varied degrees of strength and breadth. For example, trade may be fully halted or tariffs raised slightly; financial flows may be banned or assets seized in whole or in part; the entire opposing economy may be targeted or just one vital sector; and so on.

2.9.4 Purposes of Economic Sanction

"States employ economic pressure to exert political pressure on one another for a variety of reasons. Trade restrictions and finance limitations are the two main types of international economic weapons, both of which can be used with varied degrees of strength and breadth. For example, trade may be completely halted or tariffs raised slightly; money flows could be restricted or assets taken whole or partially; and the entire opposing enemy could be targeted or just one vital sector.

Although the same economic weapons can be used to promote various political objectives, different political objectives necessitate different techniques" (Pape, 1997, p. 93). Almost all sanctions experts acknowledge the difficulties in determining the sender's goals. This is especially true when the sender's primary purpose is to demonstrate something to a domestic or worldwide audience. Furthermore, the "sender" is frequently a heterogeneous entity with several components serving diverse objectives. As a result, as well as the proclaimed purposes, it is necessary to investigate the hidden intentions inherent in sanctions.

According to Economic sanctions, according to Ahang (2014) have the following goals:

Changing behaviour: In some situations, target's actions may harm the interests of other countries, and the lateral effects of Target's activities may have future consequences for other countries. As a result, the sender(s) employ sanctions to put a stop to the target's activities.

Punishment for bad policy: Target's policy does not always have a negative outcome, yet it does pose a risk due to comparable rules. As a result, Deterrent punishment can prevent a new difficulty from arising.

Punishment because of breaKing Sanctions: Sanctions will not be effective if other countries do not cooperate with the sender(s), or if they do not have an immediate effect on the Target. As a result, punishment is a response to countries with which target has a reciprocal relationship.

Reducing the pace of Target to achieve goals: The sanction come in a variety of degrees, and they are not always used at the greatest level since different targets have varied effects on the world, and the highest level of sanctions might harm non-aligned countries by lowering trade levels. Smart sanctions have the potential to fix the problem while causing the least amount of collateral damage to other countries.

Authorities instability: Countries with consistent policies can reach an optimal position after actions and reactions because each side understands the benefits of the other. However, ideology can occasionally trump logic, and discussions lose their effectiveness. Because the sender(s) will be unable to evaluate a condition that achieves a common grand with the target, a putsch can alter the equations, and sanctions can aid these types of operations.

Destroying of military power: Sender(s) occasionally opt to apply a series of Smart Sanctions against military force,

according to some evidence that shows an unusual activity for target's Army.

Protection of NGOs and Human right: Governments can be compelled to change their behaviour when it comes to innocent people by using smart sanctions. Unfortunately, certain countries are afflicted by a totalitarian political system, in which case other countries can help defend citizens (pp.19-20).

According to a survey of economic sanctions cases and earlier research studies, economic penalties have five distinct goals.: punishment (deterrence), compliance (coercion), destabilization (subversion), signaling, and symbolism (demonstrative effect (Nincic & Wallensteen, 1983, p. 27).

a) Punishment (Deterrence)

“Economic fines have been used to punish transgressions both historically and thematically. The objective of incarcerating a criminal is not always to rehabilitate the wrongdoer, but rather to punish him for his crime and dissuade others from repeating it. Economic penalties used for punitive purposes also help to define unacceptable behaviour, whether unilaterally or multilaterally, and so help to set internationally accepted standards of lawful behaviour” (Leyton Brown, 2017, p. 303).

Sanctions may be used by the sender to deter future bad policies by displaying the sender's willingness and ability to

retaliate. If the target country is sufficiently punished for the undesired action, it is unlikely that it will repeat it. For example, when President Jimmy Carter announced a grain sanction against the Soviet Union in response to the invasion of Afghanistan, he stated, "We will dissuade aggression.

Likewise, the sender may use penalties to prevent other countries from engaging in unwanted behaviour by illustrating the likely cost of misbehaviour to third parties. For instance, one of the goals of US economic sanctions against Cuba from 1960 to the present was to deter other Latin American countries from following Castro's policies. Similarly, Soviet economic penalties against Yugoslavia (1948-1955) and Lithuania (1990) sought to prevent other countries from adopting the target's non-cooperation stance.

b) Compliance (Coercion)

Economic penalties may be used by the sender to compel the target to change its policy or behaviour in order to comply to the sender's preferences or specific political goals, such as compel desired action, encourage adoption of international rules, or restore the status quo. The goal of deterrence is to keep people from taking action. The sender is attempting to persuade the recipient to reverse a decision.

c) Destabilization (Subversion)

Economic sanctions may be used by the sender to destabilize the target government or to overthrow the entire target political regime. By applying economic sanctions against Yugoslavia, for example, Stalin hoped to replace Tito with a pro-Soviet leader (1948-1955). The United States wanted to replace Castro's regime with a non-communist one when it sanctioned Cuba (1960-). The Organization of American States and the United States placed economic sanctions on Haiti from 1991 to 1996, demanding the return of democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who had been deposed by a military coup led by Lieutenant General Raoul Cedras.

d) Signaling

Economic sanctions deliver a signal to both the target and the sender's allies about the sender's commitment. It states that the sender's words will be backed up by action. A threat of more serious action (for example, military) against the target country is often implied by economic sanctions imposed by a great power or an international organization.

According to the Hufbauer et al. (1990) “in 34 of the 115 cases, economic sanctions were used in conjunction with quasi-military or regular military action. Actual armed hostilities may be preceded or followed by economic penalties. This suggests that the sender may employ economic sanctions to persuade the

target to embrace the sender's preferred course of action before starting military action (p.44).”

e) Prevention of forming multi-Governments in a Country:

Instability and the absence of a central government in a number of nations encourage military rebels to engage in destructive operations, resulting in disasters. As a result, Smart Sanctions can aid in the defeat of these organizations.

2.9.5 The Practices of Economic Sanction

While there are many similarities in state sanctions practice, there are distinct differences in According to Kern (2009, p. 2) “the regulatory method and legal technique used to enforce sanctions across borders poses substantial complications and complexities.

For example, US sanctions are usually imposed unilaterally and extraterritorially, but EU and UK penalties are usually imposed on a territorial basis following consultation and agreement at the EU ministerial level and as part of Security Council sanctions programs. These opposing viewpoints have resulted in a slew of regulatory and legal challenges between the EU and the US, involving corporations and other business entities, third-party specialists, and designated entities and persons.”

More often than any other country, the United States employs economic and financial sanctions. Policy on sanctions can come from either the executive or legislative branches. Presidents usually start the process by issuing an executive order (EO) declaring a national emergency in response to a rare and extraordinary foreign threat, such as “nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons proliferation (p. 2).

The European Union, applies sanctions as part of its Common Foreign and Security Policy. Because the EU lacks a common military force, many European lawmakers see sanctions as the bloc's most powerful foreign policy tool.

Sanctions policies must be unanimously authorized by the Council of the European Union, which consists of EU leaders. As the UN's premier crisis-management body, the Security Council has the capacity to respond to global threats by breaKing economic ties with both state and non-state entities. Resolutions on sanctions must be approved by a majority vote of the fifteen-member council, with no veto from any of the five permanent members: the United States, China, France, Russia, and the United Kingdom. Asset freezes, travel restrictions, and arms sanctiones are the most prevalent types of UN penalties that are binding on all member states. A specific committee and a monitoring group are usually in charge of UN sanctions regimes.

2.9.6 The Effectiveness of Economic Sanction

"The opinions of both academics and policy makers oscillate between the belief that sanctions are ineffective on the one hand, and that they can have successful policy outcomes on the other" (Tsebelis, 1990, p. 5). "People and institutions have been subjected to targeted sanctions in many cases without prior notification or the opportunity for a hearing, raising concerns about due process and fairness" (Kern, 2009, p. 1).

Many economic sanctions do not work, according to different studies, and when they do, it is typically dependent on the situation, context, and specific nation effects of the economic penalties. There are also other risks associated with economic sanctions, such as the impact on human lives. The author to investigate the effectiveness of economic sanctions were Hufbauer et al. (1990). They did a large-N analysis on 115 incidents of economic penalties enacted since 1914 to see if they were effective in achieving the pre-determined declared goals.

At least 33 percent of economic sanctions are effective in achieving their stated purpose. Pape (1997) criticizes the work of Hufbauer et al. (1990), saying that "most of their successful cases were the result of military pressure rather than economic pressure. After excluding incidents involving military coercion, the effectiveness of economic penalties is significantly under 5 percent" (p.92).

In truth, there are a multitude of illusions about economic sanctions and their impact as a tool for international relations.

According to Sedliar (2017, pp. 23-24) the following provisions can be used to characterize the determinants of the effectiveness of economic penalties in international relations studies:

- Economic penalties should be tailored to put the most pressure on the guilty parties, inflicting pain and suffering on the leaders whose policies the sender is attempting to influence. Penalties should be tailored properly to reduce the humanitarian impact on the people in the target state.
- The data from the instances suggests that economic sanctions are more effective when there is political opposition in the target country that is focused on penalizing the state. Political groups that lose money as a result of economic sanctions will be in a weaker financial position, which may lessen their political clout. The "fifth column" impact is the likely reaction of those in the target's political elite who rely on imports or export-oriented producers to economic sanctions.
- Economic penalties, according to international relations experts, are ineffective in attaining foreign policy goals such as regime change and democratization. The consequences of complying with the sender's requests in

terms of security, politics, and other factors may simply exceed any pain that may be inflicted by economic sanctions. As a result, economic penalties that are aimed to achieve moderate political goals in the target country succeed.

- For a good conclusion, multilateral collaboration among sanctioning governments is a required and/or sufficient requirement. In this sense, international political scientists have discovered that cooperation issues can be divided into two stages: negotiating and implementation. Bargaining issues and/or a lack of enforcement could destroy cooperation.

"Multilateral sanctions face two dilemmas: cooperation with the target and alignment among sanctioning parties. International organizations facilitate coordination, mitigate domestic criticism, and offer incentives to maintain collaboration, crucial for effective sanction coalitions" (Drezner & Drezner, 1999).

"International political theorists believe that economic sanctions are less likely to prevail against a nondemocratic target than they are against a democratic target. There are two reasons for this conditional link. Sanctions, for starters, improve a leader's ability to extract rents. Greater rents boost a nondemocratic leader's capacity to stay in power, but they have

no effect on a democratic leader's ability to stay in power. Second, the pressure to yield to sanctions depends critically on who is bearing the brunt of the costs in the targeted state" (Sedliar, 2017, pp. 23-24).

The sanctions must be directed at the regime's winning coalition, whose size and makeup are determined by a country's political institutions. Economic sanctions, when used against a democracy with a substantial winning coalition, are more likely to result in policy change if they are wide and touch many groups in society." "According to the author "high-cost sanctions will almost always have this impact. States should avoid broad sanctions that impose high economic costs on the entire population when dealing with nondemocratic countries because most people in the country are not part of the autocratic leader's winning coalition, so the economic costs imposed on the larger population do not translate into political costs for the regime."

In summary, because nondemocratic leaders typically have a tightly defined winning a coalition, wide and costly sanctions against them will be less effective than penalties against democratic countries. States must be able to inflict restricted penalties on the regime's core supporters to force nondemocratic leaders to capitulate. According to Kaempfer and Lorwenberg (2007) argues argue that sanctions harm both the enforcer and

target, with costs influenced by trade partners and trade elasticities. Multilateral sanctions are more impactful than unilateral ones (p.875).”

Other actors may also become involved illegally as a result of sanctions, increasing their trade activity with the sanctioned state. Authors like Early and Spice (2015), Lacy and Niou (2004) critique the effectiveness of economic penalties, citing various reasons for their ineffectiveness. Some Haass (1997) and (Early & Spice, 2015) argue that “economic sanctions are ineffectual because they are supported by pressure organizations and rent-seeking corporations within the imposing governments, rather than by the government.” Davidson and Shambaugh (2000) argue that “economic sanctions are unsuccessful because they are primarily utilised as a symbolic political instrument for domestic political purposes” (as cited in Meulen, 2018).

“Sanction research uses theoretical models to explain sanctions' mechanisms. Classical macro-models focus on imposing maximum costs to influence state decisions, while pluralistic micro-models highlight impacts on specific groups, explaining why sanctions' political effects may vary” (P Rudolf, 2007, p. 6).

Kern (2009) “states should be using a wider range of sanctions mechanisms that best fit their economic capabilities and comparative advantage, according to the author. This would

enhance the efficacy of national and global sanctions programs while also ensuring a more equitable cost distribution among sanctioning governments" (pp.2-3). According to the author "sanctions effectiveness is being eroded by a rising interdependence between economies and a "shrinKing world." It becomes difficult to identify products that can successfully harm the sanctioned country while causing no ramifications for the countries imposing the sanctions."

2.9.7 Sanction and International Law

"The use of armed action to achieve national or international goals has grown less acceptable and, in many cases, legally or politically undesirable throughout time. As a result, the option of using economic penalties has become more appealing. Indeed, more international coordinated economic boycotts have occurred in the last decade than in possibly all of recorded history, although individual national exercises of systematic economic pressures have also surged" (Szasz, 2019, p. 455). "Economic sanctions can be applied by a multilateral (UN) or regional (EU) international organization, but they can also be imposed unilaterally by a state. The latter has been widely criticized as being in violation of international law, and as a result, these unilateral sanctions have received little bacKing from international attorneys.

On the other hand, in international law, there is no widely recognised system for determining whether a particular economic sanction is legal or not, hence this remains one of the most underdeveloped areas. As a result, the current link between economic sanctions and international law is contentious, opening the door to a variety of opinions and tensions in the international arena" (Ilieva et al., 2018, p. 201).

When services trade is included in the GATS, the economic and trade penalties are typically justified on the security exceptions, notably Article XXI and Article XIV bis. "GATT 1994, Article XXI, states that 'Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed (b) to prevent any contracting party from taking any action which it considers necessary for the protection of its essential security interests (iii) taken in time of war or any other emergency in international relations; or (c) to prevent any contracting party from taking any action in pursuance of its obligations under the United Nations Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security'. These provisions find their mirror image in Art. XIV bis GATS" (Smeets, 2018, p. 3).

According to the writer, "sanctions in a WTO context are frequently associated with retaliatory action following the conclusion of a WTO dispute settlement process: under WTO dispute settlement procedures, a party to a dispute may be

authorized to withdraw concessions in order to compensate for losses suffered as a result of an unjustified trade action. When members' rights and obligations are affected by a country's actions that are inconsistent with the WTO, (allowed) retaliation follows the logic of maintaining or rather restoring a balance in rights and obligations amongst members.”

“All UN members are prohibited from threatening or using force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, according to Article 2(4) of the UN Charter (i.e., UN member or not). Despite the fact that the point was not clearly stated, the word force was initially interpreted to refer primarily to military force in this context. However, it is vital to determine if this narrow interpretation still holds true, or whether additional reasons have been discovered for prohibiting the use of other sorts of pressures by UN members against any State's political independence” (Szasz, 2019, p. 455).

The author claims that “over the years, numerous international bodies, most notably the United Nations General Assembly, have enacted a succession of solemn resolutions aimed, among other things, at delegitimizing individual governments' use of economic coercion. The "Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the Protection of Their Independence and Sovereignty," issued in 1965, stated that "No State may use or encourage the

use of economic, political, or other types or measures to coerce another State into subordinating the exercise of its sovereign rights."

The identical wording was repeated in the 1970 *'Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in Accordance with the United Nations Charter,'* which is widely regarded as an authorized interpretation of the UN Charter. The 1980 *'Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention and Interference in the Internal Affairs of States*' contains a similar text. The United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution on '*Economic Measures as a Means of Political and Economic Coercion against Developing Countries'* in 1995.

Assembly expressed grave concern that the use of coercive economic measures adversely affects the economy and development efforts of developing countries and has a general negative impact on international economic cooperation and urged the international community to adopt urgent and effective measures to eliminate the use by some developed countries of unilateral coercive measures against developing countries which are not authorized by relevant organs of the United Nations or are inconsistent with the principles contained in the Charter of

the United Nations, as a means of forcibly imposing the will of one State on another."

In 1996, the United Nations General Assembly passed a similar resolution, titled '*Elimination of Coercive Economic Measures as a Means of Political and Economic Compulsion*.' In 1997, it passed a resolution on '*Unilateral Economic Measures as a Means of Political and Economic Coercion Against Developing Countries.'* which largely repeated the 1995 language but added a new ground for prohibiting the use of unilateral coercive economic measures against developing countries: contravention of the basic principles of the multilateral trading system.

In response to the 1995 resolution, the UN Secretariat convened an ad hoc expert group meeting in the summer of 1997 to discuss "economic measures as a form of political and economic coercion against poor nations. Under the heading of "basic legal norms," that group concluded that the basic principles of international law, as enshrined in the United Nations Charter, elaborated in a number of international legal instruments, and backed by declarations adopted at international conferences, prohibit the imposition of coercive economic measures as instruments of intervention in matters that are essentially political in nature.

The allowable exceptions the group recognized from this general prohibition include: multilateral economic sanctions mandated by the Security Council and other situations where the Security Council has determined the existence of a threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression; where the Security Council has merely recommended economic sanctions, provided that any limits specified by the Council are observed; where the General Assembly recommends sanctions by consensus or by large majorities over a period of time; certain instances where regional organizations impose economic sanctions for cause against their own members; where one or more States adopt unilateral measures in response to a clear violation of universally accepted norms, standards, or obligations, provided these states are not seeking advantages for themselves but are pursuing an international community interest; and where the economic measures constitute proportional countermeasures by a State for a prior injury, provided inter alia that the measures are not designed to endanger the territorial integrity or political independence of the target State.

As the twentieth century draws to a close, at least de lege ferenda, no State can claim a general legal right to impose economic sanctions on other States, except in cases where the

coercion is used in the interests of the international community, and the latter supports or at least does not strongly oppose the measures in question.”

2.9.8 Theories on Economic Sanction

As a theoretical framework for studying sanction politics in Nepal-India relations, the researcher has mostly used three theoretical approaches: realism, liberalism, and constructionism. This research aims to answer two key questions: What are the reasons behind India's economic sanctions against Nepal? And, according to the Realist, Liberal, and Constructivist schools of thought, what influence have the economic sanctions had on the bilateral relationship between Nepal and India? “The first two viewpoints align with international relations rationalists, while the third is linked to reflexivity and culture-oriented theories. The analytical approaches to studying economic sanctions as a foreign policy tool have developed over time within the frameworks of realism, liberalism, and constructivism” (Sedliar, 2017, p. 21).

The researcher's explanation of the reasons for India's economic sanctions against Nepal is based on realism and constructivism, as economic sanctions are primarily concerned with security issues and the participation of non-state actors. From a liberal perspective, the impact of economic sanctions on

Nepal-India bilateral relations is examined and analysed. The constructivism method to international relations has also been widely used by the researcher in order to comprehend the changing dynamics in Nepal-India relations, which are directed by the problem of sanctions on the Nepal-India border.

2.9.8.1 Realist View on Economic Sanction

Political realism - sometimes known as realpolitik or power politics - has a long history that can be traced back to the fifth-century BC Greek writer Thucydides. Although popular sentiments toward realism have shifted throughout time, realist arguments and perspectives have remained important to Western international relations theory and practice. According to Donnelly (2006, p. 29) “the definitions of realism differ in detail but they have a clear family resemblance, a pretty definite and recognized flavour.

Political realism in international relations is a school of thought that emphasizes the pressures that states confront in pursuing national-interest power politics. Several basic ideas are recognized as central to all varieties of realism: rationalism, state centrism, egoism, and anarchism, despite the fact that there are many various definitions and theories of international realism. Ancient authors such as Thucydides (Peloponnesian War), Kautilya (Arthashastra), Machiavelli (The Prince), and

Hobbes (The Prince) advocated realism as one of the world's oldest philosophies (Leviathan).”

Realisms has been a limited yet powerful and important approach to and set of insights about international relations (Burchill, 2006, p. 26). Donnelly (2006) accepts and values realism as a central and perennial tradition, orientation, or approach (p.1) International relations began as an academic topic shortly before and after World War I, partly in response to realist balance of power politics. Self-identified realists like E. H. Carr and Hans Morgenthau transformed the discipline immediately before and during World War II. Morgenthau is regarded as one of the most important classical realists.

‘Realists include prominent academics and practitioners like George Kennan and Henry Kissinger. For the majority of the post-war era, realism was the dominant paradigm in Anglo-American international relations research. Realist theories continue to provide background and impetus for many of the most important theoretical discussions in the discipline, even in our post-Cold War era of globalization”(Donnelly, 2006, p. 1). Despite the fact that academics claim, and have claimed for at least the previous forty years, that realism hegemony over their profession has lately been destroyed, their stories continue to

orbit the power political account of international politics, whether as commentaries or critiques (Sharp, 2009, p. 53).

“Mercantilism, Hobbes' realism, and Richelieu's raison d'être share a common view of international relations as a competitive state of nature, where limited resources lead to conflict between states. In this environment, without a global enforcer or moral order, modern economic statecraft emerged” (Dobson, 2002, p. 11).

The realist perspective on economic sanctions assumes that actors are only interested in attaining as much power as possible (Mearsheimer, 2001, p. 32). As a result, realists say that economic sanctions are best viewed as a foreign-policy tool used by a state to achieve national goals (Koga, 2005). Economic sanctions, according to Barber (1979) should be viewed as economic measures geared to political aims (p.367). Other realist researchers like Førland (1993) and Drezner and Drezner (1999) have claimed that states impose economic sanctions to gain a relative economic and political profit.

“Realists argue that policymakers employ coercive tools such as diplomacy, economic sanctions, or force to achieve foreign policy goals, choosing strategies that maximize benefits while minimizing costs. Coercive diplomacy, particularly through sanctions, is used by powerful nations to influence the behavior of target countries when diplomacy fails.” (Drury,

2001) (as cited in Yazdani & Nozari, 2019, pp. 93-94). The realists think that by diminishing the potential of the opposing country, negative economic forces would finally force that country to succumb to the imposing country

“Realism in international relations is challenging to define, especially regarding power and why people desire it. While it's reasonable to view humans as driven by material and psychological needs, it's unclear how this leads to states prioritizing power over other considerations in international politics” (Sharp, 2009, p. 53).

The efficient employment of economic sanctions for the achievement of national goals is central to realism. Realists view (economic) sanctions as a state's foreign-policy tool for pursuing national egoistic aims, rather than as a retribution for illegal or immoral behaviour.

Sanctions, according to the classic definition of realism, are "the purposeful state withdrawal of economic or financial links to achieve foreign policy goals." Economic sanctions, according to James Barber, are essentially "economic measures geared toward political ends" (Barber, 1979, p. 369).

Realist researchers of economic sanctions assume that:

1) In world politics, the principal sanctioner is the state, not a collective international player such as an international institution.

2) Economic sanctions are a foreign policy tool, not a law enforcement tool.
3) The primary goal of economic sanctions on the international stage is to compel the target state to comply with the wishes of the sanctioning countries.
4) Economic sanctions are implemented under the anarchical international system, which is dominated by states.

"The imposition of economic sanctions, whether in the form of blockades, sanctions, or other economic restrictions, requires the accompanying resources and means to enforce the sanctions, and that the sender country has significant influence over commercial activity" Carr (1946) states. The largest and most powerful nation-states and multinational institutions have this capability. However, the power imbalance does not rule out the use of economic sanctions by a tiny state. "The world's most powerful governments and international organizations have this capability. The power differential, on the other hand, does not rule out the possibility of a small state imposing economic sanctions"(Askari et al., 2003).

"Realists view states as rational actors, which helps explain why smaller states don't impose economic sanctions on larger ones. Despite having the capacity to do so, small states avoid sanctions that are unlikely to change the behavior of a more powerful stat" (Седляр, 2013, pp.72–75 as cited in Sedliar, 2017, p. 21)

2.9.8.2 Liberalist View on Economic Sanction

Liberals drew on municipal laws for their economic sanctions ideas. Generally, the essence of economic sanctions inside liberalism argues that international organizations should apply economic penalties in order to maintain international peace and security. Wright (1965, p. 206) for example, contended that sanctions must be authorized by an international institution. According to liberals, the UN Security Council uses economic penalties to address four different types of risks to world peace and security:

1) armed conflict between states;
2) armed conflict within states;
3) international norm-breaKing states (the so-called "rouges"); and
4) international terrorism ((Charron, 2011, pp. 1-8).

"They emphasize that economic sanctions are used in a non-anarchical international system that should be viewed as a community of state and non-state actors with common interests; economic sanctions should be guided by the rule of law rather than power politics. Furthermore, liberal literature demonstrates that the use of economic coercion should be governed by collective security rather than the balance of power" (Сед-ляр, 2013, p. 71 as cited in Sedliar, 2017).

Liberal ideas of economic sanctions were based on domestic analogy. “The ‘League experiment,” writes Nossal (1989) the League of Nations' "experiment" as an attempt to introduce domestic order to the international system. The Covenant set rules, with violators facing defined penalties enforced by an institution resembling a global public authority, similar to domestic punishment structures” (pp. 310-311).

To preserve the collective security system, member nations must prefer common interests over national objectives. Wolfers (1962) writes “It was the primary assumption of all collectivist thinking, that with the founding of the League of Countries, a universal community of nations had come into being, to be the acting center of world affairs.” Individual sovereign nations were merely components of a larger whole to which they and their people owed allegiance. As a result, national interests in the traditional sense should be subjugated to the interests of the community” (pp. 268-269).

“Liberals argue that economic sanctions require established laws or norms to define deviant acts. Sanctions are seen as a form of coercion aimed at promoting common goals, but not all coercion qualifies as sanctions. For sanctions to be legitimate, they must align with universal standards in a world community” (Koga, 2005, pp. 45-49).

In the case of economic sanctions, liberals of international relations believe that, given the interdependence of actors in the international arena in various political, economic, cultural, and other dimensions, imposing economic sanctions may cause irreparable damage to the target government's economy, resulting in significant costs such as price increases and lower economic growth (Nozarin & Yazdani, 2015, p. 93). As a result of the severity of economic and social welfare, the reprimanded country's public opinion will expand its political protests against their government's domestic and foreign policies to the point where the target government will either concede to the imposing government's wishes or the regime will collapse (Nozarin & Yazdani, 2015, p. 93).

2.9.8.3 Constructivism View on Economic Sanction

"Economic sanctions are not objective phenomena, but the social construction is shaped by shared ideas as well as material forces; economic sanctions are based on the identities and interests of political actors are shaped primarily by shared ideas, according to constructivism as a methodological approach in international relations theory"(Wendt, 1999, p. 1). Constructivism is concerned with norms, structure creation, the link between actors and these structures, as well as how identity influences actions and behaviour among and between actors, as

well as how norms shape an actor's character (Reus-Smit, 2005, p. 198).

“Constructivism does not specify empirical puzzles, the nature of economic sanctions, international system, key political actors in international society, their preferences, and the logic of actions in international politics. This is what Alexander Wendt calls “a variation question” of constructivist analysis.” According to Wendt (1999), there is no such thing as "logic." That is why economic sanctions are illogical. As a result, economic sanctions are neither cruel nor reasonable. They are social beings who cannot be reduced to physical beings. To put it another way, economic penalties are the tools used to produce a social reality.

“What is the primary purpose of international economic sanctions? The punishment approach, according to constructivists, aims to ensure common values in international society, but not in the international system, which is based on power balances or normative standards of international institutions” (Sedliar, 2017, p. 23). “Constructivism focuses on the role of values and norms in shaping interactions between individuals and nations. It argues that social realities are created by actors, who frame and interpret their world, with material

factors playing a secondary role in international politics (Nozarin & Yazdani, 2015, p. 94).

“Constructivism argues that cultural differences shape how nations react to material forces. Conflicts between countries are seen as clashes of norms and identities, where sanctions reflect the imposition of one set of norms over another by powerful nations”(Nozarin & Yazdani, 2015, p. 94). “Economic sanctions impact all aspects of a target country's existence cultural, political, social, and economic. Their main goal is to influence behavior while undermining the target’s legitimacy. According to constructivism, true power lies in the ability to shape beliefs, norms, and ideas. Social and cultural factors also play a crucial role in how a nation's political, economic, and military power is exercised in both domestic and international spheres” (Nozarin & Yazdani, 2015, p. 94).

“Economic sanctions are more effective and successful, according to constructivists, when the imposing country establishes intellectual control. Sanctions (bilateral or multilateral) can only be implemented if the sanctioning country can persuade other international players that the sanctioned country is a threat to international security, principles, and values, and secure their support and active participation. Sanctions, on the other hand, will have a significant impact if

the people of the target country recognize and accept the legality of sanctions.

As a result, persuading the world community is contingent on the sanction-imposing country's political and ideological standing in the international arena, as well as the penalized country's ideological vulnerability" (Mohseni, 2010 as cited in Nozarin & Yazdani, 2015, p. 94). As a result, constructivists argue that economic policies are insufficient to counter sanctions, and that a resistance culture as strong as the sanction imposing country's domineering ideology, as well as the sanction imposing country's internal structures and non-material intentions, must be developed (Nozarin & Yazdani, 2015, p. 94).

2.10 Research Gap

The majority of economic sanctions research focuses on analysing the factors that influence its success or failure. These studies have delved into the aspects that influence the effectiveness of economic sanctions as well as its legal basis. Furthermore, due to the difficulty of sanctions to be enforced in the context of rising interdependence between nations caused by globalization, the findings are not uniform. The final goal of these studies was to determine their effectiveness.

Many incidents of economic sanctions are studied collectively in order to form conclusions about their effectiveness. However, there have been very few studies of

individual penalty instances addressing the underlying factors, especially where the sender and receiver have a long-standing relationship with a socio-cultural bond and live close to one other. In terms of its form and ramifications, the Indian sanction on Nepal has been a one-of-a-kind sanction case in the history of sanctions. As a result, the researcher discovers this gap and does additional research into Indian sanctions against Nepal, their causes, and their effects on bilateral relations between Nepal and India.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design grounded in a post-positivist paradigm to systematically analyze the causes and consequences of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015.

This research design is well-suited to investigating the complex and nuanced dimensions of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal. By integrating qualitative methodologies with a post-positivist paradigm, the study ensures a comprehensive, contextually rich, and critically informed analysis, offering deeper insights into geopolitical power dynamics.

By adopting critical realism as its epistemological stance, the research acknowledges the existence of an objective reality while recognizing the contextual and theory-laden nature of understanding.

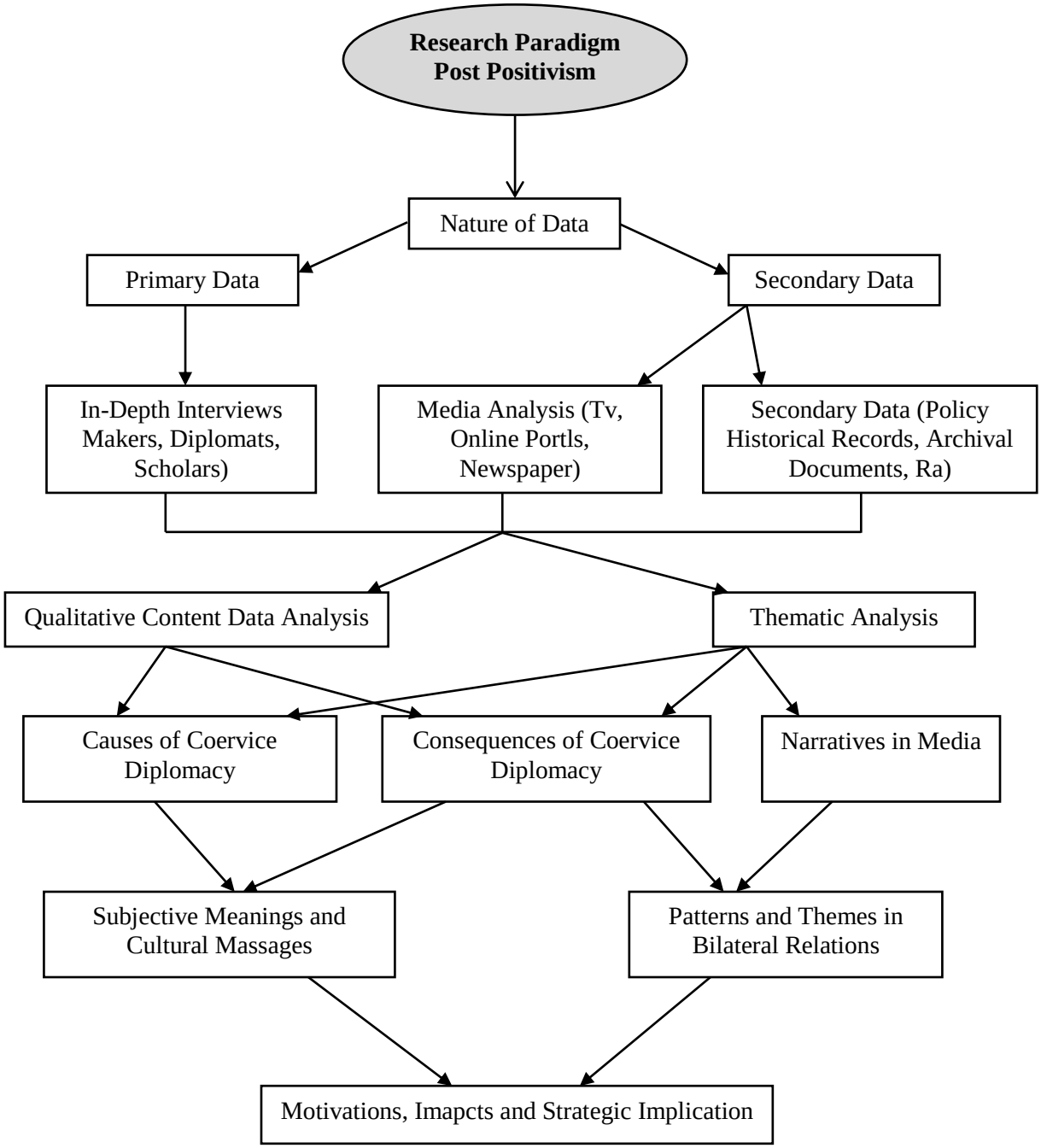
Ontologically, it embraces realism, emphasizing the stratified nature of reality, including observable events, actual occurrences, and underlying mechanisms. Axiologically, the study recognizes the value-laden nature of research,

incorporating reflexivity and ethical considerations to minimize biases.

Methodologically, the research integrates multiple qualitative data sources, including in-depth interviews with policymakers, diplomats, researchers, and stakeholders, along with an analysis of archival documents, media reports, and public discourse. This triangulation of primary and secondary data ensures a comprehensive exploration of geopolitical strategies, economic dependencies, and cultural influences. Using purposive sampling, the study analyzes perspectives from both Indian and Nepali stakeholders to reveal the motivations, strategies, and impacts of coercive diplomacy while situating the findings within broader historical and geopolitical contexts.

Figure 1

Research Design



3.2 Research Paradigms of Study

Research Paradigm:

Byadopting a post-positivist approach, researcher systematically and comprehensively studies the causes and consequences of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015. This approach balances the recognition of an objective reality with an understanding of the subjective and contextual nature of knowledge, allowing for a thorough and nuanced analysis of complex international relations phenomena. Recognize and analyze the different perspectives of various stakeholders, including Indian policymakers, Nepalese officials, and international observers.

This helps to capture the multifaceted nature of coercive diplomacy and its diverse impacts. Post-positivism stresses the importance of context in shaping social phenomena. It recognizes that historical, cultural, and political contexts influence both the causes and consequences of events. In studying India's coercive diplomacy, researcher considers the historical relationship between India and Nepal, regional power dynamics, and cultural factors.

3.3 The Epistemological Assumption of the Study

Epistemology is ‘a way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know (Crotty, 2003). Epistemology is also ‘concerned with providing a philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible and how we can ensure that they are both adequate and legitimate.

Critical Realism is an appropriate epistemology from a post-positivist perspective for studying the causes and consequences of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015. Critical realism bridges the gap between positivism and interpretivism, acknowledging an objective reality while also recognizing that our understanding of this reality is always mediated by social, cultural, and historical contexts.

Critical realism is defined as an approach that recognizes the existence of an objective reality independent of human perception while also acknowledging that our knowledge of this reality is inherently fallible and theory-laden. It posits that reality consists of different layers: the empirical (experiences), the actual (events), and the real (underlying structures and mechanisms).

This approach is often used to uncover causal mechanisms and understand the context-dependent nature of social phenomena. “Reality consists of different domains: the empirical (our experiences), the actual (events and states of affairs that occur regardless of whether they are observed), and

the real (the underlying mechanisms and structures that generate the actual events and states of affairs)" (Bhaskar, 2013).

"Critical realism asserts that the world is structured, differentiated, stratified, and changing. It maintains that there are real mechanisms, structures, and processes which can be identified and studied, even if our knowledge of the is always provisional and fallible" (Archer et al., 2013) It asserts that there is a reality independent of our perceptions and beliefs. This is crucial for studying the causes and consequences of coercive diplomacy, as it recognizes that real actions and events have tangible impacts. It allows researchers to investigate the actual events and policies that constituted India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal.

While accepting an objective reality, critical realism also posits that our knowledge of this reality is always partial and fallible. This acknowledges the limitations and biases inherent in any research process. It encourages a reflective approach to understanding the diplomatic actions, considering how various perspectives (e.g., those of Indian policymakers, Nepalese officials, and international observers) shape our comprehension of these events.

A core tenet of critical realism is the focus on uncovering causal mechanisms that explain how and why events occur. This is particularly useful for studying the complex and multifaceted nature of international diplomacy. The approach helps in

identifying the specific political, economic, and strategic factors that drove India to adopt coercive measures against Nepal and the subsequent consequences of these actions.

Critical realism emphasizes the importance of context in shaping events and outcomes. It recognizes that the causes and effects of coercive diplomacy cannot be fully understood without considering the broader historical, cultural, and geopolitical contexts. This approach ensures a comprehensive analysis that goes beyond surface-level observations to explore deeper contextual influences.

By adopting critical realism as the epistemological approach, the research systematically investigate the objective reality of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015 while acknowledging and critically examining the complex, contextual, and mediated nature of our understanding of these events.

3.4 Ontological Assumption of the Study

It is crucial to define ontology before describing the specific kind of ontology used in the study. Ontology is the study of being (Crotty, 2003). It is concerned with what kind of world we are investigating, with the nature of existence, with the structure of reality as such. It is interested in the type of world we are exploring, the nature of existence, and the basic structure of reality. The ontological assumptions, according to Guba and

Lincoln (1989), are those that address the queries "what is there that can be known?" or "what is the nature of reality?"

From a post-positivist perspective, Realism is an appropriate ontological stance to study the causes and consequences of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015. Realism in this context posits that an objective reality exists independent of our perceptions, but our understanding of this reality is always mediated by our cognitive structures and social context. This aligns well with the critical realist epistemology, which seeks to uncover underlying mechanisms and structures influencing observable events.

Realism asserts that there is an objective reality independent of human thoughts and perceptions. This is crucial for studying coercive diplomacy as it involves real actions, policies, and their tangible impacts on international relations. In the context of India-Nepal relations, realism acknowledges the existence of concrete events and actions (e.g., sanction, diplomatic negotiations) that have real consequences. It posits that there are underlying structures and mechanisms that govern observable events. These structures can include geopolitical strategies, economic dependencies, and historical ties.

Understanding the underlying structures helps explain why India opted for coercive diplomacy and how these actions

impacted Nepal's political and economic environment. Realism focuses on identifying and understanding causal relationships between events and underlying mechanisms. This is essential for studying the causes (motivations and strategies) and consequences (political and economic impacts) of coercive diplomacy. By examining causal relationships, researcher uncovers how specific actions by India influenced outcomes in Nepal.

Realism acknowledges that reality is stratified into different levels, such as the empirical (observable phenomena), the actual (events that happen), and the real (underlying mechanisms and structures). This stratified view allows researchers to delve deeper than surface-level observations, exploring the deeper causal mechanisms behind India's coercive actions and their impacts on Nepal.

Realism accepts that all observations are theory-laden, meaning that researchers' theories and beliefs influence their interpretation of reality. This aligns with the post-positivist stance that while reality exists independently, our understanding of it is mediated by our cognitive and social frameworks.

3.5 Axiology of the Study

Axiology is a branch of philosophy that deals with the study of values, including ethics, aesthetics, and other principles

that guide human behaviour and judgment. Value-Laden Inquiry:

Post-positivists recognize that research is not value-free. Researchers' values and beliefs can influence every stage of the research process. In studying coercive diplomacy, the researcher is aware of how their own values, such as political beliefs or ethical considerations, may shape to the topic.

Reflexivity involves critically reflecting on one's own values and biases and how they impact the research. This self-awareness helps to mitigate the influence of these biases. Researcher studying India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal continuously reflect on own positions.

Ethical considerations are central to post-positivist research. This includes issues of power dynamics, potential harm to participants, and the ethical implications of the research findings. When investigating the coercive diplomacy, ethical considerations includes ensuring confidentiality for interview subjects or being mindful of the potential impact of the research on India-Nepal relations.

Post-positivists advocate for transparency in the research process. This means being explicit about the researcher's values, assumptions, and the potential limitations of their study. Transparency is crucial in the study of coercive diplomacy, as it

helps build trust in the research findings and allows others to critically assess and replicate the work.

While striving for objectivity, post-positivists accept that complete objectivity is unattainable. They balance this with recognition of the subjective elements of research. In studying coercive diplomacy, this balance involves rigorously collecting and analysing data while acknowledging the interpretive nature of the findings.

3.6 Methodology of the Study

The methodology for this study adopts a qualitative research design grounded in the principles of post-positivism, aiming to explore the causes and consequences of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015. The research employs a case study approach, allowing an in-depth examination of the specific geopolitical and socio-economic dynamics at play during the period. Data collection methods include in-depth interviews with key stakeholders such as policymakers, academics, journalists, and diplomats, along with archival research of official documents, reports, and historical records. Media content analysis is conducted to assess public and political narratives surrounding the blockade.

The study employs purposive sampling to select participants and data sources that are directly relevant to the

research questions. A triangulation method ensures the credibility and reliability of findings by cross-verifying information from multiple sources. The analytical process is iterative, involving thematic coding and pattern identification to uncover underlying mechanisms and power dynamics. Ethical considerations, such as informed consent and anonymity, are prioritized to maintain the integrity of the research and the confidentiality of participants.

3.6.1 Nature of Source of Data

In order to interpret the occurrence, the researcher has employed qualitative methods. When it comes to acquiring information about a scenario, a person's problem, or a phenomenon, there are two main techniques. Sometimes the information needed is already on hand and simply needs to be extracted. There are instances, though, when information must be gathered. Data is classified as primary or secondary based on these basic techniques of information acquisition. The research is based on both primary and secondary data.

The research relies on the following data sources:

In-depth interviews: The researcher conducted in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, including policymakers, diplomats, researchers, and individuals directly involved in the events.

The selection of respondents for this study was based on purposive sampling, which was used to ensure that the individuals selected had relevant knowledge, experience, or involvement in the subject matter of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015. The respondents were chosen from a range of key stakeholders, including policymakers, diplomats, researchers, and experts.

Beyond the responses from the ten selected participants, the study also incorporates a thorough analysis of media reports, researcherly articles, historical documents, and literature reviews. These secondary sources have been instrumental in further corroborating the findings from the interviews and providing a broader context for understanding the causes, strategies, and consequences of India's coercive diplomacy during the 2015 blockade. The combination of primary data from interviews and secondary data from literature and media allowed for a more comprehensive and well-rounded analysis of the issue.

These interviews are semi-structured and open-ended to allow for detailed responses. For studying the causes and consequences of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015, in-depth interviews provide valuable, nuanced data that might not be accessible through other methods.

The participants were purposefully chosen based on specific selection criteria.

- The diplomats and policymakers who were directly involved in the events in Nepal in 2015 were purposefully chosen.
- The researchers and commentators specializing in South Asian geopolitics were purposefully chosen in Nepal.
- The affected stakeholders, including business leaders, civil society representatives, and local community leaders, were purposefully selected in Nepal.

Opinions from Indian Side: Due to geographical distance, constraints, as well as the reluctance of respondents to share information on the diplomatic communication regarding the blockade, the researcher had to rely on various media outlets such as newspapers, TV shows, and online portals to gather necessary information.

To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the issue, the researcher has purposefully selected individuals from India who represent a diverse range of perspectives. These individuals included political leaders who were actively involved in policy-making, diplomats with firsthand experience in international relations, researchers who specialize in South Asian geopolitics,

and analysts who provide expert commentary on the region's political dynamics.

The researcher has carefully incorporated the opinions and views of these prominent individuals from India to conduct a thorough analysis of the nature of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal. By including insights from such a varied group of experts, the researcher aimed to provide a well-rounded and in-depth examination of the strategies, motivations, and implications of India's actions. This approach ensured that the analysis was not only grounded in credible sources but also reflective of the diverse viewpoints within Indian political and academic circles, thereby offering a more nuanced understanding of the diplomatic relations between India and Nepal.

Archival Documents: The researcher has examined official government documents, diplomatic correspondence, and media reports pertaining to the events of 2015. Four official reports from the Nepalese government, accessed from official sites such as mofa.gov.np and nepalembassy.gov.np, were analysed. Similarly, six official reports from the Indian government were analysed, sourced from official sites like mea.gov.in and indembkathmandu.gov.in.

Media Analysis: The researcher examined news articles, editorials, and opinion pieces from both Indian and Nepali

media to understand public discourse and perceptions. Media analysis is a valuable tool for studying the coercive diplomacy of India against Nepal in 2015. It involves systematically examining media content to understand how the events were reported, framed, and perceived. This approach can reveal the narratives, biases, and influences in media coverage, providing insights into the public and political discourse surrounding the coercive diplomacy.

Researcher uses the purposive sampling to select media articles, news reports, editorials, opinion pieces, and social media posts that discuss the coercive diplomacy. Under this researcher ensure a balanced representation of sources with different political leanings and regional focus. Purposive sampling for media analysis involves a systematic and thoughtful selection process to ensure that the media content analysed is relevant, diverse, and provides a comprehensive understanding of the causes and consequences of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015. This approach helps to capture the complexity of media narratives and their impact on public perception and diplomatic relations.

Time Frame: Researcher has selected media content published from 2015 to 2023 AD. a specific period, typically before, during, and after the coercive diplomacy events in 2015.

This allows for a comprehensive view of how media coverage evolved over time.

Geographical Scope: Researcher Includes media sources from both India and Nepal to capture national perspectives. Additionally, considers including international media to understand external viewpoints.

Media Type: Researcher includes a variety of media types such as newspapers, TV news, online news portals, editorials, opinion pieces, and social media posts to ensure a well-rounded analysis.

Media Sources:

TV News: Researcher examines the broadcasts from prominent news channels such as NDTV, Times Now, Republic TV, Aajtak, News Today and ABP in India, and Nepal Television, AV News, Image, TV Today, News 24 and Kantipur TV in Nepal.

Online News Portals of Nepal: 26 articles have been selected each from The Himalayan Times, The Annapurna Express, Himalkhabar, Onlinekhabar, Naagrik News, Ekantipur, Mysansar, Nepal Times, and The Rising Nepal.

Online News Portals of India: 20 articles have been selected each from The Diplomat, The Wire, The Economic

Times, The Hindu Business, Indian Express, IDSA, and Foreign Policy

International News Agency: Five news related to the event of coercive diplomacy has been purposefully selected from BBC, Al Jazeera, and Reuters. TRT World, VOA News. SSOAR and Crises Group

Inclusion Criteria:

- Articles and reports that specifically discuss the coercive diplomacy of India against Nepal.
- Content that provides analysis, background information, or detailed reporting on the events and their consequences.
- Diverse viewpoints, including supportive, neutral, and critical perspectives on the coercive diplomacy.

Academic Research:

The researcher has research articles studied on the Indian coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015. The research articles on Indian coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015 provided valuable insights into the causes and consequences of this diplomatic episode. It provided a historical overview of the relationship between India and Nepal, including past diplomatic incidents and agreements. This context is crucial for understanding the underlying factors that led to India's coercive diplomacy in 2015.

By critically examining and synthesizing insights from multiple research articles, researcher develops a comprehensive understanding of the causes and consequences of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015. This approach allows for a nuanced analysis that considers historical context, strategic motivations, and policy instruments, impacts on Nepal, regional reactions, and potential pathways for diplomatic resolution.

3.7 Data Analysis

The data analysis for this study employs a thematic analysis approach, guided by the principles of critical realism and post-positivism. The process involves systematically identifying, organizing, and interpreting patterns and themes within qualitative data. Data from in-depth interviews, archival documents, and media analysis are transcribed and coded using both inductive and deductive coding techniques. Inductive coding allows for emergent themes to surface from the data, while deductive coding ensures alignment with the study's theoretical framework. The researcher triangulates findings across diverse data sources, such as interviews, government reports, and media articles, to enhance reliability and validity. Analytical tools are employed to explore the underlying mechanisms and causal relationships that drive India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal, with attention to contextual factors like historical ties, power dynamics, and regional geopolitics.

Reflexivity is maintained throughout the analysis to account for potential biases, ensuring that the findings offer a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the causes and consequences of coercive diplomacy in the 2015 India-Nepal context.

CHAPTER IV

CONCEPTS AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

4.1 Defining Coercive Diplomacy

Coercive diplomacy is one of the most intriguing and common practices of conducting inter-state relations and embodies the essence of the art of diplomacy: achieving political objectives and fostering a state's national interest without waging a war. It should be remarked that coercive diplomacy offers an alternative to reliance on military action; it is based on the threat of force rather than the use of force in order to get other actors to comply with one's wishes (Ilario, 2011).

Coercive diplomacy (CD) is defined as the use of threats and limited force to make an adversary halt a course of action it has embarked on, or undo what has been done already. It is differentiated into defensive and offensive uses. Defensive CD covers "efforts to persuade an opponent to stop or reverse an action," while in the offensive variant, "coercive threats can be employed aggressively to persuade a victim to give up something of value without putting up resistance.

As per George (1994) coercive diplomacy is a coercive tactic used to counter an adversary's attempts to alter the status quo in his advantage. He makes a distinction between coercive diplomacy and deterrence, a tactic that uses threats to stop an

enemy from initiating a harmful activity. There are three distinct goals of diplomacy: to just stop an adversary's action, to reverse previously taken action, and to end the adversary's hostile behaviour by calling for a change in the structure of the regime.

Instead of relying solely on military force, coercive diplomacy is an option. Instead of pounding an adversary into submission, it aims to persuade them to renounce aggression. Coercive diplomacy stresses the use of threats of punishment if the adversary does not agree with what is asked, in contrast to the blunt use of force to resist an adversary.

Feaver and Lorber (2010, p. 8) states that the economic sanctions are a tool - a particularly important if controversial tool of coercive diplomacy. It refers to any efforts by one international actor to get another international actor to act in a way that the second international actor would not otherwise choose to act (Feaver & Lorber, 2010).

Most of coercive diplomacy involves pressure short of the use of force and the use of economic sanctions looms especially large in the history of coercion, dating all the way back to ancient times. For example, when Athens imposed a trade boycott on Sparta’s ally Megara in 432 BCE, they were imposing economic sanctions in the service of coercive diplomacy (hastening the onset of the Peloponnesian War in the

process) and in doing so they confronted challenges that would be familiar to any government leader since.

Coercive diplomacy was first used after the Second World War ended in 1995. The two superpower blocs exploited it to prevent a great power war (United States and Russia). It was employed by Western allies to prevent the Soviet Union from attacking Western territories and sparKing a series of wars. "After the fall of communism, strategies emerged to address human rights violations, civil wars, and the threat of weapons of mass destruction. This shaped the post-Cold War challenge of coercing states to act more peacefully and modify their behavior, especially after 1945 (Romeo, 2016)."

Coercive diplomacy is the diplomacy of threats. Rather than relying on negotiation, diplomats will sometimes threaten adverse consequences if a demand is not met. Sometimes this works; at other times, it does not.

Factors that influence the success of coercive diplomacy are similar to the factors that influence the success of other types of threats: the threat must be credible; the adverse consequence must be severe enough that the potential recipient really wants to avoid that outcome, and the demand must be clear and possible to meet. Even when these factors are present however, coercive diplomacy is risky.

As with other threats, it tends further damage relationships and lead to a potential backlash against the threat and/or the threatening country later on. Backlash can, at times, be limited if the threat is combined with more integrative or exchange-based approaches. If rewards for compliance are offered in addition to the threat for non-compliance, the chances of success may be greater; also if the threat is seen to be legitimate, the chances of success may also rise.

The term coercive diplomacy falls under the theory of coercion as a foreign policy tool. Byman and Waxman (2002) define define "coercive diplomacy as influencing an adversary's actions without resorting to brute force, where the adversary retains the capacity for organized violence but opts not to use it. The strategy relies on the threat of future military force and may include limited actual force to achieve its goals".

Nye Jr (2008) emphasizes that coercive diplomacy depends upon the credibility and the cost of the threat. "If a threat is not credible, it may fail to produce acceptance and it may lead to costs to the reputation of the coercing state. In general, threats are costly when they fail, not only in encouraging resistance in the target, but also in negatively influencing third parties observing the outcome."

According to George (1991) coercive diplomacy aims to achieve three goals: persuading an adversary to abandon its

objectives, reversing an action already taken, or forcing fundamental changes in its government. When developing a strategy, policymakers must decide what to demand, how to create urgency for compliance, what punishments to threaten, and whether to offer positive inducements to secure the adversary's acceptance of the demands.

4.2 The Conceptual Framework of the Study

George (1991) theory of coercive diplomacy, as outlined in his influential work "Forceful Persuasion: 'Coercive Diplomacy as an Alternative to War' provides a valuable theoretical framework for studying India's coercive diplomacy towards Nepal. This framework helps in understanding the key concepts, principles, and strategies involved in coercive diplomacy.

George defines coercive diplomacy as a deliberate and organized effort by a state to threaten or use military force or other forms of pressure in order to persuade an adversary to change its behaviour, policies, or decisions. In the case of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal, the framework helps in identifying the specific threats or pressures employed to achieve India's objectives.

The Coercive Spectrum:

George's framework recognizes that coercive diplomacy exists on a spectrum, with various degrees of force and pressure. It distinguishes between limited coercion, which involves relatively low-intensity measures such as economic sanctions or diplomatic protests, and full-scale military coercion, which involves the threat or use of military force. Researchers use this spectrum to assess the nature and intensity of India's coercive actions towards Nepal.

Coercive Leverage:

The theory emphasizes the importance of having coercive leverage, which is the capability to inflict costs or harm on the adversary. In the context of India-Nepal relations, researcher examines India's sources of leverage, such as political influence, and military capabilities, to understand how it sought to pressure Nepal.

Communication and Bargaining:

Coercive diplomacy involves a communication process between the coercer (India) and the target (Nepal). George's framework highlights the need for clear and credible communication of threats and demands. Researcher analyses the messages conveyed by India to Nepal and assess their credibility.

Exit Strategies:

George underscores the importance of providing the target with a face-saving exit strategy a way to comply with the coercer's demands without appearing weak or defeated. In the case of India's coercive diplomacy, researcher explores whether India offered Nepal a way to de-escalate tensions while saving face.

Escalation and Termination:

The theory recognizes that coercive diplomacy carries risks of escalation and unintended consequences. Researcher assess how India managed these risks during its interactions with Nepal and how it decided to terminate or de-escalate the crisis.

Outcomes and Success:

Researcher uses the framework to evaluate the outcomes of India's coercive diplomacy. Did India achieve its objectives? To what extent did Nepal comply with India's demands, and what were the long-term consequences of the coercive actions?

By applying George's theory of coercive diplomacy, researcher can systematically analyse India's actions, motivations, and strategies during the period of coercive diplomacy towards Nepal in 2015. This theoretical framework provides a structured approach to understanding the dynamics of

coercive diplomacy and its implications for international relations and diplomacy.

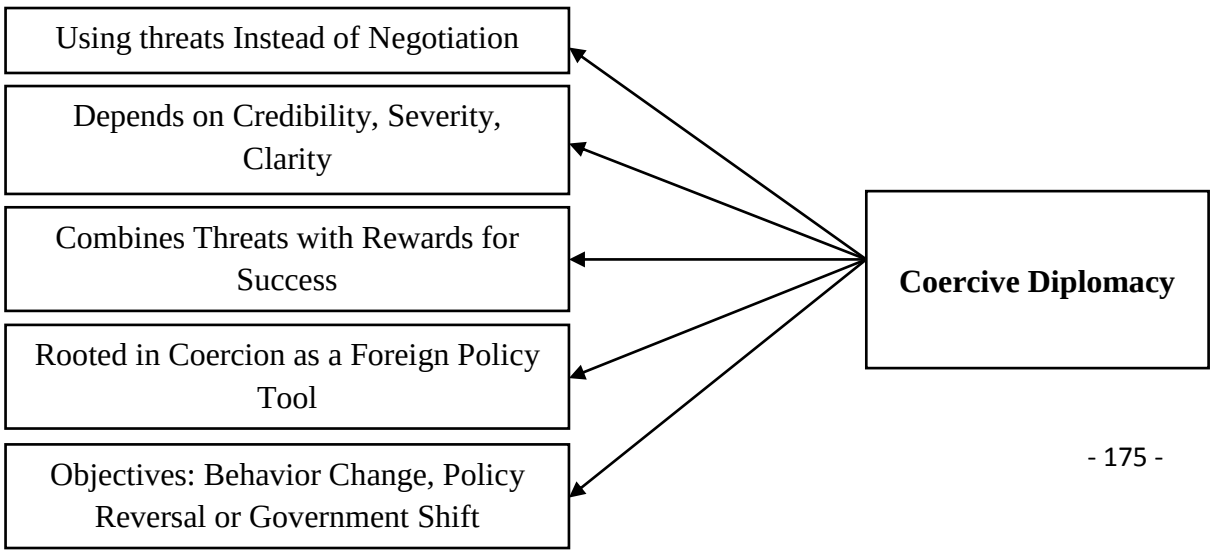
In the international relations literature, coercive diplomacy, at its core, has two characteristics: first, it is meant to change the target's behaviour; and second, it does so by threatening pain (including, but not necessarily the use of force) in limited amounts. In contrast to what Schelling (1970) describes as brute force, the purpose of coercion is not to eradicate the adversary, but rather cause him to adjust.

If force is used at all, it takes the form of an exemplary or symbolic use of military action, to demonstrate motivation and resolution to escalate to high levels of military action if necessary.

Hence, in coercive diplomacy, force is not employed as part of conventional military strategy, but as a component of a political-diplomatic strategy aimed at persuading the adversary to back down. It is a more flexible, psychological instrument in contrast to the 'physical, quick and decisive' use made in military strategy.

Figure 2

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework



- 175 -

4.3 Requirement for Success of Coercive Diplomacy

Among the numerous theories on coercive diplomacy, succinctly identifies the four key conditions the coercer must meet to maximize the chance of success to stop or undo acts of aggression:

- A threat of force to defeat the opponent or deny its objectives quickly with little cost.
- A deadline for compliance.
- An assurance to the adversary against future demands.
- An offer of inducements for compliance.

According to the Jakobsen (1998) the first requirement is to make the threat so great that non-compliance will be too costly for the resisting actors. The second requirement demands that after maximizing the credibility of the threat, the coercer must set a specific deadline, as failure to set a deadline for compliance "is likely to be interpreted as evidence that the coercer lacks the will to implement the threat". Assurance against new demands must also be carried out for greater chance of success. Jacobsen points out that the incentive to comply with the coercer's demands will be significantly downgraded if the resisting actor fears compliance will merely invite more demands. The last requirement for successful coercion is the effective use of inducements, which are important facilitators used to give more credibility and assurance.

4.4 Case Study on the Success of Coercive Diplomacy

President John F. Kennedy used coercive diplomacy successfully in 1962 when he was able to bring about a peaceful resolution to the Cuban Missile Crisis and avert possible warfare between the United States and the Soviet Union. When Kennedy leamed of the Soviet Union's attempt to deploy forty-two medium-range and twenty-four intermediate-range ballistic missiles into Cuba, he established a naval sanction and threatened an invasion of Cuba with force to remove the missiles already there.

Instead of resorting to a strictly military strategy to forcibly remove the missiles, Kennedy decided to use coercive diplomacy. He initiated this strategy by first using the 'Try-and-See" approach. The giant naval sanction, along with a massive buildup of U.S. military forces, was a message to Nikita Khrushchev to persuade him that the US was able and willing to use force if needed to remove this missile threat from Cuba. The sanction limited the showdown to Kennedy and Khruschev rather than develop into all-out war. Because of Kennedy's tough naval sanction, Khruschev "directed all Soviet vessels carrying missiles and other military equipment to Cuba to immediately turn back".

To intensify the coercive diplomacy strategy, Kennedy shifted from the "Try-and-See' approach to a hybrid of a virtual 'ultimatum' and a carrot-and-the stick approach. Kennedy addressed the sense of urgency about the growing hostile situation by standing firm and tightening the naval sanction as well as conveying to Khruschev the continued threat of a possible invasion of Cuba.

As a result of Kennedy's successful use of coercive diplomacy added to negotiated concessions, Khruschev agreed to remove missiles in place and to discontinue the deployment of new missiles into Cuba while the U.S. agreed to remove its Jupiter missiles stationed in Turkey and to call off any invasion of Cuba.

4.5 Case Study on the Failure of Coercive Diplomacy

During the 1990-91 Gulf War, coercive diplomacy failed to persuade Saddam Hussein to exit Kuwait and move his military forces back to Iraq; though the use of deterrence effectively convinced the Iraqi president that he could not invade further south into Saudi Arabia, it did little to expel him from Kuwait. Initially, the Bush administration along with the United Nations issued sanctions to pressure Iraq to withdraw troops inside Kuwait. The UN Security Council placed economic sanctions by imposing an sanction on Iraq's imports and exports.

This initial stage of the crisis was the United States' attempt to use the coercive diplomatic variant, 'Gradual Turning of the Screw to apply pressure on Saddam Hussein to comply to the demands to leave Kuwait.

Then the Bush administration, along with the UN Security Council, used the variant 'ultimatum' by setting a deadline of January 15, 1991, for the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait. When this deadline came and passed, without Saddam Hussein's compliance, Operation Desert Storm commenced and military force was used to remove Iraq's forces from Kuwait.

Despite the massive build-up of U.S. forces along the Saudi Arabia/Kuwait border, economic sanctions, and a declared deadline for withdrawal, Saddam Hussein failed to remove his forces. In this instance, coercive diplomacy failed, leading to the Gulf War, which concluded with the United States and coalition forces succeeding in removing Saddam Hussein's troops from Kuwait.

Thus, when implementing coercive diplomacy not only the benefits but also the aftermath must be considered. Especially in 21st century, every nation is interdependent so other forces by state actors may affect a nation's diplomacy

4.6 Coercive Diplomacy and Economic Sanction

In recent years, economic sanctions have fast become the tool of choice in coercive diplomacy. This type of diplomacy has been used by the United Nations, coalitions, and individual states, especially the United States. Sanctions usually need to be complemented by military, diplomatic, and information tools to achieve their national objectives.

Feaver and Lorber (2010) states that the economic sanctions are a tool a particularly important if controversial tool of coercive diplomacy. It refers to any efforts by one international actor to get another international actor to act in a way that the second international actor would not otherwise choose to act. Most of coercive diplomacy involves pressure short of the use of force and the use of economic sanctions looms especially large in the history of coercion, dating all the way back to ancient times.

For example, when Athens imposed a trade boycott on Sparta's ally Megara in 432 BCE, they were imposing economic sanctions in the service of coercive diplomacy (hastening the onset of the Peloponnesian War in the process) and in doing so they confronted challenges that would be familiar to any government leader since.

Economic sanctions transmit pain onto a target- in this case, hitting the target where it especially hurts, the pocketbook - in an effort to change the target's behaviour. Practitioners have

seen fit to resort to economic sanctions with increasing frequency over the last several decades.

In the process, practitioners have refined the tool - the "new financial levers". Yet economic sanctions have particular strengths and weaknesses as coercive tools and the literature on sanctions is marked by deep skepticism about their utility.

The most obvious and yet perhaps the most profound characteristic of economic sanctions is that they constitute a double-edged sword. The imposition of economic sanctions imposes economic pain on the target, but also on the sender. The target is denied a certain amount of commerce, but that commerce is also denied to the sender. In this way, economic sanctions are vivid contests in pain.

CHAPTER V

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS AND THE CONSTITUTION DRAFTING PROCESS

This chapter discusses the historical and political context leading up to the events analysed in the subsequent chapters.

5.1 An Overview of Political Events of Nepal Post 2006

Nepal is a mid-sized South Asian nation neighbouring India and China. It is an unfathomably assorted nation by all measures, counting geology, ethnicity, dialect, religion, and caste. For most of its history, Nepal was represented by an arrangement of genetic rulers. Records say the Gopalas and Mahishapalas accepted to have been the most punctual rulers with their capital at Matatirtha, the south-west corner of the Kathmandu Valley. From the 7th or 8th Century B.C. the Kirantis are said to have ruled the valley. Their popular Lord Yalumber is indeed said within the epic, 'Mahabharat'.

"Around 300 A.D. the Lichhavis arrived from northern India and ousted the Kirantis. One of the legacies of the Lichhavis is the Changu Narayan Sanctuary close Bhaktapur, a UNESCO World heritage site (Culture), which dates back to the 5th Century. Within the early 7th Century, Amshuvarma, the primary Thakuri ruler took over the position of authority from his father-in-law who was a Lichhavi. He hitched off his girl Bhrikuti to the popular Tibetan Lord TsongTsenGampo in this way building up great relations with Tibet. The Lichhavis

brought craftsmanship and engineering to the valley but the brilliant age of inventiveness arrived in 1200 A.D with the Mallas" (MOFA, 2019).

Amid their 550 year run the show, the Mallas built various sanctuaries and amazing royal residences with pleasant squares. It was moreover amid their run the show that society and the cities got to be well organized; devout celebrations were presented and writing, music and craftsmanship were energized. After the passing of YakshaMalla, the valley was separated into three Kingdoms: Kathmandu (Kantipur), Bhaktapur (Bhadgaon) and Patan (Lalitpur). Around this time, the Nepal as we know it nowadays was isolated into almost 46 free realms. One among these was the Kingdom of Gorkha with a Shah ruler. Much of Kathmandu Valley’s history around this time was recorded by Capuchin monks who lived within the valley on their way in and out of Tibet (MOFA, 2019).

An yearning Gorkha Ruler named Prithvi Narayan Shah set out on a overcoming mission that driven to the vanquish of all the Kingdoms within the valley (counting Kirtipur which was an independent state) by 1769. Rather than attaching the recently procured states to his Kingdom of Gorkha, Prithvi Narayan chosen to move his capital to Kathmandu building up the Shah tradition which ruled bound together Nepal from 1769 AD to 2008 AD.

The history of the Gorkha state goes back to 1559 when Dravya Shah built up a Kingdom in a zone mainly occupied by Magars. Amid the 17th and early 18th centuries, Gorkha preceded a moderate extension, prevailing different states whereas fashioning unions with others. Prithvi Narayan devoted himself at an early age to the success of the Kathmandu Valley. Recognizing the danger of the British Raj in India, he rejected European evangelists from the nation and for more than a century, Nepal remained in isolation.

Amid the mid-19th Century Jung Bahadur Rana got to be Nepal's to begin with prime serve to use outright control consigning the Shah lord to insignificant nonentities. He begun a innate rule of the Rana Prime Minister that kept going for 104 a long time. The Ranas were toppled in a popular government development of the early 1950s with back from the-then ruler of Nepal, Ruler Tribhuvan. Before long after the oust of the Ranas, Ruler Tribhuvan was restored as the Head of the State.

In early 1959, Tribhuvan's succesor Ruler Mahendra issued a modern structure, and the primary law based decisions for a national gathering were held. The Nepali Congress Party was triumphant and their pioneer, Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala shaped a government and served as prime serve. But by 1960, King Mahendra had changed his intellect and dissolved Parliament, expelling the primary majority rule government.

After numerous a long time of battle when the political parties were prohibited, they at last gathered sufficient strength to begin a People's movement in 1990.

"Clearing way for popular government, the then-King Birendra acknowledged sacred changes and set up a multiparty parliament with Ruler as the Head of State and an official Prime Serve. In May 1991, Nepal held its to begin with parliamentary races. Be that as it may, consistent infighting and factionalism between and inside political parties driven to political flimsiness and frail administration" (TCC, 2014).

In 1996, the Communist Organization of Nepal (Maoist), a minor Marxist party, launched an armed uprising against the government. Nationalism, public well-being, and people's living conditions and standards were among the demands. The majority of the demands were in line with the state policies outlined in Article 26 of the constitution.

"There were only a few revolutionary demands, such as the abolition of monarchy and the replacement of monarchy with republic, all of which ask for a new constitution to be drafted by a constituent assembly elected by the people" (Krämer, 2003). The rebellion spread across the country, wreaKing havoc on police stations and other government installations. During the ten-year struggle, more than 13,000 individuals were slain (TCC, 2014). Meanwhile, King Birendra

was slain along with his entire family on June 1, 2001, and King Gyanendra came to the throne.

Following a spate of attacks by Maoist insurgents across Nepal, King Gyanendra declared a state of emergency on November 23, 2001, in accordance with Article 115 of the constitution. It was passed by the House of Representatives with an overwhelming majority of 7 votes on February 21, 2002, and it was effective for six months from the date of issuance, or until May 26, 2002. As the six-month emergency period came to a conclusion, it became evident that Prime Minister Deuba would not be able to secure the two-thirds majority required in Parliament to extend the emergency.

All opposition parties were against it, and there was even more dissent within Deuba's own Nepali Congress, particularly from the camp of Girija Prasad Koirala, Deuba's predecessor as prime minister and party president, who made it obvious that he wanted to be prime minister again at any cost. Deuba, citing Koirala's argument that the administration had to toe the party line, requested that the House of Representatives be dissolved and new legislative elections be held on November 13, 2002, in accordance with Article 53(4) of the Constitution. The prime minister's proposals were followed by the King (TCC, 2014).

On the political front, Nepal suffered more setbacks in 2002. Despite the declaration of a state of emergency on November 26, 2001, the maoist insurgency persisted. The war

was accompanied by widespread violations of human rights, including the dissolution of parliament, the replacement of democratically elected local bodies by government officials, a split in the Nepali Congress Party, and the postponement of the November 13, 2002 general election. For Nepalese, a new conversation with the participation of political parties, the King, and the insurgent Communist Political Parties of Nepal was the best hope (Maoist)" (Krämer, 2003).

"King used article 127 of Nepal's 2047 constitution to oust the elected Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba on October 4, 2002. It was dubbed an act of regression by the major political parties, who began to criticize it. The King, on the other hand, was unconcerned. After a few days, he replaced Lokendra Bahadur Chand as Prime Minister with Surya Bahadur Thapa. The major parties were outraged by King's action (TCC, 2014).

Due to widespread resistance, King Gyanendra re-appointed Sher Bahadur Deuba as Prime Minister on July 2, 2004, with a royal proclamation calling for a House of Representatives election by the end of April 2005. Nepal's King Gyanendra dismissed Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba's administration on February 1, 2005. He explained his decision by citing Deuba's failure to hold elections and his incapacity to deal with the tenth anniversary of the Maoist uprising."

According to the study following King Gyanendra's takeover, the Nepali Congress, CPN (UML), Nepali Congress (Democratic), People's Front Nepal, Nepal Labour and Peasants Party, Nepal Sadbhwana Party (Anandidevi), and United Leftist Front formed the seven-party alliance for the first time on May 8, 2005 to protest against his rule. The royal administration retaliated by making a flurry of arrests.

Despite major doubts about the royal regime's legitimacy, King Gyanendra chose to hold municipal elections on February 8, 2006. Nearly all political parties boycotted the elections, fuelled by fierce domestic and international opposition, while the Maoists attacked some candidates and drove many more to abandon their candidacy. Many Nepalis and major contributors such as the United States, the European Union, and Japan have denounced the results of the municipal elections, which had barely a 20 percent voter turnout, as illegitimate, defective, and unrepresentative.

The Seven-Party Alliance publicly disclosed their shared understanding and commitment to work with the Constituent Assembly to provide a political outlet for the CPN (Maoist armed)'s insurrection by restoring the House of Representatives. On November 26, 2005, Nepali Congress, CPN (UML), and CPN (Maoist) reached a twelve-point agreement in New Delhi, India, with India's implicit assistance.

The Maoists agreed to multiparty democracy and freedom of speech, and the SPA agreed to hold elections to a constituent assembly, as requested by the Maoists. The democratic" political parties, the Maoists, and the military-backed monarchy became embroiled in a triangle confrontation as a result (TCC, 2014).

According to Dixit (2006), "the 12-Point Agreement between political parties and Maoists was hammered out as a result of the people's strong yearning for peace as the country's foremost necessity (p. 14). Following the agreement, the SPA's political groups, who had been staging anti-government rallies on a regular basis since October 2002, sometimes individually and sometimes collectively, increased their agitation in the early months of 2006" (Sijapati, 2007).

According to the royal administration retaliated by making a flurry of arrests. King Gyanendra chose to hold municipal elections on February 8, 2006, despite severe issues about the royal regime's legitimacy. Nearly all political parties boycotted the elections, fueled by fierce domestic and international opposition, while the Maoists attacked some candidates and drove many more to abandon their candidacy.

Many Nepalis and major contributors such as the United States, the European Union, and Japan have denounced the results of the municipal elections, which had barely a 20 percent

voter turnout, as illegitimate, defective, and unrepresentative. Following that, the SPA and the Maoists confirmed their 12-point agreement in late March 2006 and prepared for a new series of protests in April. The SPA called for a four-day state-wide general strike on April 6-9, and the Maoists declared a ceasefire in Kathmandu but maintained their actions throughout the country."

The second people's movement officially began on April 10th, when professionals and public servants joined it despite government warnings. People from all walks of life, including caste, community, ethnic, and religious groups, supported the second people's movement, known as Jana Andolan II.

Many people from the Hindu, Muslim, Christian, and janjati (indigenous ethnicities) communities, as well as those from wealthy and impoverished backgrounds, attended the protests. Professional civil society groups, such as workers, peasants, students, government servants, doctors, attorneys, teachers, and bank executives, also backed the movement. People sprang from the shanties all around the country. The entire country was in upheaval, with residents from all walks of life banding together to demand a restoration to peace and democracy."

As the protests progressed, an increasing number of people joined the demonstrations. According to unofficial estimates, the

movement drew 100,000 to 500,000 people in Kathmandu alone, accounting for more than 10 percent of the city's population. On April 8, the royal monarchy imposed a curfew and issued instructions to murder dissidents on sight. The protests continued, despite their limited size and chaotic nature.

The SPA declared an unending round of protests on April 9th, as well as a tax boycott. The government, for its part, stated that because the protests were being joined by Maoists, it would intensify its enforcement mechanisms, particularly curfews. The royal government's use of excessive force and cruelty to subdue the protests resulted in multiple deaths.

Dixit (2006) argues that "the parties would have struggled to attract four or five thousand people to their rallies four months prior to the second people's movement. Indeed, for a period, civil society was responsible for keeping the torch of opposition alive. The sole cause for this was widespread dissatisfaction and frustration among Nepalese citizens as a result of political parties' irresponsibility and lack of accountability following the reinstatement of the democratic multiparty system in 1990".

Even if the extent of the movement in terms of citizen participation was potentially 8 to 100 times larger and over a much longer period, there were 22 unfortunate deaths in the famous Andolan of 2006" (Krämer, 2003). "The country's

economic and political life was crippled during those 19 days of protests, forcing the King to declare defeat. It began with the King's address to the country on April 21, 2006, in which he requested that the SPA recommend a candidate for prime minister, only for the SPA leaders to reject the recommendation following heavy pressure from civil society and the general public.

On April 24, 2006, the monarch granted some of the SPA's requests and reinstated the former House of Representatives, as well as asking the SPA to "carry the duty of leading the country toward national unity and prosperity while preserving permanent peace and safeguarding multiparty democracy" (Sijapati, 2007).

Similar to the King's announcements in October 2002 and February 2005, the House of Representatives issued a unilateral proclamation on May 18 seizing supreme control over the state. The only difference is that legislative proclamations are supported by public power, whereas royal proclamations are based on the strength of the security forces. They were, however, entirely self-imposed and assumed" (Shrestha, 2006).

The statement was historic in that it formally ended the King's usurped legislative and administrative powers. It also marked the end of the monarchy's ties with the army. "The author states that having followed the reinstatement of Parliament, the SPA proclaimed that Girija Prasad Koirala

would lead the new government and that elections to a constituent assembly would be held at a later date, according to the author.

The Maoists reacted angrily to the SPA's move, warning that they would continue to fight government forces. They claimed that simply restoring the parliament would not solve the country's problems, and instead demanded that the monarchy be abolished first, followed by the election of a constituent assembly.

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala announced the formation of a new cabinet on May 2, 2006, after a series of talks with the Maoists. The cabinet included the Nepali Congress, the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) or CPN (UML), the Nepali Congress (Democratic), and the United Left Front. The arrest of four ministers from the ousted royalist government on May 12, 2006, was followed by investigations into alleged human rights violations by the army during the April movement.

In the meantime, the Maoists responded by announcing a unilateral three-month ceasefire in Nepal, which helped lead to the 21 November 2006 Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the 8 December 2006 Agreement on Monitoring the Management of Arms and Armies, thus ending the decade-long civil war.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of 2006 appeared to reflect the new re-distribution of power within Nepali polity and society. The new political settlement was to some extent horizontally inclusive as it included the Maoists and their main constituencies" (Goodhand & Walton, 2019).

Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007 promulgated on 15 January 2007 by the House of Representative. After which, it dissolves itself. With the formation of an interim legislature incorporating mainstream parties and Maoists, Nepal's peace process hinged on writing a constitution that permanently ends the conflict, addresses the widespread grievances that fuelled it and guards against the eruption of new violence.

Most political actors accepted the Maoist demand for a constituent assembly (CA) tasked with framing a new dispensation, although royalists are worried over the future of the monarchy, which has in effect been suspended. The major challenge was to maintain leadership-level consensus while building a broad-based and inclusive process that limits room for spoilers and ensures long-term popular legitimacy" (ICC, 2007).

The interim constitution provides a framework for constitutional change and codified the guiding concepts reached during previous negotiations. The development of the new constitution must take into account the twin goals of

peacekeeping and long-term political transformation. It provided an opportunity to integrate the Maoists into mainstream democratic politics, decide the monarchy's fate, and address long-standing ethnic, regional, and caste divisions.

A few of SPA and Maoist leaders controlled closed-door negotiations; limited parliamentary scrutiny did not even extend to accepting the concept of an opposition. The political compromise, as expressed in the Interim Constitution of 2007, failed to integrate the concerns of all factions. The interim constitution gave the prime minister and cabinet broad powers with little checks and balances, and the idea of separation of powers was weakened by the compromised independence of institutions like the judiciary. Provisions such as the unfettered power to grant pardons allowed the political class to sweep past wrongdoings under the rug.

day after the promulgation of the interim statute, a group of Madhesi activists under the Upendra Yadav-led Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum-Nepal (then a socio-intellectual NGO) burnt copies of the interim constitution at Maitighar Mandala, Kathmandu. The demand of the movement was complete regional autonomy, rights of self-determination, and a single Madhes province (*Ek Madhes Ek Pradesh)"* (Jha, 2015).

In January 2007, people of the Terai staged major protests against the government's prejudice towards Madhesis, which

resulted in more than 30 deaths. Despite the prime minister's pledges, tensions rose again in March 2007, when supporters of a significant Madhesi organization, the Madhesi People's Rights Forum (MPRF), clashed with Maoists, resulting in the massacre of roughly 30 Maoist cadres. Following this, the Terai saw months of upheaval, with intermittent strikes, shutdowns (bandhs), outbreaks of violence, and the rise of armed organizations" (TCC, 2008).

The Madhesi groups at the margins who felt excluded, culminating in violent mobilisation in the form of the 2007 Madhes Movement (Goodhand & Walton, 2019). This brought most significant changes in Nepali politics since the 2006 People's Movement is the emergence of the 'Madhes' as a political force (ACHR, 2009). According to Hachhethu (2007) "the post-Janandolan II transitional governance arrangements provided some benefits to Janjatis, women, and Dalits, but none to the Madhesis. Thus, the Madhesis' hatred of the Nepali state for its lengthy ignorance and indifference to their issues resulted in the Madhesi explosion."

"India encouraged Madhesi communities, seeing them as a counterweight to a Maoist-dominated settlement. These disturbances also gave opportunities for mainstream party central elites to consolidate their authority"(Goodhand & Walton, 2019). "Cross-border relations and political sponsorship

from India, according to the author, have been crucial to historical and contemporary political movements in the Terai. Similarly, during the anti-Rana insurgency in the 1950s, Madhesi organizations crossed the border back and forth to avoid state reprisal".

The government was forced to accede and enact an amendment declaring Nepal a federal democracy as a result of the Madhes protest. As a result, the Interim Constitution was revised twice less than three months after it was promulgated on January 15, 2007.

As a consequence, the Madhes uprising is credited with bringing about federalism, redistribution, and the enlargement of Terai's voting seats" (Hachhethu, 2007). "Because of its larger population, the Terai's seats were raised from 205 to 240. The call for federalism expressed a desire for local self-rule and the development of a governmental unit in which the Madhesis could exercise control" (ACHR, 2009, pp. 2-3). According to the authors, "the demand for electoral reform reflected a desire for shared rule at the center with real representation. However, whilst these were the obvious difficulties, the Madhesi ambition for respect, dignity, and equal citizenship in a previously discriminatory system was at the base".

The election for the constituent assembly was originally set for June 2007. "The election was postponed until November

2007 due to a lack of preparedness by political parties and insufficient political will on both sides, as well as the ongoing upheaval in the Terai. The administration struck several high-profile agreements with leading Madhesi and Janajati groups in late summer, vowing to meet key requests for increased inclusion in the political and electoral processes in order to prepare for the winter election" (TCC, 2008).

The Maoists walked out of government in September 2007, citing unmet demands such as changes to the electoral system, the formation of a republic, and the fulfilment of earlier agreements. The mainstream political parties (most notably the Nepali Congress and the CPN-UML) and the Maoists engaged in tense negotiations over the next few months.

The election was postponed a second time due to a lack of agreement. After months of squabbling, the political parties finally came to an agreement in December 2007, which included a change to the election legislation as well as a clause to abolish the monarchy during the constituent assembly's first session. The Maoists re-joined the cabinet, and a new election date was set for April 10, 2008.

The protests by disadvantaged people over the government's near-complete failure to implement any of its earlier commitments threatened to undermine the election. On

February 13, 2008, a 16-day nationwide strike in the Terai was called to put pressure on the administration. The United Democratic Madhesi Front (UDMF), a coalition of three Madhesi parties comprising the MPRF, Sadbhawana Party, and Terai Madhes Democratic Party, was in charge of the strike.

The establishment of a single, independent Madhes state with the right to self-determination, as well as a revision to the election law, were the UDMF's key demands, according to the report. The strike was vigorously enforced, restricting the supply of essential products to Kathmandu and other mountainous areas of Nepal. Throughout the strike, protestors battled with police on a regular basis in numerous Terai areas, killing at least five people and injuring hundreds more. Finally, on February 28, the government and the UDMF negotiated an agreement, ending all protests and promising that the groups will participate in the election.

5.2 Constitution Drafting Process

The nation's first-ever constituent assembly election was held on April 10, 2008, under a mixed electoral system combining a first-past-the-post (FPTP) system and a proportional representation (PR) system to provide for both geographical and party-based representation, according to the report. Many commentators were surprised that the Maoists did

better than expected, landing in first place with 38.2 percent of the total elected seats.

The Nepali Congress came in second with 19.1 percent, followed by the CPN-UML with 18.1 percent, and the Madhesi People's Rights Forum with 8.8 percent. Because of the high number of parties competing in the election, an FPTP seat may be won with as low as 30 percent of the vote; as a result, the Maoists won 50 percent of the FPTP seats but only 29.9 percent of the PR vote. For the first time on May 28, Nepal's constituent assembly met and voted to abolish the monarchy, transforming the country into a federal democratic republic.

Following the constituent assembly election, hopes were high that Nepal's new political leaders would continue to discuss the significant challenges ahead of them, including attempting to address exceptional commitments in the peace process (particularly those relating to former Maoist combatants and security sector reform), drafting an inclusive and democratic new constitution, and implementing the commitments made during the Constituent Assembly elections.

The election, on the other hand, proved to be the end of the "politics of consensus" that had characterized the pre-election era and permitted development up to that point (TCC, 2014). Political leaders could no longer function under the assumption of rough political equivalency among the major groups,

according to the report, because they were confronted with the harsh reality of election outcomes.

The Nepali Congress and the CPM-UML, fearing that their future control would be jeopardized, accused the Maoists rigging the election with violence and fraud. The Maoists, for their part, interpreted the results as an unequivocal mandate for their party, despite receiving less than 40 percentage of the vote. The Maoists' unwillingness to support G.P. Koirala, the senior Nepali Congress leader and their peace process counterpart, as the country's first president exacerbated the deterioration of relations between the major parties.

While the constituent assembly election advanced the country to the next phase of the transition process, it also had a number of major and negative repercussions on the country's political dynamics. The breakdown of consensus politics, increasing internal fragmentation of political parties, leading to party splits in some cases, the development of a zero-sum approach and highly polarized political environment, and the rise of long periods of deadlock overseen by a series of weak governments were all examples.

The Maoists created a coalition government in August 2008, after several months of delay as the election results were thoroughly digested, with Prachanda as Prime Minister. His time

in office, however, was brief. A series of contentious decisions culminated in his decision in May 2009 to fire Chief of Army Staff Gen. Rookmangud Katawal and replace him with a candidate perceived to be more sympathetic to the Maoists and willing to negotiate a better deal on the integration of former Maoist combatants into the Nepal Army.

At the request of a coalition of non-Maoist political parties and with reported help from India, newly elected President Ram BaranYadav overruled the prime minister's decision after only a few months in office and with an ambiguously defined function in the interim constitution. According to the report, Prachanda resigned in protest of the president's decision, and the Maoist party withdrew from the cabinet, resulting in a period of political turmoil.

The Maoists went into active opposition, launching a multiphase series of protest programs both in the Legislature-Parliament and on the streets, while an effectively “anti-Maoist” governing coalition of 22 political parties took power, with new Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal at the helm and perceived Indian support.

The new coalition administration ruled over near-complete political gridlock for almost a year. It was impossible to go forward on critical peace process topics like the integration and

rehabilitation of former Maoist combatants without the Maoists, and it was also impossible to get an agreement on key constitutional concerns without them. According to the study, the original two-year deadline for creating a new constitution expired in May 2010 and was extended in the first of a series of extensions.

Due to the political parties' inability to agree on a new prime minister or for either side to achieve sufficient electoral results in the Legislature-Parliament to install a replacement, Prime Minister M.K. Nepal was forced to resign in June 2010, but stayed on as a caretaker for an additional seven months.

Factionalism within the parties aggravated the problem, producing fissures that might be exploited by other parties. This dynamic resulted in Jhala Nath Khanal replacing Madhav Kumar Nepal as Prime Minister in August 2011, despite the fact that they were both from the same political party.

Despite the ongoing political impasse, the constituent assembly was able to make some progress during this time, according to the report. To make its work easier, 11 topic committees and three procedural committees were formed soon after it was founded. Many of these committees met on a regular basis, and some of them took their work seriously enough to produce lengthy reports covering their respective areas of responsibility.

Issues on which the committees could not agree were subsequently submitted to a high-level dispute resolution subcommittee of senior political leaders, who were supposed to make a final decision, showing that high-level officials retained more influence than the constituent assembly itself.

Federalism and state restructuring, government structure, the electoral system, and concerns linked to fundamental rights were rapidly identified as the most contentious subjects, according to the research. The assembly's public outreach was likewise lacKing. One round of public consultations was poorly organized and implemented, and little information regarding the constituent assembly's work and accomplishments was consistently shared with the public.

The time was also marked by an increase in identity-based political engagement. Due in part to an extensive quota system placed on the proportional representation seats; Nepal's constituent assembly election produced the most diverse elected body in the country's history. According to the study, the shift toward inclusivity was represented in the election of Ram Baran Yadav as Nepal's first president and Paramananda Jha as vice president, both Madhesi men, a development that would have been difficult to envisage previously. However, both the state and existing political parties failed to meet the high aspirations of Nepalis belonging to marginalized groups such as Madhesis, Janajatais, women, and Dalits.

Following the election, the Madhesi parties in the Terai experienced a succession of severe personality-based fractures and were unable to restore the cohesive spirit that the Madhesi Andolan had unleashed. The subject of federalism, and whether new states should be constituted along "ethnic" or "geographic" lines, became a prominent point of dispute in this setting.

A state restructuring commission was established in 2011 to help settle the issue (as required by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement), however the committee was split, releasing a narrowly won majority report in favor of identity-based federalism and a minority report opposing it.

After a series of government transitions, a new political accord was established in November 2011 that aided in resuming the transition process. Under the leadership of Maoist leader Baburam BhatTerai, a coalition government was formed with the capacity and political will to handle critical unresolved peace process concerns.

The constituent assembly's term had been extended four times by early 2012, with the Supreme Court ruling any future extensions unlawful. As a result, the final deadline of May 28, 2012, began to loom big over the political process. Efforts were made to expedite the complex legal prerequisites for the

adoption of a new constitution, as well as to resolve lingering controversies.

Federalism remained the most challenging of them. According to the report, “after years of squabbling, Nepal's major political parties attempted to achieve an agreement on a new federal structure. Identity-based campaigners, on the other hand, saw the deadline as their last chance to secure their rights. As a result, a number of protest programs, both in favor of and against identity-based federalism, were launched, resulting in nationwide strikes, particularly in the Far Western area, which was shut down for almost a month.

A political deal reached on May 15 proved to be too little, too late. Insufficient effort had been made to inform the public about the compromise achieved or to assure that protesting organizations would accept it. As a result, it was almost immediately rejected by street activists, prompting the Maoist and Madhesi parties who had signed it to withdraw their support.

The days proceeding up to the constitutional deadline were stressful and politicized, according to the report, with real worries of severe violence breaKing out in numerous regions around the country. Senior political leaders were unable to reach

a final agreement against this backdrop, and expectations for a last-minute constitution, or even a draft one, were crushed.

The Maoist Prime Minister Baburam BhatTerai, accusing the Nepali Congress (NC) and United-Marxist Leninist Party (UML) for causing the failure of the CA, unceremoniously announced the dissolution of the CA at midnight on the 27th May 2012 (Bhandari, 2013). With no new constitution promulgated by the deadline, the country descended into a prolonged period of constitutional crisis and violent political infighting. The identity-based protests that had erupted across the country died away as soon as the deadline was lifted.

Positively, there had been no violence, while the protests had heightened inter-communal tensions in some parts of the country, as well as anxieties about what might happen in the future as a result of resumed state reorganization negotiations (TCC, 2014).

According to Bhandari (2013) “The failure of Nepal's Constituent Assembly (CA) is mainly due to four factors: the CA’s redundant role, poor discourse, constitutional crisis, and a democratic deficit. CA members often prioritized political party loyalty over engaging with democratic principles and crafting a constitution. This stifled individual contributions and

meaningful constitutional dialogue, ultimately leading to the failure of Nepal's leadership to draft a new Constitution.”

Identity federalism is a major concern, as is power allocation, which is a difficult problem to solve. The State Restructuring Commission proposed two possibilities, none of which was acceptable to diverse ethnic minorities for a variety of reasons, but both pushed for semi-independent ethnic-identity-based areas.

Dixit (2012) agrees, stating that “the most important concerns of federalism, governance, separation of powers, and electoral system remained unsolved and bundled at the end. The desertion of the assembly, according to the author, exemplified how the house was manipulated by new political forces intent on solidifying their power rather than crafting the fundamental law.”

The Unified Communist Party of Nepal (UCPN) (Maoist) Party and, more recently, the United Democratic Madhesi Front exemplified this ultra-utilitarian attitude. The majority of the time spent on constitution drafting was a ruse, based on a lack of jurisprudence, a lack of awareness of comparative south Asian experience, and a surplus of donor funds for international travels and in-country campaigning.

India's role in the federalism debate had an impact on the CA's independence. There was a significant disparity between what the people wanted, as evidenced by public opinion polls, and what the CA members planned to enact on the subject of federalism. The CA became a dividing arena rather than a place of compromise as a result of differing demands from political parties, classes, linguistic groups, regions, castes, and races.

The CA's own norms of procedure discouraged the spirit of compromise that is so vital in constitution-writing. To present their proposals to the plenary, the 10 thematic committees needed only a 50 percentage majority, ensuring maximalist grandstanding from the start. Because government formation usually took precedence, adding rancor and unprincipled compromise, the fact that both the CA and the Legislature-Parliament had the same members proved catastrophic.

Divisions between and within several of the major political parties grew in the aftermath of the constituent assembly's dissolution. The Maoist party's mounting disagreements resulted in a formal split, with Mohan Baidya creating a new, more hardline Maoist party and saying the UCPN(M) had gone off track.

UCPN (Maoist), Nepal Congress, CPN (UML), and Madhesi Janadhikar Forum, the four major parties participating in CA-I, held rounds of negotiations (Loktantrik). On March 13,

2013, the parties signed an 11-point settlement to end the constitutional crisis, culminating in the formation of an Interim Election Council (IEC) headed by a caretaker administration led by Supreme Court Chief Justice Khil Lal Regmi.

The IEC set November 19, 2013, as the new date for CA-II elections, roughly 18 months after the death of the CA-I. Despite some initial difficulties and delays, the 2013 election was a success, with a record 79.82 percent voter turnout, including more than half of female voters (Election Commission of Nepal 2013 as cited in IDEA, 2015).

Despite the turbulent months following the dissolution of the CA-I, everyone interviewed in the 2015 KIIs praised the interim government's successful elections. According to them, the successful transition demonstrated that the parties, despite their differences on issues, were willing to achieve a compromise in order to advance the constitution-building process (IDEA, 2015). The CA-II election used the same electoral system as the CA-I, which is a mixed electoral system that combines FPTP and PR. The number of seats in each constituency remained the same 240 FPTP seats and 335 PR seats, with 26 seats to be appointed by the Council of Ministers after the election. In comparison to 2008, the election results showed a substantial shift.

In comparison to their past performance, the Maoists and identity-based parties fared poorly, while the NC and CPM-

UML resurrected. The Rastriya Prajatantra Party-Nepal, the only party to take an explicit stance in favor of overturning many of Nepal's key political transition decisions (most notably, the dissolution of the monarchy), likewise saw a considerable increase in vote share. The Nepali Congress gets 26 percent of the vote, the CPM UML gets 24 percent, the Maoists get 15 percent, and the RPP Nepal gets 7 percent.

According to the study by IDSA, “the four major parties agreed to a four-point pact on December 24, 2013, in which they committed to: a) form a committee comprised of their senior leaders to aid in the finalization of the peace process and constitution drafting; and b) secure the constitution's promulgation within a year. The CA-II was supposed to reopen for work on January 22, 2014, and resume the task of creating a constitution. The Legislative-Parliament elected Sushil Koirala of the Nepali Congress as Prime Minister three months after the election. The CA-II accepted the CA Rules 2014 on March 21, clearing the path for the writing of the constitution”.

Having followed this, on March 28, 2014, the CA-II decided to adopt the agreements reached by the CA-I and establish five new committees: the Constitutional Records Study and Determination Committee (CRSDC), the Constitutional Political Dialogue and Consensus Committee (CPDCC), the Committee on Citizen Relations and Public Opinion Collection (CCRPOC), and the Committee on Capacity Development and

Resource Management (CCDRM), as well as the Committee on Capacity Development and Resource Management (CCDRM) (CDC). The CA-II approved a worKing calendar on April 4, 2014, stating that the constitution-building effort would be completed by January 22, 2015.

The CRSDC, chaired by Bishnu Prasad Poudel, was tasked with analysing the documents provided by the CA-I and identifying which topics were agreed upon and which were disputed. The CDC, led by Krishna Prasad Situala, received the agreed-upon problems, while the CPDCC, led by Dr. Baburam BhatTerai, received the disputed items. The CDC was in charge of drafting the constitution's draft. Similarly, the CPDCC was in charge of bringing the CA-II together and consulting organized groups and representatives of identity-based organizations.

The CRSDC began sending phase-by-phase reports to the CA on May 13, 2015. The CA-entire II's House began debating the ten reports submitted by the CRSDC. On June 1, 2015, the CDC began worKing through its five subcommittees. By June 2014, CDC had collated all of the topics that had been agreed upon by these committees, and had approved practically all of the problems that had been agreed upon by the CA-I.

The CPDCC was tasked with resolving disputes over the judiciary, electoral design, systems of government, and federalism, and began providing reports to the Assembly on

September 11, 2015. The committee began talks with political parties about the sensitive issues, but the parties were unable to reach an agreement". "The ruling party alliance (Nepali Congress, CPN (UML), RPP, CPN (ML) with two-thirds majority) and the 30-Party Alliance (UCPN (Maoist), MJF (Loktantrik), plus small parties inside and outside the CA-II) remained divided and presented their positions on the contentious issues through 9-point position papers.

Although the two stances were diametrically opposed, both groups expressed a willingness to find common ground on each issue from time to time. Despite both coalitions' readiness to achieve an agreement on controversial matters, the question of state restructuring remained unresolved despite CPDCC's repeated attempts. As a result, the development of the constitution stalled, and the deadline for promulgating the constitution, set for January 22, 2015, was missed.

The country was rocked by two significant earthquakes on April 25, 2015, and May 12, 2015, as a result of the hindrance in the constitution-building process. Responding to pressure to show leadership, the four major parties, the Nepali Congress, CPN (UML), UCPN (Maoist), and MJF (Loktantrik), inked a 16-point accord on June 8, 2015, less than a month after the second earthquake, which eventually gave the process of constitution drafting a boost.

According to the 16-point accord, “the country will be divided into eight provinces based on identity and capability. Ethnicity/community, language, culture, geographical and regional continuity, and history were the five criteria for identity, while economic inter-relationships and capability, status and potential for infrastructure development, availability of natural resources, and administrative feasibility were the four criteria for capability.

The agreement stipulated that within six months of the constitution's promulgation, a federal committee would determine their boundaries, and the names of the provinces would be approved by a two-thirds majority of provincial assemblies.

The agreement also stipulated that a bicameral parliament with an executive Prime Minister and a constitutional President will be established at the center, consisting of the House of Representatives and the National Assembly. It also established a Constitutional Court to resolve issues between provinces and the federal government, as well as conflicts between provinces, provinces and local governments, and election-related challenges involving the House of Representatives, National Assembly, and provincial assemblies.

Some people were against the agreement because they believed state reorganization should be handled by the CA, as

Article 138 of the Interim Constitution specified specifically that the CA should decide on the names, numbers, and boundaries of the federal provinces. According to the study, some respondents, including political analysts, claimed that the agreement was the result of the leaders of the major parties' personal political interests. Despite the Supreme Court's interim judgement, issued on June 19, 2015, requiring the CA-II to resolve all federal issues, including demarcation, as required by the Interim Constitution, the constitution-drafting process continued.

According to the study, the Preliminary Draft Constitution was tabled in the CA-II on June 30, 2015, based on the 16-point agreement. Despite objections regarding the legislative system, citizenship provisions, and the role of districts in the federal structure, among other things, the UCPN (Maoist) party supported the text on July 7, 2015, along with the other major political parties. Members of Madhes-based parties (Federal Socialist Forum Nepal, Terai Madhes Democratic Party, and Sadbhavana Party) tore up the document shortly after it was presented in the House, and boycotted the CA-II meetings that followed.

They urged that the constitution be promulgated only after the federal units were defined. The parties also claimed that the draft violated the rights of Dalits, Janajatis, Madhesis, Muslims, and other oppressed groups. A 52-point statement of disagreement was presented by CA-II members from indigenous

communities. Their demands included inserting the word secularism in the preamble, identifying provinces based on ethnic, linguistic, and cultural identity, and revising state reorganization and devolution of power measures.

The leaders of the four major political parties reached a fresh agreement on August 8 to partition the country into six provinces (contrary to the eight provinces as agreed in the 16-point agreement). The agreement was signed by the UCPN (Maoist) and the MJF (Loktantrik), albeit with misgivings. The agreement's declared goal was to create a solution to end the federal discussion and move the constitution-writing process forward.

The decision to divide the country into six provinces was met with both favour and resistance. Those who had become tired of the extended standoff over federalism applauded the move, hoping that it would solve the political crisis and make the work of drafting a constitution easier. Many parties, particularly Madhesi parties and ethnic groups like the Indigenous People, have condemned the accord.

These organizations took to the streets, enforcing shutdowns around the country, staging protests, and demanding that the parties reverse their decision. Many districts in the mid- and far-west have called for an indefinite strike by those wanting Tharuhat province. The six-province plan was also criticized by disgruntled Madhesis and supporters of ethnic

provinces. Madhes-based organizations urged that the entire southern terai plains be preserved.

The federal model was changed again on August 21, 2015, and political parties decided to divide the country into seven provinces. A special committee convened by the CPDCC altered the previously agreed six-province federal model and agreed to create a separate province in Karnali by incorporating some of the region's eastern districts. The Tharus, Madhesi, and Janajatis imposed indefinite strikes in the plains after the unveiling of the seven-proivnce plan.

The demarcation issue mostly affected the districts of Jhapa, Morang, Sunsari, Saptari, Kanchanpur, and Kailali. Senior leaders of the Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal (UML) were insistent that the nine districts of the Far-West should remain intact, and that Kailali should not be divided. However, factions within the NC, UML, and UCPN (Maoist) all expressed willingness to achieve a compromise, even if the districts were split.

The people's submissions were presumably included into the Preliminary Draft Constitution, which was tabled on June 30. The result was the Constitution Bill of Nepal, which was tabled on August 23 by the Chairperson of the CDC, Krishna Prasad Sitaula (the Constitution Bill). The Constitutional Bill was distributed to the CA-II members, who had three days to

read it before deliberations began on August 26. The CA-entire II's house deliberated on the amended draft for five days.

A meeting of the CA-II on August 30 gave members seven days to register their proposed amendments to the Constitution Bill, which was the last chance for their requests to be integrated into the statute. Members of the CA-II were given until September 5 to submit amendment ideas. Any amendment proposal accepted by a two-thirds majority in the CA-II was to be included in the new constitution, according to the CA Rules 2014.

The extensive protests in the CA-II resulted in close to forty deaths and hundreds of injuries in just four weeks. The Madhesi and Tharu groups were particularly dissatisfied, claiming that the Constitution Bill failed to fulfill their needs through a federal inclusive government. The Madhesi communities, who make up one of the country's largest demographic blocs (19.86 percent), objected to areas of the plains being included in hill states.

Curfews were imposed in many localities in the Terai, including Birgunj, Janakpur, Dang, Rautahat, Siraha, Bardiya, and Sarlahi. For the past five weeks, Terai has been shut down

indefinitely. Leaders of Madhes-based parties have vowed to keep the protests going until their demands are met.

The Tharu community, Nepal's fourth biggest indigenous tribe, centered in the Far-Western Terai, desired an autonomous, undivided Tharu Province and expressed their unhappiness through violent protests. On the 24th of August 2015, violence erupted in Tikapur village in Kailali, killing eight police and security officials, including a Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), as well as a two-year-old child.

The Chairperson began conducting clause-by-clause discussion and vote for each item of the Constitution Bill, as per CA Rules 2014. The Constitution Bill was overwhelmingly adopted by more than two-thirds of CA members (507 of 598 CA-II members) on September 16, 2015, despite Madhesi parties boycotting the process and the Rastriya Prajatantra Party-Nepal (RPP-N) voting against it (p. 29). On September 18, 2015, CA-II members signed five copies of the new Constitution, which was then verified by CA Chair Subhas Chandra Nembang.

CHAPTER VI

THE SPECTRUM OF INDIA'S COERCIVE DIPLOMACY

This chapter focuses on the specific coercive strategies employed by India and the contextual factors that enabled such actions.

6.1 The Coercive Spectrum

George (1991) introduced the idea of the coercive spectrum in his work to describe the range of measures a state can use to influence another state's behaviour. The spectrum includes various tools and tactics, from mild to severe that apply pressure without escalating to full-scale war. "The coercive spectrum in coercive diplomacy refers to the range of coercive measures or actions that a state can employ to influence the behaviour of another state or actor. This spectrum includes a variety of tools and tactics, ranging from mild to severe, that are used to apply pressure or compel compliance from the target state" (George, 1994).

"These measures can include economic sanctions, diplomatic isolation, military threats, limited military actions, or a combination of these strategies. The choice of which coercive measures to use depends on factors such as the desired outcome, the target state's vulnerabilities, and the willingness of other actors to support or oppose the coercing state's actions" (Romeo, 2016).

Studying the coercive spectrum in the context of Indian coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015 involves analyzing the range of coercive measures employed by India during that period. George's concept of the coercive spectrum helps analyze India's coercive measures against Nepal in 2015 by categorizing the actions taken into diplomatic, economic, and psychological tactics. These measures aimed to influence Nepal's political decisions without escalating to outright conflict, aligning with the principles of coercive diplomacy outlined by George.

The key elements of the coercive spectrum in coercive diplomacy studied in the case of India's coercive diplomacy in 2015 are diplomatic, pressure, economic measures, military threats, limited use of force and psychological operations.

6.1.1 Economic Coercion

Economic coercion, as a tool of statecraft, involves the use of economic sanctions, trade restrictions, or financial penalties to influence the actions of a target state. These measures can include trade embargoes, asset freezes, or restrictions on financial transactions, and they aim to exert pressure by leveraging economic interdependence (Byman & Waxman, 2002) .The 2015 blockade imposed by India on Nepal serves as a stark example of economic coercion, where the disruption of trade and the restriction of essential goods deeply affected Nepal’s economy and societal functioning. This blockade not only exemplifies the mechanisms of economic coercion but also

highlights the interplay of domestic political unrest and international diplomacy in exacerbating crises.

The 2015 blockade was closely tied to political developments in Nepal, particularly the adoption of a new constitution that failed to address the longstanding demands of the Madhesi community. The Madhesi protests, rooted in historical grievances, underscored the exclusion of proportional representation in Nepal's governance structures. Madhesis, along with Tharus and other marginalized groups, had long sought political inclusion, particularly in electoral processes and state institutions. The Madhesi uprisings, such as the one in January-February 2007, marked pivotal moments in Nepalese politics, foregrounding issues of ethnic identity and regional autonomy.

Despite agreements with the Madhesi leadership in 2008 and 2009, including the United Democratic Madhesi Front and the Tharuhat Joint Struggle Committee, the demands for a single Madhesi province or greater self-determination remained unresolved. The failure to incorporate these demands into the constitution led to heightened tensions. When the constitution was promulgated on September 20, 2015, the Madhesi groups perceived it as a betrayal, igniting protests and blockades of key border points. The dissatisfaction with the constitution also reflected a broader discontent with Nepal's governance, which

had been shaped by years of political instability and a lack of inclusive decision-making.

India's involvement in the blockade remains a contentious issue. Officially, India denied any role, attributing the disruption to the Madhesi protests. However, evidence suggests that India covertly restricted the flow of goods into Nepal, exacerbating the situation. According to a fact-finding mission by SAHR (2016), the restrictions began on the same day the constitution was promulgated, predating the Madhesi blockade of September 24. Reports indicated that Indian authorities slowed or halted vehicular movement at major border points under the pretext of security concerns, despite the absence of visible unrest in border areas. The extension of restrictions to border points beyond those affected by Madhesi protests indicated a deliberate and coordinated strategy, signaling India's willingness to sustain pressure until its demands were met.

India's unofficial sanction on Nepal in 2015 serves as a striking example of "plausible deniability" in coercive diplomacy. By employing this strategy, India sought to achieve its strategic objectives while avoiding direct responsibility for the sanction. In diplomatic terms, plausible deniability refers to a method used by a powerful state to exert pressure or intervene in another state's affairs without openly acknowledging its actions, thus evading international criticism and accountability.

During the blockade, India applied economic sanctions, a blockade, and political pressure on Nepal but refrained from admitting the true reasons behind its actions.

Publicly, India justified the blockade as a response to "internal security" concerns, but in reality, it was a calculated move to influence Nepal’s constitution-making process. India framed its intervention as protecting the rights of the Madhesi community, presenting legally valid justifications while concealing its actual objective (GOI, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c). India supported Madhesi protests and applied indirect methods, which made it difficult to trace the intervention directly to its goal of altering Nepal's constitutional decisions (Bhatta, 2019). This combination of indirect pressure, legal justifications, and denial exemplifies the subtle yet powerful application of plausible deniability in coercive diplomacy.

The blockade disrupted the supply of essential goods, including fuel, medicines, and food, leading to severe shortages and a humanitarian crisis. UNICEF warned of dire consequences, with over three million children under five at risk due to the lack of food, medicines, and vaccines (Iyengar, 2015). Hospitals faced critical shortages of life-saving drugs, and schools were forced to close due to a lack of transportation. These disruptions extended to reconstruction efforts following

the devastating April 2015 earthquake, which had already strained Nepal’s resources and infrastructure.

The blockade's impact on Nepal's economy was devastating. The Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) estimated losses of approximately NPR 200 billion, with industries and businesses severely affected (SATP & IFCM, 2016). The disruption of fuel supplies led to rampant black-market activity, with skyrocketing prices for essentials such as cooking gas. Transport costs increased significantly, further burdening ordinary citizens. For example, gas cylinders that previously cost NPR 1,400 became scarce and were sold at inflated prices for reduced quantities (MASUM, 2016).

The blockade also highlighted Nepal’s vulnerability as a landlocked country dependent on India for third-country trade. The restrictions extended beyond the Madhesi-protested Birgunj-Raxaul border point to other crossings where no unrest was reported, indicating a broader strategy by India. Nearly 2,000 trucks were stranded at the border, and the customs clearance process slowed significantly, with daily clearance dropping from 150 trucks to fewer than 10 at some points (MASUM, 2016).

The blockade of Nepal represents a clear case of economic coercion within the framework of coercive diplomacy. India's

use of trade restrictions, customs delays, and supply chain disruptions inflicted significant economic and humanitarian costs on Nepal, leveraging its geographic and economic vulnerability to achieve political objectives. However, the strategy also highlighted the ethical and strategic challenges of economic coercion, particularly its disproportionate impact on civilians and the potential for long-term diplomatic fallout. The case underscores the importance of carefully weighing the costs and benefits of coercive measures, as well as the need for clear and achievable objectives to ensure their effectiveness.

The blockade functioned as a deliberate attempt by India to exert economic pressure on Nepal to achieve political concessions. Economic coercion involves the strategic use of economic tools such as trade restrictions, embargoes, and resource denial to compel a target state to alter its behavior. In this case, the blockade disrupted essential supplies, exacerbating Nepal’s humanitarian crisis and crippling its economy, demonstrating the coercive intent behind the economic restrictions. The severe shortages of food, fuel, and medicines, along with the stagnation of post-earthquake reconstruction, illustrate how economic coercion can create acute social and political distress, compelling the target state to reconsider its policy choices. The selective enforcement of trade restrictions,

even at border points without unrest, indicates that the blockade was not merely a security response to Madhesi protests but rather a calculated diplomatic maneuver.

The economic ramifications massive financial losses, black-market inflation, and increased transport costs further exemplify the blockade as a means of leveraging Nepal's economic dependence to influence its political decisions. This aligns with the broader framework of economic coercion in coercive diplomacy, where economic pain is strategically imposed to shape political outcomes.

The crisis underscored the fragility of Nepal's energy and supply chains. Power cuts of up to 13 hours a day compounded the hardships, forcing people to rely on illegal logging for fuel. Education suffered as schools shut down, and healthcare delivery was crippled. The blockade brought the economy to a standstill, with festivals like Dashain and Tihar, crucial for economic activity, failing to provide a boost. By disrupting the supply of essential goods, the blockade inflicted severe economic and humanitarian costs on Nepal, including skyrocketing prices, black-market activity, and the collapse of critical sectors like healthcare and transportation.

The blockade deepened the humanitarian crisis in Nepal. The lack of essential supplies affected every aspect of daily life. Patients were left untreated due to medicine shortages, and

school closures disrupted education for thousands of children. The social fabric was strained as communities struggled to access basic necessities. Reports of stranded trucks filled with supplies from third countries, such as Japan and Indonesia, highlighted the extent of Nepal's isolation during the crisis.

Moreover, the blockade intensified ethnic and political tensions within Nepal. It brought to light the deep-seated disparities and grievances of marginalized groups while exposing the challenges of governance in a diverse society. For India, the blockade was a demonstration of its leverage over Nepal but at the cost of worsening bilateral relations and fueling anti-Indian sentiments among Nepalese citizens.

The 2015 blockade exemplifies the strategic use of economic coercion to achieve political goals. By leveraging Nepal's dependence on Indian trade routes, India exerted pressure on Nepal's government to address Madhesi demands and amend its constitution. This aligns with theoretical perspectives on economic coercion, which emphasize the role of economic interdependence as a tool of influence (Byman & Waxman, 2002). However, the blockade also highlights the limits of economic coercion. While it inflicted significant economic and social costs, it failed to achieve a swift resolution to the constitutional crisis and instead deepened divisions within Nepal.

The blockade also raises questions about the ethics and long-term consequences of economic coercion. The humanitarian impact, particularly on vulnerable populations, underscores the need for balancing coercive strategies with considerations of human welfare. For Nepal, the crisis revealed the importance of diversifying trade routes and reducing dependence on a single neighbor.

The 2015 India-Nepal blockade stands as a critical case study in the application of economic coercion in international diplomacy. It underscores the interplay between domestic political unrest and external intervention, highlighting the complexities of regional power dynamics. While the blockade achieved limited political objectives, its economic and social costs were profound, leaving a lasting impact on Nepal's economy and bilateral relations with India. This case serves as a reminder of the need for inclusive governance and the risks associated with the strategic use of economic coercion

6.1.2 Psychological Coercion

"Psychological coercion is a key aspect of coercive diplomacy, aiming to influence the target state's decision-making by creating psychological pressure, uncertainty, and fear of potential consequences" (George, 1991). The psychological coercion in the 2015 blockade by India against Nepal was

multifaceted, aiming to create fear, uncertainty, and pressure on the Nepalese government and population.

The imposition of the blockade created a pervasive sense of fear and uncertainty in Nepal. The sudden restriction of essential goods, including fuel and medical supplies, disrupted daily life and created a climate of insecurity. The psychological impact of not knowing when or if these essential supplies would be restored placed immense pressure on the Nepalese government and population.

By imposing the blockade, India aimed to isolate Nepal politically. The blockade signalled to the Nepalese government and the international community that India was willing to take significant measures to influence Nepal's internal affairs. This created a psychological effect of isolation and vulnerability, pressuring Nepal to comply with India's demands regarding the constitution and the representation of the Madhesi people.

The blockade served as a demonstration of India's power and its ability to influence Nepal's economic and social stability. This display of power was intended to remind the Nepalese government of India's strategic and economic dominance, creating psychological pressure to align Nepal's policies with India's interests. The blockade exploited and amplified existing ethnic and political tensions within Nepal.

The Madhesi protests and the subsequent blockade highlighted the internal divisions within Nepalese society. This manipulation of national sentiments aimed to weaken the resolve of the Nepalese government by exacerbating internal conflicts and creating a sense of helplessness and frustration among the population.

By disrupting daily life, demonstrating power, and manipulating national sentiments, India sought to influence Nepal's political decisions and align them with its strategic interests. The psychological impact of the blockade was profound, highlighting the effectiveness of psychological coercion as a tool in coercive diplomacy.

“The imposition of the blockade created a pervasive sense of fear and uncertainty in Nepal. The sudden restriction of essential goods, including fuel and medical supplies, disrupted daily life and created a climate of insecurity. The psychological impact of not knowing when or if these essential supplies would be restored placed immense pressure on the Nepalese government and population” (SAHR, 2016).

The blockade led to significant economic hardship and social disruption. The scarcity of fuel and cooKing gas, combined with the shutdown of industries and the halt in school and medical services, created widespread anxiety. The resulting economic losses and the uncertainty about how long the

blockade would last exacerbated the psychological stress on the Nepalese population and government.

“By imposing the blockade, India aimed to isolate Nepal politically. The blockade signaled to the Nepalese government and the international community that India was willing to take significant measures to influence Nepal's internal affairs”. This created a psychological effect of isolation and vulnerability, pressuring Nepal to comply with India's demands regarding the constitution and the representation of the Madhesi people (MASUM (2016).

The blockade served as a demonstration of India's power and its ability to influence Nepal's economic and social stability. This display of power was intended to remind the Nepalese government of India's strategic and economic dominance, creating a psychological pressure to align Nepal's policies with India's interests.

The blockade exploited and amplified existing ethnic and political tensions within Nepal. The Madhesi protests and the subsequent blockade highlighted the internal divisions within Nepalese society. This manipulation of national sentiments aimed to weaken the resolve of the Nepalese government by exacerbating internal conflicts and creating a sense of helplessness and frustration among the population.

India implemented an unofficial sanction in reaction to the Madhes agitation. The Nepalese border in the south is intricately related to India's concerns about its neighbors. Historically, India has supported the Madhesis, a major ethnic group in Nepal's Terai region.

The Madhesis have strong links to individuals from neighbouring Indian states in terms of family, culture, and ethnicity. In terms of family, culture, and ethnicity, the Madhesis have close ties to people from adjacent Indian states. “Perceived bias against the Madhesi is an essential component of the constitution-drafting process from an Indian perspective, and it also resonates with those Indians who consider this as discrimination against their own blood” (Majumder, 2015).

“The stated reason for India's discontent is that Nepal's constitution restricts the rights of Madhesis living near India's border, many of whom have strong familial ties to Indians” (Ojha, 2015). “India considers the new constitution to be detrimental to the Madhesi people's interests” (RSTV, 2015). “India has always advocated for the Madhesi people, and was present during the 2008 accord between the Nepalese government and Madhesi parties” (Jaiswal, 2015). It's goal was to find political solutions to the most pressing Madhesi issues.

On the same day that Nepal celebrated the approval of its new constitution, India made a brief mention of it and expressed concern about border tensions. India was alluding to current

protests by Madhesis who think the constitution fails to address their concerns (Ojha, 2015).

“India addressed Madhesi leaders in Nepal for two reasons. To begin with, India believes that Madhesis are loyal to the Indian government because of their social affinities. Second, India seeks to promote pro-Indian Madhesi leaders to executive positions so that they may be used to further its own objectives. Madhesi leaders, who are loyal to and supportive of the Indian government, have also asked for India's help in persuading the Nepalese government to modify the constitution to address their concerns. This is a scenario of give and take” (Aryal, 2019).

The American researcher Fredrick H. Gaige projects “the importance of Madhes thus: it contains 87 per cent of forest resources and generates 75 per cent of land revenue, 93 per cent of excise duty and 70 per cent of customs duty. Madhes is the backbone of the national economy, containing more than 60 per cent of agricultural land and contributing over two thirds of the GDP” (Jaiswal, 2015).

“During the border blockade, a respondent from a hilly region shared that when he crossed to the Indian side for supplies, he was treated differently than the Madhesi people. While his belongings were thoroughly checked and limited in what he could bring, Madhesi individuals were allowed to pass without such scrutiny. This distinction led to perceptions that

India favored the Madhes region and sought to isolate it from the rest of Nepal"(Aryal, 2019).

During the Madhes movement in 2008, India served as a mediator. The then-Indian Ambassador to Nepal, Shiva Shankar Mukherjee, was instrumental in bringing then-Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala and the Madhes-based parties to an accord. At the time, India's role was seen as that of an external guarantor. Throughout the preparation of the Constitution, from 2009 to 2015, India consistently supported the demands of Madhes-based parties (Bhattarai, 2019).

Madhesis have deep ties to populations on the other side of the border, therefore the political and security situation in Nepal has ramifications at home. It's also worth noting that elections in the huge Indian state of Bihar were taking place, which were critical for Modi's BJP.

India's strategic use of Madhesi grievances exemplifies how psychological pressure can be employed to shape Nepal's political decisions. Psychological coercion involves influencing the target state's decision-making by exploiting its internal divisions, fostering fear, or manipulating perceptions to create uncertainty and insecurity. By framing Nepal's new constitution as discriminatory against the Madhesis, India heightened tensions and reinforced narratives of exclusion, fostering a sense

of marginalization among the Madhesi population. This, in turn, intensified internal political struggles within Nepal, compelling the government to reassess its stance under mounting pressure.

The selective treatment of Madhesis at the border during the blockade further deepened the perception that India was positioning itself as their protector, indirectly pressuring Nepal's leadership to accommodate Indian concerns. Additionally, India's engagement with pro-Indian Madhesi leaders and its historical role as a mediator signaled its ability to influence Nepal's internal affairs, reinforcing the psychological dimension of its coercion. By leveraging the Madhesi issue at a time when Bihar elections were underway, India also sought to generate domestic political capital, demonstrating how psychological coercion in coercive diplomacy can serve both foreign and domestic strategic objectives.

"The uncontrolled, open border between India and Nepal is a huge security problem for both countries. Cross-border crime, smuggling, false money, and unwanted people infiltrating India, including potential terrorists, are all important security concerns. Nepal is also concerned about the smuggling of small guns into the country from India" (Gupta, 2010). "Apart from the emotional link, anger and unrest among Madhesi people have an obvious security dimension for India: due to its proximity to India's two most densely populated states, it is

concerned about the spill over consequences of ongoing protests in Nepal's Terai area" (P. Bhattarai, 2018). India interpreted the new constitution as detrimental to the interests of the Madhesi population (RSTV, 2015).

"The 2008 agreement between the Government of Nepal and Madhesi parties, which focused on finding political solutions to urgent Madhesi issues, was witnessed by India, which has long been pro-active on behalf of the Madhesi community" (P. Bhattarai, 2018). The Indian apprehension about the current events in Nepal was that the Nepalese government was unable to take any step to address the Madhes concerns. Nepal turned down India's plea to postpone the adoption of the constitution in order to solve the concerns in the southern plains.

"Gaige maintains the close association of 'Terai' with colonial mentalities, which he referred to as the process of *Nepalisation* of *Madhes*. Others argue that while Terai exists in the context of Nepal, the word is more generic than claimed" (Singh, 2011).

"There are two schools of thought on what it means to be Madhesi, according to the author. In its geographical portrayal, the first school sees Madhes as a regional unit. As a result, the people who live in this region are known as Madhesi or *Madhesiyas*. According to this viewpoint, the name Madhesi

refers to all non-*Pahadis*, including conventional castes such as *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaishya*, and *Dalits*, as well as indigenous *Janjati* ethnic groups, other local tribes, and Muslims. The sociological lens of identification is used to examine the second interpretation of Madhesi identity" (Singh, 2011).

The Madhes area is described by Hachhethu (2007) as "a traditional homeland of tribal people and people of Indian descent." As a result, the second concept of Madhesis claims that 'people of Indian-origin' are the source of identity. Many Madhesis have had long-standing marriage links with communities residing on the other side of the open border. In this way, Madhesis have a lot in common with the people who reside beyond the Indian border in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in terms of lifestyle, dietary preferences, language, and culture".

This has occasionally generated questions about allegiance and identity among *Pahadis* in positions of power in Nepalese politics (Singh, 2011). "The cultural and linguistic area that exists as a basis of identity among the people who live in the region is referred to as *Madhes*. Apart from the emotional link, unhappiness and unrest among Madhesi people have an obvious security dimension for India: due to its proximity to India's two most densely populated states, it is concerned about spill over consequences of on-going protests in Nepal's Terai area" (Bhattarai, 2019).

“India’s deep interest in the construction of federal states in the Terai region and adequate representation of Madhesi people in different state organs was driven by the assumption that this would enable India to influence Nepal’s decision-making on issues around water resource management, foreign policy, security policy and many more” (Dinesh Bhattarai, 2015). India has attempted to destabilize a Maoist-led government by backing a Madhesi insurrection and it is believed that if the Maoists ever get too aggressive, Madhesi factions can give us that influence

India capitalized on the ethnic and cultural connections between Madhesis and Indian populations in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh to create a narrative of discrimination against Madhesis in Nepal’s new constitution. By reinforcing Madhesi grievances and promoting Madhesi leaders who were sympathetic to Indian interests, India amplified domestic political unrest in Nepal, increasing the sense of instability. Psychological coercion was evident in the strategic framing of the Madhesi issue portraying it as an injustice not just to Madhesis but to India’s own people of shared ancestry.

India officially denied its involvement in the blockade while unofficially allowing trade restrictions creating a state of uncertainty in Nepal. The confusion about India's true stance undermined Nepal’s ability to form a coherent diplomatic response, leading to frustration and distrust at the government level. This uncertainty served to weaken Nepal’s international standing, making it appear as if Nepal’s instability was self-inflicted rather than externally imposed.

India’s subtle diplomatic pressure at international forums signaled to Nepal that it could be isolated on the global stage if it did not comply with India’s demands. The narrative of Nepal being unable to manage its internal affairs created further psychological strain on Nepalese leadership, pushing them toward a decision that aligned with India’s strategic interests.

India demonstrated that it could manipulate internal ethnic divisions to create prolonged unrest in Nepal. By supporting Madhesi leaders, India sent a warning that failing to accommodate Madhesi demands could lead to continued instability, essentially creating a fear of prolonged crisis. The blockade showed India's ability to directly impact Nepal’s political and economic stability, reinforcing the idea that Nepal could not afford to ignore India’s concerns.

Through these tactics, India effectively pressured Nepalese policymakers into reconsidering constitutional provisions without outright military intervention. This case demonstrates

how psychological pressure can be as potent as direct threats in coercive diplomacy.

India's unofficial sanctions on Nepal, particularly during the Madhes agitation, raise significant questions about India's motives and involvement in Nepal's internal affairs. Analyzing this issue through the lens of ethnic intervention in international relations reveals complex dynamics at play. Ethnic conflicts often draw external actors seeking to exploit ethnic ties for their own strategic interests. In the case of India's engagement with the Madhes movement, historical, cultural, and economic factors intertwine, shaping India's stance towards Nepal's constitution and the Madhesi community.

The narrative surrounding the blockade included denials from India about its role in the crisis, while evidence suggested otherwise. This created a sense of confusion and mistrust within Nepal, contributing to psychological warfare. The uncertainty about India's intentions and the mixed messages further destabilized the psychological state of the Nepalese government and citizens.

The blockade also aimed to shape international perception, putting pressure on Nepal to appear as a state unable to manage its internal affairs and dependent on India for stability. This external psychological pressure aimed to push Nepal towards making concessions to restore normalcy and maintain international standing. The blockade created a significant

humanitarian crisis, applying psychological pressure on the Nepali government and public to comply with India's demands.

Psychological coercion is a key aspect of coercive diplomacy, aiming to influence the target state's decision-making by creating psychological pressure, uncertainty, and fear of potential consequences. In the 2015 blockade by India against Nepal, this coercion aimed to instill fear, uncertainty, and pressure on the Nepalese government and population.

The sudden restriction of essential goods created a pervasive sense of insecurity, placing immense psychological stress on Nepal. India aimed to isolate Nepal politically, signaling its willingness to take significant measures to influence Nepal's internal affairs, thereby creating a sense of vulnerability. By demonstrating power and exploiting ethnic tensions, India sought to align Nepal's policies with its strategic interests, highlighting the effectiveness of psychological coercion in coercive diplomacy.

6.1.3 Diplomatic Pressure

This involves using diplomatic channels to communicate displeasure or dissatisfaction with the target state's actions. It includes issuing formal statements, summoning ambassadors for meetings, or lodging diplomatic protests.

Diplomatic pressure is a crucial element of coercive diplomacy, which involves the use of threats and limited force to

influence the behaviour of another state. It operates on the principle of combining diplomatic negotiations with the implicit or explicit threat of adverse consequences if the target state does not comply. This dual approach aims to make the costs of non-compliance outweigh the benefits, thereby compelling the target state to alter its behaviour without escalating to full-scale conflict.

India used diplomatic channels to express its dissatisfaction with Nepal's policies, urging changes without direct threats. India expressed concerns over the new constitution of Nepal, which it believed marginalized certain ethnic groups with close ties to India. Diplomatic efforts included meetings and communications to urge Nepal to consider amendments.

Following the adoption of Nepal's draft constitution by the Constituent Assembly on September 17, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi dispatched Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar to Kathmandu for a last-minute intervention. This visit was perceived differently in the media, with Nepali outlets labeling it as “ill-timed,” while Indian media highlighted its proximity to the upcoming Bihar state elections, which were scheduled to begin on October 16. Jaishankar’s visit was seen by some as a diplomatic maneuver ahead of the elections, sparking

discussions about its timing and implications for Nepal-India relations

India's swift diplomatic response, including sending Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar to Kathmandu, can be seen as an attempt to apply pressure on Nepal to amend its newly adopted constitution, especially regarding the concerns over the rights of the Madhesi population. India’s intervention was not a military threat but rather a political maneuver, signaling to Nepal that failure to address India’s concerns could have serious consequences, such as strained bilateral relations or the use of economic sanctions.

The timing of the intervention, just weeks before the Bihar elections, further suggests that India’s actions were strategically designed to align with its domestic political interests and ensure that Nepal’s constitutional changes would not jeopardize its regional influence (Yadav, 2016). This approach reflects the key elements of coercive diplomacy: the threat of future punitive actions (in this case, political and economic repercussions) combined with an inducement (support for constitutional amendments). Thus, India’s actions in Nepal can be understood as a targeted exercise in coercive diplomacy aimed at achieving a desired political outcome without escalating to direct military confrontation.

President Ram Baran Yadav signed the Constitution of Nepal 2015 during a special event at the CA Hall in New Baneswor, Kathmandu, on September 20, 2015. With the release of the constitution, the CA-II was dissolved, and the former CA-Legislative Parliament became merely a Legislative Parliament.

The international community greeted the constitution with caution, with everyone urging the government to resolve its problems with opposition parties and groups as soon as possible. Nepal eventually approved a constitution after ten years of post-conflict transition and two constituent assembly elections.

“This upset India, resulting in a significant thaw in Nepal-India relations. As the Constituent Assembly overwhelmingly endorsed the new constitution, which is set to be fully implemented on September 20, Indian Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar, as a special envoy of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, paid a visit to Kathmandu on September 18, two days before the constitution's promulgation, to request a postponement” (Dinesh Bhattarai, 2015).

“At the end of the tale, he made an earnest effort to persuade Nepalese authorities to accept the unsatisfied groups' demands in the constitution. His visit to Kathmandu was intended to re-appeal to the government to maintain social unity through a process of broadest possible agreement in order to

strengthen the climate of trust and confidence by delaying the promulgation date" (Pandey, 2015).

However, his attempt to bring everyone into the broadest possible agreement failed miserably. The political authorities denied postponing the constitution's promulgation, and the constitution was signed on September 20, 2015, as planned. Despite India's diplomatic and political pressure on the eve of the new constitution's promulgation, and despite top-level Nepali political leaders' assurances to find a middle ground to address the concerns of dissatisfied groups with the draft constitution, the three major political parties in Nepali Congress, CPN (UML), and UCPN (Maoist) took a bold decision to adopt the new constitution.

The visit of Indian envoy Jayashankar on the eve of the constitution's promulgation, as well as his plea to the political parties to halt the process was unusual in diplomatic ties. According to Khanal (2021) Prachand said that this visit should have taken place either fifteen days prior or later of the constitution promulgation. If this visit should have occurred 15 to 20 days just before the constitution's promulgation, it would have a beneficial impact.

India's diplomatic pressure on Nepal during the promulgation of its 2015 constitution aligns closely with the

principles of coercive diplomacy, which seeks to influence a target state’s actions through a mix of persuasion and implicit threats, avoiding direct military confrontation.

India employed high-level diplomatic engagement, notably dispatching Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar to Kathmandu just days before the constitution’s promulgation. While framed as a concern for the Madhesi population’s representation, India’s intervention carried coercive undertones, signaling potential consequences if Nepal failed to amend its constitution. Despite not issuing direct threats, India’s diplomatic push was reinforced by economic measures, as seen in the unofficial blockade that followed Nepal’s defiance, restricting fuel and essential goods. This blockade functioned as a form of economic coercion, pressuring Nepal’s leadership while maintaining strategic ambiguity by denying responsibility.

Additionally, India’s intervention coincided with the Bihar elections, where the Madhesi issue resonated with voters, suggesting a domestic political motivation behind India's assertive stance. Despite these efforts, coercive diplomacy failed in its immediate goal Nepal’s leadership resisted the pressure and proceeded with the constitution’s promulgation. However, the blockade destabilized Nepal economically and politically, exacerbating humanitarian challenges and fueling anti-India sentiment, an unintended consequence of India's coercion.

Ultimately, while India's approach reflected a non-military coercive diplomacy strategy, combining diplomatic persuasion, economic leverage, and psychological pressure, Nepal's strong nationalistic resolve, political unity, and historical mistrust toward India rendered the strategy ineffective, demonstrating the limits of coercive diplomacy when the target state perceives resistance as a more viable option than compliance.

From the perspective of coercive diplomacy, India's diplomatic pressure on Nepal regarding the 2015 constitution demonstrates a failed attempt at persuasive coercion**,** wherein India sought to influence Nepal's political decisions through diplomatic maneuvers rather than direct threats. The delayed intervention of Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar, arriving just two days before the constitution's promulgation, suggests that India's diplomatic pressure was poorly timed and lacked the necessary leverage to compel Nepal to reconsider its position. As Khanal (2021) argues, Nepal could have engaged in early diplomatic consultations to create a more favorable environment, potentially preventing an outright confrontation with India. The lack of preemptive dialogue reflects a communication gap, which in coercive diplomacy weakens the sender's ability to exert influence.

Sharma (2019) identifies two critical mistakes in India's approach: first, the eleventh-hour intervention, which appeared

more reactionary than strategic, and second, the mere acknowledgment rather than endorsement of Nepal's constitution. This symbolic disapproval served as a form of diplomatic pressure, signaling dissatisfaction without overt threats. However, P. Bhattarai (2018)notes that the Indian establishment's frustration stemmed from Nepal's resistance to its influence, demonstrating the limits of coercive diplomacy when the target state refuses to comply. The Indian government's decision to simply "note" the constitution, rather than welcome it, contrasts with the responses of China, the United States, and Pakistan, which formally congratulated Nepal. This divergence highlights India's strategic isolation, a consequence of its coercive stance.

Furthermore, India's framing of the constitution as non-inclusive, aligning with the grievances of Madhesi groups, illustrates the use of diplomatic pressure as a justification for intervention (Jaiswal, 2015). However, its failure to secure amendments before promulgation suggests that India's coercive approach lacked both effectiveness and credibility**.** As Ojha (2015) observes, India's dissatisfaction had both symbolic and strategic dimensions, reflecting concerns over its diminishing influence in Nepal's internal affairs.

Meanwhile, China’s swift congratulatory message to Nepal reinforced a counterbalancing diplomatic move, indicating a shift in Nepal’s regional alignments. In coercive diplomacy, when diplomatic pressure fails to achieve compliance, the coercing state may escalate or reassess its approach India’s subsequent undeclared blockade can thus be interpreted as an intensification of its coercive strategy after its diplomatic pressure failed.

China wished for Nepal to embark on a new path of political and economic development. Unlike China, the Americans pointed out some of the Constitution's flaws while nevertheless hailing it as a watershed moment in Nepal's democratic journey. India, on the other hand, reacted in an unusually frigid manner (Sharma, 2019). It made a court statement on Nepal's Constitution on the evening of September 20.

> *We note the promulgation in Nepal today of a Constitution. Other lines of the statement had further ominous tones. We are concerned that the situation in several parts of the country bordering India continues to be violent.' The Constitution lacked broad-based ownership and acceptance*.

India's Ministry of External Affairs summoning Nepal's ambassador in New Delhi (September 21, 2015) signals official discontent with Nepal's new constitution. This formal diplomatic move conveys India's dissatisfaction and exerts pressure on Nepal's leadership, aligning with the coercive diplomacy tactic of communication and bargaining. By asserting that Madhes-based political groups will not reach an agreement unless amendments are made, India attempted to manipulate Nepal's domestic decision-making process through external influence (Times, 2015b). Roy (2015) released seven points of revisions that need to be made in the new constitution of Nepal, as addressed to the government of India on September 24, 2015, which were:

1. *Article 63 (3) of the Interim Constitution provided electoral constituencies based on population, geography and special characteristics, "and in the case of Madhes on the basis of percentage of population". Under this provision, Madhes, with more than 50 per cent of the population, got 50 percent of seats in Parliament. The latter phrase has been omitted in Article 84 of the new Constitution. "It needs to be re-inserted so that Madhes continues to have electoral constituencies in proportion to its population.*

2. *According to Article 21 of the Interim Constitution, various groups will have "the right to participate in governmental structures on the basis of proportional inclusion principles." The phrase "proportional" was removed from the new Constitution (Article 42), but Delhi wants it reinstated.*

3. *Article 283 of the Constitution provides that the President, Vice-President, Prime Minister, Chief Justice, Speaker of Parliament, Chairperson of the National Assembly, Head of Province, Chief Minister, Speaker of Provincial Assembly, and Chief of Security Bodies can only be citizens by descent. For the enormous number of Madhesis who have gained citizenship by birth or naturalization, this clause is considered as discriminatory. This, according to Delhi, should be changed to encompass citizenship through birth or naturalization.*

4. *According to Article 86 of the new Constitution, the National Assembly will be made up of 8 members from each of the seven states, as well as three nominated members. Madhesi parties desire participation in the National Assembly based on province population. This,*

according to Delhi, should be done in order to resolve concerns.

5. *Kanchanpur, Kailali, Sunsari, Jhapa, and Morang: These districts, or parts of them, may be included in the neighboring Madhes Provinces based on the majority of the population.*
6. *The Interim Constitution's Article 154 mandated the demarcation of election seats every ten years. In Article 281 of the new Constitution, this has been expanded to 20 years. India, like the Madhesi parties, wants this reduced to ten years.*
7. *According to Article 11(6), a foreign woman who marries a Nepali citizen may get naturalized citizenship in Nepal under the terms of a federal statute. Naturalization should be automatic upon application, according to Madhesi parties. This is also popular in Delhi. The Indian government transmitted these revisions to Nepal's leadership via official channel ambassador to Nepal Ranjit Rae. (Roy, 2015).*

Aside from these recommendations, some more revisions were published in India's leading daily national newspapers. These newspapers raised the issue of social justice, in which economically, socially, and educationally marginalized groups such as women, Dalits, indigenous nationalities, ethnic groups,

castes, peasants, Madhesi community, labors, and exploited groups have the right to participate in the state structure on the basis of proportional representation.

According to article 86, India's Ministry of External Affairs requested that Nepal address the demand of the Madhesi parties for representation of Madeshis in the provincial legislature based on province population" (Devendra Bhattarai, 2015a). The Indian foreign ministry's reaction statement had an unenthusiastic tone to it, and the word welcome was not used in it.

India had hoped to engage Nepalese Madhes-based parties in the process of promulgating the Nepalese Constitution, but this was not possible, and India was dissatisfied. "We note the proclamation of a constitution in Nepal today," the statement added (GOI, 2015d).

Internally, a coalition of Madhes-based parties unhappy with the new constitution sparked protests in several districts of Nepal. Following a few days of protests, Madhes-based parties began rallies near the India-Nepal border on September 24" (TKP, 2016b). The key demands made by the Madhesis in the new Constitution are as follows (Jaiswal, 2015):

- *Madhes' 20 districts are divided into two federal provinces. Five Madhes districts (Kanchanpur, Kailali, Sunsari, Jhapa, and Morang) are currently separated*

from Madhes provinces and merged with other proposed neighboring provinces under the current federal framework.

- *Define electoral constituencies based on population, location, and unique qualities that were adopted by the Interim Constitution following the 2008 Madhes Movement.*
- *Integrate the right to be involved in state organizations based on proportionate inclusion principles, which the Interim Constitution recognized. Seats in the national assembly should be distributed proportionally as well. Because the Madhes region contains 51% of the population, 83 of the 165 electoral seats suggested for direct elections should be given to the Madhes provinces.*

India's engagement in Nepal's constitutional process exemplifies coercive diplomacy through strategic communication, diplomatic pressure, and media influence. The summoning of Nepal's ambassador, the transmission of seven key constitutional demands**,** and the use of Indian media to frame the debate reflects a calculated attempt to shape Nepal's domestic policies through diplomatic and reputational pressure**.** While avoiding overt military threats, India's actions leveraged its regional influence, economic leverage, and strategic

messaging to coerce Nepal into constitutional revisions aligned with Madhesi interests.

This case highlights how coercive diplomacy functions through official disapproval, diplomatic summons, issue linkage, and media framing, making communication a crucial instrument in applying pressure without direct force.

The issues raised by the Indian establishment correspond to the demands of a coalition of Madhes-based parties. India appears to have had a part in the Madhes movement in order to get a foothold in Nepalese politics. Though the grievances of Madhes-based political parties are legitimate to some extent, the question of India's desire to support the Madhes movement looms. India looks to be formally supporting the Madhes Agitation, which can be deduced from a succession of related incidents.

India used diplomatic channels to express dissatisfaction with Nepal's constitution, issuing demands and engaging in high-level meetings. Despite this pressure, Nepal proceeded with its constitution as planned, leading to strained relations and a subsequent blockade. This diplomatic engagement highlights the combination of negotiations and threats in coercive diplomacy.

India’s response to Nepal’s 2015 Constitution aligns with the theory of diplomatic pressure within coercive diplomacy,

which involves using diplomatic engagement, implicit threats, and economic leverage to achieve political objectives. Unlike China and the U.S., which took a more accommodating stance, India adopted a strategic pressure approach, expressing formal discontent through diplomatic channels, summoning Nepal's ambassador, and presenting a list of constitutional amendments that aligned with Madhesi demands.

By framing its objections around inclusivity and representation, India sought to exert normative pressure while simultaneously leveraging economic constraints, as seen in the border disruptions that functioned as an informal sanction. The diplomatic protests, media discourse, and official recommendation**s** reveal a multifaceted coercive strategy that combined persuasion with punitive measures.

Despite these efforts, Nepal remained firm, leading to heightened bilateral tensions and an economic blockade that reinforced India's coercive stance. This case illustrates how diplomatic pressure in coercive diplomacy can blend negotiation, influence, and punitive actio**ns** to push for policy adjustments in smaller states.

6.1.4 Limited Use of Force

In some cases, coercive diplomacy may involve the limited use of military force to demonstrate resolve and willingness to escalate if necessary. This could include targeted airstrikes,

naval blockades, or other military actions designed to exert pressure on the target state.

The mobilization of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) force by India during the 2015 blockade against Nepal was a significant aspect of the coercive measures employed by India. The SSB is a border patrol organization under the Ministry of Home Affairs of India, primarily responsible for guarding India's borders with Nepal and Bhutan.

During the blockade, the SSB was deployed to control and monitor the movement of goods and people across the Indo-Nepal border. This deployment was crucial in enforcing the blockade, as the SSB's presence effectively restricted the flow of essential supplies into Nepal.

The Limited Use of Force in coercive diplomacy emphasizes the use of controlled, limited military or paramilitary actions to influence the behavior of an adversary without escalating into full-scale conflict. India’s actions at the Nepalese border during the 2015 blockade provide a clear illustration of this approach. India’s deployment of the SSB (Sashastra Seema Bal) and its establishment of multiple checkpoints resulted in severe delays and restrictions on the movement of goods**,** with reports indicating a drastic reduction in clearance of trucks from 100-150 per day to just 5-6 (MASUM, 2016). The heightened security checks and thorough

searches aimed at halting the movement of goods were framed as security measures to address political unrest in Nepal. This demonstrates how limited, coercive actions can be employed under the guise of security concerns, exerting pressure on Nepal without direct military engagement.

The shooting incident involving Madhesi youths at the border is a critical example of the use of force within the framework of coercive diplomacy. The SSB's claim that the youths were involved in smuggling and attacked personnel, which led to the use of lethal force, was seen as a response to perceived threats at the border (THT, 2015a). Despite India's justification, this incident can be interpreted as an intentional use of force within a broader strategy of coercion to instill fear and pressure Nepal into modifying its stance on the Madhesi demands. The subsequent compensation of the victims' families by the Nepali government further indicates the pressure Nepal faced from India's coercive actions.

Additionally, the occupation of the Birgunj bridge by protesters illustrates the limited use of force, where India responded by increasing its presence at the border and using tear gas in certain situations, as evidenced by the incident on September 24 (Yadav, 2016). These measures were designed to

maintain control over the border region while avoiding escalation into open conflict.

The withdrawal of Indian support for the escort of vehicles, once the protests escalated, demonstrates India’s strategic use of pressure and control to influence Nepal without crossing the threshold into outright military confrontation. Thus, the combination of economic blockade, military deterrence, and selective use of force in border areas reflects India's strategy of applying limited use of force to advance its political objectives without triggering full-scale hostilities. This approach exemplifies how coercive diplomacy can utilize escalatory but controlled tactics to force an adversary to alter its behavior under pressure.

The Limited Use of Force in coercive diplomacy is exemplified by India's actions at the Maitreyi Bridge during the 2015 blockade. The blockade, which restricted passage across the bridge, allowed only pedestrians, many of whom were carrying fuel by foot or on motorbikes. This symbolic use of force limiting access to critical trade routes while avoiding full-scale military confrontation was part of a broader strategy to exert pressure on Nepal. The ongoing Madhesi protests, which were centered around the Birgunj Bridge, were seen as a mix of

domestic grievances and an impediment to international trade (SAHR, 2016).

The occupation of the Maitreyi Bridge for an extended period led to strained diplomatic relations between India and Nepal, creating logistical challenges for trade. The situation escalated to the point where local businessman Mahesh Agarwal faced pressure to cease his support for the protestors, highlighting the unexpected duration and complex dynamics of the protests (SAHR, 2016). This illustrates how limited force can extend beyond direct physical action to include economic and logistical pressure, impacting individuals and businesses in both countries.

The disputed involvement of the Indian government in the blockade reveals the complexities of coercive diplomacy. While Nepal accused India of imposing the blockade in retaliation for Nepal’s Constitution ratification, India denied direct involvement, instead citing Nepal’s failure to address ethnic grievances (SAHR, 2016). This ambiguity in India's role points to how coercive diplomacy often operates in a gray zone, where actions are not overtly aggressive but still exert significant influence**.**

India’s response also included strategic moves by the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)**,** which initially provided escort services to Nepalese vehicles at night. However, once the

protesters took control of the Birgunj Bridge, the SSB withdrew support (SAHR, 2016).. This withdrawal of assistance is a classic example of the limited use of force in coercive diplomacy, where the dynamics of cooperation are gradually withdrawn to increase pressure on the targeted nation, without escalating into direct military conflict.

The firing incident at the border, where four Nepali citizens were injured during a confrontation between Nepali civilians and SSB personnel, further exemplifies the theory of limited use of force. The Indian embassy's denial of responsibilityclaiming the incident occurred inside Indian territory and involved smugglersreflects an attempt to downplay the severity of the use of force while framing it as a necessary self-defense measure (THT, 2015b). This reflects how coercive actions can be justified as necessary security measures, even when they lead to civilian casualties. In the context of coercive diplomacy, the limited use of force is often framed as a defensive response to maintain control over border areas and prevent disruptions to the flow of goods, while denying intentional escalation.

The events at the Maitreyi Bridge and the associated border incidents reveal how coercive diplomacy, particularly the limited use of force, functions to exert pressure on an adversary

without triggering open hostilities. The gradual withdrawal of cooperation, the denial of direct involvement, and the symbolic use of force through economic restrictions and military posturing demonstrate the nuanced application of this strategy. India's actions in this context reflect the broader theory of coercive diplomacy, where power is exercised through controlled, indirect means to achieve political objectives.

The incident at the Mechi Customs office illustrates how non-cooperation and indirect actions can be leveraged as a form of coercive pressure without resorting to overt military aggression. According to the Chief Customs Officer of Nepal, Bhim Prashad Adhikari, the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) personnel, when questioned, failed to provide any formal order from the Indian government for the slowdown of vehicle movement. This suggests a deliberate lack of communication and coordination that is typical of coercive diplomacy's ambiguous tactics (SAHR, 2016).

The non-cooperation extended by the Indian side can be seen as a strategic action to delay and disrupt essential transport flows to Nepal. As reported, the Indian Customs Department communicated to their Nepali counterparts that the slowdown of vehicle movement was due to factors beyond their control (THT, 2015b). This deniability and indirect action attributing responsibility to systemic delays rather than overt political

orders are hallmarks of limited use of force, where the coercive effect is achieved not through direct confrontation, but through the gradual accumulation of pressure.

Furthermore, the agitation and occupation of no-man's-land by protestors, which halted transport vehicles, compounded the slowdown of goods, particularly oil tankers, into Nepal. India's failure to take action against these protestors, while framing it as a local issue that did not warrant intervention, further highlights the limited use of force**.** By withholding intervention, India applied pressure on Nepal without escalating the conflict to a full-scale diplomatic or military confrontation.

The delay at customs and security checkpoints on the Indian side of the border is another form of coercive action that falls within the scope of the theory of limited use of force. These delays were not due to logistical or operational necessity but were used as political tools to slow down the movement of critical supplies, thereby exacerbating the economic impact on Nepal. Such measures exerted economic and diplomatic pressure on Nepal, demonstrating how coercive diplomacy often involves indirect pressure through the control of economic flows rather than direct forceful actions.

This analysis aligns with the core principles of the Limited Use of Force theory, where non-violent and indirect action**s** are employed to influence an adversary's behavior. These actions, though subtle and less overt, still serve as a form of coercion by

creating economic hardship and diplomatic challenges for Nepal, thus achieving India's goals without resorting to direct military force.

The limited use of military force is an integral part of coercive diplomacy, serving as a demonstration of resolve and a willingness to escalate actions if necessary. India's mobilization of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) during the 2015 blockade against Nepal exemplifies this approach. As a border patrol force, the SSB played a crucial role in enforcing the blockade by controlling and monitoring the movement of goods and people across the Indo-Nepal border.

Their presence was instrumental in restricting the flow of essential supplies, exacerbating the shortages in Nepal. Checkpoints established by the SSB caused significant delays in the clearance of goods, drastically reducing the number of trucks passing through key border posts like Kakarbhitta. Thorough inspections and searches further slowed the movement of goods, deepening the crisis.

“India cited increased SSB deployment and strict border controls as security measures during Nepal's political unrest. However, incidents like the SSB shooting of four Madhesi youths and the Birgunj bridge occupation by protesters underscored tensions. Non-cooperation reports and customs delays fueled perceptions of an unofficial blockade” (TET, 2015).

Despite official denials, the blockade and the mobilization of the SSB had significant psychological and economic impacts on Nepal. The involvement of local actors like Mahesh Agarwal, who supported the protesters, added another layer of complexity to the situation. Overall, the limited use of force through the SSB's actions underscored India's strategic use of coercive measures to influence Nepal's internal affairs, highlighting the multifaceted nature of relations. The limited use of military force is a key component of coercive diplomacy, serving to demonstrate resolve and willingness to escalate if necessary. India's deployment of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) during the 2015 blockade against Nepal is a prime example.

The SSB, a border patrol force, was essential in enforcing the blockade by controlling the movement of goods and people across the Indo-Nepal border, significantly restricting the flow of essential supplies and exacerbating shortages in Nepal. Checkpoints and thorough inspections caused major delays, reducing the clearance of goods at key border posts.

India justified the SSB's presence as a security measure in response to Nepal's political unrest, but incidents such as the shooting of four Madhesi youths and the occupation of the Birgunj Bridge by protesters highlighted the contentious nature of India's involvement.

Non-cooperation and delays at customs checkpoints further contributed to the perception of an unofficial blockade. Despite official denials, the blockade and SSB's actions had significant psychological and economic impacts on Nepal. The local actors and protesters added complexity to the situation. Overall, India's strategic use of coercive measures through the SSB underscored its influence over Nepal's internal affairs.

CHAPTER VII

THE LEVERAGE OF INDIA'S COERCIVE DIPLOMACY

Leverage is a central element in the execution of coercive diplomacy, where a state strategically employs pressure, threats, or incentives to influence the behavior of another state. The chapter begins by defining the concept of leverage in coercive diplomacy and situates it within the broader theoretical frameworks of power asymmetry and strategic statecraft. It then examines the specific instruments through which India has exerted its influence over Nepal, including trade dependencies, geopolitical positioning, and diplomatic engagements. A particular focus is placed on India’s use of economic sanctions, diplomatic maneuvers, and informal pressures, such as border restrictions, to achieve its objectives.

7.1 Coercive Leverage

“Coercive leverage is a state's use of threats, pressure, or limited force to influence another state's actions or policies. It combines inducements and punishments, relying on credible threats, the coercing state's resolve, and the target state's vulnerabilities for effectiveness” (Baldwin, 1985).

For India, this involved leveraging its economic and logistical superiority over Nepal. India’s blockade demonstrated its capability to severely impact Nepal’s economy and supplies. The credibility was reinforced by the immediate and tangible effects of the blockade on Nepal. India’s coercive leverages

were effective in applying immediate pressure on Nepal, but their long-term success was limited by backlash, both domestically within Nepal and internationally. This suggests that while the use of coercive leverage can achieve short-term objectives, it can also generate significant costs if not carefully managed.

India's coercive leverages can be presented as follows:

7.1.1 Historical Precedent

India's economic influence over Nepal has been a significant source of coercive leverage. Arora (2015) points out Nepal’s economic dependence on India, a factor that has historically allowed India to exert pressure. The blockade of 2015 became effective because Nepal was already reliant on India for essential supplies, including fuel and trade routes. This economic interdependence heightened India's ability to use trade restrictions as a coercive tool. India’s deep-rooted involvement in Nepal’s political transitions has given it considerable leverage.

As KC (2016) and Campbell (2012) argue, India has been instrumental in Nepal’s democratic movements, from the fall of the Rana regime in 1950 to the 2006 transition to republicanism. India's role in brokering political agreements, such as the 12-Point Agreement, further entrenched its position as a key external actor in Nepalese politics. This historical precedent lent credibility to the idea that India could shape Nepal’s internal

political landscape at will, reinforcing Nepal's perception of India's coercive potential. The argument that Nepal lies within India's strategic sphere of influence Campbell (2012) is a crucial aspect of India's diplomatic leverage. India's security concerns, such as preventing potential Chinese influence and managing cross-border insurgencies, have driven its active engagement in Nepal.

The statement from Indian Foreign Secretary Harsh Shringla, quoted by Budhathoki (2020), reflects India's perception of Nepal as symbiotically dependent, reinforcing the notion that India retains the ability to pressure Nepal diplomatically. The repeated political interventions by India have created a historical precedent that strengthens India's psychological leverage over Nepal (P. Bhattarai, 2018).

Nepalese political actors have often engaged with Indian counterparts for mediation, indicating recognition of India's capacity to shape Nepal's political landscape. This recognition increases India's bargaining power and enables it to apply pressure through diplomatic signals, as seen in India's criticism of King Gyanendra's coup (BBC, 2005 as cited in Janjua, 2007, pp. 100-101). India's involvement in Nepal's political transitions, particularly its strategic maneuvering between different political forces, aligns with the key components of coercive diplomacy. Leverages in coercive diplomacy typically

include economic, political, military, and diplomatic tools to influence the target state’s behavior.

India's past interactions and influence over Nepal, including economic and political interventions, established a historical precedent that added weight to its current actions. Nepal was aware of India's capacity and willingness to exert pressure, which enhanced the credibility of the blockade.

After brokering the end of the Rana rule in Nepal, India began openly intervening in the country since 2007 BS. During the reign of King Tribhuvan, it became more intense, but during the reign of King Mahendra, it became less intense. During the Panchayat era, India was virtually non-existent from Nepalese politics. India extended moral support to Nepal during the 2046 people's movement but did not engage openly, while there was some apparent engagement but it was not intense. In the year 2063 BS, India became a major player in Nepalese politics.

According to available sources, the rebel commanders Baburam Bhattarai and Puspakamal Dahal 'Prachand' used to meet with political elites in Indian territory. In India, an alliance of Maoist and other political parties became conceivable. This prompts the direct engagement of India in Nepal. In comparison to issues around 2007 BS and 2046 BS, there were considerably more complex issues around 2006 BS.

The issue of Maoist army cantonment settlement, republicanism, federalism, secularism, and election system, among other things, made the situation extremely difficult. Secularism, republicanism, and federalism were very new issues for Nepal.

These issues have prompted international entities such as India, China, and western nations to intervene in Nepalese affairs. As the issues became more complicated and prolonged the Indian involvement and role in Nepal substantially increased. Khanal (2021) contends that if the issues of political transition are complicated, and the basis for resolving these issues as well as political movements is outside, international actors play a larger role.

Sharma (2019) claims that King Gyanendra's coup altered Indian attitudes toward Nepal. India sought to resolve Nepal's political issues through a collaborative venture between the King and political parties. On this path, India dispatched espionage agents and the RAW chief to Kathmandu to strike a deal with King.

After learning of the Kings' use of the China Card against India, it wanted to form a partnership between Maoists and political parties. Some Indian authorities, according to Shah (2067) want Nepal to be a federal country, which is in line with

the newly announced goal of ending monarchy and becoming a republic.

India had discovered the King's intention to seize power and had devised its own strategy in response. It made a series of paradoxical moves, supporting both the King and the Maoists, reducing the influence of legislative parties like the Nepali Congress and the CPN. -UML (Sharma, 2019).

One of the goals of RAW's Nepal mission in 2002 was to overthrow the monarchy and establish a republic in Nepal. It only took them six years to accomplish this goal. India permitted Maoists to remain on Indian land and continue their activities. India appeared to be eyeing the opportunity to emerge as a dominant player in Nepal, resolving its lingering geopolitical and economic concerns (Sharma, 2019).

“India, on the other hand, never wanted Nepal's instability to spiral out of control. Prior to 2001, it was thought along the same lines as the Royal Palace and the Royal Nepal Army. Simply worded, allow Maoist operations to expand to a certain degree, but allow us to intervene and manage them as needed” (Sharma, 2019).

“Delhi’s decision to support concessions for Nepal’s Maoists stemmed primarily from concerns about the monarchy consolidating power, which hindered India’s ambitions in Kathmandu. Additionally, there were views in Delhi that Nepal's

monarchy, particularly under King Gyanendra, had become a hub for anti-India sentiment, despite initially being perceived as favorable” (Sharma, 2019).

“The second reason was the United States' rising influence in Nepal, which Delhi despised. For example, American Ambassador Malinowski had to complain to Indian Ambassador Saran about some RAW agents in Kathmandu depicting America's strategy and intentions in Nepal as equal to disregarding Nepal's sovereignty ” (Sharma, 2019).

“India did not want to see an expansion of the role of any other country, be it the US or China, in Nepal. Had the America-army alliance been able to thwart the insurgency, there would have been a possibility of a transformation in the traditional power structure in Nepal, which would have greatly reduced India's dominance. Delhi could not allow that to happen. So it chose to lend various sorts of support to the Maoists" (Sharma, 2019).

The Maoists, on the other hand, wanted to make Delhi their shield as they saw America helping the army-palace combine, against which they were fighting. They wanted to concentrate their attack on the monarchy by joining hands with the parliamentary parties at the behest of the Indians. The Indians, too, worked to bring the Maoists and the parties together against the palace (Sharma, 2019).

Shah (2067) argues that India did not want see Maoist as a largest political power in the election of the first constituent election. On one hand it had used the Maoist to replace the Monarchy and on another had it used the Madhes card to keep the former in a proper size prior the election of CA.

India became independent six decades ago but it does not want to see Nepal as an independent entity and tries to keep Nepal under its complete influence through unnecessary intervention. The emergence of Maoist as a largest political power after the election of CA and forward of the nationalistic issues, and Pranchada's first visit to China breaKing the tradition of making first visit of India by the newly appointed PM of Nepal strongly dissatisfied the India.

India realized her interest could no longer can be served by the Maoist and prompted her to balance later using the Madhes card. While India has generally been described as a reluctant democracy promoter, researchers have noted that India became heavily involved in Nepal's peace and democratization process that took place between 2005 and 2008 (Destradi, 2012) or was even "very actively" engaged in promoting democracy in Nepal (Mehta, 2011 as cited in Bhattarai, 2018).

India remained in fact relatively passive during most of the constitution-making process (2008-2014) and only started to

actively engage shortly before the adoption of the new constitution (in September 2015) as well as during the implementation phase since September 2015 (P. Bhattarai, 2018)

India’s interference in the constitutional debate had the declared aim of encouraging the major parties to increase the document’s legitimacy (ICG, 2016). But, as in previous cases of Indian involvement in Nepal’s internal affairs, this official position was also defined by Nepal’s geo-political reality as seen through the lenses of Indian policymakers (Campbell, 2012).

In fact, India has had direct and indirect interests in Nepal’s constitution-making process, as the provisions of the new constitution of Nepal would have an impact on India’s national security and wider foreign policy, on bilateral economic relations as well as on water resource management (P. Bhattarai, 2018)

Dixit (2006) argues that “India's advocacy for plains-specific provinces in Nepal’s constitution was notable and raised questions about its motives. Potential drivers included geopolitical concerns related to China, security issues tied to the open border, frustration with Kathmandu-centric governance necessitating an alternative power base, or linguistic

considerations involving Ganga plains languages (Hindi, Awadhi, Bhojpuri, and Maithili".

"India's concerns regarding Nepal's southern border are closely linked to the Madhesi community, an ethnic group in Nepal's Terai region with familial, cultural, and ethnic ties to Indian border states. During Nepal's constitution drafting process, India perceived discrimination against the Madhesis as a significant issue, interpreting it as an affront to those they consider their kin. This stance has shaped India's active engagement in Nepal's constitutional affairs" (Majumder, 2015).

"Beyond this emotional connection, discontent and unrest among Madhesi populations has a clear security dimension for India: due to adjoining borders with India's two most densely populated states, it is much concerned about spillover effects of continuous protests in Terai region of Nepal" (P. Bhattarai, 2018).

India's foreign-policy interests in Nepal are based on the economic ties with Nepal, security concerns due to possible spillover of violent conflict across the common border, and India's deeper interest in continuing its political hegemony over its immediate neighboring country. Parameters that limited India's influence included the domestic strength and legitimacy of the official Nepali position (elite alignment; popular support)

as well as skepticism concerning India’s role in Nepal, which was reinforced by India’s overly partisan agenda.

In international politics, the relatively powerful nations of the world interpret the nations around them as their sphere of influence, whether declared or undeclared, and are interested in the internal political development of those nations. Their foreign policy focuses on countries that are defined as having no influence against them, no rulers worKing against their interests, and no presence of 'external forces' acting against them. Powerful nations also influence the foreign policy, security policy, and domestic politics of the so-called spheres of influence.

Defining a sphere of influence and maintaining such a sphere of influence is considered a sign of being a powerful and influential nation. The theory of sphere of influence in international relations states that to become regional and world power a state should also maintain it. The United States, the world's most powerful nation, for example, is interested in political developments in every corner of the globe. But the United States considers the continents of North and South America to be its special spheres of influence because of their geographical proximity. This has been America's policy since World War II. The United States wanted as many communist

regimes as possible to be established in North and South America

India considers South Asian countries, especially Nepal and Bhutan, as its sphere of influence. Considering Nepal as a country of sphere of influence, it seems that India wants Nepal to run according to India's interests in Nepal's foreign policy, security and some other domestic issues. India has been using many colonial geopolitical approaches and terminology to explain its attitude towards Nepal(Tiwari, 2016).

The sphere of influence, the interpretation of Nepal as a buffer state, and the fact that Nepal's mountains are also natural strongholds of India's security system (Himalayan Frontier Policy) convey a similar colonial view. Indian rulers, policy makers and intellectuals from the time of Jawaharlal Nehru till now consider Nepal as a country of sphere of influence and consider it necessary for India to take interest in its internal affairs as well. India has also adopted a strategy of looking at Nepal's political, economic and social development from its own security point of view.

India argues that the border between Nepal and India is open and that Nepal does not have the resources and capacity to address Indian security concerns. Showing the same understanding of the sphere of influence and other geopolitical reasons, India is interested in looKing at every activity of Nepal

from a security point of view and saying that Nepal's internal political development will affect India's security and is ready to intervene if necessary.

This view may have been correct when India became independent in 1947 and there was a real security threat from communist China, but since China's foreign policy in the 1990s was based on pragmatism rather than practicality, it should have been reconsidered by India and Nepal actively urged India to reconsider (Tiwari, 2016).

The growing water crisis in India and the abundance of water in Nepal, the security threat to India due to open borders, India's desire to become a world power by taking regional leadership in South Asia, and the lack of alternative concepts to explain and understand the relationship with Nepal. Due to India's military, economic and intellectual power, India has been able to explain Nepal's sphere of influence and maintain it in practice.

In terms of the reasons for sanction Khanal (2021), claims that India's dissatisfaction with Nepal is attributable to factors other than the constitution's content. India has had reservations since the beginning of the constitution-making process, but they became more obvious following the 16th point agreement amongst political leaders for the constitution-making process. The 16th point’s agreement covers the substance of the

constitution as well as power sharing following the constitution's proclamation.

(S. Sharma, 2021) also claims that Nepal's major political parties reached an agreement to share significant government positions, such as, President, Vice President and Prime Minister among themselves. Khanal (2021) argues that India appears to be more concerned about power sharing, and as a result, that it's found being disregarded. The Madhes issue has never been a serious concern for India; rather, it has been used by India as a card for political gain. Khanal (2021) does not accept the logic of the 2015 sanction's causes, according to which India enforced the sanction to support the Madhesi agenda. He argues that Madhes is India's only card. The BJP's ideology and philosophy is not in favour of federalism in Nepal.

There are several rooms for its reasoning. If that is the case, why did Madhesi parties ultimately enter the constitution by voting for Sushil Koiral? India has exploited the Madhes as a card to further its interests in Nepal. According to him, India anticipated that the Maoist becoming as dominant political force.” He further argues that “India wanted Nepal to be free of the grip of a powerful communist party which has been a part of international politics. India did not see a possibility to contain

the Maoist through Nepali Congress and Communist Party of Nepal (UML).

India's influence in Nepalese politics has been significant, particularly in shaping power dynamics among political groups. Feeling sidelined by alliances formed without its involvement, India leveraged Madhesi sentiments to counter the Maoists, thereby preventing their dominance in the constituent assembly. India's interventions extend beyond regional politics, influencing national parties and governmental institutions across Nepal

Chintan (2015) argues that whatever the constitution, it is an internal matter of the Nepali people and the political process here. Even if a party less constitution is issued in Nepal, the world cannot do anything. There are also countries with military rule. The only meaningful international concern is the guarantee of minimum fundamental rights and economic, social and cultural rights.

In this sense, the constitution from 1947 BS to date is very progressive compared to many controversial constitutions in the world. However, the direct or indirect request from India to repeal or amend the articles of the current constitution is a direct interference in Nepal's sovereignty and internal affairs.

Tiwari (2016) argues that 'due to the concept of colonial sphere of influence, India also seeks some ownership in Nepal's

internal political development and this is the main reason why Nepal does not support the main decision which did not take India into confidence. The main reason for India's displeasure with Nepal after the promulgation of the constitution is the Indian understanding that it was not given a place in the process of drafting the constitution of Nepal. Based on the concept of sphere of influence, India appeared to change the political system in Nepal and play a role in changing the government, influence policy making, lobby for awarding contracts to Indian companies in Nepal's development projects, and managing micro-politics in Nepal.

India has historically exerted significant influence over Nepal's political, economic, and social affairs, often viewing Nepal as within its sphere of influence. This influence has been characterized by a complex interplay of factors including geopolitical considerations, security concerns, economic interests, and historical ties. India's involvement in Nepal's internal affairs has been both overt and covert, ranging from brokering agreements between political factions to covert support for certain political movements.

Several researchers argue that India's interventions in Nepal have often been driven by its own interests, including the desire to maintain its dominance in the region, counter perceived

threats from other countries such as China and the United States, and ensure a favorable political landscape in Nepal. This has sometimes led to tensions and conflicts between the two countries, particularly when Nepal's political developments have not aligned with India's preferences.

India's approach to Nepal has been criticized for being paternalistic and colonial, with some researchers arguing that India has sought to control Nepal's political system and decision-making processes to serve its own interests. This has led to resentment among some Nepali politicians and citizens who perceive Indian interference as a threat to Nepal's sovereignty and independence.

The issue of Madhes, a region with close cultural and ethnic ties to India, has been a contentious issue in Nepal-India relations, with India accused of using Madhesi grievances for its own political gain. Additionally, India's involvement in Nepal's constitution-making process has been a source of controversy, with some Nepali politicians and analysts arguing that India sought to influence the content of the constitution to serve its own interests.

Overall, the relationship between India and Nepal is complex and multifaceted, characterized by a mix of cooperation, competition, and conflict. While India's influence in Nepal remains significant, there are also signs of Nepali

assertiveness and efforts to assert its sovereignty and independence in the face of perceived Indian encroachment. The dynamics between the two countries will continue to evolve as they navigate their shared history, geopolitical realities, and domestic political developments.

India's historical and ongoing interventions in Nepal have established a robust precedent that enhances the credibility of its coercive actions, such as the blockade. Over the decades, India has wielded substantial influence in Nepal through economic dependencies and political alliances, shaping key political transitions and decisions.

This historical context underscores India's capacity and willingness to exert pressure, reinforcing the credibility of its coercive diplomacy strategies. Researchers argue that India's interventions, guided by geopolitical interests and regional dominance aspirations, have strategically positioned it to influence Nepal's internal affairs, ensuring a favorable political environment aligned with its own objectives. This historical backdrop not only legitimizes India's coercive actions but also underscores the complex interplay of power dynamics and strategic leverage in South Asian geopolitics.

7.1.2 Domestic Political Dynamics

India’s coercive diplomacy toward Nepal reflects the strategic interplay between domestic political dynamics and external intervention, as theorized in the framework of realist international relations. By leveraging Nepal's internal political instability, particularly the grievances of the Madhesi community following the adoption of Nepal’s new constitution, India strategically exerted influence to advance its national interests and maintain regional dominance.

India’s coercive diplomacy toward Nepal in 2015 was built on multiple layers of leverage, including diplomatic, economic, political, historical, and soft power tools**.** By exploiting Nepal’s internal political divisions, economic dependencies, and historical ties, India sought to influence the constitutional process in its favor. However, this intervention also led to strained bilateral relations, rising anti-Indian sentiments in Nepal, and a more pronounced debate on Nepal’s sovereignty and foreign policy independence**.** The crisis highlighted the inherent power asymmetry between the two states and reinforced India’s ability to act as both a facilitator and disruptor in Nepal’s domestic politics.

According to Khanal (2021), Nepalese political actors have historically sought external involvement to achieve domestic objectives, a pattern that has enabled India to gain

leverage in Nepalese politics. This dynamic underscores how domestic instability creates openings for external actors to assert influence, aligning with realist notions of power and state behaviour in an anarchic international system. India's engagement in Nepal's internal affairs, either as an invited actor by Nepalese leaders or through independent intervention, has often led to strained bilateral relations.

As (Thapa, 2021) and Khanal (2021) argue, such interventions reflect a transactional and interest-driven approach, illustrating the complexities of sovereignty and diplomacy in asymmetric power relationships. Historically, since 2007 B.S., India has been enmeshed in Nepal's domestic political landscape, with Nepalese political leaders frequently seeking India's support for their respective governments. However, such practices challenge the norms of non-interference and reciprocity in foreign policy, reinforcing a cycle of dependency and diplomatic tension in Nepal-India relations.

Nepal's relationship with India, shaped by historical legacies from the British colonial period despite Nepal never being a formal colony, continues to be marked by significant Indian involvement in Nepal's domestic affairs, particularly since the 1990s (Ojha, 2015). From a constructivist perspective in international relations, this dynamic reflects the interplay of historical narratives, political culture, and shared expectations in

shaping state behaviour. India's facilitation of the 12-point agreement during Nepal’s Maoist conflict in 2004 exemplified its role as a key political actor in Nepal’s domestic sphere, effectively embedding itself as a stakeholder in Nepal's political processes. However, this involvement also enabled certain Nepalese leaders to seek Indian support for their domestic agendas, including assurances to align constitutional provisions with Indian concerns (H. Sharma, 2021).

Such practices underscore the tension between sovereignty and external influence, where domestic political actors inadvertently amplify external leverage. The promulgation of Nepal’s constitution by a two-thirds majority of the constituent assembly underscores the legitimacy of the democratic process, yet unresolved issues with marginalized groups, such as the Tharus, reflect shortcomings in fostering inclusivity and ownership.

Realist and institutionalist theories together highlight that the constitution's effectiveness depends on its acceptance by the broader population, which is contingent upon addressing critical social and political grievances. The resultant dynamic positions India as both a facilitator and a disruptor in Nepal's quest for political stability and sovereignty, reinforcing asymmetries in their bilateral relations.

Political parties could not go along with the groups out of the constitution promulgating process. There was need of flexible role and responsibilities of the political parties to bring dissatisfied groups in the mainstream of the political parties as soon as possible

The people in power during which time they decided to crush ethnic movement saw the images of colonizers in the protesters within the border. The people in power saw that they are fighting the war of liberation and campaigning a movement of decolonization.

“On the other hand, the Madhesi and Adivasi Janajatis regard those people sitting in power in Kathmandu as internal colonists, while on the other hand, the people in power in Kathmandu image the Madhesi as a force of colonial authority in New Delhi. As a result, both parties in conflict resort to the use of violence as a means of liberating themselves from the rule of colonial authority” (Dahal, 2018).

The geopolitical crisis around the Nepal Constitution arose not simply because India wanted more of a role in Nepal. In making major decisions about the constitution, especially delineating the provinces of the new Nepal, many news reports and intellectuals argue that a *Pahade* (namely, related to the hill people who dominate Nepal’s national politics) hegemonic mentality dominated the decision, ignoring some of the genuine

concerns of the Tharu and Madhesi peoples. The national political parties are dominated by hill Brahmins, followed by *Chhetri* and *Newars*, all of whom are of hill origin.

The root of the crisis of representation is that these parties have failed to bring members of agitating groups into the national parties, at a time when inclusive governance was particularly critical in post-monarchy Nepal, as multiple communities suddenly became aware of their rights.

This failure of the Kathmandu leaders provided a hotbed for agitation in Madhes, whose people enjoyed the support of the *Modi* government (Ojha, 2015). Certainly, it is true that some of the Madhesis' demands were not reasonably addressed at the time the constitution was adopted. The claims of the Madhesi focus on several issues, including the boundaries of the provinces and the provision of citizenship for family members. It is also true that Nepal's political leaders have failed to engage Madhesi communities and broaden ownership of the new constitution. Still, these are all internal issues for Nepal, and a process of constitutional amendment has already begun.

The Madhesi agitation for rights is only the tip of the iceberg. The more serious issue of exclusion goes unspoken: The *Dalits* and landless people forced to work as bonded labour of the landed aristocrats in the *Terai* are not in the Madhesi

movement. For this reason, even if the current Madhesi movement succeeds in negotiating power with the central authority in Nepal, it is very likely that *Dalit's* and marginalized groups including women in the Madhes will not receive their rights. If Nepalese politics seeks to ensure proportional representation of disadvantaged groups, then the pressing issue is not just Madhesi inclusion, but more importantly the *Dalit's* of both Madesh and hill origins.

Khanal (2021) arguges that the *Madhesi* political parties are responsible for the sanction of 2015. The *Madhesi* Parties sought Indian support in the *Madhes* movement that can be substantiated from the series visit of Madhesi leaders to India and meeting with the Indian leader. They also visited the Indian embassy on the eve of constitution promulgation. It is obvious that the *Madhesi* parties have some reservations about this constitution.

The main issue of the *Madhes* is identity, but in the *Madhes* movement, the issue of identity has been further weakened by the Indian alliance. Even so, the *Madhesi* parties were being called pro-India in the eyes of Kathmandu (Kafle, 2015). Author states that the cadres of *Madhes* parities sitting in India and throwing stones at Nepal in the name of Indian security personnel, holding sit-ins at checkpoints, mobilizing the

same people and protesting here, carrying *Modi's* banner saying *Modi* is alive, directly and indirectly invited the Indian interference in the domestic politics of Nepal imposing unofficial sanction against Nepal. This sort of activities *Madhes* parties defamed the entire *Madhes* people.

Jha (2015) argues that "Many Madhesi leaders were defeated in the second constituent assembly elections due to their failure to address people's issues. Driven by power and money, they fragmented their parties, unlike in the 2008 elections when three Madhes-based parties had significant representation".

In contrast, during the second constituent assembly elections in 2013, there were 13 Madhes-based parties. Though both during first constituent assembly and second constituent assembly elections, the overall voting percentage for the Madhes based parties remained almost the same about twelve per cent *Madhes* leaders lost the elections because their votes were divided, making it easier for non-*Madhesi* leaders to win. People have the right to express their demands and voices of dissent in a democracy.

Their demand can change over time, like in Nepal's case. *Madhes* based political parties walked out of the constitution making process when the 4 major political parties reached an agreement in June to 'fast track' the process and to delineate the federal provinces. After walKing out of the process, the

Terai Madhes political parties organized the protests opposing the agreement, forming an alliance called the United Democratic Madhesi Front (UDMF). The UDMF protested calling the nationwide strike against the decision to delineate the provinces in the constitution (Pokhrel, 2015).

The UDMF's major demands includes (i) the implementation of all past agreements reached between the UDMF and the government, (ii) two provinces to be part of the entire *Terai Madhes* belt, (iii) an electoral constituency based on population only, (iv) an amendment to citizenship laws, and (v) proportional representation in every state institution. It is becoming harder to understand what the exact agenda of the UDMF is as the protests have been escalating.

"News of a seven-point agenda has emerged from India, and a thirty-five-point agenda is circulating in the media in Kathmandu. Some UDMF leaders deny these demands to be their own, whilst other are affiliated themselves with them. The Government registered an amendment bill in parliament to address the UDMF's demands, however the UDMF remains dissatisfied, saying that all demands must be met before they will come to the negotiation table" (Pokhrel, 2015).

Social identity has a long list of demands in search of amendments of the new constitution, which sometimes cross over a hundred. The latest in the series until December 2016 was an eleven point demand made public by UDMF, asKing for

constitutional amendments in more than a dozen of places (Dahal, 2018).

Jwaala (2015) argues that issues including citizenship of *Madhes* centric parties have been fully addressed. The districts of *Madhes* have been merged into one province, while the Tharu-majority territory has been kept in one province. There is a constitutional provision for *Madhesi*, *Tharu*, *Muslim*, *Dalit* and women's commissions.

In order to establish the representation and access of *Madhesi* and other communities, the constitution is being amended to adopt the principle of proportional inclusion and to determine constituencies on the basis of population. According to him the rest of the issues will not be resolved by *Bandh*, strike or foreign appeal. There has been option of resolving issues including demarcation through negotiations, consensus, amendment of the constitution and the Federal Commission

India knows that the real power in Nepal will be in the mountains, not in the *Madhes*. India has made four bets through the *Madhes* movement. One is to create an anti-hill and anti-major three party atmosphere in the *Madhes* so that indigenous parties can dominate all future elections; it helps India to put pressure on the Nepalese government. But India is with them. In this way, India can exert strong pressure on the Government of

Nepal by showing its influence in the *Madhes*. Third, to prove that the constitution made by Nepalese has no meaning unless India supports it. And fourth, to create pressure on the next government, the President, the Speaker and the Vice-President to have as many people as possible on their side.

More importantly, subnational politics in *Terai* has also failed to represent Madhesi communities effectively at the national level through electoral politics. Madhesi parties are known for their divisions and conflicts not because of ideological differences but because of their leaders' interest in the repeated games of power in Kathmandu.

In the last election, the regional parties bagged many fewer seats than the national parties did. Many of the leaders who were defeated in the last Constituent Assembly election have come together to form alliances to agitate against the national parties that won more than 90 percent of the vote (Ojha, 2015). There are many villages in *Madhes* Pradesh which lack road connectivity with Nepali towns.

However, they have access to Indian towns without any hassle. For instance, my own village *Bathnaha* of *Mahottari* is not fortunate enough to have access to road or transport connectivity with Nepali market or *Jaleshwar*, district headquarters. *Bathnaha* dwellers are dependent on the Indian

market for fertilizers, medicines and other daily needs (Jha, 2020). Madhesi people have often suffered humiliation at the hands of India’s Border Security Forces (BSF) deployed along the Indo-Nepal border. They often misbehave with the Madhesi people who visit the bordering towns to meet their relatives or for marketing purposes. The ill-treatment at the hands of BSF fuels so much resentment in the Madhesi People.

In a nutshell, Indian meddling in Nepal's constitution-making process, and subsequent sanction, are the outcome of Nepalese political players' incapacity to resolve national concerns within the country. They have openly sought Indian involvement in Nepali politics for a long time when the situation was favorable to them. On the other hand, if it was to be a stumbling block in the creation of a power equation, they resisted it. This sort of political behaviour keeps the diplomatic relationships between Nepal and India in a state of flux, resulting in stress in the relationship time after time. As a consequence, the last sanction was erected.

It appears that political leaders are unable to establish a climate conducive to greater support of the constitution. Owing to Madhesis closeness to bordering India due to scio-cultural affinity, major political parties' views on Madhes have been tinted with fear and distrust. The main political parties' fear

psychology has precluded them from dealing with Madhes issues from a liberal perspective.

Madhesis, on the other hand, perceive Kathmadu through the eyes of a colonizer, unwilling to compromise on their demands and refusing to recognise the Constitution's flexibility. The Madhesis' uncompromising stance on the problems, as well as their preference for Indian assistance in dealing with their demands, resulted in constitutional crises. They were, in reality, skeptics of the democratic process of establishing rights in their own country. In reality, Madhes has served as a card for India, as indicated by India's relaxation of the sanction without a formal proclamation, rendering Madhes concerns.

In conclusion, the current sanctions imposed by India on Nepal stem from a combination of internal and external factors. Nepalese political actors seeking external involvement in domestic affairs have contributed to souring relations between the two countries. India's involvement in Nepal's political landscape, both invited and unsolicited, has added complexity to the situation. The historical context of Nepal-India relations, influenced by colonial legacies and power dynamics, has further fueled tensions. The failure of Nepalese leaders to address the concerns of marginalized communities, particularly the Madhesis, has exacerbated the situation. Internal divisions

among Madhesi parties, driven by power struggles rather than ideological differences, have hindered effective representation at the national level.

The proximity of Madhesi communities to the Indian border has also shaped perceptions and behaviours on both sides. Madhesi grievances, exacerbated by mistreatment from Indian security forces, have led to a reliance on India for support in addressing their demands.

Ultimately, the inability of Nepalese political leaders to foster a conducive environment for constitutional implementation has perpetuated diplomatic tensions. Fear and distrust have colored interactions between major political parties and Madhesi groups, hindering progress towards a resolution.

7.1.3 Trade and Economic Dependency

Nepal's trade and economic dependency on India is significant and multifaceted, with historical, geographical, and economic factors contributing to this close relationship. This dependency has been a critical element in understanding the dynamics of Nepal-India relations, particularly in contexts such as the 2015 blockade.

A significant portion of Nepal's imports and exports pass through Indian territory. These economic linkages make Nepal

vulnerable to economic sanctions or blockades imposed by India as a coercive measure. During the 2015 blockade, Nepal faced severe shortages of essential goods like fuel and medicines due to restrictions imposed on border crossings by India.

One of the key aspects of coercive diplomacy is leveraging economic dependence to exert influence over another state (Art & Cronin, 2003). In Nepal's case, India's role as the sole active transit route for third-country trade and Nepal's heavy reliance on Indian exports make it vulnerable to economic pressure (Richter, 2017). Nepal's reliance on India for petroleum, essential commodities, and trade infrastructure enables India to use economic tools as a means of coercion. The 2015 blockade is a prime example where India's ability to disrupt fuel supply resulted in economic hardship for Nepal, highlighting the coercive potential of economic interdependence (Baral, 2017a).

The significant trade imbalance between Nepal and India further exacerbates Nepal's economic vulnerability. Nepal's import dependence on India, with petroleum, transport equipment, and medical supplies forming a major share, creates a structural disadvantage in bilateral trade relations (EON, 2023; Vashisht, 2024). This trade asymmetry grants India leverage, as any disruption to Nepal's import supply chain can cause severe

economic consequences, giving India a strategic upper hand in diplomatic negotiations.

Nepal’s landlocked status and historical dependence on Indian transit routes make it susceptible to coercive measures in the form of trade restrictions and blockades. The Nepal-India Treaty of Transit (1999) and the Nepal-India Treaty of Trade (2009) outline Nepal’s dependency on India’s goodwill for unhindered trade (Vashisht, 2024). The blockade of 2015 demonstrated India's capability to disrupt Nepal’s access to essential goods, thereby reinforcing its ability to exert diplomatic pressure when necessary.

The 2015 crisis also highlighted a shift in China’s approach toward Nepal. While China refrained from supporting Nepal during the 1988-89 fuel crisis, it responded swiftly in 2015, signing a petroleum agreement with Nepal (Richter, 2017).This shift suggests that Nepal may have an emerging alternative to reduce its dependence on India, though logistical challenges and infrastructure constraints continue to limit this option. Nonetheless, the episode indicates that the availability of alternative trade partners could influence the effectiveness of coercive diplomacy.

Nepal’s economic dependence on India is not only an economic issue but also a geopolitical concern. As seen in the case of fuel supply disruptions, India’s leverage extends beyond

trade and into Nepal’s internal political and diplomatic affairs. The prolonged trade imbalance and Nepal’s inability to diversify trade routes reinforce India's dominance in Nepal's economic and political landscape, making Nepal vulnerable to future coercive strategies (Joshi & Rose, 1967).

Although this observation was made many years ago, Nepal's present circumstances are exactly the same as what they saw. Nepal is finding it difficult to escape the influence of its neighbor and main trading partner, India, despite efforts to diversify trade channels and lessen reliance on India for trade in order to protect its economy from any unfavorable consequences imposed by geography (Chand, 2018)

Nepal's significant economic dependence on India for essential goods, including fuel and medical supplies, underscored the credibility of India's threat. The blockade demonstrated India's capability to disrupt Nepal's economy and daily life, making the threats tangible and immediate. In the context of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal, economic interdependence plays a crucial role, influencing the dynamics and outcomes of coercive actions.

"Nepal and India share a long history of trade and commercial exchanges. India is Nepal’s largest trade partner. The volume of bilateral trade has reached over NRS 1134.53 billion during the last fiscal year 2022-23 with imports from

India amounting to NPR1027.84 billion and exports to India standing over NPR 106.69 billion" (EON, 2023).

Over the years, Nepalese imports have increased substantially. The major import items include petroleum products, transport equipment and parts, electronics, machinery and parts, rice, crude soya bean oil, medicine, telecommunication equipment and parts, readymade garments, fertilizer, and coal etc.

Nepal-India Treaty of Trade (2009), Agreement of Cooperation to Control Unauthorized Trade (2009), Treaty of Transit (1999), and Rail Services Agreement (2004) provide for the bilateral mechanism for trade and transit. Under the Treaty of Trade, duty-free access into the Indian market for all Nepali-manufactured goods is provided on a non-reciprocal basis, except a short negative list (including cigarettes, alcohol and cosmetics).

Since the signing of the 2009 treaty, India Nepal trade has witnessed a very growth rate of around 18.3 per cent per annum. The total volume of bilateral trade has increased from US$ 2.6 billion in 2009 to US$ 8.5 billion in 2019 (Vashisht, 2024).

However, the surge has been extremely lopsided. Increase in Indo-Nepal trade has primarily been driven by Nepal’s imports from India leading to a massive trade deficit. In 2009

Nepal imported goods worth US$ 2.1 billion from India under 3639 tariff lines at 6-digit level (Vashisht, 2024).

The imports were dominated by petroleum oil, flat and rolled iron, petroleum gas, semi-finished iron products, medicaments containing hormones, portland cement, light petroleum, motorcycles, cement, iron bar and roads, live goats and medicament (Vashisht, 2024).

These twelve products accounted for almost 42 per cent of Nepal's import from India. Over the next ten years, Nepal's imports from India grew at an average annual rate of 21.4 per cent to reach US$ 7.14 billion in 2019 before declining to below US$6 billion in 2020, owing to the covid induced restrictions (Vashisht, 2024).

In 2009 AD, Nepal exported 619 products to India and imported 3639 things from India. In 2019 AD, Nepal exported 436 products to India and imported 4068 products from India. Similarly, Nepal exported 381 products to India and purchased 4102 products from India in 2021 AD (Vashisht, 2024). Nepal's annual exports to India are declining significantly, while Nepal's imports from India are significantly rising.

Economic interdependence between India and Nepal plays a pivotal role in the framework of coercive diplomacy. India's capacity to leverage its economic ties, such as trade, energy supplies, financial flows, and development assistance, provides

it with considerable tools to apply pressure and shape Nepal's policy decisions during times of diplomatic tensions). This economic reliance positions Nepal in a vulnerable situation, given its dependence on India for crucial trade and transit routes. The strategic manipulation of these economic links can significantly influence Nepal's diplomatic behavior, as it remains heavily reliant on Indian infrastructure for international commerce.

Thus, understanding the economic dynamics between the two countries is essential for assessing the potential effectiveness and consequences of coercive measures, particularly when Nepal's options for diversification are constrained by geographical and logistical factors

Due to a combination of historical, geographical, and economic considerations, Nepal is heavily dependent on India for commerce and economics. Due to this dependence, Nepal is susceptible to blockades or economic penalties from India, as was the case in 2015 when there were significant shortages of necessities.

This vulnerability is made worse by Nepal's reliance on Indian transit channels for commerce with foreign countries. Because of the open border and ease of access, Nepal still faces tremendous obstacles in trying to become less dependent on India, even with its efforts to diversify. The dynamics of

coercive diplomacy are heavily influenced by economic interdependence, and India's economic sway over Nepal is a powerful instrument in shaping bilateral relations.

India’s coercive diplomacy against Nepal is significantly shaped by its economic and transit leverage. The trade asymmetry, transit dependency, and Nepal’s limited alternative trade routes provide India with strong coercive tools. However, Nepal’s attempts to diversify its economic partnerships, particularly with China, indicate a gradual shift in regional dynamics that could potentially reduce India's coercive leverage over time. Nevertheless, as long as Nepal remains highly dependent on India for essential goods and transit access, India will continue to wield significant economic coercion capabilities.

7.1.4 Energy Dependence

The energy sector in Nepal is highly dependent on non-renewables; with renewable sources, like solar and hydropower, comprising of only 6.3%. This indicates that Nepal is reliant on less effective and inefficient domestic sources (such as firewood and coal), and largely dependent on external sources for relatively developed forms of energy be it for cooKing, transportation or other energy necessities (Shakya & Bhattarai, 2016). All the while, Nepal is yet to leverage on the abundance

of water resources to develop its hydropower potential, and substitute reliance on primitive and external sources.

Additionally, over the past five years demands for household petroleum products have been gradually increasing. On an average, diesel has been growing at 9.14% annually, while petrol and LPG has been growing at 11.22% and 12.85% respectively. During these five years, Nepal has imported products worth a total of NPR 516.3 billion (USD 5.01 billion). In FY 2014/15 alone, Nepal's petroleum import bill racked up to NPR 110 billion (USD 1.06 billion). With the growing demand for petroleum products, the daily requirement for FY 2014/15 (Shakya & Bhattarai, 2016).

Nepal imports a considerable amount of petroleum products from India. During the blockade, the shortage of fuel in Nepal highlighted its dependency on India for energy supplies. This dependency gives India leverage to use energy as a tool in coercive diplomacy, impacting Nepal's domestic stability and economic activities.

India has long been Nepal's main fuel source; the country gets all 200,000 kilolitres of petroleum every month from the state-run Indian Oil Corp (TET, 2017).

Petroleum is the second largest energy fuel in Nepal after firewood and accounts for 8% of primary energy consumption in Nepal. All petroleum products are imported from India. The

government has signed an agreement with the British company Cairns Energy PLC for petroleum exploitations but the exploitation works have not been initiated up to now (Energypedia, 2010).

At the moment, the import of petroleum products is transacted exclusively between the “Nepal Oil Corporation” and the “Indian Oil Corporation”. 75 % of the imports are diesel, kerosene and gasoline. Due to the high energy demand in the country the dependence on petroleum imports is increasing (Energypedia, 2010).

In 2006, Nepal had to spend 53 % of its foreign currency for importing petroleum products which is almost double than 2001. More than 62 % of the petroleum products are used in the transportation sector. Besides that, petroleum products constitute important energy sources for cooKing purposes in households. The price rises in the years made the import dependency more and more precarious for the economy of the country (Energypedia, 2010).

Price instability has heightened the vulnerability of urban poor households, particularly as kerosene has become their main cooking fuel. The cost of kerosene for these households more than doubled between 2003 and 2009. By 2010, nearly 40% of high-speed diesel was used for electricity generation in captive generators, leading to a significant increase in diesel imports

doubling from 2008 to 2010. This has resulted in opportunity costs of approximately NR 41 billion (US$ 490 million) annually (Energypedia, 2010).

Nepal, a landlocked country, heavily depends on India for its energy supplies. This dependency is a critical factor in the dynamics of the two countries' bilateral relations, especially during periods of political tension, such as the 2015 blockade. This analysis provides a detailed overview of Nepal's energy dependency on India, supported by data and facts.

Nepal imports over 90% of its petroleum products from India. According to the Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC), Nepal imported approximately 1.6 million kiloliters of petroleum products from India in 2014-2015, which constituted the majority of its total imports. The annual consumption of petroleum products in Nepal is around 1.8 million kilolitres. The major products include petrol, diesel, kerosene, and liquefied petroleum gas LPG (MASUM, 2016).

Nepal relies entirely on imports for its LPG requirements, primarily from India. In 2015, Nepal imported around 300,000 metric tons of LPG from India, which is essential for household cooKing and heating. The supply chain for LPG is heavily dependent on road transport from Indian refineries to various distribution points in Nepal (Fellendorf, 2018).

The unofficial blockade imposed by India in 2015 led to severe fuel shortages in Nepal. The supply of petroleum products, LPG, and other essential goods was significantly disrupted. The shortage led to long queues at petrol stations, a spike in fuel prices, and a thriving black market. The transportation sector, industries, and daily life were heavily impacted.

Hospitals faced difficulties in operating due to the lack of fuel for generators and transportation. The shortage of medical supplies further exacerbated the crisis. The shortage of LPG and kerosene affected cooKing and heating in households, particularly during the winter months.

In the fiscal year 2014-2015, Nepal imported 1.6 million kiloliters of petroleum products from India. Nepal's annual import of LPG from India stands at around 300,000 metric tons. During the blockade, the price of petrol on the black market surged to over NPR 300 per liter, compared to the official rate of around NPR 104 per liter. The blockade's economic impact contributed to a slowdown in Nepal's GDP growth, which fell to 3% in 2015-2016 from 6% in 2014-2015 (Shakya & Bhattarai, 2016).

One of the most visible impacts of the blockade which the general public experienced first-hand, was the sharp rise in prices. The year-on-year inflation measured by Consumer Price

Index (CPI) increased by around 6.9% and 7.2% in the first and second months of the current fiscal year respectively. Thereon, inflation rose steeply climbing up as high as 12.1% by mid-January. The figure shows the change in CPI levels in nine months of FY2014/15 and FY 2015/16 which provides a perspective as to how prices have fared in the same periods over two subsequent fiscal years (Shakya & Bhattarai, 2016).

Nepal's energy sector reflects structural dependency and highlights the challenges theorized in dependency theory. The reliance on imported petroleum products, primarily from India, constitutes a significant vulnerability in its economic and political framework. With non-renewable energy dominating consumption and renewable resources like hydropower contributing only minimally, Nepal remains locked into an asymmetrical relationship that favors India. The 2015 blockade starkly exposed the risks of this dependency, as shortages in fuel, LPG, and other essentials disrupted transportation, healthcare, and household energy needs, exacerbating inflation and socio-economic disparities. This crisis aligns with dependency theory's assertion that peripheral economies are structurally constrained by reliance on external sources, perpetuating underdevelopment and vulnerability to coercion. Addressing these vulnerabilities requires diversifying energy sources, leveraging abundant hydropower potential, and

fostering self-sufficiency to break free from exploitative economic dependencies

7.1.5 Remittances and Financial Flows

Nepal receives a significant amount of remittances from Nepali migrant workers in India, which contributes significantly to Nepal's economy. This financial flow provides India with indirect economic influence over Nepal, as any disruption or constraints on these remittances could destabilize Nepal's economy and society.

Nepal is heavily reliant on remittances, which constitute a significant portion of its GDP. In 2015, remittances contributed approximately 31.3% to Nepal's GDP, making it one of the top remittance-receiving countries in the world (Khan, 2018, p. 5). During the blockade, the restrictions on the movement of goods and people at the India-Nepal border disrupted economic activities and increased the economic hardship for many Nepalese families, who relied heavily on remittances sent by family members working abroad.

The blockade's economic impact was profound, causing Nepal's GDP growth to fall to 3% in the fiscal year 2015-2016 from 6% in 2014-2015 (WB, 2018). This sharp decline was partly due to the disruptions in trade and the increased cost of goods, which squeezed household budgets and reduced

disposable income, affecting domestic consumption and investment.

In 2015, remittances to Nepal amounted to approximately USD 6.7 billion, accounting for 31.3% of the GDP. The blockade's economic impact contributed to a slowdown in Nepal's GDP growth, which fell to 3% in 2015-2016 from 6% in 2014-2015 (Dixit, 2017).

India's coercive diplomacy through the 2015 blockade significantly disrupted Nepal's economic stability. The blockade affected remittance flows by exacerbating economic hardship for families dependent on foreign income and disrupting financial flows by increasing black market activities and inflation.

These economic pressures were intended to coerce Nepal into making political concessions regarding its new constitution, showcasing the interplay between economic dependence and geopolitical strategy.

7.1.6 Political Leverage

India's political influence in the region, especially its ability to support or oppose political movements within Nepal, further reinforced its credibility. The support for the Madhesi protests indicated India's strategic involvement and its capacity to influence internal Nepali politics.

During the people's movement in April 2005, the Maoist insurgency group in Nepal agreed to participate in the peace process and promised to meet the demands through a constituent assembly brokered by India. India's participation in the April movement in various forms has been a powerful reality (Ghimire, 2015a).

Despite India's role in the Nepalese peace process, Nepalese sovereignty over her constitution, democratic model, and direction is something with which India should not interfere. India should not have imposed any preconditions on Nepal's constitution-making process, as this is absolutely pointless.

There were high hopes among the people after the movement of 2006 that all outstanding problems -perceived, exaggerated and real will be sorted out in their favour. But when the post 2006 governments, one after another, and the constituent assemblies, decided not to get into serious debate on conflict and its causes, and about the grievances of the people, they were angry and frustrated.

Nepal’s diplomacy with India was almost one-way since 2005 to the extent that India felt, and Nepali actors accepted, that it was for India to dictate and decide the agenda of Nepali politics and contents of the constitution.

In 2007, many Nepali leaders worked for India’s independence as they were swayed and convinced against colonial rule. In 2046, India built a perception that King

Birendra, by obtaining Chinese arms and rocket launchers (that was when Indian repeatedly violated Nepal's airspace), and imposed economic sanction to bring Nepal under its knees. It formally proposed to the King that Nepal accept a space under India's security umbrella and give prior right to India over Nepal's vast water resources.

That means India was dangling a carrot and a stick to the King: either listen to what we are demanding, or face to accept democracy as there are political parties willing to launch a movement. The King did not budge, and political parties wisely went for a negotiated settlement with the King for the multiparty democracy and a constitutional monarchy.

While 2063 movement, India brazenly collaborated with the forces (Maoists) it called 'Terrorists', it also demonized King Gyanendra after he warned Man Mohan singh in Dhaka against having Afghanistan in the SAARC fold when US forces were still present there. India and US as well as other western countries agreed for radical change in Nepal for a Republic and secular Nepal to teach the King a lesson.

India failed in Nepal for two reasons: people had started realizing that India had overplayed its card or intervention. Political parties had miserably failed to deliver in nine years following the movement of 2063. They had also come to realize that excluding the King from the peace process was part of the

larger western and Indian game to increase their presence and contain China.

India has puppetized Nepali leaders, and instead of having a long term approach or policy on Nepal, India seems busy in regime change, and has become grossly unpopular, with China outsmarting it as a far more ‘trusthworthy’ friend. Though India did not officially declare the sanction through a formal statement, it was clear from different statements made by political leaders, journalists, and the tacit acceptance of India's Minister for External Affairs in a parliamentary address during a Nepal discussion. When it comes to Nepal policy, India has unofficially accepted the sanction as a diplomatic blunder (Ghimire, 2021).

In order to further their vested interests, Nepalese players are courting outside involvement in the country's internal affairs. The current sanction enforced by India is the result of Nepalese political actors acting in this manner. Khanal (2021) argues that due to the political instability in Nepalese politics over the last few decades, actors have demonstrated a predisposition to seek outside assistance to achieve their goals.

Foreign powers have gained leverage and affected Nepalese politics by taking advantage of this kind of propensity among Nepalese political actors. LooKing in our mirror we should not let to enter the foreign power harm the national

interest. Such a pattern has ultimately soured the relations with neighboring countries.

Similar to (Thapa, 2021), Khanal (2021) India sometimes intervenes in Nepalese politics to further its own interests, and other times it does so at the invitation of Nepalese political actors. Since 2007BS, India has become a part of Nepal's domestic politics. The political actor frequently seeks India's help, as seen by Nepalese political leaders' declarations of India's support for a specific Nepal government. Whichever government is taking power in the neighboring country, it must accept that government in accordance with norms of foreign policy and diplomacy.

Nepal’s relationship with India is strongly tinged by the British colonial era, although Nepal never became a formal colony. But relations in the post-1990 era have shown a consistent trend of increasing and mostly unwarranted Indian interference in Nepal’s affairs (Ojha, 2015). Nepalese leaders have been complicit in this interference. In the decade from 1996, Nepal was in the grip of the Maoist War. India helped resolve the conflict by facilitating a 12-point agreement between the Maoist party and the other national political parties in 2005. Included in the package was a roadmap for subsequent political development in Nepal.

But this process also established India, for better or worse, as an extraordinarily powerful political player in Nepal. Certain

Nepalese political leaders visited India before the constitution's proclamation, promising the Indian leader that the new constitution would meet Indian concerns. (H. Sharma, 2021). This type of promise from political leaders has been a crude form of agreement to safeguard India's interests in Nepal. It also encouraged Indian desire and participation in the constitution-making process.

Major political parties could not make clear about the age era historical achievement of the constituent assembly to the dissatisfied groups nor did they address the relevant demands of Tharu and other groups. The constitution drafted by the constituent assembly was the mandate of sovereign people. Though political discourse can be made on its provision but there cannot be any question taking its legitimacy and jurisdiction.

Major political parties taking people’s votes carved the constitution and passed it with support of two third members of the constituent assembly, whose constitutional and legal status is high. The effectiveness of the constitution depends upon acceptance and sense of ownership of the overwhelming population of the country, where political parties missed with open mistakes that they came on the decision to promulgate the constitution without solving some relevant issues that could have left a long term effect.

Political parties could not go along with the groups out of the constitution promulgating process. There was need of flexible role and responsibilities of the political parties to bring dissatisfied groups in the mainstream of the political parties as soon as possible

The people in power during which time they decided to crush ethnic movement saw the images of colonizers in the protesters within the border. The people in power saw that they are fighting the war of liberation and campaigning a movement of decolonization.

On the other hand, the Madhesi and Adivasi Janajatis regard those people sitting in power in Kathmandu as internal colonists, while on the other hand, the people in power in Kathmandu image the Madhesi as a force of colonial authority in New Delhi. As a result, both parties in conflict resort to the use of violence as a means of liberating themselves from the rule of colonial authority (Dahal, 2018).

The geopolitical crisis surrounding Nepal's Constitution stemmed not only from India's desire for influence but also from a Pahade-centric (hill-based) hegemonic approach to decision-making, particularly in the delineation of new provinces. Reports suggest that the concerns of marginalized groups, such as the Tharu and Madhesi, were overlooked, with national

political parties being dominated by hill-origin Brahmins, Chhetris, and Newars (Ojha, 2015).

The root of the crisis of representation is that these parties have failed to bring members of agitating groups into the national parties, at a time when inclusive governance was particularly critical in post-monarchy Nepal, as multiple communities suddenly became aware of their rights.

This failure of the Kathmandu leaders provided a hotbed for agitation in Madhes, whose people enjoyed the support of the *Modi* government (Ojha, 2015). Certainly, it is true that some of the Madhesis' demands were not reasonably addressed at the time the constitution was adopted. The claims of the Madhesi focus on several issues, including the boundaries of the provinces and the provision of citizenship for family members. It is also true that Nepal's political leaders have failed to engage Madhesi communities and broaden ownership of the new constitution. Still, these are all internal issues for Nepal, and a process of constitutional amendment has already begun.

The Madhesi agitation for rights is only the tip of the iceberg. The more serious issue of exclusion goes unspoken: the *Dalits* and landless people forced to work as bonded labour of the landed aristocrats in the *Terai* are not in the Madhesi movement. For this reason, even if the current Madhesi movement succeeds in negotiating power with the central authority in Nepal, it is very likely that *Dalit's* and marginalized

groups including women in the Madhes will not receive their rights. If Nepalese politics seeks to ensure proportional representation of disadvantaged groups, then the pressing issue is not just Madhesi inclusion, but more importantly the *Dalit's* of both Madesh and hill origins.

The *Madhesi* political parties are responsible for the sanction of 2015. The *Madhesi* Parties sought Indian support in the *Madhes* movement that can be substantiated from the series visit of Madhesi leaders to India and meeting with the Indian leader. They also visited the Indian embassy Kathmandu on the eve of constitution promulgation. It is obvious that the *Madhesi* parties have some reservations about this constitution.

(Kafle, 2015) states that the cadres of *Madhes* parities sitting in India and throwing stones at Nepal in the name of Indian security personnel, holding sit-ins at checkpoints, mobilizing the same people and protesting here, carrying *Modi's* banner saying *Modi* is alive, directly and indirectly invited the Indian interference in the domestic politics of Nepal imposing unofficial sanction against Nepal. This sort of activities *Madhes* parties defamed the entire *Madhes* people.

Jha (2015) argues that many of the *Madhesi* leaders were defeated in the second constituent assembly elections because they failed to address the people's problems. Out of lust for money and power, they did not hesitate to fragment the

parties. During the first constituent assembly elections in 2008, only three Madhes-based parties had contested the elections and hence they had a substantial presence in the first constituent assembly.

In contrast, during the second constituent assembly elections in 2013, there were 13 Madhes-based parties. Though both during first constituent assembly and second constituent assembly elections, the overall voting percentage for the Madhes based parties remained almost the same about twelve per cent *Madhes* leaders lost the elections because their votes were divided, making it easier for non-*Madhesi* leaders to win. People have the right to express their demands and voices of dissent in a democracy.

Their demand can change over time, like in Nepal's case. *Madhes* based political parties walked out of the constitution making process when the 4 major political parties reached an agreement in June to 'fast track' the process and to delineate the federal provinces. After walKing out of the process, the *Terai Madhes* political parties organized the protests opposing the agreement, forming an alliance called the United Democratic Madhesi Front (UDMF). The UDMF protested calling the nationwide strike against the decision to delineate the provinces in the constitution (Pokhrel, 2015).

The UDMF's major demands includes (i) the implementation of all past agreements reached between the UDMF and the government, (ii) two provinces to be part of the entire *Terai Madhes* belt, (iii) an electoral constituency based on population only, (iv) an amendment to citizenship laws, and (v) proportional representation in every state institution. It is becoming harder to understand what the exact agenda of the UDMF is as the protests have been escalating. News of a seven-point agenda has emerged from India, and a thirty-five-point agenda is circulating in the media in Kathmandu. Some UDMF leaders deny these demands to be their own, whilst other are affiliated themselves with them.

The Government registered an amendment bill in parliament to address the UDMF's demands, however the UDMF remains dissatisfied, saying that all demands must be met before they will come to the negotiation table (Pokhrel, 2015). Social identity has a long list of demands in search of amendments of the new constitution, which sometimes cross over a hundred. The latest in the series until December 2016 was an eleven point demand made public by UDMF, asKing for constitutional amendments in more than a dozen of places (Dahal, 2018).

Jwaala (2015) argues that issues including citizenship of *Madhes* centric parties have been fully addressed. The districts of *Madhes* have been merged into one province, while the Tharu-majority territory has been kept in one province. There is a constitutional provision for *Madhesi*, *Tharu*, *Muslim*, *Dalit* and women's commissions.

In order to establish the representation and access of *Madhesi* and other communities, the constitution is being amended to adopt the principle of proportional inclusion and to determine constituencies on the basis of population. According to him the rest of the issues will not be resolved by *Bandh*, strike or foreign appeal. There has been option of resolving issues including demarcation through negotiations, consensus, amendment of the constitution and the Federal Commission

India knows that the real power in Nepal will be in the mountains, not in the *Madhes*. India has made four bets through the *Madhes* movement. One is to create an anti-hill and anti-major three party atmosphere in the *Madhes* so that indigenous parties can dominate all future elections; it helps India to put pressure on the Nepalese government. In this way, India can exert strong pressure on the Government of Nepal by showing its influence in the *Madhes*. Third, to prove that the constitution made by Nepalese has no meaning unless India supports it. And

fourth, to create pressure on the next government, the President, the Speaker and the Vice-President to have as many people as possible on their side.

More importantly, subnational politics in *Terai* has also failed to represent Madhesi communities effectively at the national level through electoral politics. Madhesi parties are known for their divisions and conflicts not because of ideological differences but because of their leaders' interest in the repeated games of power in Kathmandu.

In the last election, the regional parties bagged many fewer seats than the national parties did. Many of the leaders who were defeated in the last Constituent Assembly election have come together to form alliances to agitate against the national parties that won more than 90 percent of the vote (Ojha, 2015).

In a nutshell, Indian meddling in Nepal's constitution-making process, and subsequent sanction, are the outcome of Nepalese political players' incapacity to resolve national concerns within the country. They have openly sought Indian involvement in Nepali politics for a long time when the situation was favorable to them.

On the other hand, if it was to be a stumbling block in the creation of a power equation, they resisted it. This sort of

political behaviour keeps the diplomatic relationships between Nepal and India in a state of flux, resulting in stress in the relationship time after time. As a consequence, the last sanction was erected.

It appears that political leaders are unable to establish a climate conducive to greater support of the constitution. Owing to Madhesis closeness to bordering India due to scio-cultural affinity, major political parties' views on Madhes have been tinted with fear and distrust. The main political parties' fear psychology has precluded them from dealing with Madhes issues from a liberal perspective.

Madhesis, on the other hand, perceive Kathmadu through the eyes of a colonizer, unwilling to compromise on their demands and refusing to recognise the constitution's flexibility. The Madhesis' uncompromising stance on the problems, as well as their preference for Indian assistance in dealing with their demands, resulted in constitutional crises. They were, in reality, skeptics of the democratic process of establishing rights in their own country. In reality, Madhes has served as a card for India, as indicated by India's relaxation of the sanction without a formal proclamation, rendering Madhes concerns.

In conclusion, the current sanctions imposed by India on Nepal stem from a combination of internal and external factors.

Nepalese political actors seeking external involvement in domestic affairs have contributed to souring relations between the two countries. India's involvement in Nepal's political landscape, both invited and unsolicited, has added complexity to the situation. The historical context of Nepal-India relations, influenced by colonial legacies and power dynamics, has further fueled tensions.

The failure of Nepalese leaders to address the concerns of marginalized communities, particularly the Madhesis, has exacerbated the situation. Internal divisions among Madhesi parties, driven by power struggles rather than ideological differences, have hindered effective representation at the national level.

The proximity of Madhesi communities to the Indian border has also shaped perceptions and behaviours on both sides. Madhesi grievances, exacerbated by mistreatment from Indian security forces, have led to a reliance on India for support in addressing their demands.

Ultimately, the inability of Nepalese political leaders to foster a conducive environment for constitutional implementation has perpetuated diplomatic tensions. Fear and distrust have colored interactions between major political parties and Madhesi groups, hindering progress towards a resolution. In

essence, The sanctions imposed by India reflect a complex interplay of historical, political, and socio-cultural factors.

India's political leverage in the region is demonstrated through its ability to influence internal Nepali politics, as seen in its support for the Madhesi protests. This support indicates India's strategic involvement and capacity to sway political movements within Nepal.

Nepalese political actors, due to the nation's political instability, often seek external assistance, which has allowed foreign powers to gain leverage in Nepal. This pattern has negatively impacted Nepal's relations with its neighbors, particularly India.

Historical ties, coupled with contemporary political dynamics, have cemented India as a significant player in Nepal's domestic affairs, leading to on-going diplomatic tensions and challenges in implementing the new constitution.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CREDIBILITY INDIA'S COERCIVE DIPLOMACY

Credibility is a crucial factor in the success of coercive diplomacy, determining whether the targeted state perceives threats or pressures as genuine and enforceable. This chapter critically examines the credibility of India’s coercive diplomacy against Nepal during the 2015 border blockade. The chapter

investigates how Nepal’s domestic political landscape, public sentiment, and strategic alliances influenced its perception of India’s coercive threats. It also evaluates the long-term consequences of India's diplomatic strategies, questioning whether the 2015 blockade reinforced India’s influence over Nepal or, conversely, weakened its credibility as a regional power by provoking resistance and international criticism.

8.1 Credibility of the India's Coercive Diplomacy

In the context of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015, credibility played a significant role in shaping the outcomes and effectiveness of the blockade and related measures. From Nepal's perspective, India's credibility was reinforced by the immediate and severe impact of the blockade. The shortages of essential goods, economic disruptions, and social unrest made the threats real and pressing. The mixed messages from India, including denials of the blockade, created an environment of uncertainty, further amplifying the psychological pressure on Nepal.

Credibility in coercive diplomacy is about making threats and promises believable. In the 2015 blockade against Nepal, India's historical influence, economic leverage, and demonstrated resolve contributed to its credibility. However, factors like international perception and internal dissent had the

potential to undermine it. For coercive diplomacy to be effective, the coercing state must maintain a balance between credible threats and the ability to follow through, ensuring the target state perceives the consequences as both real and imminent.

The credibility of coercive diplomacy is crucial for its effectiveness. The coercing party must have the capability to carry out the threats or promises made during coercive diplomacy. This includes military, economic, diplomatic, and technological capabilities. If the coercer lacks the means to follow through on its threats, its coercive diplomacy is less credible.

Credibility in coercive diplomacy is a delicate balance of capabilities, resolve, consistency, communication, international support, past behaviour, and the perceived costs and benefits of compliance. When these factors align effectively, coercive diplomacy can be a powerful tool in shaping the behaviour of adversaries (Smith, 2022).

Coercive credibility is essential for a successful coercion strategy. It occurs when the coercing state effectively communicates the cost of noncompliance to the target. Both perceived and actual costs influence the target's decision-making, with perceived costs reflecting the potential dangers

and rewards envisioned by the adversary, as well as the likelihood of these outcomes occurring" (Daniel & Matthew, 2002).

The credibility of coercive diplomacy is crucial for its effectiveness. The coercing party must have the capability to carry out the threats or promises made during coercive diplomacy. This includes military, economic, diplomatic, and technological capabilities. If the coercer lacks the means to follow through on its threats, its coercive diplomacy is less credible.

In the context of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015, the credibility of threats involves Historical and Geopolitical Context, Economic Leverag, Political Influence, Regional and International Perception, Public and Media Reaction and Consistency with International Norms.

8.1.1 International Perception

The international community's response and scrutiny of the blockade potentially undermined India's credibility. Criticism from global actors and organizations has weakened India's position by portraying it as an aggressor.

A coalition of independent Nepali citizens including diplomats, journalists, women’s rights leaders, medical doctors and former U.N. officials expresses deep concern over the de

facto economic blockade calling upon the international community and the United Nations to take “effective steps” to help remove an “economic blockade” imposed on Nepal (Deen, 2015).

The UN expressed concern about the humanitarian impact of the blockade, particularly on vulnerable populations still recovering from the earthquake. There were calls for dialogue and peaceful resolution of the issues between India and Nepal (Pattisson, 2015). China took advantage of the situation to increase its influence in Nepal, providing humanitarian assistance and signing agreements to supply fuel and other essential goods. Other South Asian countries mostly remained neutral but were wary of the implications for regional stability (Baral, 2017a).

The United States and European Union called for an end to the blockade, emphasizing the importance of respecting Nepal's sovereignty and addressing humanitarian needs.

Diplomatic statements urged both India and Nepal to engage in constructive dialogue to resolve their differences. The blockade received considerable coverage in international media, highlighting the severe impact on Nepalese society, economy, and the post-earthquake recovery efforts (Pattisson, 2015).

Reports MASUM (2016), INHURED (2016), INSEC and DFHRI (2016) & SAHR (2016) often criticized India's

approach, framing it as heavy-handed and detrimental to regional. According to the reports, the blockade led to widespread shortages of fuel, medicines, and other essential supplies, drawing criticism from humanitarian organizations and international observers. There was a focus on the disproportionate impact on ordinary Nepalese citizens, particularly those still recovering from the earthquake.

The international community's response to India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015 was marked by concern for the humanitarian impact, calls for dialogue, and recognition of the broader geopolitical implications. Global actors, including the UN, the United States, and the European Union, called for an end to the blockade and emphasized the need for dialogue.

The passage highlights Nepal’s counter-coercion efforts in response to India’s unofficial blockade of 2015. In the context of coercive diplomacy, states often resist coercion through diplomatic, economic, or public relations strategies. The Nepalese diaspora's protests and Nepal's diplomatic engagements can be seen as counter-leverage**s** against India’s coercive tactics.

Nepalese living in London, New York, and Washington, DC organized demonstrations against Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and India's blockade. These protests served as a

means of mobilizing international attention toward Nepal's grievances.

The viral #BackOffIndia hashtag (with over 200,000 tweets) illustrates how digital activism was used to internationalize Nepal's plight and apply reputational pressure on India. This aligns with modern counter-coercion tactics where social media amplifies state narratives in global discourse.

The protests occurred in London (Downing Street), New York (UN headquarters), and Washington, DC (Indian Embassy) - all influential political and diplomatic hubs. This indicates **a** strategic approach to counter India's coercion by appealing to international norms and Western governments.

Nepal's Appeal to the United Nations: Deputy Prime Minister Prakash Man Singh raised the blockade issue at the UN General Assembly and discussed it with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon**.** By invoking Nepal's status as a landlocked country**,** Nepal framed the blockade as a violation of international norms under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the rights of landlocked nations. By emphasizing that landlocked countries require more international backing, Nepal attempted to rally diplomatic support from the broader international community, making India's position more difficult to justify. Nepal leveraged

international norms of sovereignty, non-interference, and the rights of landlocked states to challenge India's blockade.

India, as an aspiring global power, faced reputational costs due to growing criticism from both Nepalese communities abroad and international institutions. The pressure from these campaigns likely contributed to India's gradual shift in position, leading to the eventual easing of the blockade.

Nepal used public diplomacy, digital activism, diaspora mobilization, and multilateral institutions to counter India’s coercive diplomacy (Karki, 2022). While India sought to exert leverage through an economic blockade**,** Nepal responded by internationalizing the issue, increasing reputational costs for India, and appealing to global governance mechanisms. This reflects the interactive nature of coercive diplomacy, where the targeted state can employ counter-strategies to resist external pressure.

China's increased support to Nepal during this period and the extensive media coverage of the blockade's impact further portrayed India as an aggressor, undermining its credibility and highlighting the complex regional dynamics in South Asia. While there was significant scrutiny and criticism of India's actions, the episode also underscored the complex interplay of regional and international dynamics in South Asia.

India’s 2015 blockade against Nepal exemplifies coercive diplomacy, where a state employs economic, political, or diplomatic pressure to achieve strategic objectives. However, Nepal’s response demonstrates the interactive nature of coercive diplomacy, where the targeted state can deploy counter-coercion tactics to mitigate the coercer’s leverage.

Nepal’s counter-coercion strategy involved public diplomacy, diaspora mobilization, digital activism, and multilateral engagement**,** successfully internationalizing the crisis. The protests in major global capitals, the viral #BackOffIndia campaign, and Nepal’s diplomatic efforts at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) helped frame India’s actions as aggressive and a violation of international norms, particularly the rights of landlocked states. These efforts imposed reputational costs on India, undermining its credibility on the global stage.

The international community’s response further constrained India's coercive leverage. The United Nations, United States, and European Union condemned the humanitarian impact of the blockade and called for dialogue, reinforcing Nepal’s position. Additionally, reports from humanitarian organizations and international media coverage intensified scrutiny on India, depicting its actions as

disproportionate and damaging to Nepal’s post-earthquake recovery.

A key outcome of this diplomatic struggle was China’s growing influence in Nepal**,** as it capitalized on the crisis by providing humanitarian assistance and signing agreements to supply fuel and essential goods**.** This shift highlighted the geopolitical consequences of India’s coercive diplomacy, demonstrating how coercion can sometimes produce unintended strategic setbacks for the coercing state.

India sought to exert coercive leverage through economic means, Nepal’s successful counter-strategies, combined with international criticism and geopolitical shifts**,** forced India to reconsider its position. This case illustrates how coercive diplomacy is not a one-sided process, but rather a dynamic interaction where the target state can resist, mobilize international support, and reshape the strategic environment to counteract coercion.

8.1.2 Public Perception

Within India, differing views on the blockade's legitimacy and effectiveness also impact credibility. Internal dissent or lack of unified support for the blockade signal weaknesses in India's resolve. In 2015, India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal faced mixed assessments regarding its credibility. India imposed an

unofficial blockade on Nepal, mainly affecting the flow of essential goods such as fuel, causing severe shortages and economic difficulties in Nepal. This sanction did not construct a positive environment. The Nepalese political parties considered that the Madhesis are fighting in the Indian incitement.

Nonetheless, the Indian government could not demonstrate that the economic sanction was important to promote democratic inclusion in Nepal. The foreign actors need credible sources to justify their intervention. But the Indian government did not have anything to justify its action; therefore, it denied imposing any sanction. It argued that the obstructions occurred due to the demonstrations on the Nepalese side; Nepal should thus amend its Constitution and address marginalization before seeking to ease transportation (GOI, 2015a).

India could not explain what made the blockade necessary and reiterated that "there is no hindrance from the Indian side (Swaraj, 2015). The parliament asked whether the Indian pressure helped the Madhesis to secure their rights.

In response, the government stated that "India has been supportive of a broad-based and inclusive Constitution in Nepal" (GOI, 2015a) and admitted supporting the Madhesi demand for autonomy. Due to the fear of the Chinese influence, the Indian government, parliament, and diplomats began to reflect on the mistakes of their approach.

India's coercive diplomacy during Nepal's constitutional promulgation in 2015 faced significant credibility challenges, as it failed to justify the necessity of the unofficial blockade while officially denying involvement. The Indian government's stance-supporting Madhesi demands for autonomy-was seen as an attempt to micro-manage Nepal’s internal politics rather than facilitating conflict resolution. Prominent Indian diplomats like S.D. Muni and Rakesh Sood later admitted that India's approach alienated Nepal and fueled anti-Indian nationalism.

Domestically, Indian politicians, analysts, and academics criticized the Modi administration’s interference, labeling it a diplomatic blunder that harmed India's global image and pushed Nepal closer to China. Several members of the Rajya Sabha condemned the government for imposing economic pressure on Nepal, arguing that sovereignty should be respected. Critics pointed out that Nepal’s constitution was more inclusive than India's, and historical grievances should have been handled through sustained diplomacy rather than coercion.

The blockade, imposed when Nepal was still recovering from a devastating earthquake, further exacerbated humanitarian challenges, making India’s actions appear both unjustified and counterproductive. Overall, India's intervention eroded its credibility in coercive diplomacy by undermining its legitimacy,

weakening its influence over Nepal, and damaging its international reputation.

S. D. Muni admitted that the Indian government stood on one side of the polarized politics instead of seeking to “nudge both sides of the polarised debate through quiet and sustained diplomacy” (Muni, 2015b).

The Indian former ambassador Rakesh Sood also mentioned that India wanted to get the Madhesi concerns addressed through the new Constitution, but it tried to micro-manage the Nepalese politics in the name of Madhesis, which strengthened anti-Indian nationalism (Sood, 2020).

These two former diplomats’ statements suggest that India had focused on micro-management instead of conflict resolution. When the foreign actors engage in various interests and seek to micro-manage the internal politics, that hurts their legitimacy and credibility. The Indian government lost its credibility due to the unnecessary intervention, which the parliament acknowledged through its statements.

According to S.D. Muni, "if the Ministry of External Affairs had prepared the seven-point revision list, it would have been a non-diplomatic action. India may have framed the situation to elicit a positive response from various political groups, using it as a tool to gauge public opinion. From a

theoretical policy perspective, the constitution institutionalizes key issues of change, allowing for political debate but preventing challenges to its legitimacy or jurisdiction. It ensures proportional and gender representation, population-based electoral constituencies, and committees for safeguarding ethnic community interests".

The unofficial sanction imposed by the Modi government on Nepal following the promulgation of its new constitution has faced strong opposition within India itself. Politicians, academics, and analysts criticized the Indian government's actions, labeling them as a diplomatic blunder and an act of interference in Nepal's internal affairs. They have highlighted the negative consequences of the sanction, including its detrimental impact on India's image and its role in pushing Nepal closer to other countries, notably China (Times, 2015a).

Additionally, Indian leaders have been vocal in condemning their government's actions, emphasizing the importance of respecting Nepal's sovereignty and allowing the country to address its constitutional issues independently. Overall, the response from within India underscores the complexity and controversy surrounding the sanction and its repercussions on bilateral relations between the two neighboring countries (Times, 2015a).

Mani Shankar Aiyar, a Raja Shabha member, se, Aiyar further chastised the BJP government for siding with a group of

discredited Madhesi leaders and coercing Nepal to adopt their advice. He remarked in the house (Times, 2015a):

> *“This is an act of bullying; stop harassing Nepal.We want to make it clear to the Nepalese people that the sanction against them is being imposed by the Modi administration, not by India. Only 11 elected Madhesi legislators voted against the constitution, but 105 elected Madhesi legislators voted in favor,” he stated. “How can we disregard these facts?*

Another member of the house, Renuka Chaudhary, chastised the Indian government for dispatching Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar to Kathmandu to exert pressure on Nepal's ruling parties to postpone the implementation of the constitution, which had already been approved by an elected assembly. She stated (Times, 2015a):

> *"That was a folly, and it culminated in today's standoff." In the name of counsel, India was attempting to impose orders on it. The "sanction" is the result of the Modi government's actions, rather than India's.*

Likewise another member of the house, TK Rangarajan, stated (Times, 2015a):

> *Our constitution, too, had difficulties when it was passed. However, we refused to allow a third country to intervene in our domestic affairs because we believed we were a sovereign nation. How can we put pressure on Nepal to*

modify its constitution if we feel it is a sovereign country? They'll take care of it on their own.

During debate, the majority of the 14 Rajya Sabha members who spoke condemned the Indian government for intervening in Nepal's domestic affairs and undermining the Nepali people's sense of sovereignty. They also accused Modi of driving Nepal into China's arms.

Shashi Tharoor, a Indian politician, has also written to express his displeasure with the ‘de facto sanction’ (Paudel, 2015). “The visit of Foreign Secretary Jayashankar on the eve of the constitution's promulgation, according to Kamal Mita Chinoi, could not have been beneficial to India. Nepal saw it as India interfering in her internal affairs. He claims that Nepal's constitution cannot be compared to India's constitution. In terms of proportionality and inclusion, the Nepalese constitution is more progressive than the Indian constitution. He suggested that India's diplomatic track be corrected rather than being aggressive in its approach to Nepal's constitution” (Times, 2015a).

Sudhindra Bhadoria, a political analyst and leading spokesperson for the Bahujan Samaj Party of India, said that “India must consider Nepal's new constitution in the context of its history. Nepal has fought for almost 65 years and sacrificed thousands of people in order to create a constitution that reflects the wishes and aspirations of the people. He recalled that much

dissatisfaction remained unresolved at the time of the Indian constitution's proclamation. He claimed that driving the constitution to full adoption by its citizens is a continual process.”

The economic sanction, according to Mahendra P. Lama, a former Member of the Government of India's National Security Advisory Board and former Vice Chancellor of Sikkim University, was India's largest diplomatic disaster. “It was a bad decision made at the wrong moment. At the time, Nepal was still recovering from the earthquake, and India had halted the shipment of necessary items such as fuel, medication, and food, worsening the situation."

Sitaram Yechury, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), remarked that India's “undeclared” sanction of Nepal is a major diplomatic blunder. He stated that the sanction had harmed India's global image” (Devendra Bhattarai, 2015a).

Tiwari (2015) claims that, “rgues that India masked its sanctions by claiming that protests obstructed entry points, which is inaccurate. The protests at border crossings only occurred on Fridays, despite Nepali containers being stuck in India for over a week. Except for Birgunj, no sit-ins blocked the route. Additionally, sources reported that protestors at Birgunj threw stones at Nepali security from Indian soil. If the unrest in

the southern plains had disrupted trade, it would have occurred 40 days earlier when the protests began.”

During very difficult time of Nepal, India imposed a sanction against Nepal (Bhattarai, 2016: Chand, 2018: Dahal, 2018: Sangraula, 2016: Shrestha, 2016).

Kamal Thapa, then-Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, stated that Nepal faced an unexpected "de facto sanction" from India after the new constitution was promulgated, which he deemed unfair. He mentioned being criticized for not using the term "sanction" but emphasized that Nepal handled the situation discreetly, noting that things could have worsened if an official position had been taken (Pandey, 2016).

Baral (2015) argues that, “India's other desire through sanction is to displace Nepal's current political leadership and establish a political leadership that suits it. Among the leaders of the three major political parties, Congress president Sushil Koirala, UML president KP Oli and UCPN (Maoist) president Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' are now perceived by the Indian establishment as anti-India leaders.” He states that the Indian understanding may be that prolonging the sanction will make it easier to displace the top leadership of all three parties.

Chauhan (2018) states that "The transport disruption of significant magnitude and duration could not have occurred without India's backing. Despite condemning the West's use of economic coercion in international forums, India has historically used economic pressure for political purposes. This sanction illustrates how India strategically employs economic tools, such as sanctions, to advance political objectives. India has selectively addressed its use of economic coercion, particularly in cases involving Nepal, South Africa, and Pakistan."

India has made open declarations of utilizing economic coercion and has campaigned for similar international action in the past. From 1946 through 1993, India utilised economic pressure against South Africa because it regarded the South African government's policies discriminatory and harmful to the interests of the Indian diaspora living there.

The measures began before independence and continued with greater vigor after independence. "India put sanctions on Pakistan in December 2001, which had an economic impact. When the then-External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, stated unequivocally that the Government of India has no option but to take the steps" (Chauhan, 2018).

The leaders of various western countries (and even growing powers like Brazil and Iran) spoke out about their views on economic coercion; Indian leaders have largely

avoided the topic. Nonetheless, there appears to be widespread recognition in India's foreign policy establishment that such policy instruments, which are still available to advance policy aims, have been used.

However, references and acknowledgements of economic coercion by India's foreign policy elite have been few and cryptic. Salman Khurshid, the then-Minister of External Affairs, made an allusion to China's use of economic pressure on Vietnam in a candid interview in 2012, stating, do not we all employ economic muscle? (Chauhan, 2018).

Ghimire (2021) argues that India at times has resorted to arm-twisting diplomacy in Nepal. As landlocked which some Indian diplomats have also said ‘India linked’, the best way to make Nepal feel the pinch is sanction which can also be called an economic sanction. It has done it in the past, although India has been a loser mostly.

Ghimire (2021) states that India expressed concern about the constitution drafted by the constituent assembly shortly after its election. India desired her strong participation and leadership in the constitution-making process. The mainstreaming political parties tried to get out of India's grip during the constitutional crisis, which was followed by the election of two constitution assemblies. The Modi regime was enraged by political parties' attempts to break free from Indian control. It has actively

participated in important political processes, including the abolition of the Rana government in 2007 BS and the subsequent peace deal in 2063.

Pandey (2021) argues that Pandey (2021) argues that India, through various intermediaries, urged Nepal to delay the promulgation of its constitution, but Nepal proceeded with ratification as planned. India exploited Nepal's internal issues to advance its own interests, inflicting hardship on the people without genuine concerns about constitutional provisions. Pandey claims India supported dissenting factions in Nepal but had no real stake in the constitution. He further suggests that India lobbied for the reinstatement of the Hindu Kingdom, opposing Nepal's republicanism, while dismissing official concerns about secularism. Additionally, internal and external pressures, such as the "One Madhes, One State" issue, fueled protests in the Terai.

India has suppressed many revolts, such as the Hyderabad insurrection, by deploying its army which were against the constitution following independence in order to ensure its successful implementation, national integrity, and security. When compared to the experiences of other countries in drafting constitutions, Nepal has done so in a peaceful manner. According to widespread belief, Nepal is stuck in a never-

ending cycle of constitutional disputes, and conflict is absolutely meaningless and futile.

According to S. P. Sharma (2021) S.P. Sharma (2021) India's role during Nepal's constitution-making process. According to Sharma, differing political opinions, particularly from Madhes-based parties, prevented consensus on the constitution, leading to unrest. India, leveraging its coercive diplomacy, exaggerated the sanction by citing the Madhes issue; however, this was a strategic move to align the constitution with its own interests, rather than genuine concern for the Madhesi population.

India used coercive diplomacy by pressuring Nepal's political leaders and deploying its special envoy to influence the constitution-making process. India's concern for the Madhes issue, especially after lifting the sanction, was seen as insincere, particularly after the expulsion of protestors at Birgunj. This tactic was a response to Nepal's newfound political independence, which challenged India's influence and negated its role in Nepal’s political development, as seen in the 12-Point Agreement and peace process.

It wished to have the same amount of space as her throughout the drafting of the constitution. India had raised

reservations over the adoption of the constitution. Despite aiding Nepal with significant political changes, India considered that it made a vital decision without consulting her. India believed that Nepal had completely neglected it.

S. Sharma (2021) argues that a hypothesis was established in New Delhi that such a move was made with China's support. This has been India's biggest source of dissatisfaction and disagreement to Nepal. As a result of these events, India imposed sanctions on Nepal.

According to Acharya (2021), the recent sanction is the result of Indian perspectives on Nepal, Indian willingness to lead substantial political changes in Nepal, and Nepalese political parties' reliance on India. India was compelled to enter forces with Madhes parties as a result of these three factors. Khanal (2021) argue that throughout the constituent assembly's constitution-making process, China and India did not have substantial differences with Nepal. Both countries have a common concern over the western presence in Nepal. The involvement of UNMIN in the Nepalese peace process, followed by no extension of UNMIN's mandate in Nepal, suggests that both countries believe they can handle the Nepalese situation. China and India appear to have reached an agreement that will allow them to address both Nepal's development and other needs. In the case of Nepal, both India and China shared a

common interest. However, after Xi Jinping's presidency, China's Nepal policy has become more assertive and aggressive.

S. Sharma (2021) argues that rather than getting derailed offs the diplomatic route, Nepal remained extremely sensitive during sanction issues. At a time when Nepal was subjected to a sanction, it demonstrated diplomatic maturity. Rather than internationalizing the problem, it demonstrated goodwill toward India in the face of India's aggressive diplomacy towards Nepal. Within India, Nepal took diplomatic initiatives to resolve sanction situations, whether negotiating with the Indian government or other authorities.

India's sanction against Nepal aimed to force constitutional changes and provoke rebellion, but it failed. The sanction quickly proved counterproductive, and India recognized this shortly after imposing it, though diplomatic steps take time to reverse (S. Sharma, 2021).

The sanction pushed Nepal closer to China, which alarmed India. India’s policies also sparked opposition from intellectuals, media, and political leaders in Nepal, who feared the diplomatic behavior could harm India’s national interests. As a result, India lifted the sanction, while Nepal took visible and invisible diplomatic steps to distance itself from India.

S. P. Sharma (2021) argues that India's imposition of sanctions on Nepal following the promulgation of its new

constitution was not only a response to perceived grievances regarding the constitution's provisions but also reflected India's strategic interests and desire for influence in Nepalese politics. The sanctions were seen as a means for India to assert its dominance and control over Nepal's internal affairs, particularly in relation to issues concerning the Madhesi community.

Despite India's denial of formal sanctions, the actions taken, including the disruption of essential supplies, indicate otherwise. Additionally, India's attempts to pressure Nepal into making amendments to the constitution reveal its interventionist approach. However, Nepal's diplomatic maturity and efforts to navigate the situation without escalating tensions led to the eventual lifting of the sanctions. The episode underscored the complex dynamics between the two neighboring countries and highlighted Nepal's growing assertiveness in its foreign relations, particularly in response to perceived infringements on its sovereignty.

Within India, differing views on the legitimacy and effectiveness of the blockade indicated a lack of unified support, signaling weaknesses in India's resolve. The blockade faced mixed assessments regarding its credibility, with criticisms suggesting it was heavy-handed and primarily aimed at influencing Nepal's political process.

The severe shortages and economic difficulties caused by the blockade were seen as aggressive measures that undermined India's humanitarian stance. India's actions were perceived as an attempt to assert its dominance and influence over Nepal's political leadership and constitutional process, further complicating regional dynamics. Nepal's diplomatic efforts to resolve the situation without escalating tensions and its growing ties with China underscored a shift in regional alliances and Nepal's assertiveness in maintaining its sovereignty.

CHAPTER: IX

COMMUNICATION AND BARGAINING

Effective coercive diplomacy relies not only on the use of pressure but also on strategic communication and bargaining to achieve desired outcomes. This chapter examines how India communicated its demands and negotiated with Nepal during key moments of coercion, particularly in the context of the 2015 border blockade. It explores the channels, messaging strategies, and diplomatic maneuvers India employed to influence Nepal’s decisions while managing regional and international reactions.

The chapter begins by outlining the role of communication in coercive diplomacy, highlighting how signals, threats, and reassurances shape interstate bargaining. It then analyzes the explicit and implicit messages conveyed by Indian officials, their diplomatic engagements with Nepali leaders, and the broader media narratives that framed India’s position. A key focus is placed on whether India’s communication was clear, consistent, and credible in signaling its intentions and conditions for resolution.

9.1 Communication of Demands

In the context of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015, the communication of demands played a significant role in shaping the dynamics and perceptions of the blockade India conveyed its concerns directly to Nepal's political leadership.

Indian diplomats and officials, including the Ministry of External Affairs, made it clear that India was dissatisfied with certain provisions of Nepal's newly promulgated constitution, especially those related to the representation and rights of the Madhesi community (GOI, 2015d). Indian officials, including special envoys, visited Nepal to communicate their demands and expectations. These visits were intended to exert pressure on Nepal to amend its constitution in line with India's concerns (Mazumder, 2015).

India utilised media channels to communicate its stance and demands. Statements from Indian officials were reported widely, emphasizing the need for Nepal to address the grievances of the Madhesi community (Roy, 2015). Formal diplomatic communications were made to Nepal, outlining India's expectations and the necessary steps Nepal should take to resolve the crisis.

India was perceived to be supporting the Madhesi protests at the Nepal-India border. This indirect method of communication aimed to reinforce India's demands by highlighting the internal unrest and leveraging the Madhesi grievances. The blockade itself served as a strong indirect communication of India's demands.

By restricting the flow of essential goods, India signalled its dissatisfaction and the urgency for Nepal to comply with its expectations. India communicated its demands through international forums, indirectly encouraging global actors to pressure Nepal. The involvement of international organizations and the global community's scrutiny added weight to India's position (Baral, 2016).

India publicly advocated for dialogue and a peaceful resolution, framing its demands within a broader narrative of regional stability and cooperation. While there were clear demands, India officially denied imposing a formal blockade,

attributing the disruption to internal protests in Nepal. This ambiguity in communication created a complex narrative and allowed India to maintain a degree of plausible deniability. Within India, different factions had varying views on the blockade and its legitimacy, leading to inconsistent messaging and reflecting internal dissent regarding the policy.

The Constituent Assembly had already formally adopted the new Constitution. It was to be officially proclaimed on 20 September 2015 in a special ceremony. Just two days before the ceremony, Indian Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar rushed to Kathmandu as a special envoy of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. In all the subsequent meetings he had with top Nepali leaders, the foreign secretary was unrestrained in pressing the leaders to stop the process of Constitution promulgation (Sharma, 2019, p. 24).

Jaishankar was accompanied by Ambassador Ranjit Rae and the MEA's northern division chief, Abhay Thakur, in these meetings. The most notable meetings occurred in Lazimpat, at the residence of Maoist Chairman Prachanda. Prachanda was waiting for Jaishankar along with two leaders, Baburam BhatTerai and Narayan Kaji Shrestha Soon after they sat down, Jaishankar minced no words in asKing them to stop the Constitution promulgation for a few days.

When Jayshankar raised India's security concerns with the UCPN-Maoist Chairman Dahal, the latter emphasised that Nepal was indeed more concerned than India about the deteriorating security situation in Terai. Dahal also went as far as commenting that the timing of Jayshankar's visit just before the promulgation of constitution was inappropriate, as it gave a negative impression regarding India's roles and presence in Nepal (TKP, 2015d).

Following the bitter exchange with Prachanda, Jaishankur left for the Budhanilkantha residence of Congress leader Sher Bahadur Deuba. There, too, he repeated the concerns of his political leadership and asked for suspension of Constitution promulgation for at least fifteen days. Once again, Deuba replied that the timing of his visit was wrong and he could do nothing to stop the process at this point. The reply he got from CPN UML President K.P. Oli was also similar (Sharma, 2019).

Jayshankar told KP Sharma Oli, leader of the CPN-UML, that "it would have been better if the disgruntled Madhes-based parties were brought on board the constitution drafting process before promulgating the new constitution" (TKP, 2015a). In response, Oli merely pointed out that the new constitution had been adopted with the approval of more than 85 percent of lawmakers and in the presence of 90 percent of the total CA

members. He also asked the leaders how they could issue the Constitution in the midst of a curfew when people were agitating everywhere. He warned them that India would not support the new Constitution and added that support from the rest of the world would have no meaning (Sharma, 2019).

Prime Minister Sushil Koirala did not even want to meet with the Indian foreign secretary, who had landed in Kathmandu without an invitation. However, since a refusal to meet the envoy of neighbouring country's prime minister would have sent the wrong diplomatic message, he called the Indian team to Baluwatar. But that meeting, too, was futile. In fact, the suddenly scheduled two-day visit of Jaishankar ended in total failure. Jayshankar's meeting with the prime minister ended more amicably; Koirala assured the Indian envoy that a 'win-win solution' to the problems associated with Nepal's constitution-making process would be found (TKP, 2015d).

Sharma (2019) argues that Jaishankar had delivered a blunt message' to Nepali leaders: 'India is unhappy about the manner in which they have gone about adopting the country's new constitution. The leaders were helpless even if they wanted to suspend the process, since the assembly had already adopted the constitution.

Sharma (2019) states that the tension of a failed mission was apparent on Jayashankar's face when he spoke to reporters at Tribhuwan International Airport on his way back. India has been strongly supportive of the Constitution making in Nepal. We would like its completion to be an occasion for joy and satisfaction, not agitation and violence. The Indian foreign secretary also issued a veiled warning: We hope that Nepal's political leaders will display the necessary flexibility and maturity at this crucial time to ensure a durable and resilient Constitution that has broad-based acceptance.

The Indian Embassy in Kathmandu became quite active during the final phase (August-September 2015) of the constitution-making process and intensely lobbied to change the draft constitution in order to reflect India's concerns. Ranjeet Rae, former Indian ambassador to Nepal, did several trips between Kathmandu and New Delhi for consultation with his government on how to best engage with the Nepali leadership (Roy, 2015 as cited in P. Bhattarai, 2018). On 25 Au-gust 2015, the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself made a phone call to his Nepali counterpart Sushil Koirala and expressed his concerns regarding a nonviolent and truly inclusive constitution-making process.

As the time of the scheduled adoption drew closer, a number of press statements were released from the Indian side highlighting the need for broad-based consensus and a nonviolent constitution writing process. For example, the External Affairs Minister of India issued a press statement on 14 September 2015, just a week before the promulgation of the new constitution. The press statement emphasized India's firm commitment to support peace, stability, unity, and development in Nepal and underlined India's long-standing support to Nepal whenever it had faced political crises and natural disasters.

It also praised the progress that the Constituent Assembly had already made, including the resolution of several contentious issues. However, the statement then expressed deep concern regarding the ongoing pro-tests and strife in several parts of Nepal and urged for "continuing flexibility on the part of all the political forces so that any outstanding issues are addressed through dialogue and widest possible agreement, in an atmosphere free from violence" (GOI, 2015b).

The need for a "durable and resilient Constitution" to build a modern Nepal was also highlighted. This press statement was the first *public* attempt to communicate India's concerns and dissatisfaction and can thus be understood as a desperate attempt to increase the pressure on Nepali political leadership (P.

Bhattarai, 2018). One high-profile attempt at changing the constitutional draft at the last minute was also the Indian Foreign Secretary Subrahmanyam Jayshankar's visit to Nepal on 17-18 Sep-tember 2015 (Majumder, 2015).

A former journalist for BBC, Raman (2015) writes:

> *India's foreign office mishandled developments when the Constitution was being adopted and the ill-advised move to send foreign secretary S Jaishankar to Kathmandu sent a negative message about New Delhi's strategy towards a country that had adopted a new Constitution. Announcement of a new Constitution on September 20 was not to India's liKing. Jaishankar wanted Madhesi demands to be addressed first. But Nepal's response was "We will do it our way."*

Following Jayshankar's departure, he issued a press statement warning that the completion of the constitution-making process should "be an occasion for joy and satisfaction, not agitation and violence" (EOI, 2015b). He also called upon Nepali political leaders to "display the necessary flexibility and maturity at this crucial time to ensure a durable and resilient Constitution that has broad-based acceptance" (Jaiswal, 2015).

In sum, Jayshankar put notable pressure on the Nepalese government and top-level political leadership to delay the adoption of the constitution, hold discussions with political

groups opposed to it, and make it widely acceptable to all groups, particularly the Madhes-based political leaders (Majumder, 2015).

However, Jayshankar's proposal was rejected by all Nepali political leaders who were committed to adopting the new constitution on schedule. Thus, despite India's diplomatic and political pressure on the eve of promulgating the new constitution and despite the level Nepali political leaders' assurance to find a mid-way solution to address the concerns of dissatisfied groups with the draft of the constitution, the three major political parties in Nepali Congress, CPN (UML), and UCPN (Maoist) took a bold decision to adopt the new constitution on the stipulated date.

The Indian establishment became quite frustrated with the Nepali political leadership for not taking their advice seriously. As a result, the Indian government did not welcome the constitution but only formally "noted" that a constitution had been adopted in Nepal. Such a step taken by India was not only the beginning of a diplomatic crisis, but also a contributing factor to increase anti-India sentiment in Nepal (P. Bhattarai, 2018).

Following weeks and months, several high-level meetings attempted to relieve strains in the bilateral relationship. India's lukewarm reception of the new constitution caused resentment in Nepal. Moreover, the intensity of aggression and

confrontation was growing at various places in the Terai region due to the protests by Terai based parties' dissatisfaction with the newly adopted constitution.

Arora (2015) argues that "punishing of Nepal for not addressing India's concerns in its new constitution appears to be the first act in a diplomatic suicide. Regional powers elsewhere in the world, India apparently exploited local disputes to achieve its diplomatic goals with the help of its local friends, who do not necessarily hurt their own nation's interests but willingly receive foreign help in matters that can be of mutual gain." Modi remains as adamant in achieving India's diplomatic goals as his predecessors. So the message that the sanction has sent to Nepal is, "We won't interfere as long as you do what we say." It is a message that has not gone well with Nepal's leaders (Arora, 2015).

The unofficial sanction imposed by India was the worst kind of diplomacy. As a result, India made a diplomatic miscalculation when dealing with Nepal's policy. When all other tactics were futile, it resorted to coercion. In diplomacy, a country must carefully analyze its actions in light of their long-term implications for relations. However, India's diplomatic blunder has pushed Nepal-India diplomatic relations back nearly a decade. It adopted aggressive policy, which is now outmoded

and obsolete in the evolving geopolitical setting, where national states have interdependence and interaction in achieving common goals.

The historical evolution of diplomacy from its origins as a means of granting privileges to its modern definition as the conduct of international relations through negotiation highlights its importance in shaping interstate relations. While diplomacy has traditionally been practiced by professional diplomats, its scope has expanded to include a wider range of actors in today's globalized world. Effective diplomacy relies on a set of skills and practices aimed at optimizing international relations and managing change. Despite its challenges, diplomacy remains a fundamental institution for maintaining peace and stability among nations.

The case study of Nepal-India relations following the promulgation of Nepal's new constitution illustrates the complexities of diplomatic interactions between neighboring countries. India's attempt to influence Nepal's constitution-making process through diplomatic pressure and unofficial economic sanctions reflects the nuanced dynamics of interstate relations. However, India's coercive approach ultimately backfired, leading to strained diplomatic relations and exacerbating anti-India sentiment in Nepal. This diplomatic misstep underscores the importance of thoughtful and strategic

diplomacy in navigating complex geopolitical realities and fostering mutually beneficial relationships among nations.

The communication of demands in India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015 was multifaceted, involving direct and indirect methods. India leveraged political, diplomatic, and economic channels to exert pressure on Nepal to amend its constitution. However, the ambiguity and mixed messages, both domestically and internationally, complicated the communication process. Ultimately, while India succeeded in conveying its demands, the approach also drew significant criticism and scrutiny, affecting its regional standing and bilateral relations with Nepal.

9.2 Perception of Resolve

India demonstrated a high level of resolve by imposing the blockade, reflecting its determination to influence Nepal's political process, particularly the inclusion of the Madhesi community's concerns in the new constitution.

The target state must believe that the coercing state is resolved and willing to endure the costs of carrying out its threats. India's history of assertive diplomacy in the region contributed to the perception of its resolve. The coercing party's resolve or willingness to use force or impose sanctions is essential for credibility. If the adversary doubts the coercer's determination to follow through on its threats, coercive diplomacy is less likely to succeed.

India's resolve in its coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015 was perceived as a display of strong political will to influence Nepal's constitutional process. However, this resolve was met with significant international criticism due to the humanitarian impact and concerns over regional stability.

This action was seen as a form of economic coercion to pressurize Nepal to address India's concerns regarding Nepal's new constitution, particularly issues related to the rights of Madhesi ethnic groups. India's actions were perceived as leveraging its economic power over Nepal due to their close economic and geographical ties.

This leverage was evident in the control over Nepal's major trade routes and access to essential supplies. While India had significant economic leverage, the credibility of its coercive diplomacy was questioned due to several factors.

First, the blockade led to humanitarian crises and international criticism, weakening India's position diplomatically. Second, Nepal sought alternative supply routes and increased cooperation with China, reducing its dependence solely on India. This demonstrated Nepal's resilience and willingness to diversify its options, challenging India's leverage.

India's coercive measures faced backlash not only from Nepal but also from the international community, including criticism from human rights organizations and calls for a

resolution through dialogue and diplomacy rather than coercion. While India's coercive diplomacy in 2015 demonstrated its ability to exert economic pressure on Nepal, the credibility of this approach was undermined by humanitarian concerns, diplomatic repercussions, and Nepal's efforts to reduce dependence on India.

Due to the disruption, the lives of the people of Nepal have become miserable. School students, college students and office goers have not been able to reach their destinations due to paucity of public transports, which is not operating regular services due to non-availability of fuels. Patients do not get medical care due to scarcity of medicine.

People residing nearby border points arranged their daily requirements, though at a higher cost. But the people in the remotest part of Jhapa district and other adjoining districts remained in acute distress. There were no reported incidents of violence or political protests in this part of Nepal. But the administration of the Indian Government took the stand to either halt or slow down the movement of vehicles is a real mystery for the Nepali authorities (SAHR, 2016).

The Fact Finding team witnessed local people near the border carrying kerosene and diesel in small pots, trying to enter Nepal. This clearly evidenced the shortage of fuel and gasoline supply in the area. Tej Prashad Prachaya, a local from Birtamode, expressed his view in this way: “Most of the fuel

comes from India, and the restriction has led to severe shortage in Nepal (MASUM, 2016). Fuel rationing led to buses and trucks cutting down services. People travelled on rooftops and taxis charge four times the normal rate." Due to the apathetic attitude of the Indian Government, a vast portion of the Nepali population expressed strong anti-India resentments (MASUM, 2016).

The shortages in life-saving medicines lead to a crisis, as hospitals had started to cut services. Hospitals were rescheduling surgeries by weeks, and patients were finding it difficult to get to medical facilities due to fuel shortages (ibid). Truckloads of medicines were blocked at the main border crossing with India for the last few months by Nepal's Madhesi ethnic protesters. Indian authorities were also not allowing the shipments across at points where there were no protests (MASUM, 2016).

Reportedly, Nepal imports about 60 percent of required medicines from India. Even for locally made drugs, most raw materials and packaging come from India. The district officials were found to try to maintain decorum while making a statement about the neighbouring state, but they could not control their frustration. The CDO uttered that the stance taken by the Indian Government was not appropriate and against the long and cherished relation between the two countries (MASUM, 2016).

Nepal Oil Corporation was the only state-owned company, which imported and distributed petroleum in Nepal, did not have enough facilities to store petroleum for even a week’s use. So the public was angry for not getting petrol, diesel, cooKing gas (LPG), kerosene from the state oil corporation for having to stand in line for days. The major towns across the country also saw people lining up to collect fuel and stock up on supplies, as fear spread of an economic blockade like the one imposed by India for 13 months in 1989, when relations between then PM Rajiv Gandhi and then King Birendra led to the lapse of a transit trade agreement between them.

The blockade also underscored the competitive dynamics between India and China in South Asia, as China's response sought to counterbalance India's influence in Nepal. Overall, while India's resolve was evident, it was perceived as aggressive and counterproductive by the international community.

The blockade was seen as a strong signal to Nepal and the broader region about India's willingness to use economic and diplomatic measures to achieve its foreign policy objectives. India's actions conveyed a message of steadfastness in its geopolitical stance, showcasing its readiness to bear the costs of strained bilateral relations to uphold its strategic interests.

The blockade underscored India's resolve to maintain its influence over Nepal's internal affairs, emphasizing its strategic importance in South Asia. The international community perceived India's resolve as overly aggressive, drawing significant criticism for the humanitarian impact on Nepal, especially in the aftermath of the earthquake.

Reports from humanitarian organizations and international observers highlighted the severe shortages of essential goods in Nepal, painting India's actions in a negative light (MASUM, 2016), (INHURED, 2016), (INSEC & DFHRI, 2016) & (SAHR, 2016).

Despite India's firm stance, the international calls for dialogue and peaceful resolution indicated a perception that India's approach was counterproductive and detrimental to regional stability. The resolve displayed by India was seen as compromising Nepal's sovereignty, leading to a loss of diplomatic goodwill among other nations.

China's swift humanitarian assistance and agreements to supply essential goods to Nepal were perceived as a strategic counter to India's blockade, showcasing Beijing's resolve to expand its influence in South Asia. This dynamic highlighted the competitive aspect of regional geopolitics, where India's resolve was met with equal determination from China to support Nepal. Other South Asian countries remained neutral, indicating a cautious approach to the situation and a perception that taking

sides could destabilize regional relations further. This neutrality suggested that while India's resolve was acknowledged, it was not necessarily supported within the regional context.

9.3 Communication and Bargaining

George (1991) emphasized the importance of clear communication and effective bargaining in the practice of coercive diplomacy. These elements are critical for ensuring that the target state understands the demands, the consequences of non-compliance, and the potential benefits of compliance.

9.3.1 Clarity of Demands

The coercing state must clearly articulate what it wants the target state to do. Ambiguity can lead to misunderstandings and reduce the effectiveness of coercive efforts. George stresses the importance of clear and unambiguous communication of demands to the target state. The demands must be specific and understandable to ensure that the target state knows exactly what is being asked of it. Ambiguity or vagueness in demands can lead to misinterpretation and failure in achieving the desired outcomes (George, 1991).

India clearly communicated its dissatisfaction with Nepal's new constitution, particularly regarding the representation of Madhesi and other marginalized groups. It has publicly expressed her dissatisfaction with the restrictions. The official reason for India's dissatisfaction is that Nepal's constitution

denies the rights of Nepalese Madhesis residing on India's border, many of whom have deep familial ties to Indians. According to the researcher, India has not demonstrated any rational logic on matters such as citizenship rights, proportional representation, and federal state demarcation.

Different studies (international/independent) show that Nepal is much more inclusive compared to other countries of the world and majority of the parties/parliamentarians in the Constitutional assembly were satisfied with the provisions (S. P. Sharma, 2021). Dixit (2006) says that India is more resentful of the process rather than the content of Nepal's new constitution. He says India feels it should be consulted about change in the region and that it may want clear access to natural resources in Nepal.

According to theory of International relation nation foreign policy is guided by her national interest. Manan (2017) argues that "International politics continues to be dominated by sovereign states. States act in their own self-interest rather than in the interests of human beings. The concept of national interest is closely linked to a realistic approach to international affairs, in which security becomes the paramount goal" (as cited in Humphreys, 2015). (Nuechterlein, 1976) defines national interest as "the perceived needs and desires of one sovereign

state in relation to other sovereign states comprising the external environment.”

India’s interests in Nepal, particularly in the context of the Madhesi demands, align less with the aspirations of the Madhesi community. Indian companies are significant investors in Nepal, accounting for over a third of the country’s foreign direct investments. These companies operate in diverse sectors such as manufacturing, banking, insurance, dry ports, education, telecommunications, power, and tourism (EOI, 2021). Ghimire (2021) argues that India’s Nepal policy, shaped by Shyam Saran, inaccurately treats Nepal as two separate entities: Kathmandu and the Terai. India has portrayed the Terai people as of Indian descent, under its protection, and oppressed by Kathmandu, a narrative that overlooks the Terai's demographic diversity, including indigenous groups and long-standing migrants. This oversimplification has fueled suspicions in Nepal, with political parties believing that Indian-influenced leaders are pursuing a two-nation strategy, thereby sidelining the concerns of the protesting Madhesi parties.

H. Sharma (2021) argues that domestic politics and geopolitics have put Madhes in a vulnerable position. If constitution should have promulgated ensuring the broad acceptability and stakeholder participation from all sections of society would be a highly intellectual undertaking for Nepal's

political parties. Political parties appear to have been overlooked in this regard. H. Sharma (2021) argues that the major political parties of the day agreed that if the constitution-making process was prolonged, the odds of a new constitution being drafted were increased. They also recognized that all the segments of society can be addressed, thus major powers must unite together and the constitution should be promulgated.

(S. Sharma, 2021) argues that based on conspiracy theories, key leaders of major political parties have begun to assume that India is interfering against Nepal's constitution-making process in order to suit its own interests. It would not allow Nepal to enact the constitution on its own initiative. As a result, Nepal's constitution must be promulgated as soon as possible.

Khanal (2021) argues that India has strategically used the Madhes region to counter Maoists in Nepal, although the Madhes issue itself is primarily a domestic concern. The electoral constituencies, based on the 2048 constitution, remained unchanged until a commission was formed after the 2056 elections to review them. The CPN (UML) opposed changes, leading to a study commission that proposed constituency adjustments to increase Madhes's representation. However, this was derailed by fears of growing Madhes influence. The Nepali Congress and CPN (UML) reportedly

reached an agreement to limit Madhes representation, which was criticized by the Sadbhavana Party. While Madhes's issues, like representation and citizenship, are largely internal, Khanal suggests that India has used the Madhes issue to influence Nepali politics, despite Madhes not expressing direct dissatisfaction with India" (Khanal, 2021).

India's dissatisfaction with Nepal's constitution appears to be less about genuine concern for the Madhesi population and more about asserting influence over Nepal's political decisions. India's focus on the Madhesis, a group with close familial ties to India along the Nepal-India border, can be viewed as a strategic move to apply pressure on Nepal's political process.

The lack of rational justification for India's objections to Nepal's constitutional provisions, coupled with its historical pattern of intervening in Nepal's domestic affairs, aligns with the principles of coercive diplomacy. Here, India seems to employ a combination of indirect pressure and strategic interference, aiming to shape Nepal's constitutional trajectory in a manner that aligns with its own geopolitical interests, rather than advocating for the genuine rights of the Madhesis.

The theory of international relations suggests that nations act in their own self-interest, with national security often being a paramount concern. In the case of India-Nepal relations, India's interests are multifaceted, including economic investments in

Nepal, geopolitical considerations, and historical ties. However, India's approach to the Madhes issue has been criticized for its colonial undertones, with India projecting itself as the protector of Madhesis and attempting to manipulate Nepali politics through divisive narratives.

Furthermore, researchers argue that Madhes has been used by India as a tool to contain Maoists in Nepal, rather than being a genuine concern for Madhesi rights. The issue of electoral constituencies in Madhes has also been a point of contention, with allegations that political parties have manipulated electoral boundaries to maintain power dynamics favoring certain groups.

Overall, while Madhes may be a significant issue in Nepal's internal politics, researchers suggest that India's involvement in the matter is driven more by its own strategic interests rather than a genuine concern for Madhesi rights. This underscores the complex and often contentious nature of India-Nepal relations, which are influenced by historical, geopolitical, and domestic political factors

9.3.1.1 Citizenship

Baral (2015) argues that “even if the sanction is imposed on the basis of the dissatisfaction of the *Madhesi Morcha* and the Tharu community, one of India's priorities is to empower the students born in India and given Nepali citizenship. The new

constitution stipulates that a person with naturalized citizenship cannot become president, prime minister, or head of security". In *Maharajgunj*, Uttar Pradesh, on September 29, Indian Home Minister Rajnath Singh said that India was sensitive to the political rights of some Indians in the Madhes who had been granted citizenship but not political rights. In particular, Singh advocated for the granting of political rights to those who have adopted citizenship (Baral, 2015).

It is obvious that if there would be flexibility in providing adopted citizenship; it would benefit immigrant Indian nationals rather than indigenous *Madhesi* people. They will be deprived from the government jobs reserved for them (Pant, 2015). There are many examples of native Madhesis falling behind in the competition due to the adoption of citizenship by immigrant Indian nationals from the direct impact of uncontrolled distribution of adopted citizenship in the past.

Most countries of the world, including the United States, only descendants of citizens are entitled to key state positions. BJP leaders including Narendra Modi and Sushma Swaraj had strongly protested and stopped Sonia Gandhi from becoming the Prime Minister. They argue that Sonia, who was born in Italy, could not become India's prime minister. Now in the case of Nepal, they seem to be standing against their own beliefs. The question of whether or not to grant citizenship is a matter of

internal population balance and national security of every independent nation. It can be reviewed at any time (Chintan, 2015). In any case, the demand that a person with naturalized citizenship should have the same rights as a person on the basis of descent is completely wrong and impossible.

Ghimire (2021) argues that there are some flaws in Nepal's citizenship laws which need to be sorted out through larger debate, But India tried to impose its interest on any woman married in Nepal should get citizenship overnight, that all naturalized citizens should have the right to occupy any constitutional position. India's main goal was to ensure that naturalized Indian nationals become the leaders of the entire Terai, which other ethnic groups accepted without question. Acharya (2021) argues that Madhesis have political and administrative rights under Nepal's current constitution. The issue of citizenship is the main source of unhappiness among Madhes parties. The main source of contention is the citizenship application process. The Nepali Congress had introduced a first amendment bill in parliament to address this issue. It was unable to pass due to opposition from communist parties. The issue of how to offer citizenship to individuals living on the Gangetic Plain has always been a challenge.

Due to the socio-cultural ties that exist between the Madhesi people and the inhabitants of the bordering states with

India, Kathmandu has expressed reservations over the provision of citizenship to the Madhesi people. The subject of citizenship has long been a political narrative, but communists transformed it into a nationality issue.

India's interest in Nepal's citizenship laws, particularly regarding naturalized citizens, stems from its desire to empower individuals of Indian origin residing in the Madhes region. However, researchers argue that India's focus on granting political rights to naturalized citizens could disproportionately benefit immigrant Indian nationals rather than indigenous Madhesi people. This concern is compounded by the potential impact on government jobs reserved for Madhesis, further exacerbating existing disparities.

There is a comparison drawn between citizenship laws in other countries, such as the United States, where only descendants of citizens are entitled to key state positions. The argument is made that the demand for naturalized citizens to have the same rights as citizens by descent is misguided and impractical. Furthermore, researchers assert that India's insistence on certain provisions in Nepal's citizenship laws, such as granting citizenship to any woman married in Nepal overnight, reflects India's attempt to assert its interests in the region.

The debate over citizenship in Nepal is complex and multifaceted, with issues surrounding the citizenship application process and concerns over socio-cultural ties between Madhesis and inhabitants of bordering zones with India. While there are efforts to address these issues through legislation, political opposition and competing narratives have hindered progress.

Overall, the conclusion suggests that India's involvement in Nepal's citizenship laws is driven by its own geopolitical interests, particularly in the Madhes region. However, researchers argue that these interests may not align with the needs and rights of indigenous Madhesi people, highlighting the complexities of the citizenship debate in Nepal.

9.3.1.2 The Proportional Representation

The demand for delimitation of constituencies on the basis of population put forward by the Madhesi Front has not been implemented in India or the United States. Of course, population is also a basis for determining constituencies, but not the whole. Constituencies are determined on the basis of population, geography and ethnic presence. The population of other parts of the Indian state of Bengal and Darjeeling are not the same. Darjeeling sends one representative to the Lok Sabha, while other districts in Bengal have more representation in terms of population. Sikkim, Mizoram, Nagaland, etc., which have very small population, have got one seat each in the Lok Sabha, while Arunachal, Goa, Meghalaya, Tripura, etc. have got two seats

each. Larger states, including Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, get more seats in the Lok Sabha, both in terms of population and geography. South Africa has determined constituencies on the basis of population and geography. In the US Senate, two / two representatives are elected from each state, big or small.

Many tribes live in the mountainous and hilly districts of Nepal including Manang, Mustang, Dolpa, Humla, Jumla and Mugu. Their population is also small. In districts like Siraha, Dhanusha and Jhapa, one has to get 25,000 votes to win the election, while in Manang, one has to win by 1,500 votes (Pant, 2015). If the Mustang seat is removed due to population, tribes like Thakali will not get the geography to contest the election. Therefore, determining constituencies in Nepal should not be based on population alone. The location of geography and the aspect of different tribal settlements and presence should also be taken into consideration (Pant, 2015).

Pant (2015) argues that on the basis of population alone, the population is increasing in big cities like Kathmandu Valley, Biratnagar, Dhangadhi, Nepalgunj and constituencies in the Terai, while it decreases in hilly districts like Panchthar, Terhathum, Taplejung, Myagdi, Rukum, Rolpa, Dhankuta and Sankhuwasabha. That means Limbu, Rai, Magar, Gurung, Sherpa, Thakali etc. will not be elected. When determining constituencies in Nepal, one should not forget the fact that there are 142 castes in the country and the cultural diversity. If the

representation of mountainous and hilly regions in our parliament decreases, another kind of dissatisfaction will arise.

Acharya (2021) argues that Nepal's electoral constituency is determined by topography and population. Nepal followed the American model of representation, with each state's representation. Nepal did its best to ensure that each district has at least one representative, in accordance with its political model. This should not have been a source of contention for India. The new constitution has addressed most of the demands put forward by Madhesis, Tharus and Janajatis in the past. The demand that it adopted should also get key posts in the state is actually aimed at weakening the indigenous Madhesis in the Terai and increasing Indian influence in Nepal.

Drawing comparisons with other countries like India, the United States, and South Africa, the author argues that constituency delimitation should not solely rely on population figures but should also take into account geographical diversity and the presence of various ethnic groups. The author highlights concerns that solely basing constituency boundaries on population could disproportionately disadvantage certain ethnic groups, particularly those residing in remote mountainous regions. There is a fear that if representation is solely determined by population, it could marginalize indigenous

groups and lead to a lack of diversity in parliamentary representation.

Furthermore, the argument is made that the current electoral constituency system in Nepal, which follows a model similar to that of the United States, already ensures representation for each district. The author contends that the demands for representation of adopted citizens in key positions are aimed at weakening indigenous Madhesis and increasing Indian influence in Nepal, rather than addressing genuine concerns about electoral fairness and representation.

Overall, the conclusion stresses the need for a balanced approach to constituency delimitation in Nepal, taking into account various factors such as population, geography, and ethnic diversity to ensure fair and inclusive representation in the country's democratic institutions.

9.3.1.3 Hindu Kingdom

"The BJP was displeased with the installment of secularism in Nepal followed by successive people’s movement of April 2006. Aftermath, it took the policy to reinstate the Hindu Kingdom in Nepal. Moreover, it took this policy since the earlier time BJP couldn’t oppose secularism due to the sweeping victory of CPN Maoist and formation of government under it" (Khanal, 2015). After the dissolution of the second constituent assembly the BJP forwarded this issue of Hindu Kingdom as a

crucial policy. Though leaders of BJP publically states that the issue of Hindu Kingdom and republic belongs to the internal affair of Nepal but they have been putting serious concern over the protection of Hinduism (Khanal, 2015).

H. Sharma (2021) asserts that on the eve of Nepal's constitution's promulgation, Former Prime Ministers of Nepal visited India and committed to Indian leaders to review the New Constitution's secularism both directly and indirectly. Minister for External Affairs Susma Swaraz, in response to a question from opposition leaders in Rajaya, Shabha Swaraj stated that Nepalese leaders had committed to review the term secularism in the country's new constitution. Her remark in the Rajya Sabha demonstrates India's desire to turn Nepal into a Hindu Kingdom by meddling with the constitution's promulgation (H. Sharma, 2021).

Khanal (2021) argues that India, too, has reservations on the part of Hindu Kingdoms as a result of the BJP-led government, which is well-known in the public domain. This is corroborated by India's demand for justification for the process of incorporating secularism into the constitution. According to him, if other political parties had been in power in India, the subject of secularism would not have come up in the process of drafting Nepal's constitution. BJP want to use Nepal as frontline Hindu Kingdom. In the backdrop of Pakistan, BJP liberal leader

and former Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee stated a few years ago that Nepal must be a Hindu frontline state (Khanal, 2021). According to (S. P. Sharma, 2021) India's ruling party, the BJP, has a stated principle that the Hindu religion should be given precedence in state authority. This view has affected the current Indian government's Nepal policy, which claims that Nepal must formally and informally integrate Hinduism. (S. Sharma, 2021) argues that India seeks to further her security and military interests in Nepal through the ideological tie of Hinduism. (S. Sharma, 2021)

S. Sharma (2021) argues that although India identified Madhes as the basis for the sanction; the underlying objective is for India to consider Nepal as a Hindu Kingdom because of India's Hindu Nationalistic leadership. They put a lot of pressure on Nepal to make it a Hindu Kingdom, or at the very least remove the phrase "secularism" from the constitution. (S. P. Sharma, 2021) argues that the clause in the constitution to include an ambiguous notion of secularism was a way to balance India. However, this type of arrangement would not please the Nepalese as well as the Indian side. S. Sharma (2021) says that prior to the adoption of the new constitution; India summoned past Prime Ministers of Nepal for a visit and gave a message emphasizing the importance of Hinduism in the new

constitution. It also conveyed the same message to Nepal's other political leaders.

Acharya (2021) states that Hinduism is the pride and dignity of India's current regime and it is sustaining on this ethos. The BJP and RSS have a credible direction to consolidate Hinduism in India. It couldn't stand the thought of merely one Hindu Kingdom slipping away from Nepal. It wants Nepal to be a part of her Hinduism in all of its manifestations. The current Indian government has a declared aim to build a comprehensive *Aaryabrata* for the entire Indian subcontinent. Acharya (2021) claims that India intends to turn Nepal into a Hinduism-injecting laboratory, and that India is proud of the fact that Nepal is the world's only country with Hinduism as an official religion. The BJP and RSS believe that if Nepal became a Hindu Kingdom, it would drive India to become a Hindu Kingdom, which would be a futile basis for Hinduism to strengthen in India.

H. Sharma (2021) argues that while the BJP did not win the elections in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, it did try to urge Nepal to become a Hindu Kingdom to some extent. H. Sharma (2021) argues that Hindu fundamentalists in India regard Nepal as "Dev Bhumi," or "Land of the Gods." If small countries like Nepal are able to become Hindu Kingdoms, they will be able to exert pressure within their own country to make Hinduism the state religion. As a core of internal politics, India appears to be experimenting with Nepal as a Hindu Kingdom.

The Indian leader’s visit to Pasupatinath Temple, Muktinath Temple, Janaki Temple etc. shows how those leaders including Indian elite are in favour of Hindusm in the entire Indian subcontinent. In contrary, the constitution of Nepal was against, which not give spaced to Hinduism exclusively according to the perception of Indian elite.

Acharya (2021) remembers the dissatisfaction of some Madhesi leaders that India used them while talking to Acharya. At last Madhesi Leaders negotiated with Prime Minister K. P. Sharma Oli. Author argues that India should have comprehended secularism, which has been India's guiding concept in its constitution, and Nepal has little chance of adopting secularism due to the growing influence of communists in Nepal. Indian authorities could not understand the wave of secularism, federalism and republicanism in Nepal.

The approaches of BJP align with religious and cultural nationalism. Except Hinduism , BJP has other unstable agendas (Khanal, 2015). As the Indian independence movement progressed, it developed two models of an independent India (Ibrahim, 2020). The Congress party believed it would be possible to unify India only if religious differences were set aside and the new economy sought to improve the lot of the poorest. At the same time, some strands of Hindu nationalism began taking a sectarian approach. India could be unified only

when all foreign influences were removed. This saw the development of the Arya Samaj, a new syncretic religious tradition that introduced European-style monotheism and proselytizing to Hinduism in the 1870s.

The Arya Samaj laid the foundations for attempts to define "Hindu-ness" by a cadre of nationalist thinkers through the following decades. And the movement came into its own with the explicit articulation of an exclusionary notion of Hindu-ness and Hindu nationalism in a 1923 pamphlet called "Essentials of Hindutva" (later retitled "Hindutva: Who Is a Hindu?") by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. This duly formed the ideological basis for the right-wing Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), founded two years later, and arguing that an independent India should be a state for Hindus (and Buddhists) (Ibrahim, 2020).

Today, the RSS is more powerful than ever. Modi and his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is one of a member of RSS offshoot organizations. Ideology is critical to its success. When the BJP stands for elections, it does not merely stand against other parties on policy grounds. It stands to challenge the secular constitutional order on which the Indian Republic was founded (Ibrahim, 2020). Since Modi won his first election, through his wildly successful promotion of Hindutva ideology, Modi is poised to remake India into a Russian-style managed

democracy, one retaining all the trappings of democracy while operating as a de facto autocracy (Ibrahim, 2020).

BJP leader and former cabinet minister Rajnath Singh poured his dissatisfaction over the amendment of Hindu Kingdom and installment of secularism with Prime Minister Sushil Koirala during latters India visit. Speaking to Prime Minister Koirala, the BJP leader Rajnath told; “Are you ashamed of being Hindu? Hindu is neither state nor religion, it is an aspect of life. I would be happy if Nepal would do correction of this mistake (Khanal, 2015)

The rise of Hindutva ideology under Modi and the BJP significantly influences India's coercive diplomacy, particularly in its relationship with Nepal. The BJP's ideological push to redefine India’s identity challenges neighboring countries, including Nepal, to align with its vision. This is evident in BJP leader Rajnath Singh’s remarks to Nepal’s Prime Minister Sushil Koirala, where he questioned Nepal’s secular constitution and advocated for a Hindu state, suggesting that Nepal "correct" what he called a "mistake."

This subtle form of coercion reflects an attempt to pressure Nepal into reconsidering its identity and political stance. Such statements, though not direct threats, function as diplomatic signals that challenge Nepal's sovereignty and autonomy, indicating potential consequences for its foreign

relations if it does not conform to India’s ideological framework. Through strategic communication and ideological leverage, India employs coercive diplomacy to assert its influence in the region, seeking to align Nepal with its own vision of governance, while potentially undermining Nepal's secular identity and political autonomy

For the Hindu-nationalist (BJP), Nepal’s majority Hindu population is an important vehicle through which to expand political clout. Modi himself and his party leaders have invoked religious narratives on several occasions to redefine the Nepal-India relationship. Yet regardless of the country’s overwhelming Hindu majority, Nepal’s political parties have adopted secularism, clearly delinking the state from any particular religion (Ojha, 2015). “India was also hoping that Nepal would either be reinstated as a Hindu nation or drop the word secular” from its charter. But Nepal’s lawmakers did not oblige, and believe they are now being disciplined by big brother” (Arora, 2015).

The BJP's stance on Nepal's secularism is rooted in its ideological foundation, which seeks to redefine India's relationship with its neighbors based on religious narratives and shared cultural identity. Leaders like Rajnath Singh have openly expressed dissatisfaction with Nepal's secular constitution, urging corrections to what they perceive as a mistake. The BJP's

aspirations for Nepal align with its broader vision of Hindutva ideology, which aims to establish India as a Hindu Rashtra. Modi's government, supported by the RSS, seeks to consolidate Hinduism not only within India but also across the Indian subcontinent, viewing Nepal as a crucial component in this endeavour.

However, Nepal's political parties have resisted pressure from India to reinstate Hinduism as the state religion or remove secularism from its constitution, asserting the country's sovereignty and independence. Despite India's efforts to influence Nepal's internal affairs, Nepalese lawmakers have upheld the principles of secularism and resisted external interference in their constitutional matters.

In essence, the conclusion underscores the complex dynamics between India and Nepal, shaped by ideological differences, geopolitical interests, and assertions of national sovereignty. While India seeks to advance its Hindu nationalist agenda, Nepal remains committed to its secular and democratic principles, asserting its autonomy in shaping its own destiny.

9.3.2 Threat of Consequences

The coercive diplomacy of India against Nepal in 2015, particularly surrounding the promulgation of the new Nepali Constitution, involved several threats of consequences. These threats aimed to pressure Nepal into addressing India's concerns

about the constitution, especially regarding the representation and rights of the Madhesi and Tharu communities in Nepal's southern plains.

These threats of consequences were designed to create significant pressure on Nepal to amend its constitution in line with India's preferences. The coercive diplomacy employed by India in 2015 was multifaceted, leveraging economic, diplomatic, political, and security dimensions to achieve its strategic objectives. India threatened to restrict economic aid and support, a key leverage point given Nepal's reliance on Indian assistance for development projects. The unofficial blockade, which severely restricted the flow of essential goods and fuel, exemplified this threat and resulted in widespread shortages, black markets, and economic disruption. India implied it could politically isolate Nepal by influencing regional and international forums to diminish Nepal’s diplomatic space.

India leveraged its diplomatic channels to exert pressure on Nepal's political leadership. High-level diplomatic engagements, statements, and meetings underscored India's dissatisfaction with the new constitution and its insistence on amendments to address the grievances of the Madhesi community

India threatened to politically isolate Nepal on the international stage. By influencing regional and international

forums, India aimed to curtail Nepal's diplomatic space and emphasize its disapproval of the constitutional process. This included signaling a potential decrease in support for Nepal in international organizations and multilateral institutions (GOI, 2015d)

India hinted at the potential reduction or withdrawal of economic aid and development assistance to Nepal. Given Nepal's dependence on Indian aid for various infrastructure and development projects, this threat was significant. It aimed to pressure Nepal by leveraging the potential loss of financial and technical support for ongoing and future projects (GOI, 2015c). India also implied that security cooperation between the two countries could be affected. Considering the shared border and security concerns, particularly related to cross-border crime and insurgency, the disruption of security cooperation posed a considerable threat to Nepal's internal stability and border management (GOI, 2015c).

India utilised its influence in the South Asian region to rally support for its stance on Nepal's constitutional issues. By influencing other neighboring countries and regional organizations, India sought to create a broader consensus against Nepal's constitutional provisions, thereby increasing diplomatic pressure.

India used its media outlets to shape public perception and build a narrative that justified its actions. By highlighting the alleged marginalization of the Madhesi community and framing Nepal's constitutional process as flawed, India aimed to gain moral high ground and justify its coercive measures.

The undeclared blockade on Nepal by the Indian government restricted all the trading opportunities of Nepal, including that of essential consumable goods, gasoline, and liquefied petroleum gas, among others. Therefore, the act of the Indian government qualifies as a blockade. The most significant and immediate threat was the unofficial economic blockade imposed by India. The blockade severely restricted the flow of essential goods, including fuel, medicine, and food, into Nepal. This led to widespread shortages, economic disruption, and significant hardship for the Nepali population, exacerbating existing post-earthquake recovery challenges.

The possibility of altering trade relations, including the imposition of tariffs or other trade barriers, was another coercive tool. Given that India is Nepal's largest trading partner, any disruption in trade relations would have profound economic consequences for Nepal.

The main border crossings were completely closed. For instance, the Kakarbhitta checkpoint often grants permission for 100 to 150 vehicles to enter Nepal each day. In contrast, when

the mission was in the field, just five to six trucks were approved each day. This led to the discovery of between 3,000 and 4,000 trucks stuck at the Indian side of the Nepal Border (SAHR, 2016).

The Fact Finding team MASUM (2016) experienced the same and found the statement made by him to be correct. Trucks were found stranded from Kakarbhitta to Naxalbari, stretching nearly 20 kilometres. Commodities loaded in these containers were of different kinds, namely medicines, food grains, fuels, cooking gas and oxygen. The commodities from third party countries, like Japan, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, and Myanmar, mainly included industrial components, woollen cloths, and other commodities.

The blockade expanded the black market, leading to overpriced fuel, lost government revenues, and adverse social implications. The shortage of Indian currency in Nepal caused a significant rise in the exchange rate during the blockade.

Due to the disruption, the lives of the people of Nepal have become miserable. School students, college students and office goers have not been able to reach their destinations due to paucity of public transports, which is not operating regular services due to non-availability of fuels. Patients do not get medical care due to scarcity of medicine.

People in the remotest part of Jhapa district and other adjoining districts are in acute distress. There were no reported incidents of violence or political protests in this part of Nepal. Why the administration of the Indian Government took the stand to either halt or slow down the movement of vehicles is a real mystery for the Nepali authorities.

The vehicles were found to move very slowly through this check post, only 70 to 80 trucks per day. Previously the number could be nearly 400 trucks per day entering into Nepal, according to local sources (MASUM, 2016). Before the unjustified restriction, one truck would pass through the check post within six to seven minutes. But after that a truck took as long as 40 to 45 minutes to get clearance. Local ‘demarge’ (local terms) charge per vehicle was Rs. 35,000/- and demarge charge for carrying coal was 2,000/- to 3,000/- extra per vehicle (MASUM, 2016) The transport costs increased after the blockade. Previously a seven kilograms gas cylinder was available for Rs. 1400/- and since available gas cylinders contained only 3.5 kilograms for Rs. 700/- (MASUM, 2016).

This economic pressure aimed to compel the Nepali government to address India's concerns about the constitution. The hardest hit were the trucks carrying perishable items like vegetables and fruits and essential goods such as fuel and cooking gas; these were rarely allowed to cross the border. This

acute shortage resulted in fuel smuggling and black marketing The price of a litre of petrol in Kathmandu was Nepali Rupees 104 whereas during and after the blockade, people were forced to buy petrol from the black marketeers paying three to four times that for a litre.

India repeatedly stated that it did not create the blockade and trucks could not enter Nepal due to the ongoing protests especially at Birgunj-Raxaul. But Nepali trucks were also not able to - or not allowed to pass the border either, even from those border entry points where there was no protest. There is large evidence indicating that the blockade was not from the Nepal side enforced by the agitating Madhesis but went far beyond that; it indicates that the blockade was from the Indian side. In all, nearly 2,000 trucks were stranded at the border for months, according to Nepalese reports.

The obstruction because of the Madhesi protests was of maximum intensity at Birgunj-Raxaul points on the Indo-Nepal border. Later into the protest, however, a number of cargo and fuel trucks entered Nepal through other border points where the protests were minimal or non-existent.

Of all items that became scarce, petrol and liquefied petroleum gas used for cooKing were the most affected. This in turn led to a large amount of illegal logging in several forests. Also badly affected was the supply of essential medicines, including some life-saving drugs and those used in intensive

care units of hospitals, putting patients' lives into jeopardy. The extent of the impact of the blockade is best seen in the press release that UNICEF issued. It warned of "more children under the age of five at risk of death or disease during the harsh winter months due to a severe shortage of fuel, food, medicines and vaccines".

The shortage of fuel for vehicles meant that even school buses could not ply, forcing schools to give holidays affecting children's education and future. The shortage of fuel and gas resulted in rampant black marketing, inconveniencing people and putting these items of out of their reach. People also had to contend with daily power cuts of up to 13 hours a day. Everyday life was crippled and the country was forced to come to a standstill (SAHR, 2016).

Equally badly affected were the rebuilding projects undertaken after the devastating earthquake in April which had killed about 9,000 people and damaged more than 600,000 houses. The shortage of fuel and supply disruption had led to the shutting down of 90 percent of industries across Nepal, with more than 60 percent of the business which occurs during the festive season of Dashai and Tihar failing to uplift the economy.48 Nepal's financial sector too took the brunt as economy came to a halt (Pyakuryal, 2016)

The country's economy took a hit. The Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) remarked on December 18, 2015, that the protests and blockade of the previous few months "have resulted to economic losses to the tune of NR 200 billion…pushed the economic, social and education, among other sectors, to a serious mode…Nearly 2,000 industries are closed while materials worth billions of rupees have been stranded on the other side of the border (SATP & IFCM, 2016).

The sanction placed on Nepal was officially rejected by India. It claimed that activists on the Nepal-India border were responsible for the obstruction. However, the events that followed do not support the Indian claim. The evidence and Indian behaviour strongly suggest that the sanction was imposed by India to reprimand Nepal for failing to comply with previous orders.

On December 11, 2015, Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli warned that "the country, which was already reeling from the repercussions of the deadly earthquake, was on the edge of a humanitarian disaster owing to an Indian sanction. This is the first time the prime minister has referred to the border restrictions as a sanction. While pledging to find a solution through discussion, Oli warned the agitating Madhes-based groups about the dangers of using external forces in the internal

conflict, as well as the price the country will have to pay in the long run" (Ghimire, 2015b). "Prime Minister Oli, called the sanction "cruel, barbaric, and beyond conception." He argued, New Delhi's response was unacceptable. He claimed that denying Nepal free transit violated Nepal's right to self-determination and many international agreements."

PM KP Sharma Oli explicitly referred to the blockade as a sanction, marking a shift in Nepal's diplomatic stance. His warnings about a "humanitarian disaster" underscored the severe economic and social costs Nepal faced, making it clear that India's actions were designed to exert maximum pressure

On September 26, 2015, Kanak Mani Dixit, one of Nepal's journalists, tweeted, "If it feels, smells, looks, sounds, and tastes like a sanction, then it is a 'Blockade.' There is nothing left to hide" (Paudel, 2015)

As the sanction continued, India's political and administrative leadership has not been able to make a formal argument arguing that violence and insecurity have increased in the border areas (Bohara, 2015).

Infrastructure projects, natural resources, security of the economy, Sky Marshall and other conditions are on the first list, while issues related to the constitution are on the other list." Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Narahari

Acharya told the citizens, Our official relations with the Indian officials of the customs and related bodies were normal till September 21, but the roadblocks have been blocked since September 22 (Dahal, 2015).

Reacting angrily to members of India's Rajya Sabha Mani Shankar Aiyar and Renuka Chaudhary, (Swaraj, 2015) said: "We are not imposing a sanction now, but the party you belong to had openly imposed sanction against Nepal for one and a half year starting 1990."

"India largely ignored Nepal's attempts to end the sanctions following the 2015 constitution's promulgation. On 25 September 2015, just four days after the constitution was adopted, Nepal's Prime Minister Sushil Koirala, along with CPN-UML leaders KP Oli and Madhav Kumar Nepal, raised the issue with Indian Ambassador Ranjit Rae in separate meetings.

Nepal's leaders demanded the clearance of cargo stalled at the border and called for talks to resolve the strained relations between the two countries. In response, the Indian envoy denied any involvement in the obstruction of goods, attributing the delays to political unrest in the border region stemming from dissatisfaction with Nepal's constitution-making process" (Haidar, 2015).

Ambassador Rae reiterated his remarks as a speaker at a gathering hosted by the Nepal-India Friendship Association on

September 29, 2015, when he also assured Nepali authorities that India was putting in the effort to resolve the problem. Other Indian government officials from the Ministry of External Affairs made similar statements, with some emphasizing that developments on the Nepalese side of the border were beyond India's control (TKP, 2015b).

Deep Kumar Upadhyaya, Nepal's ambassador to India has urged the Indian government to make crucial supplies, such as petroleum goods, more readily available to Nepal. The Ambassador met with the Indian Ministry of External Affairs and requested that the Ministry alleviate the supply of supplies from the border to the Nepalese highlands, which has been blocked for about two weeks (Chaudhary, 2015).

Deep Kumar Upadhyay, Nepal's Ambassador to India, was very cheerful the day following his return to New Delhi on October 2nd. The conversation with Ajit Doval, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's National Security Advisor, was the cause of the happiness. Doval not only promised to make it easier for transporting petroleum products and other everyday requirements to enter Nepal, but he also expressed sadness over Nepalis' suffering (Baral, 2015).

Ambassador Upadhyaya told Nepali media in New Delhi, they have promised to ease the roadblocks after talks with

various Indian government bodies and high-ranking government officials. The Indian Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of External Affairs have also told that the checkpoints will be eased soon. The Indian officials claimed that the checkpoint would be operating on October 5th." Until the morning of October 10th, there was no easy supply of petroleum products from any of the checkpoints.

Instead, officials from the South Block sent a clear message to the Indian Ministry of External Affairs on September 21, saying, first address the demands of the agitated Madhesi and Tharu populations. The door will only be opened after that. Despite India's backing for the Madhesi Front's demand for at least two Terai-Madhes states, experts claim the Indian establishment is unconcerned about the number of states.

India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal during the 2015 blockade exemplified the threat of consequence, where economic hardship was strategically prolonged to exert political pressure. Despite Ambassador Deep Kumar Upadhyaya's urgent appeals for essential supplies, India's assurances of relief were repeatedly delayed, reinforcing Nepal's dependence. While Indian officials, including Ajit Doval, publicly expressed sympathy and promised to ease restrictions, actual relief remained conditional on Nepal addressing Madhesi and Tharu demands.

This dual messaging strategy allowed India to minimize international backlash while maintaining leverage over Nepal's constitutional process. The controlled economic strangulation demonstrated how coercive diplomacy operates-using strategic delays, diplomatic reassurances, and economic manipulation to pressure a weaker state into compliance without direct intervention. India's lack of concern over the specific demands of the Madhesi Front further suggests that the blockade was less about constitutional grievances and more about geopolitical influence over Nepal's internal affairs.

Sangraula (2016) & Shrestha (2016) argue that India's sanctions functioned as tacit support for Madhes-based political parties, effectively turning the blockade into a proxy attack on Nepal's sovereignty. By aligning with one faction in Nepal's internal political strife, India disregarded international norms and obstructed diplomatic relations. Sangraula (2016) contends that this intervention violated principles of non-interference, as India's actions directly influenced Nepal's constitutional process. Meanwhile, India's Ministry of External Affairs repeatedly justified the blockade by citing the exclusion of Madhesi people from Nepal's new constitution, framing the sanctions as a response to democratic shortcomings rather than an exercise of coercive diplomacy.

Since the constitution's adoption, India's border security forces barred necessary products and commodities from entering

the country. In Nepal, just 10 percent of petroleum products were allowed to enter. This attention was directed to the Indian government producing several statements citing the obstruction of the SSB, including those issued by the American embassy and various civil society organizations.

Agitators sanctioned the border, occupying no man's territory on the Nepal-India border, with India's help. They were entirely safe and protected in Indian territory when they hurled the petrol bomb at Nepal. They were not prosecuted by the Indian authorities. An Indian citizen was killed in a clash with Nepal police, and a few others were arrested, indicating that Indian nationals were involved in the demonstration on Nepalese soil. This incident demonstrates India's role in supporting Madhes protests while pampering its own citizen.

Amid the issue of a seven-point amendment list by the Ministry for Externa Affairs of India to Nepal, though former stated it to be wrong, these all points were informally discussed in the south block of Ministry in the presence of the ambassador of Nepal and India including other diplomatic authorities. One of the authorities stated that the serious concern was drawn on the provision of the election constituency on the basis of the population which was previously included in the interim constitution but now removed in the present constitution. The briefings were given by the Indian ambassador Ranjit Roy and

assistant secretary for Nepal desk of Ministry Abhaya Thakur (Devendra Bhattarai, 2015a).

These threats were designed to coerce Nepal into making constitutional amendments, reflecting the application of coercive diplomacy as outlined by George, where the anticipated negative consequences are used to influence the target state's behaviour.

This threat aimed to pressurize Nepal into reconsidering its constitutional provisions to align with India's preferences. India suggested that security cooperation, vital for managing border issues and cross-border crime, could be affected. This potential disruption was a significant threat given the security concerns on both sides of the border. By rallying regional support against Nepal’s constitution, India sought to create broader diplomatic pressure on Nepal, thereby amplifying the coercive effect of its threats.

These threats like economic consequences, diplomatic Isolation, security cooperation**,** influence on regional support were designed to coerce Nepal into making constitutional amendments, reflecting the application of coercive diplomacy as outlined by George, where the anticipated negative consequences are used to influence the target state's behaviour.

9.3.3 Negotiation Leverage

Effective coercive diplomacy involves bargaining where the coercing state uses its leverage to negotiate terms that are acceptable to both parties. Negotiation leverage in the context of coercive diplomacy involves a state using its power or influence to shape the terms of an agreement in its favor, often through economic, political, or military pressure. In the case of India's interactions with Nepal during the 2015 constitutional crisis, India applied negotiation leverage by using its economic power, particularly through the unofficial blockade, as a means to pressure Nepal into addressing issues related to its new constitution. High-level diplomatic exchanges were held, such as the meeting between Nepal's Prime Minister Koirala and Indian Ambassador Rae, where India emphasized the need for a broad-based consensus within Nepal's political spectrum (Bhattarai, 2015a).

Furthermore, India's National Security Advisor, Ajit Doval, underscored the importance of political dialogue and consensus-building to address the grievances of minority groups, particularly in the Terai region (Bhattarai, 2015a). When diplomatic talks did not yield immediate results, India escalated its leverage by imposing economic sanctions, which were designed to exacerbate Nepal's economic difficulties, forcing it to reconsider its constitutional stance (Bhattarai, 2018).

Despite repeated diplomatic efforts, including visits from Nepalese leaders like Foreign Minister Kamal Thapa, who attempted to restore bilateral relations, India's insistence on a broad consensus for the constitution highlighted how negotiation leverage was central to the coercive diplomacy strategy (Bhattarai, 2015). Thus, India's use of negotiation leverage through economic pressure and diplomatic channels aimed to influence Nepal's internal political decisions and ensure that its concerns were addressed within Nepal's constitutional framework.

Following the contentious relationship between Nepal and India after the promulgation of the new constitution, Nepal's Prime Minister Koirala and Indian Ambassador Rae met in Kathmandu on 23 September 2015 (Devendra Bhattarai, 2015a). This meeting particularly focused on discussing the differences and the resentment between the two countries after the promulgation of the new constitution.

Although the details regarding this meeting were not published, Dinesh Bhattarai, the then Prime Minister's Foreign Affairs Advisor, briefly told to the press that positive talks were held between them regarding the Nepali-Indian relationship after the promulgation of the new constitution. During this meeting, Prime Minister Koirala had assured ambassador Rae to take the

initiative to resolve the issues with the dissenting Terai centric political parties by bringing them on board for talks and if needed amend the constitution.

Another important meeting on the same day (23 September 2015) took place in New Delhi between the then Nepali ambassador to India Deep Kumar Upadhyay and Indian Prime Minister's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval. During this meeting, Doval gave a clear message to Upadhyay for an immediate need for political dialogue and consensus between the concerned stakeholders" in Nepal (Bhattarai 2015a).

Doval once again emphasized the need for a broad-based consensus among Nepali stakeholders regarding the content of the new constitution. What exactly Nepali ambassador responded to Doval's concerns is not clear, yet both sides reiterated their goodwill to maintain dialogue and foster mutual understanding after the Indian Prime Minister expressed his serious concerns over the straining ties between two neighbours in the post-constitution period of Nepal.

Several high-level exchanges followed. For instance, one such exchange took place in Kathmandu on 12 October 2015 between Nepal's new Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli and Indian ambassador Rae on finding ways to improve the contentious Indo-Nepal relation-ships as result of an unofficial economic sanction imposed by the Indian side. In the meeting, Prime

Minister Oli reiterated his government's priority on the long and fruitful ties with India for the mutual benefit of both countries, where ambassador Rae repeated the same rhetoric that the sanction was not imposed by India (RSTV, 2015).

As a continuation of high-level exchanges, Prime Minister Oli sent his Foreign Minister Kamal Thapa for a visit to India in the third week of October 2015 where he called on the Indian political leadership to ensure the trade of essential goods across the common border. In response, the Indian political leadership reportedly reemphasized that India was not behind the economic sanction, but that it was rather the insecurity in the Nepali-Indian border that disrupted the movement of vehicles.

Likewise, during his different high-level meetings with India's External Affairs Minister, Home Minister and National Security Adviser of India, concerns were raised about the delay in constitution amendment to address the grievances of the Madhesi groups over the delineation of federal states and gave a clear indication that relations between the two countries would not improve without addressing the problems in Terai (Devendra Bhattarai, 2015b).

In response to their concerns, Minister Thapa briefed them about the Nepal government's initiation of forming a high-level political committee to hold talks with the disgruntled groups and the beginning of a dialogue process to resolve the problem

through talks and consensus. Although Minister Thapa claimed that his visit was successful in bringing Nepali-Indian ties back on track, the stance of India regarding Nepal's constitution-making process remained unchanged (Devendra Bhattarai, 2015b).

Following Nepal's Foreign Minister's visit to India, Prime Minister Oli called his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi on 31 December 2015. During the 20 minutes long conversation, Oli discussed the obstructions at the Nepali-Indian border points and requested Modi to take initiatives to ease supply of essential commodities through different border points (Devendra Bhattarai, 2015b).

In response, Modi stressed on finding a Sahamati (broad based consensus) on the constitution by bringing the conflicting parties into dialogue. He also repeated the same rhetoric that restrictions at border-points were due to the protests on the Nepali side and that the Indian government had no role in the halt of supplies. He moreover issued an invitation for Oli to come to visit India (P. Bhattarai, 2018).

Following this invitation, Prime Minister Oli paid a 6-day State Visit to India from 19 to 24 February 2016. This visit was mainly focused on improving the shaky relationships between India and Nepal that emerged after the promulgation of Ne-pal's new constitution. During a joint press meeting Oli stated that his

visit was aimed at bringing bilateral relations back on track (NDTV, 2016).

In response, Indian Prime Minister Modi appreciated that Nepal's constitution-making process is an important achievement Nepal has made in its democratic process (MOFA, 2016b). Yet, Modi once again conveyed to Oli that the new constitution could only be successful after resolving contentious issues through consensus and dialogue in a time-bound manner. Modi also gave emphasis on the fact that a volatile situation in Nepal on constitution related issues would have a direct impact on India.

Nepal's new Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal's State visit to India from 15-18 Sep-tember 2016 was another effort from the Nepali side to improve its relationships and build trust with India. In this regard, Nepal's Prime Minister Dahal, giving an official address in Hyderabad House, New Delhi expressed his government's efforts to take all sections of Nepali society on board for the effective implementation of the constitution (NDTV, 2016). In response, Prime Minister Modi appreciated his efforts of the constitutional consolidation of democracy in Nepal and also welcomed the ongoing efforts of the Government of Nepal to take all sections of the society on board for effective implementation of the constitution (MOFA, 2016b).

Although India welcomed the efforts, their key negotiation agenda such as the assurance of broad-based consensus was still

highlighted. As reported by The Hindu, Indian Foreign Secretary Jayshankar hinted that India would not back off from its engagement with the Madhes issue. He also believed that the constitution of Nepal would go for full fledge implementation only accommodating the grievances of all sections of Nepalese society, which at present is lacKing (P. Bhattarai, 2018).

The Author argues that when the diplomatic and political negotiation attempts did not work according to plan, India, by (unofficially) imposing an economic sanction on 21 September 2015, took a more aggressive approach to increase its leverage. This represents the most extreme expression of India's dissatisfaction with Nepali political leadership (P. Bhattarai, 2018).

India's request to delay the issuance of a new constitution for some time cannot be denied. However, the day's work could not be done at night, just as India's request after the time for passing the constitution had expired could not be compelled by Nepal and India's request could not be implemented. Although the world saw India's diplomacy slow in this matter, India imposed sanction on Nepal. The sanction case has been caused by misinformation and misunderstanding.

Such incidents have arisen when rumors of animosity between some communities in the country reached exaggerated countries. Diplomatically, Nepal should be quick to provide

information on the real situation. In which India can reach a decision amicably by 'cross-checking' it.

India too favored Madhesi demands that there should be an arrangement for the Madhesi parties to go to the key posts of the adopted citizen state, to make all the districts of the Terai into Terai Madhes, to determine constituencies on the basis of population, to review constituencies every 10 years, not every 20 years, and to send members of the National Assembly on population basis. By raising the issue third, India put pressure on Nepal. India has an example of not allowing Sonia Gandhi to become the Prime Minister. Most of the states in India are made up of hills and plains. India could not pay attention to one's own precedents before imposing one's agenda on another country(Jwaala, 2015).

P. Bhattarai (2018) states that “economic sanctions, albeit unofficial, were another negotiation strategy when purely diplomatic efforts turned out to be unsuccessful. Moreover, India also worked closely with oppositional domestic forces within Nepal in order to increase the pressure on the Nepali political leadership from the inside”. Post CA elections, all the political parties followed a policy of obstruction and confrontation when they were not part of the government. The result was a breakdown of consensus without which the peace process could not proceed.

The negotiation leverage of coercive diplomacy played a significant role in India's dealings with Nepal following the promulgation of Nepal's new constitution in 2015. India utilized its economic influence as leverage, most notably through an unofficial blockade, to compel Nepal to address issues raised by India regarding the constitution. In the early stages, high-level meetings were held, such as between Nepal's Prime Minister Koirala and Indian Ambassador Rae, where India emphasized the need for a broad-based consensus in Nepal and urged political dialogue to resolve contentious issues, particularly concerning the Terai region.

Similarly, India's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval also pressed Nepal for immediate political dialogue to resolve the disputes. However, as Nepal did not make the desired constitutional amendments, India escalated its pressure by unofficially imposing an economic sanction, a move seen as an attempt to increase its leverage in the negotiation process. While Nepal attempted to mitigate the situation through diplomatic exchanges, including a visit by Nepal's Foreign Minister Kamal Thapa to India, India's position remained firm on the need for a constitution that would accommodate the grievances of all Nepali stakeholders.

India’s leveraging tactics, though not overtly coercive, included manipulating supply chains and imposing restrictions on trade, which led to significant economic and political pressure on Nepal. Even as diplomatic talks continued, the economic blockade and calls for constitutional amendments demonstrated how India used leverage to push for its political objectives, ultimately influencing Nepal’s political decisions, but not fully achieving the changes India sought.

The leverage employed by India, though ultimately unsuccessful in its primary goal of constitutional amendments, showcased how coercive diplomacy can function through a combination of diplomatic pressure and economic tools.

The case study of Nepal-India relations following the promulgation of Nepal's new constitution illustrates the complexities of diplomatic interactions between neighboring countries. India's attempt to influence Nepal's constitution-making process through diplomatic pressure and unofficial economic sanctions reflects the nuanced dynamics of interstate relations. However, India's coercive approach ultimately backfired, leading to strained diplomatic relations and exacerbating anti-India sentiment in Nepal. This diplomatic misstep underscores the importance of thoughtful and strategic diplomacy in navigating complex geopolitical realities and fostering mutually beneficial relationships among nations.

9.3.4 Incremental Concessions

Bargaining often involves a series of incremental concessions from both sides. This process requires flexibility and a willingness to adjust demands and offers. Nepal was proposed minor constitutional adjustments initially, with further negotiations leading to more substantial changes.

Incremental concessions in India’s coercive diplomacy against Nepal involved a mix of easing the economic blockade, engaging in diplomatic negotiations, responding to humanitarian concerns, and eventually working towards restoring and enhancing bilateral relations. These concessions were crucial in transitioning from a confrontational stance to one of renewed cooperation and dialogue, aiming to address the grievances of the Madhesi community and repair the strained relationship between the two nations.

Incremental concessions in coercive diplomacy refer to the gradual adjustments or compromises made by a coercive power in response to the adversary's behaviour or concessions during a diplomatic standoff. In the context of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015, incremental concessions played a significant role in the evolving dynamics of the relationship between the two countries. Here's a discussion on how these concessions manifested:

India’s initial coercive strategy involved imposing an economic blockade on Nepal, restricting the flow of essential goods such as fuel, medicine, and food. This measure aimed to pressure Nepal into addressing the grievances of the Madhesi community, who felt marginalized by the new constitution.

India conveyed through diplomatic channels that Nepal’s new constitution should address the concerns of the Madhesi community. This was an incremental concession aimed at showing India's willingness to engage in dialogue and negotiate, rather than continue a hardline approach (GOI, 2015d)

The severe humanitarian impact of the blockade led to increased international and domestic pressure on both India and Nepal. India faced criticism for the blockade’s effects on ordinary Nepalis, which prompted it to offer some relief measures. This included easing the blockade slightly to allow the passage of humanitarian supplies, indicating a concession to mitigate the crisis and improve diplomatic relations.

Following the blockade, India and Nepal engaged in direct talks to address the issues raised. India demonstrated incremental concessions by agreeing to discussions and negotiations aimed at resolving the underlying disputes related to the Madhesi community’s demands and other bilateral issues.

In early 2016, Nepal amended its constitution to address some of the Madhesi concerns, including changes related to

federal boundaries and political representation. India's acknowledgment of these amendments and its subsequent easing of border restrictions can be seen as an incremental concession in response to Nepal's efforts to address the concerns raised.

By 2018, both countries made efforts to restore and improve bilateral relations. Indian Prime Minister Modi's visit to Nepal and the joint inauguration of the Ramayana circuit indicated a willingness to make incremental concessions in diplomatic engagements to rebuild trust and cooperation (Kaura, 2018).

India resumed and even enhanced its support for various development projects in Nepal. This included focusing on infrastructure and cultural projects that benefited both countries and demonstrated a commitment to positive engagement, reflecting incremental concessions to foster goodwill and mutual benefit.

CHAPTER X

EXIT STRATEGY OF INDIAS COERCIVE DIPLOMACY

An effective coercive diplomacy strategy requires not only the application of pressure but also a well-planned exit strategy to ensure a controlled resolution without escalating tensions or damaging long-term relations. This chapter examines how India managed its exit from coercive measures against Nepal, particularly in the aftermath of the 2015 border blockade. It explores the timing, mechanisms, and broader implications of India's withdrawal from coercive actions, assessing whether the exit was strategic, reactive, or dictated by external pressures.

10.1 Exit Strategy

A successful coercive diplomacy strategy includes a clear exit strategy for both the coercing and the target state. This helps ensure that the conflict does not escalate and that both parties can claim some form of victory. An agreed-upon constitutional amendment process that addressed some of India’s concerns while allowing Nepal to maintain sovereignty could serve as an exit strategy (Ivan, 2005).

In 2015, India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal involved various strategies aimed at influencing Nepal’s domestic policies and geopolitical orientation. The exit

strategies that India employed, or considered, to mitigate the impact and resolve the situation, include:

10.1.1 Assurance of Compliance Benefit

Assurance of Compliance Benefit refers to the positive outcomes or assurances that are offered to a target state as an inducement for it to comply with the coercer's demands. These benefits are intended to create a favorable outcome for the target state if it adheres to the demands, thereby making compliance a more attractive option compared to resistance or non-compliance (Cebul et al., 2021).

The primary purpose of offering assurance is to provide the target state with a clear and compelling incentive to align its behaviour with the coercer's objectives. This strategy aims to leverage positive inducements to secure compliance rather than relying solely on threats or punitive measures (George, 1991).

According to George, effective coercive diplomacy often involves a combination of threats and assurances. While threats are used to create pressure, assurances are employed to offer tangible benefits that can be gained through compliance. This dual approach helps in convincing the target state that compliance will lead to favorable outcomes, thus increasing the likelihood of achieving the desired behaviour (George, 1991).

In the context of India’s coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015, the Assurance of Compliance Benefit can be seen in India’s potential promises of restored economic aid, improved diplomatic relations, and enhanced security cooperation if Nepal addressed India’s concerns regarding the new constitution. By providing these assurances, India aimed to make compliance with its demands more attractive to Nepal (George, 1991).

Effectiveness of assurance of compliance benefit depends on the clarity and credibility of the promises made. The target state must perceive the benefits as substantial and achievable to be persuaded to comply. The assurance must be credible and convincingly linked to the target’s compliance behaviour. Challenges in this approach include the risk of the assurances being perceived as insufficient or unreliable, which can undermine their effectiveness. Additionally, the target state’s willingness to comply also depends on its assessment of the costs of non-compliance versus the benefits of adhering to the demands (George, 1991).

Assurance of compliance benefit in the context of India's coercive diplomacy involved the potential for restoring and enhancing diplomatic, economic, and security relations, which would have provided Nepal with substantial positive outcomes had it aligned its constitution with India's concerns. India indicated that resolving the issues surrounding Nepal’s new

constitution, particularly addressing the concerns of the Madhesi community, could lead to the normalization of diplomatic relations. This included the easing of tensions and the restoration of high-level engagements and cooperation between the two countries (GOI, 2015a).

By addressing India's concerns, Nepal could improve its bilateral relationship with India, leading to enhanced cooperation in various fields such as trade, security, and regional diplomacy. India indicated that the normalization of the blockade and the restoration of smooth trade and transit would follow once Nepal addressed the issues raised. This would include resuming the flow of essential goods and services that had been disrupted.

India engaged in diplomatic discussions with Nepalese leaders to address grievances and seek a resolution. This included bilateral talks to negotiate amendments to Nepal’s new constitution that could address India's concerns regarding the representation of marginalized communities. Throughout the blockade, there were continuous diplomatic efforts and dialogues at various levels. The exit strategy included continued diplomatic engagement to ensure that any agreements or amendments made would be satisfactory to all parties involved.

During the sanction, India remained steadfast on Madhes concerns, stating that Nepal was not serious about the Madhesi people's grievances (GOI, 2015d). On December 31, 2015, Prime Minister Oli contacted his Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi. Oli mentioned the obstacles at Nepali-Indian border crossings during the 20-minute talk, and asked Modi to take steps to simplify the delivery of basic commodities across various border points. This call, significant given the strained Nepal-India relations, was the third between the leaders since Oli took office.

Modi emphasized the importance of political consensus in Nepal and extended an invitation for Oli to visit India. The call followed a meeting between Oli and Indian Ambassador Ranjit Rae, aiming to resolve the diplomatic standoff. Modi acknowledged the border restrictions and promised increased supply flow and airlifting of medicines to Nepal, attributing the obstructions to ongoing protests in Nepal (TKP, 2015c).

During the blockade India released statements and took public positions aimed at improving relations with Nepal. By highlighting its commitment to Nepal’s welfare and its historical ties, India sought to repair its image and reduce tensions.

India and Nepal engaged in extensive diplomatic efforts to address grievances and resolve issues arising from Nepal's new constitution and ongoing border restrictions. Through high-level talks and a State Visit by Nepalese Prime Minister K.P. Sharma

Oli, both nations aimed to restore bilateral relations and address concerns regarding the representation of marginalized communities in Nepal's constitution.

India's exit strategy from its coercive diplomacy involved continued dialogue, direct communication, and a focus on achieving consensus. The diplomatic interactions included discussions on infrastructure projects and supply flow, ultimately striving to improve relations and address the underlying issues.

India's exit strategy from its coercive diplomacy involved a combination of diplomatic negotiations, direct communication, and a focus on resolving issues through consensus. By engaging in high-level talks, addressing grievances, and facilitating a State Visit, India aimed to restore bilateral relations and address the underlying issues that had led to the diplomatic standoff.

It seemed that the easing or removal of the blockade could lead to the restoration of economic aid and development assistance that India had threatened to withhold. This would be a significant benefit for Nepal, given its reliance on Indian support for infrastructure and development projects. Assuring compliance led to the resumption of normal trade relations, alleviating the economic hardships caused by the blockade (GOI, 2015b).

This would include the free flow of essential goods, fuel, and other critical supplies, thereby stabilizing the Nepali economy. This strategy aimed to enhance border security cooperation, preserve India's cultural and social ties with Nepal, ensure continued Indian aid and investment in infrastructure projects, and facilitate collaboration on hydropower projects, thereby aligning Nepal's actions with India's strategic interests (GOI, 2016). Assuring compliance indicated to pave the way for stronger bilateral relations between Nepal and India, built on mutual understanding and cooperation. This could benefit Nepal in terms of sustained diplomatic and economic support.

The compliance benefits of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015 included securing political realignment through constitutional amendments to address marginalized groups' concerns, reinforcing Nepal's economic dependence on India, and maintaining diplomatic influence to prevent Nepal from aligning too closely with China.

This economic dependence served as a reminder of the benefits of compliance with India's strategic preferences, reinforcing the idea that maintaining good relations with India was crucial for Nepal's economic stability. By pressuring Nepal, India aimed to maintain its influence over its neighboring country, ensuring that Nepal did not drift too close to China or

other external powers. This diplomatic influence was crucial for India's regional stability and strategic interests.

Compliance with India's demands semed to ensure better cooperation on border security and management, reducing the risk of insurgency and illegal activities across the India-Nepal border. By ensuring Nepal's compliance, India aimed to preserve its cultural and social influence over Nepal, leveraging historical and cultural ties to maintain a favorable position in the region.

In summary, the Assurance of Compliance Benefit in the context of India's coercive diplomacy involved the potential for restoring and enhancing diplomatic, economic, and security relations, which would have provided Nepal with substantial positive outcomes had it aligned its constitution with India's concerns.

10.2 Escalation and Termination

In Alexander L. George's influential work "Forceful Persuasion: Coercive Diplomacy as an Alternative to War," the concepts of escalation and termination are central to understanding how coercive diplomacy can be effectively applied and managed. These concepts are particularly relevant when analyzing India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015.

10.2.1 Escalation

Escalation refers to the process by which a state increases the pressure or intensity of its coercive measures to compel the target state to comply with its demands. This can involve a range of actions, from increasing economic sanctions to threatening or implementing military measures. The goal is to raise the stakes sufficiently to make the costs of non-compliance higher than the benefits of defiance (Stephenson, 2002).

India's actions towards Nepal during the constitutional crisis exemplify the process of increasing pressure to compel compliance. Initially, India engaged in diplomatic measures, advocating for changes to Nepal's draft constitution and expressing concerns through official channels. When these efforts failed to yield the desired outcome, India escalated its approach by unofficially imposing an economic blockade (P. Bhattarai, 2018). This significant increase in pressure aimed to raise the costs of non-compliance for Nepal, making the economic and social impacts of defiance more severe. This escalation underscores India's strategy to use coercive diplomacy to influence Nepal's political decisions and ensure its interests were addressed.

The Indian Embassy in Kathmandu strongly advocated for changes to the draft constitution to take India's concerns into account during the last round of the country's constitution-making process in August and September 2015. The Indian

ambassador, Ranjeet Rae, would often make consulting trips from Kathmandu to New Delhi. The necessity of a peaceful and inclusive process for creating a constitution was conveyed by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to his Nepali counterpart, Sushil Koirala, over the phone on August 25, 2015 (Majumder, 2015).

India released several press releases as the adoption date drew closer, highlighting the need of agreement and a peaceful procedure. On September 14, 2015, India's External Affairs Minister issued a major speech in which she complimented the country's progress and reaffirmed India's commitment to peace, stability, unity, and prosperity in Nepal. She also voiced grave worries about the current demonstrations (Swaraj, 2015).

As a special envoy of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Indian Foreign Secretary Subrahmanyam Jayshankar visited Nepal on September 17-18, 2015, in a high-profile attempt to alter Nepal’s constitution at the last minute. Jayshankar met with important political figures, such as the prime minister and representatives of all political parties, emphasizing the need for peace and stability that the constitution be ratified with the greatest possible consensus.

He emphasized how important it is to include parties with grievances centered on the Madhes in the drafting process. In response, KP Sharma Oli stated that more than 85% of parliamentarians had approved the adoption of the constitution.

When Jayshankar raised security concerns during his meeting with UCPN-Maoist Chairman Dahal, Dahal criticized the timing of Jayshankar's visit and emphasized Nepal's larger worry for the worsening security in Terai. Nonetheless, Jayshankar received assurances from Prime Minister Koirala that a "win-win solution" would be reached (TKP, 2015a)

Following his visit, Jayshankar released a press statement in which he urged happiness rather than unrest or bloodshed to accompany the conclusion of Nepal's constitution-making process. He urged Nepali leaders to be adaptable and mature in order to guarantee a constitution that is widely regarded and long-lasting. Jayshankar put pressure on the Nepali government to hold off on approving the constitution and interact with leaders of rival political parties, particularly those situated in the Madhes (P. Bhattarai, 2018).

But Nepali officials turned down his suggestion and went on with the planned passage of the constitution. Frustrated with Nepali leadership, India only formally recognized the adoption without expressing its approval. This triggered anti-Indian sentiment in Nepal and signaled the start of a diplomatic crisis (S. Sharma, 2021).

Another important meeting took place in New Delhi on September 23, 2015, between Indian Prime Minister Ajit Doval's national security advisor and Nepali Ambassador to India Deep Kumar Upadhyay. Doval underlined how crucial it is

for Nepal's stakeholders to have political discussions and reach an agreement on the new constitution. The Nepali ambassador's precise reaction is unknown, but both parties reaffirmed their commitment to preserving communication and promoting understanding. Following the ratification of Nepal's constitution, Indian Prime Minister Modi expressed grave worries about the two nations' worsening ties, which prompted this meeting (P. Bhattarai, 2018).

After the passage of the constitution, the contentious Indo-Nepal ties were followed by many high-level encounters. Meeting in Kathmandu on October 12, 2015, Indian Ambassador Rae and Nepal's new Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli talked about mending strained relations caused by an unofficial economic blockade purportedly placed by India. Rae rejected that India was involved in the blockage, while Oli underlined the value of having long-standing relations with India.

In the third week of October 2015, Oli dispatched Foreign Minister Kamal Thapa to India to continue these discussions. Thapa pleaded with the political establishment in India to guarantee cross-border commerce in necessities. Indian officials retorted that the embargo was not the result of Indian activities, but rather of security at the border between Nepal and India (TKP, 2015c).

Concerns on the length of time it is taking to change Nepal's constitution to accommodate Madhesi complaints regarding the division of federal states were brought up in high-level talks with the Home Minister, Foreign Affairs Minister, and National Security Advisor of India.

They said that unless the Terai issues were resolved, bilateral ties would not get better. In response, they were notified by Nepal's Foreign Minister Kamal Thapa that a high-level political committee had been established to hold talks with aggrieved factions. India's position on Nepal's constitution remained unaltered, notwithstanding Thapa's assertions of a fruitful visit.

Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli contacted Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on December 31, 2015, to discuss border blockages and to ask for assistance in easing the delivery of necessities. Reiterating the need for a wide agreement on the constitution, Modi blamed the supply stop on protesters in Nepal and denied India's involvement. Oli was also asked to visit India by Modi (EOI, 2015a).

On November 3, 2015, at the 23rd Session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in Geneva, India voiced concerns on the turmoil and violence in the Terai area, as well as the 45 deaths that occurred after Nepal adopted a new constitution. In retaliation, Nepal's Foreign Minister Kamal

Thapa denounced the border restrictions and defended Nepal's autonomy to independently implement its constitution. Thapa pointed out that the killings had happened prior to the ratification of the constitution and underlined that Nepal could handle the internal problem of the Terai crisis. He also reaffirmed that the constitution was drafted democratically with input from all segments of society and emphasized the government's commitment to resolving the issues of the Madhesi population (Pandey, 2016).

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the UK on November 12-13, 2015, he and UK Prime Minister David Cameron urged for an inclusive constitutional settlement in Nepal and India requested international assistance over the country's constitutional problems. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nepal responded by claiming that the constitution was an internal concern. Similar to this, a joint EU-India declaration from the 13th EU-India Summit on March 30, 2016, reaffirmed the necessity of a long-term constitutional settlement in Nepal. Nepal protested vehemently, claiming that it was capable of resolving its domestic problems on its own and pleading with India and the EU to respect Nepal's sovereignty (P. Bhattarai, 2018).

India supported Terai-centric political parties unhappy with the new constitution in an attempt to put pressure on Nepal's top political leadership through local actors. This support was mostly shown by joining them in their anti-

government marches. Political discussions with leaders of Madhes-originated parties were often held by the Indian government and embassy. Senior Madhesi Morcha leaders traveled to India at the beginning of December 2015. There, they met with Sushma Swaraj, the Indian Minister of External Affairs, who urged a swift political resolution and offered spiritual support for their nonviolent actions. Due of their engagement, there was a general belief that India supported the demonstrations in Terai (P. Bhattarai, 2018).

In Rajbiraj, the epicenter of Terai protests, Indian officials, among them Vinay Kumar, Deputy Chief of Mission of the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu, met with Madhesi leaders. Indian diplomats counseled the Madhesi leaders that in order to effectively influence the government for constitutional revisions, they should concentrate their demonstrations on Kathmandu rather than at the district level. They also supported the continuation of rights-based battles and offered suggestions for boosting participation in these demonstrations. The leaders of the Madhesi party met many times with the Indian ambassador concurrently to talk about the demonstrations' future (SAHR, 2016).

They continued to travel during the blockade, nonetheless, because their requests were not met. While indigenous people's movements embraced the demands of the Kiratis, Buddhists, and other religious organizations, ethnic movements frequently

brought up religious problems. On October 7, 2015, amid the height of the Madhesi uprising, a few leaders of the Janajati movement went to the Indian embassy to ask for India's support of their struggle (Devendra Bhattarai, 2015a).

Within weeks, as the impact began to be felt, the government formed a three-member team to engage with the Madhesi parties who were demanding amendments in the new Constitution to reflect and include their demands. The protests and demonstrations resulted in wide-spread violence and violation of human rights, piquing the interests of and concerns from national and international human rights organizations (Devendra Bhattarai, 2015a).

Ostensibly under pressure, on December 15, 2015, the Bill on the First Amendment to the Constitution was tabled in the Parliament. But this did not break the political deadlock. The agitating UDMF was still raising objections and announced a fresh round of protests on January 9, 2016. The movement of the Bill was accordingly delayed as different stake-holders attempted for a breakthrough in the negotiations between/with the government and agitating parties. The latter had put forth a 11- point demand (DH, 2015).

However, their demands were not addressed which led to the continuation of their movements during the blockade. Often, the ethnic movements were raising religious issues while the

indigenous people's movements also incorporated the demand of the Kiratis, Buddhist and other religious groups. However, on December 8, the Muslim parties especially the National Muslim Struggle Alliance severed its ties with the UDMF on the grounds that the agitation had led to a humanitarian crisis in the country and the alliance leaders felt deceived because the UDMF did not raise issues concerning Muslims. Some also reached out formally to India. At the height of the Madhesi movement, on October 7, 2015, a few Janajati leaders visited the Indian embassy to seek India's support for their movement (Khabar, 2015)

When the diplomatic and political negotiation attempts did not work according to plan, India, by (unofficially) imposing an economic blockade on 21 September 2015, took a more aggressive approach to increase its leverage (Sharma, 2019). This represents the most extreme expression of India's dissatisfaction with Nepali political leadership. The blockade, obviously, was never an official act; India repeatedly denied any connection to it and pointed to the political unrest in the Terai region as responsible (Acharya, 2021).

In effect, the transportation of most essential goods such as petroleum products was interrupted several times at the Nepal-India border. This escalation led to a severe crisis in the

diplomatic relationship between the two neighbours and there was a rapid rise of anti-India sentiments in Nepal.

India essentially disregarded the Nepali government's pleas to lift the embargo. For instance, on September 25, 2015, four days following the new constitution's approval, Nepal's Prime Minister Sushil Koirala and CPN-UML leaders Madhav Kumar and KP Oli Nepal brought up this matter with Indian Ambassador to Nepal Ranjit Rae in consecutive occasions (P. Bhattarai, 2018).

The Nepali policymakers asked for clearance of Nepal-bound cargo stranded on the Indian side of the border and also stressed the need to improve the strained relationships between the two countries through dialogue. Responding to senior leaders' comments, the Indian ambassador denied any responsibility for the obstruction of the movement of vehicles with goods to Nepal.

Instead, it was the result of widespread discontent with the constitution-making process that caused political turmoil in the border area. At a conference hosted by the Nepal-India Friendship Association on September 29, 2015, Ambassador Rae reiterated his remarks and gave Nepali leaders assurances that India was leading the charge to end the conflict (Haidar, 2015).

Other Ministry of External Affairs officials in India made similar remarks, with some highlighting that India had no influence over what was happening on the Nepali side of the border (Haidar, 2015). Similarly, on December 3, 2015, Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj refuted claims of an economic embargo by her country in the Rajya Sabha (Swaraj, 2015). Nonetheless, it is abundantly evident that Nepali political elites saw the economic blockade as an Indian tactic intended to penalize Nepal for ratifying its constitution without sufficiently consulting India.

India's actions toward Nepal during the constitutional crisis illustrate the escalation of coercive diplomacy, progressing from diplomatic engagement to economic pressure. Initially, India advocated for amendments to Nepal's draft constitution through official channels, with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Foreign Secretary Subrahmanyam Jaishankar emphasizing inclusivity and consensus.

Despite diplomatic interventions, including high-profile visits, press statements, and meetings with Nepali leaders, Nepal proceeded with its constitution's adoption, triggering dissatisfaction in India. Frustrated by Nepal's decision, India escalated its pressure by unofficially imposing an economic blockade, significantly increasing the costs of non-compliance

and exacerbating economic and social hardships. Simultaneously, India leveraged local actors, supporting Madhesi-centric protests and advising their leaders on strategies to exert influence.

As tensions grew, Nepal resisted external pressures, emphasizing its sovereignty and democratic process in international forums, including the UN and diplomatic engagements with the EU. The prolonged blockade and continued political deadlock led to constitutional amendments in December 2015, though unrest persisted as Madhesi leaders and other agitating groups remained unsatisfied, resulting in ongoing protests and political instability. This series of actions exemplifies India’s coercive strategy, highlighting how diplomatic pressure can escalate into economic and political leverage to influence a neighboring state's internal affairs.

Nepal’s private sector incurred significant losses amounting to Rs202.5 billion ($1.96 billion) due to the recent four-and-a-half-month blockade imposed by India. This figure represents nearly 25 percent of this year’s national budget. according to a report prepared by the Nepal Economic Forum and Alliance for Social Dialogue (TKP, 2016a).

The blockade's impact was widespread, severely affecting border economies and daily wage laborers dependent on cross-border trade. The commercial and industrial sectors faced

significant challenges, including obstructed trade, increased demurrage and detention charges, and shortages of fuel and raw materials, disrupting production and distribution. Agriculture suffered with projected declines in paddy and wheat production, risking a cycle of poverty for farmers. The tourism sector saw a sharp decline in arrivals and hotel occupancy rates.

This economic pressure aimed to compel the Nepali government to address India's concerns about the constitution. The hardest hit were the trucks carrying perishable items like vegetables and fruits and essential goods such as fuel and cooKing gas; these were rarely allowed to cross the border. This acute shortage resulted in fuel smuggling and black marketing. The price of a litre of petrol in Kathmandu was Nepali Rupees 104 whereas during and after the blockade, people were forced to buy petrol from the black marketeers paying three to four times that for a litre.

The blockade, severe in its impact, can be traced back to the Madhes uprising of January-February 2007 which had lasted for 21 days. In its scale, organisation and purpose, the ethnic uprising was unprecedented. It was considered a historic moment for the Madhesis, Tharus and for the Terai region. The central point of protest in this was the inability or the unwillingness of the Maoist-led government in Nepal, which had itself come to be after a decade of protests and violence, to

secure full proportional representation to the Madhesis for elections to the Constituent Assembly.

The blockade had a profound impact, crippling border economies and daily wage laborers reliant on cross-border trade. The commercial and industrial sectors faced major disruptions, including obstructed trade, rising charges, and shortages of fuel and raw materials, hindering production and distribution. Agriculture saw declines in paddy and wheat output, pushing farmers into poverty. The tourism industry also suffered, with significant drops in arrivals and hotel occupancy. Nepal faced a humanitarian crisis, with severe shortages of essentials like petrol, diesel, and cooking gas, while schools closed, hospitals ran out of medicines, and the movement of people was restricted. Additionally, about 7,000 containers of supplies from third countries were blocked from entering Nepal.

10.2.2 Termination

The process of stopping coercive tactics when goals are met or a mutually agreeable resolution is reached is referred to as termination. A solid resolution and the ability for the states' relationship to progress amicably are prerequisites for an effective termination. When its main goals have been achieved, the coercing state should preferably stop using coercive tactics.

This requires having a clear idea of what success looks like (George, 1991).

India sought amendments to Nepal's constitution to ensure greater representation for marginalized groups. Partial amendments made by Nepal in January 2016 provided a basis for de-escalation.

"The blockade was lifted following Nepal's partial constitutional amendments, and efforts were made to restore normal relations through continued diplomatic engagement and negotiations. According to sources close to the situation, India's initial plan was to enforce the sanction for no more than ten days. However, it was extended for another five months. Naturally, Nepalese bore the brunt of it, but India, too, was powerless to stop it. Nepal, which is entirely reliant on India for its imports, was expected to be pushed into chaos by the sanction, forcing its political leadership to cave in" (Sharma, 2019).

According to the author, in 1989, India conducted a successful trial of such a punishment. People had resorted to a movement against the government and the uprooting of the Panchayat rule as a result of the sanction at the time. However, the times had changed. Nepal had an authoritarian government in 1989.

The Indian punishment in 2015 was directed at the democratically elected government. The public fury was directed against India rather than the Kathmandu government. The study concludes the two main reasons for lifting the sanction. First, India preferred to save its own degrading image in the world due to the sanction in Nepal rather than supporting the Madhesi issues and second, India realised Nepal's growing closeness to China could be more harmful than the threats from Madhesi protestants.

A related concern of the parliament was the increase of the Chinese influence on Nepalese politics. The Nepalese side considered that India supplied the agenda and imposed a blockade in support of its agenda. Due to this perception, the Prime Minister Oli mentioned that he would resolve the present crisis, maintain national independence, dignity, and national integrity, and find an alternative. Using the term 'alternative', he was hinting toward seeking Chinese support and stand against the Indian intervention (Ghimire, 2015a)

Certainly, the pro-China position is also a part of Nepali nationalism as much as anti-Indian sentiments. The Nepalese politicians have often used the pro-China position, known as the China card, to increase their leverage on India. But this time, the Nepalese people demonstrated national unity and solidarity against the Indian intervention (CPN-UML, 2021), and the

government utilised strong public support to seek Chinese assistance in support of its initiatives (Khanal, 2021).

The Chinese government also pledged to support the Nepalese government to safeguard national independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. Accordingly, Nepal concluded the Protocol of Transit and Transport Agreement with China and received permission to use four seaports (Xingang, Shenzhen, Lianyungang, and Zhanjiang) and three land ports (Lanzhou, Lhasa, and Xigatse) for trade with third countries in 2018 (N Nayak, 2018).

The Chinese support is, however, partly facilitated by the presence of strong and numerous communist parties in Nepal. The Chinese authorities want to see the unification of the communist parties and the presence of a strong communist government (B. Bhattarai, 2018). This wish also supported the Nepalese government, under the leadership of the chairperson of the Communist Party of Nepal, to conclude various treaties with the Chinese government. Whatever the reasons, the Chinese authorities positively responded to the Nepalese government's effort for trade and transit agreements.

Following these treaties, the Indian side became concerned about the Chinese influence in Nepal, and its concern with the Madhesi agenda began to decline. In 2016, the Indian parliament asked whether Nepal had signed a transit and transportation

. . .

treaty with China to minimize its dependence on India Nepal's relationship with China should not generally become a concern for the Indian parliament (Gokhale, 2021). Sovereign states conduct bi-lateral treaties to secure mutual interests. But the Indian parliament asked how the Nepal-China relation would affect the India-Nepal relations (Ibid).

In 2017, it inquired whether the Nepalese government had proposed a joint military exercise with China, and how this proposal would impact India's national interests. These concerns indicate that the Chinese influence deterred the Indian government from supporting the Madhesi issues (Rajagopalan, 2018).

The Indian parliament reminded the government to maintain its strong presence in Nepal's politics. Expressing concerns about the Chinese government becoming the top aid donor to Kathmandu, it asked "what diplomatic, political, and economic measures the Ministry is proposing to be a major player in Nepal?"(Jnawali, 2023). The parliament became concerned about Nepal's increasing inclination toward China and urged the government not to let this inclination affect the Indian interests.

Due to the fear of the Chinese influence, the Indian government, parliament, and diplomats began to reflect on the

mistakes of their approach. The former ambassador S. D. Muni admitted that the Indian government stood on one side of the polarized politics instead of seeking to "nudge both sides of the polarised debate through quiet and sustained diplomacy" (Muni, 2015b). The other former ambassador Sood (2021) also mentioned that India wanted to get the Madhesi concerns addressed through the new Constitution, but it tried to micro-manage the Nepalese politics in the name of Madhesis, which strengthened anti-Indian nationalism.

These two former diplomats' statements suggest that India had focused on micro-management instead of conflict resolution. When the foreign actors engage in various interests and seek to micro-manage the internal politics, that hurts their legitimacy and credibility (Jnawali, 2023). The Indian government lost its credibility due to the unnecessary intervention, which the parliament acknowledged through its statements.

The Indian parliament inquired in 2017 as to whether India supported the Madhesi demands and what fresh diplomatic initiatives were being implemented to strengthen ties with Nepal. This inquiry presumes that by endorsing the Madhesi parties, India committed errors and must determine corrective actions. The government of India responded to this inquiry by

saying that it wants the Nepalese government to deal with the complaints of the protesting groups (Jnawali, 2023).

This reaction signifies a noteworthy shift in India's approach towards the Madhesis. India was accustomed to referring to the Madhesis as being of Indian descent. In order to allay anti-Indian feeling and maintain silence over the Madhesi demands, the Indian government at this point has only referred to the protesting groups.

Starting on September 23, 2015, the blockade lasted for nearly five months. The nation had experienced significant challenges during this time. The blockage was lifted for no justifiable cause. In the first week of February 2016, in anticipation of Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli's visit to India, the Madhes-based parties and its coalition for the movement, the United Democratic Madhesi Front (UDMF), decided to reduce the pace of their strike. In a statement, UDMF stated that "the ongoing protest programs of general strike, border blockade, and government office shutdown have been called off for the time being due to the current crisis facing the nation and public necessity and aspiration"(Bhattacherjee, 2016).

Once they assume the position of prime minister in Nepal, political party leaders have made it a tradition to visit India. The prime minister at the time had said that he would not travel to India until the country's closed borders were opened, even though India had sent a formal invitation. In order to prepare for

the PM's travel to New Delhi during the third week of February in Nepal, the embargo was lifted in part (Ghimire, 2015a).

Both Madhes-based parities and Indian government could have been looking for some reason in lifting the blockade. Meanwhile, the constitution of Nepal was amended on 23rd of January 2016 for solving the ongoing agitation of the Madhes-based parties. The amendments included the proportional representation and electoral constituencies based on population and geography (Koirala, 2016).

Two thirds of the assembly passed the measure despite the legislators from the Madhes-based parties abstaining from voting. Sushma Swaraj, the Indian minister of external affairs, praised Nepal's new constitution after its adoption on January 23, despite the discontent of protesting parties. She went on to say that the modification had addressed the majority of the concerns raised by the Madhes-based groups, and the remaining issues could be settled by discussion among interested parties. In a bilateral meeting with the prime minister of Nepal, Prime Minister Modi of India, who had objected constitution's promulgation, declared that the constitution of Nepal was a "significant achievement" in the country's democratic fight (THT, 2016).

The situation demonstrated that the Indian government appeared to be happier with the revisions than the activist organizations. The replies during this visit suggest that India

wanted the revisions. Subsequently, KP Sharma Oli, the prime minister of Nepal, declared that the embargo will be withdrawn without an official declaration, unlike when it was implemented. His forecast proved to be accurate. India made no official announcement regarding the "better security situation" in Nepal when the embargo was lifted (Tiwari, 2015).

The removal of India's economic embargo on Nepal, which is based on the principle of termination of coercive diplomacy, serves as an example of how to reach a mutually agreeable settlement and facilitate the development of bilateral ties. After Nepal approved partial constitutional modifications that matched India's main objectives, India stopped using coercive measures. Even though the ban was lifted later than expected, it was motivated by the necessity to offset Nepal's strengthening connections with China and lessen India's deteriorating international reputation. This change emphasizes how crucial it is to have well-defined goals and to be flexible in response to changing geopolitical conditions in order to effectively end coercive diplomacy.

10.2.3 Restoration in Relationship

The restoration of the relationship between Nepal and India after the end of the 2015 blockade involved several key steps and initiatives aimed at rebuilding trust and resuming normal diplomatic and economic interactions. Following the

blockade, there were significant high-level visits and meetings between leaders of both countries.

The restoration of the relationship between Nepal and India after the 2015 blockade involved several key initiatives and high-level interactions that successfully mended ties and resumed normal diplomatic and economic relations. Significant visits, such as those by Nepalese Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli in 2016 and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in subsequent years, were pivotal in addressing grievances, promoting mutual respect, and enhancing bilateral cooperation.

Discussions and agreements covered various areas, including trade, infrastructure, energy, and cultural ties, fostering an environment of trust and collaboration. Both nations committed to regular dialogue and joint efforts in economic development, regional connectivity, and cultural projects, thereby rejuvenating their historically close relationship and laying a strong foundation for future cooperation.

Following this invitation, Prime Minister Oli paid a 6-day State Visit to India from 19 to 24 February 2016. This visit was mainly focused on improving the shaky relationships between India and Nepal that emerged after the promulgation of Nepal’s

new constitution. During a joint press meeting Oli stated that his visit was aimed at bringing bilateral relations back on track.

In response, Indian Prime Minister Modi appreciated that Nepal's constitution-making process is an important achievement Nepal has made in its democratic process (MOFA, 2016b). Yet, Modi once again conveyed to Oli that the new constitution could only be successful after resolving contentious issues through consensus and dialogue in a time-bound manner. Modi also gave emphasis on the fact that a volatile situation in Nepal on constitution related issues would have a direct impact on India.

During a bilateral meeting in New Delhi, Nepalese Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi discussed various aspects of Nepal-India relations, emphasizing the need for quick implementation of ongoing infrastructure projects, including the Pancheshwar Multipurpose Project. They jointly inaugurated the Dhalkebar-Muzaffarpur transmission line, allowing Nepal to import additional electricity (MOFA, 2016b).

Both leaders highlighted the importance of their friendly relations and aimed to clear misunderstandings and improve ties. Modi praised Nepal's constitutional achievements, while Oli focused on restoring bilateral relations. Oli's visit also included ceremonial events, a meeting with President Pranab Mukherjee,

and discussions with other Indian officials. He attended a reception at the Nepalese Embassy to mark Nepal’s Democracy Day (MOFA, 2016b)

Nepalese Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli's visit to India in February 2016 marked a critical step towards mending ties. During this visit, both sides discussed various issues and sought to address the grievances that had led to the blockade. Indian leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, expressed a positive outlook on the amendments made to Nepal's constitution and acknowledged the steps taken by Nepal to address the concerns of the Madhesi community. This helped to reduce the tension and create a more conducive atmosphere for dialogue (P. Bhattarai, 2018).

"The diplomatic engagement between Modi and Oli reflects a strategic attempt to repair strained relations, employing elements of coercive diplomacy. After a period of tension, the visits by both leaders in 2018 symbolize an effort to reconcile by emphasizing cultural and religious ties, such as the opening of the Ramayana circuit.

This move, framed as a cultural initiative rather than purely political, suggests that India sought to leverage shared cultural bonds to influence Nepal's stance and mend bilateral ties, ultimately aiming to strengthen India's influence over Nepal's political landscape through soft power while maintaining its broader strategic interests (Sood, 2020).

On invitation from Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Nepal's premier, Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda,' together with a group of important ministries and officials, visited India from September 15-18, 2016. The two prime ministers discussed developments in a number of areas, including as commerce, infrastructure, and power projects, and underlined the significance of sustaining and strengthening India-Nepal ties through frequent high-level meetings. They also talked about Nepal's post-quake reconstruction efforts, for which India has been a major financial supporter. There were agreements to explore new areas of collaboration, such as military and security, as well as to speed ongoing initiatives, such as regional connectivity. At the end of the tour, both parties committed to deepening their relationship and extended an invitation to the Indian Prime Minister for a reciprocal visit (MOFA, 2016a).

Nepal President Bidya Devi Bhandari embarked on a five-day visit to India, her first state visit as President of Nepal, on 17-21 April 2017 at the invitation of India President Pranab Mukherjee. President Bhandari expressed confidence that India-Nepal bilateral ties would be strengthened further through her visit. At a banquet hosted in her honor on 18 April 2017, President Mukherjee thanked her and the Government and people of Nepal for the overwhelming warmth and gracious hospitality during his visit to Nepal in 2016. President Mukherjee reflected on the close relations between India and Nepal, urging both countries to build on their many

complementarities, and explore opportunities and new avenues of cooperation for the mutual benefit of Nepal and India. He reaffirmed India's commitment to bilateral cooperation and friendship with Nepal, and expressed hope of advancing the region's common interests through regional and subregional cooperation, which will lead to a better future for the whole region (SASEC, 2017).

At the invitation of the Prime Minister of India, His Excellency Shri Narendra Modi, the then Prime Minister of Nepal Sher Bahadur Deuba paid a State Visit to India in August 2017. Prime Minister of India warmly welcomed Nepal’s Prime Minister Deuba on his first visit abroad since assuming office in June 2017, marking Deuba’s fourth visit to India. This visit held special significance in the 70th year of India-Nepal diplomatic relations. Both leaders expressed mutual appreciation for high-level visits and bilateral cooperation, committing to deepen relations based on mutual trust and benefit. They emphasized the importance of democratic institutions and discussed Nepal's recent political developments, including local elections. They also noted the progress made by the Eminent Persons Group on Nepal-India relations (MOFA, 2017).

The Prime Ministers of India and Nepal expressed satisfaction with the progress of the 'Oversight Mechanism' and ongoing projects under bilateral economic and development cooperation. India committed to expedite post-earthquake

reconstruction projects. They noted the effective use of Lines of Credit for infrastructure development and agreed on enhancing connectivity through rail and road projects. They welcomed initiatives like the Motihari-Amlekhgunj petroleum pipeline and discussed cooperation on various priority projects for Nepal. Both leaders emphasized enhancing bilateral cooperation in energy, water resources, and flood management, and ensuring regular power supply from India to Nepal (MOFA, 2017).

Similarly, on Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli's invitation, Indian Prime Minister Modi visited Nepal on May 11 and 12, 2018, as part of a state visit. It marked his third trip to Nepal. One month had passed since Mr. Modi had lavished his counterpart from Nepal, Mr. Oli, with red carpet treatment during his visit to New Delhi on April 6 to 8, 2018. Modi's visit was mostly intended to repair his reputation and goodwill, which had diminished in Nepal primarily as a result of the unofficial Indian economic embargo in 2015. During this time, he also visited Janakpur and Muktinath and attended civic receptions in Kathmandu and Janakpur

The reciprocal state visits between the prime ministers of India and Nepal served to establish new standards for equality, mutual trust, respect, and mutual benefit in bilateral relations. It is now evident that in order to pursue a cooperative agenda in a number of disciplines, bilateral processes need to be revived in

addition to implementing all prior agreements and understandings. With financial support from India, both sides have pledged to creating new agricultural partnerships, constructing inner canals for commercial traffic, which will increase Nepal's access to the sea, and extending train connections from Kathmandu to Raxaul. Additionally, it has been decided to resolve unresolved issues within a certain time limit in order to enhance collaboration across the board (Muni, 2016).

In Janakpur, the two prime ministers inaugurated the first-ever direct bus service between Janakpur and Ayodhya, with the aim of further fortifying the close religious and cultural ties between the two countries. The two prime ministers also launched the Nepal-India Ramayana Circuit, which links Janakpur, the birthplace of Sita, with Ayodhya and other sites associated with the epic Ramayana.

They established the foundation for Nepal's 900 MW Arun-III hydropower project. They also underlined the necessity of holding regular meetings of bilateral mechanisms, such as the Joint Commission between India and Nepal at the level of Foreign and External Affairs Ministers, in order to assess the general status of bilateral relations and to expeditiously carry out projects involving economic and development cooperation. They expressed hope that the project's operationalization will

improve the two nations' collaboration in power generation and commerce

Nepal and India signed an agreement to study the feasibility of a rail line Linking Raxaul (Bihar) with Kathmandu. Therefore, the joint statement issued by the two governments in April 2013 on expanding rail linkages, the pact comes hot on the heels of an agreement with China. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Nepalese counterpart K P Sharma Oli jointly inaugurated a 400-bed Nepal-Bharat Maitri Pashupati Dharamshala a rest house for pilgrims built with Indian assistance in Kathmandu. Prime Minister Modi concluded his visit after prayers at the Pashupatinath temple (Standarad, 2018).

On May 16, 2022, the day of Gautam Buddha's birth, Indian Prime Minister Modi paid his sixth visit to Nepal following his reelection in 2019. This was the occasion of Buddha Purnima. New Delhi's recognition of the necessity for improved bilateral relations with Nepal may be deduced. These relations had recently worsened as a result of border disputes brought on by territorial claims and counterclaims, leading to months of diplomatic deadlock (Poudel, 2022a). While on this tour, Modi dedicated the India International Centre for Buddhist Culture and Heritage located in the Lumbini Monastic Zone.

Furthermore, six memorandums of partnership were signed by colleagues from India and Nepal (Ghimire, 2024).

It is interesting to note that just 18 kilometers from Lumbini, on the morning of Modi's visit, Nepal's prime minister, Sher Bahadur Dueba, opened the Gautam Buddha International Airport in Bhairahawa, the country's second international airport, which was constructed with Chinese support (Shiraz, 2022). Modi did, however, indicate India's reluctance to support China's infrastructure development in Nepal by opting to land by helicopter on a helipad near Lumbini rather than at the recently built airport (Shiraz, 2022). It is evident that China's expansion and infrastructural presence in Nepal's Terai area has angered India (Prasain & Giri, 2022).

The main causes of the 2015 embargo were seen to be Nepal's increasing proximity to China (Poudel, 2022b)argo by India, Nepal resorted to China for assistance in constructing cross-border rail, modernizing the nine road connections between Tibet and Nepal, and establishing a dry port at Timure of Rasuwa to promote commerce. In addition, Nepal chose not to participate in the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral and Technical Cooperation (BIMSTEC) military drill that was scheduled to take place in India the same year that China and Nepal conducted their first combined military exercise

The EPG report is the next significant problem in ties between India and Nepal. Upon its formation in January 2016, the EPG was tasked with examining a number of bilateral relations issues, including the 1950 Friendship Treaty between India and Nepal. The group consisted of four members each from the Indian and Nepali sides. At the halfway point of its two-year tenure in June 2018, the eight-member Eminent Persons' Group on Nepal-India Relations (EPG-NIR) completed its final report.

An EPG member from Nepal claims that the EPG has performed an impressive and thorough job of dissecting every facet of the bilateral relationship, including the 1950 treaty. EPG had looking forward to submit report to PM Modi at first since 2018. But did not get appointment from PM Modi's office.

The restoration of Nepal-India relations after the 2015 blockade can be understood through the lens of coercive diplomacy. India's initial use of economic pressure as a coercive tool aimed to influence Nepal's constitutional process. However, the eventual diplomatic engagements, high-level visits, and agreements reflected a shift towards a reconciliation phase, where both countries sought to repair strained ties through strategic dialogue, economic cooperation, and cultural diplomacy.

From the perspective of coercive diplomacy, India employed a mix of threats, economic constraints, and later, positive inducements to shape Nepal's political decisions while maintaining its strategic influence. The emphasis on cultural and religious ties, such as the Ramayana Circuit and Buddhist heritage initiatives, illustrates a soft power approach aimed at restoring goodwill. Meanwhile, Nepal leveraged diplomatic engagements to reassert its sovereignty and negotiate from a position of resilience.

Ultimately, the post-blockade restoration of relations showcases the limits of coercive diplomacy when applied to a close neighbor with strong nationalistic sentiments. The eventual resolution required a balance of strategic adjustments, economic incentives, and high-level diplomatic efforts, demonstrating that coercion alone is insufficient without avenues for dialogue and reconciliation.

CHAPTER: XI

OUTCOMES AND SUCCESS

The effectiveness of coercive diplomacy is ultimately measured by its outcomeswhether the coercer achieves its objectives, the extent of compliance from the target state, and the long-term impact on bilateral relations. This chapter critically examines the outcomes of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal, with a particular focus on the 2015 border blockade. It evaluates whether India succeeded in achieving its strategic goals, the degree of Nepal's response, and the broader regional and international implications of the coercive measures.

Furthermore, the chapter explores the unintended consequences of India's coercive diplomacy, such as the rise of anti-Indian sentiments in Nepal, the strengthening of Nepal's relations with other regional powers, and shifts in public and political narratives about India-Nepal relations. It also evaluates the impact on India's own diplomatic credibility, both within South Asia and on the global stage.

11.1 Outcomes and Success

According to George (1991), the success of coercive diplomacy hinges on the clear communication of objectives, credible threats, proportional measures, timely application, and

the use of incentives. The modern concept of coercion developed from the early warfare tactic of the siege, whereby an attacker hoped to close off a walled city to such an extent that the citizens inside would be starved into submission (Simons, 1999).

The basic expectation is that sanctioning states apply economic pressure to bring about a change in political behaviour of the targeted states. However, the efficacy of sanctions as an instrument of foreign policy is still in great doubt (Caruso, 2003). In fact, the literature does not present conclusive evidence that economic sanctions are an effective policy instrument (Smeets, 2018).

Van Bergeijk (1995) states that about two out of three sanctions failed to achieve their intended foreign policy goals in the period from 1946 to 1989. Economic sanctions fail between 65-95% of the time in achieving their intended goals. Evidence suggests sanctions are also counterproductive in advancing human rights, democracy, and press freedom. Peksen (2020) states that imposed sanctions often fail to impair the capacity of the government in part because the target elites might respond to foreign pressure by;

- *Changing their public spending priorities by shifting public resources to military equipment and personnel to enhance their coercive capacity*
- *Redirecting the scarce resources and services to its supporters such as those in police, military, and civil services to maintain their loyalty and support; and*
- *Actively involving themselves in sanction busting activities through illegal smuggling and other underground transnational economic channels*.

Smeets (2018) argues that the objectives of the sanction episodes vary and range from merely being an expression of dissatisfaction to demanding a change of policies in the targeted country. The higher the level of ambition and change envisaged, the more difficult it is to achieve. This is particularly so when economic sanctions are taken by countries individually. Pape (1997) in his paper "*Why economic sanctions do not work*" concluded that sanctions reach only 10-15% of the success rate as the target state adapts to new economic and political circumstances instead of changing its political behaviour; 79% of cases when sanctions did not prevent military action.

According to Clarke et al. (2009) the number of initiated sanction cases, which ended in success, was 12% between 1980 and 2005; and the success of sanctions aimed at changing the

political regime was 28% . The Hufbauer et al. (1990) study shows that successful sanctions have an average economic impact of a 2.4 percent decrease in GDP, while failed sanctions have an impact of only a 1.0 percent decrease.

The sanctions have the opposite effect, creating tensions between political elites and societies, contributing to the realization of hidden and not always friendly motives of interested parties. The report "The impact of economic sanctions" written by UK Committee on Economic Affairs (2007) states that: "sanctions do not always bring the same results in terms of prompting the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions, and in recent years the effectiveness of sanctions is increasingly being questioned" (Bimbetova et al., 2019).

According to traditional wisdom of sanction theory, the more economic harm resulting from sanction is likely to increase the possibility of yielding the demands of the sender by the target. A prominent researcher on sanction, Galtung (1967) states that if economic sanctions are severe enough, they will harm a target state's economy.

In turn, economic harm will lead to political disintegration brought about by an unwillingness of the population in the target country to suffer economically because of an internationally

unpopular policy. As a result, increased pressure is placed on the target government to comply with the sanctions demand: "the more value-deprivation, the more political disintegration.

In contrary to the traditional idea of economic sanctions, the current idea on this is just diverse and reversed. Conventional wisdom suggests that economic sanctions can influence the behaviour of leaders by imposing economic hardship on the targeted public, who in turn will pressure their government to yield to the demands of the initiating states. This view of sanctions has influenced American foreign policy toward a variety of countries, but there is very little empirical evidence as to whether this is what actually occurs on the ground in states targeted by sanctions (Allen, 2008).

Lektzian and Souva (2007) argue that the effect of economic punishment is conditional on a state's political institutions. In particular, economically punishing sanctions are less likely to succeed against a nondemocratic target than they are against a democratic target. According to them the reason for this conditional relationship is twofold. First, sanctions increase a leader's ability to extract rents. Greater rents increase a nondemocratic leader's ability to hold onto power, but greater rents do not increase a democratic leader's ability to retain office. Second, the pressure to yield to sanctions depends

critically on who is bearing the brunt of the costs in the targeted state.

To succeed, sanctions need to target the regime's winning coalition, the size and composition of which depend on a state's political institutions. Against a democracy, where the winning coalition is large, economic sanctions are more likely to produce a policy change if they are relatively broad and affect many groups in society. Sanctions that are high in cost will generally have this effect.

The difference in the size of democratic and nondemocratic winning coalitions leads to different behavioural incentives, especially in the face of economic pressure. Leaders in democracies are more accountable to their publics than leaders in non-democracies and are rewarded or punished based on the expected short-term outcome of their policies. Greater accountability means democratic leaders place a higher premium on successful public policies and overall economic prosperity than non-democratic leaders: as a result, democratic leaders are more likely to be punished for poor public policies or failing economic conditions.

Von Soest and Wahman (2013, p. 5) argue that authoritarian states are more likely to be sanctioned if they face strong internal protests, have many organizational ties with the

sanctioned, a low level of economic development, high inflation or high dependence on aid from the sanction sender. All these variables serve as proxies for the economic and political vulnerability of the target state. More than 50 percent of all the sanctions directed toward autocratic regimes recorded in the new global dataset post-Cold War sanctions explicitly aim to bring about democratization or to improve the level of human rights.

von Soest and Wahman (2014) state that sanctions are not always effective, sometimes they may even be counterproductive, and all types of sanctions are not equally likely to lead to positive outcomes, but on average, democratic sanctions are, in fact, associated with higher levels of democracy in the targeted state.

Soest and Wahman (2014) argue that democratic sanctions have other more profound effects on the targeted state. In authoritarian states targeted by democratic sanctions, authoritarian leaders are more likely to lose power and countries are more likely to change their basic political institutions. Such institutional changes do not necessarily lead to a fully-fledged liberal democracy, but often open up to increased civilian political control or multiparty elections.

The mechanism through which economic sanctions are believed to achieve their ultimate objectives from an economics perspective is based on a reversal of the international trade theories, which assume that world economic welfare is maximized under conditions of free trade. These trade theories are mostly associated with the Swedish economists who explain the notion of trade and specialization (Ohlin, 1929).

The key element of their theory is that different goods require different factor proportions, and different countries have different relative factor endowments. Countries will tend to have a comparative advantage in producing goods that use their most abundant factors more intensively, for this reason each country will end up exporting its abundant-factor goods in exchange for imported goods that use scarce factors intensively ((Smeets, 2018). Trade therefore is not a ‘zero-sum game’ in which one side gains only what the other loses. The whole world gains from trade and both sides are at least as well off with some trade as with no trade.

There is widespread agreement in sanctions research that effectiveness of sanctions needs to be appraised in a differentiated manner. Sanction can develop an immense impact by causing economic political costs in a targeted country. This does not however, imply that aims linked to the sanctions are being achieved and that they are, consequently, effective. An

assessment of the utility of the sanctions cannot be limited to their effectiveness: the costs incurred by those states imposing sanctions must be borne in mind (Peter Rudolf, 2007).

Kaempfer and Lorwenberg (2007) argues that the sanctions to be successful, they must hurt supporters of the policy in the target nation at greater levels than they hurt potential opposition to the policy. Sanctions that hurt all groups in the target at equal levels will result in a reduced national welfare, but will not lead to a decrease in the level of the policy supplied ((as cited in Lektzian & Souva, 2003).

Kirshner (1997) argues that the success of sanctions depends not on how much the target country is hurt economically, but on how much the right groups within the target are hurt. He identifies two groups within the target of sanctions that must be identified if maximum pressure is to be exerted on the target government. These groups are ‘the central government, and the core groups whose political support allows the regime to remain in power (as cited in Lektzian & Souva, 2003). The greater the sanction hurts the central government directly, the greater the chance is that it will influence policy. Beyond this, the success of sanction depends on whether or not core support groups are affected’.

Economic effectiveness allows a sender state to put pressure on the economy of the target state with the expectation

that economic deprivation caused by sanctions will create shifts in power within the target state. This logic is similar to that which underlies punishment strategies of air power. In practice, high levels of economic impact, and thus, civilian punishment have not always resulted in compliance by the target state, as recent sanctions episodes in Yugoslavia and Iraq demonstrate. Researchers have noted that there is no easily discernable transmission mechanism that causes social suffering to be translated into political change, even in democratic states, much less autocratic states (Jentleson 2000, Lopez 1999, Baldwin 1985 as cited in Allen, 2008).

The economic hardship created by the Serb-led government of the crumbling former Yugoslavia led not to political action but to greater focus on survival, which caused sanctions to fail (Woodward, 2018). While the basic cost hypothesis does depict part of the story of sanctions, it ignores the possibility of adaptation by the target and does not go far enough in its explanation of the coercive mechanism behind sanctions (Galtung, 1967 and Renwick, 1981).

Regardless of the amount of the economic pressure exerted, without political costs, there is no reason for targeted states to comply (Blanchard & Ripsman, 1999). Sanctions policies that are thought to fail often do have economic effects, but that impact is not successfully translated into the desired political outcome (Kirshner, 1997).

To effect change, sanctions must be politically costly relative to the issue at stake between the target and the sender (Morgan & Schwebach, 1995). According to (Losman, 1979) to concede, targeted states must sufficiently value the benefits gained by compliance. When sanctions succeed, the benefits of compliance exceed the value of the offending behaviour that triggered the sanctions initially. In this view, sanctions are a bargaining tool rather than a punitive one.

By imposing sanctions, a sending state hopes to increase its bargaining leverage over the target. Successful sanctions then serve to encourage dialogue to gain compliance rather than creating isolation to do so (Cortright et al., 2000). Unless there are political costs imposed on the leader, sanctions are unlikely to alter the status quo policy.

In the case of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015, these elements were evident in the strategy employed. The partial amendments to Nepal's constitution and the subsequent lifting of the blockade can be seen as indicators of the relative success of India's coercive efforts, although some unresolved issues suggest limitations to the overall effectiveness.

The effectiveness and consequences of the Indian sanction on Nepal is discusses as follows:

11.1.1 Partial Constitutional Amendments

As a direct outcome of the blockade and diplomatic pressure, the Nepali government introduced amendments to the constitution in January 2016, addressing some of the concerns raised by the Madhesi groups and India. This partial compliance can be seen as a measure of success for India's coercive diplomacy.

As far Indian concern for the constitution amendment, on January 23, 2016, Legislature-Parliament endorsed the Bill on First Amendment of Constitution of Nepal and amended the country's charter with two thirds majority four months after its promulgation. The amendment aims at resolving the ongoing agitation by the Madhesi parties. The lawmakers of agitating parties, however, boycotted the voting this evening, saying the purported amendment was incomplete and would not address their demands (Koirala, 2016).

When put to vote, the Bill garnered 461 votes in its favour. Seven lawmakers, including from the Nepal Peasants and Workers Party, voted against it. Taking into consideration the demands of the Madhes-based parties, the amendment has included provisions to ensure proportional representation and electoral constituencies based on population. For that, two articles Article 42 and Article 286 were amended (Koirala, 2016).

Article 42 - Right to Social Justice

1. Socially backward women, Dalits, Adivasi, Janajati, Khas Arya, Madhesi, Tharu, minority groups, persons with disability, marginalised groups, Muslim, backward classes, gender and sexual minority groups, youth, peasants, labourers, the oppressed and the citizens of backward regions, shall have the right to employment in state structures and public service on the basis of the principle of inclusion.*

Article 84 - Constitution of House of Representatives

(5) The House of Representatives shall consist of 275 members as follows:

(a) 165 members elected through the first-past-the-post electoral system consisting of one member from each of 165 electoral constituencies, formed by dividing Nepal into 165 constituencies based on geography and population. **

Article 286 - Constituency Delimitation Commission

(5) The Constituency Delimitation Commission, while delimiting the constituencies in accordance with this Article, shall consider geography and population the basis for representation, and maintain as far as practicable the equal ratio or proportionality between geography, population and the number of members.**

****With today's amendment, the Constituency Delimitation Commission (Article 286) shall consider population the first

priority and geography the second while fixing 165 electoral constituencies (Article 84) as per the federal laws. What is more, each district in the provinces shall have at least one electoral constituency.

India welcomed Nepal's move to amend some sections of the country's constitution that had led to protests from almost half of its population that feared political marginalisation. The foreign ministry spokesperson Vikas Swarup said in a statement "*We regard the two amendments passed yesterday (Saturday) by the Nepali parliament as positive developments*" (Roche, 2016).

The lawmakers of agitating parties, however, boycotted the voting, saying the purported amendment was incomplete and would not address their demands. When put to vote, the Bill garnered 461 votes in its favour. Seven lawmakers, including from the Nepal Peasants and Workers Party, voted against it. Taking into consideration the demands of the Madhes-based parties, the amendment has included provisions to ensure proportional representation and electoral constituencies based on population. For that, two articles Article 42 and Article 286 were amended (Koirala, 2016).

The Madhesi leaders saw the modification as incomplete, while the Indian government, which had previously refused to acknowledge the Constitution presented the decision to revise it as a positive achievement. By welcoming this amendment

decision, the Indian government indicated its intention to remain silent about Madhesi demand. The next amendment makes clear that the Nepalese government took advantage of this circumstance to disregard the Madhesi objective for self-determination.

The Madhesis pleaded the government to decide on the changes across the board and take into account their concerns, but the Nepalese government refused to do more than change the state's coat of arms. If the ruling party does not support their measure, the Madhesi parties have threatened to withhold their support from the government's plan. The Madhesi parties voted in support of the government's measure despite their proposal being rejected. The Madhesis only had 34 members in the 275-member House of Representatives, but their support was not necessary for the government's proposal to pass.

11.1.2 Effects on Bilateral Relations

11.1.2.1 Anti-India Sentiment

Indian intervention led to a rise in anti-Indian sentiments in Nepal. Nepalese politicians viewed Indian pressure as interference in their internal affairs, which heightened animosity and frustration towards India. The Indian government failed to demonstrate that its actions aimed to include and accommodate marginalized communities. Often, neighboring powers interfere in conflicts and exacerbate situations. Nepalese politicians

doubted the legitimacy of India's actions, suspected the Indian government of provoKing the Madhesi people to protest, and opposed India's stance.

Anti-Indian sentiments play a significant role in Nepali nationalism. Over time, Nepalese politicians have leveraged Indian support to strengthen their power, voiced anti-Indian rhetoric when their interests were unmet, and harnessed anti-Indian sentiments to boost their political standing (Khanal, 2021).

In 2015, the anti-Indian sentiment was, however, more against the Indian intervention in the Constitution-writing process than toward power politics. The Constitution's drafters felt that the Indian government was supporting the Madhesi demand to bring the territorial disintegration of the Nepalese state. In an ethnic conflict, when the foreign actors take the side of one particular group, the other considers that illegal or illegitimate. The Nepalese politicians considered India as the actor with ulterior motives and took a stand against the ethnic demand.

Anti-Indian sentiments were also reflected in the statements of CA members. Haribol Gajurel (CPN-Maoist) noted that the interests of neighboring countries had significantly influenced Nepal's political transformation. He asserted that political parties did not act according to foreign

interests, which was why the first CA failed to produce a constitution. Although Gajurel did not explicitly name any country, he implied that only India had reservations about the federal system, unlike other neighbors. The Chinese government had committed to supporting Nepal's independent choice of a social system and development path suited to its national conditions. India was the sole actor pressuring the Nepalese government to meet Madhesi demands, suggesting that Gajurel was referring to the Indian government.

The outside intervention in ethnic conflict does not just concern the settlement of the conflict. It inspires debates about the nature of state sovereignty. The political actors of the host state become concerned that the foreign powers can be seeking to change the state's territorial norms, and this understanding increases the repulsion toward the foreign actors. In Nepal, the CA members doubted that India was seeking to hurt the Nepalese state's national independence and territorial integrity and presented India as an illegitimate actor.

In this reference, Mohan Singh Rathor (CPN-UML) stated:

> *There is a grand design to carve Nepal into pieces and integrate/incorporate Terai into India, and there is a danger that the foreigners are playing a role to disintegrate Nepal in the name of ethnic preferential*

> *treatment or the right to self-determination. Therefore, we do not need that kind of federalism* (Jnawali, 2023).

"Echoing concerns over India's potential influence, Gauri Kumari Oli (CPN-UML) argued that granting the right to self-determination to a homogenous province in Nepal could pave the way for the Terai region's integration with India, a scenario she strongly opposed. Oli suspected that India was supporting Madhesi political parties' demands for self-determination as a means to divide Nepal. Similarly, Chandra Prakash Mainali (Nepal Communist Party, Marxist Leninist) warned that such a provision could invite foreign interference, jeopardizing Nepal's territorial integrity (Jnawali, 2023).

Oli emphasized that under Nepal's federal system, provinces already held autonomy within constitutional boundaries, making additional autonomy unnecessary. Mainali cautioned that granting self-determination to specific ethnic groups could lead to national disintegration, referencing the situation in Crimea as a cautionary example. He argued that such a move could create an opportunity for India to exploit Nepal's internal divisions" (Jnawali, 2023).

These statements demonstrate that India failed to establish the legitimacy of its position, despite its claims to support democratic inclusion for marginalized communities. External

actors aim to gain legitimacy by appealing to various constituencies.

India reiterated its desire for progress, growth, and prosperity in Nepal, trying to appeal to both mainstream elites and the Madhesi people. However, the mainstream parties perceived the Indian government as plotting against the state's sovereignty norms, and the Madhesi parties were also dissatisfied with India's position.

The Indian government did not receive appreciation for its actions in Nepal. Political parties perceived that India sought to use the right to self-determination to fulfill its territorial interests, which led to anti-Indian nationalism. The Indian government was aware of these rising sentiments. In a response to parliament, it acknowledged that some people in Nepal were hostile towards India and stated that Nepalese authorities had been made aware of India's concerns. The government realized that its position was breeding discontent in Nepal.

Oli mentioned that foreign intervention in Nepal's sovereign right to create its Constitution was unacceptable, and Nepal adopted the Constitution, rejecting such pressures. Including a single autonomous province was not desirable, as it would give Madhesi political parties disproportionate power due to their regional unity (Jnawali, 2023).

The sanctions provided the Nepalese government an opportunity to revive anti-Indian nationalism. Nepalese political parties did not see the blockade as a result of Madhesi protests but as foreign intervention disguised as social unrest. Prime Minister Oli stated that the Madhesi parties' protest was just an excuse and that transportation was blocked even at entry points without protests.

Oli argued that India violated international human rights treaties and acted against humanity; the sanctions aimed to meddle in Nepal's domestic politics. Oli succeeded in fostering this understanding and encouraged Nepalese people not to yield to foreign intervention, which ultimately heightened anti-Indian sentiments in Nepal (TEX, 2015).

India's engagement with Madhesi issues became counterproductive to its national interests. Foreign intervention needs support from conflicting parties to be successful, and external support is ineffective without such bacKing. The Nepalese people interpreted the Indian sanctions as an invasion of internal affairs, increasing anti-Indian sentiments. Recognizing this, the Indian parliament urged the government to improve Nepal-India relations (P. Bhattarai, 2018).

In sum, the Indian pressures increased anti-Indian sentiments in Nepal. The Nepalese politicians responded to the Indian intervention by promulgating the Constitution that did

not include self-determination as a right. The sanction turned a whole generation of Nepali youth's anti-India, which was a remarkable development. The Indian intelligence service sent a strong warning to India's political leadership about the evolving situation in Nepal. The harshest criticisms of Modi came from within India. Following the sanction, the Modi government has faced widespread criticism in India's parliament, media, and other public spheres over his Nepal policy.

S. P. Sharma (2021) argues that at the level of people, the event has made more people anti-Indian. At the political level, UML took advantage of it in the election. It has made Nepal more suspicious about India. It is difficult to say, but big countries like the US and on certain occasions, UN also does it. But it all depends on the situation and geography. Because of the open border between Nepal and India, the sanction was neither effective nor productive to India.

S. Sharma (2021) argues that the 2045 BS sanction in Nepal sparked anti-India sentiment and turned a generation of Nepalese against India. With the passage of democratic stages in Nepal, India showed empathy and support, resulting in a generation of positive towers in Nepal and a decrease in anti-India feeling. Although that generation was aware of the agony caused by the sanction, the younger generation was unaware of the suffering inflicted by India. But in opposite the current

generation of Nepalese people is filled with skepticism and mistrust as a result of the sanction of 2015.

Indian pressures increased anti-Indian sentiments in Nepal. Nepalese politicians responded to Indian intervention by promulgating a constitution. The sanctions turned a generation of Nepali youth against India, a significant development. Criticisms of India's Nepal policy emerged from within India, highlighting the counterproductive nature of the sanctions. The 2015 sanction has left a lasting impact, filling the current generation of Nepalese people with skepticism and mistrust towards India.

The Indian intervention in Nepal’s constitution-writing process and its subsequent pressures, including sanctions, significantly contributed to the rise of anti-Indian sentiments in Nepal. Nepalese politicians perceived India's actions as interference in their internal affairs, fostering a sense of nationalism and resistance against external influence. The intervention failed to achieve legitimacy among Nepal’s mainstream political actors, who viewed it as an attempt to manipulate internal ethnic dynamics for strategic gains.

India’s engagement with the Madhesi movement was seen as an effort to promote territorial disintegration, which led to strong opposition from Nepal’s ruling elites. Political leaders leveraged anti-Indian rhetoric to consolidate their positions, and

the perception of India as an illegitimate actor further fueled nationalist sentiments. The sanctions imposed by India provided Nepalese political parties an opportunity to frame the blockade as foreign intervention rather than an internal protest, reinforcing the narrative of Indian coercion.

At the public level, the intervention turned a generation of Nepali youth against India, deepening historical grievances and mistrust. Domestically, it strengthened nationalist forces, particularly the UML, which capitalized on anti-Indian sentiments during elections. Internationally, the Indian government faced criticism from within India for its counterproductive Nepal policy.

Ultimately, India's approach not only failed to secure its objectives but also backfired, leading to long-term damage to Nepal-India relations. The 2015 crisis cemented a legacy of skepticism and suspicion among Nepalese people, illustrating how coercive diplomacy, when miscalculated, can yield unintended consequences.

11.1.2.2 Strained Diplomatic Relations

The use of coercive diplomacy has strained the diplomatic ties between Nepal and India. Nepalese leaders have publicly criticized India for interfering in Nepal's internal affairs, which

has led to a more cautious and sometimes confrontational stance in bilateral discussions.

The unofficial sanction imposed by the Modi government on Nepal following the promulgation of its new constitution faced strong opposition within India itself. Politicians, academics, and analysts have criticized the Indian government's actions, labeling them as a diplomatic blunder and an act of interference in Nepal's internal affairs. They have highlighted the negative consequences of the sanction, including its detrimental impact on India's image and its role in pushing Nepal closer to other countries, notably China.

Additionally, Indian leaders have been vocal in condemning their government's actions, emphasizing the importance of respecting Nepal's sovereignty and allowing the country to address its constitutional issues independently. Overall, the response from within India underscores the complexity and controversy surrounding the sanction and its repercussions on bilateral relations between the two neighboring countries.

Despite India's denial of involvement in the sanction, it has been abundantly obvious that the former was the driving force behind it. According to the expert, this has moved Nepal closer to the fluency of other countries such as China. Various politicians, academics, and analysts have criticized these

actions, labeling them as a diplomatic blunder and interference in Nepal's internal affairs.

The response within India underscores the complexity and controversy surrounding the sanctions and their repercussions on bilateral relations between the two countries. Individuals such as Mani Shankar Aiyar, Renuka Chaudhary, and Shashi Tharoor have expressed their disapproval, with Aiyar specifically condemning the Modi government's actions as bullying and urging respect for Nepal's sovereignty.

Additionally, criticisms highlight the adverse effects of the sanctions on India's global image and its role in potentially pushing Nepal closer to China. Overall, the consensus within India is against the imposition of sanctions on Nepal and emphasizes the need for a more diplomatic and respectful approach towards Nepal's constitutional issues.

B. Bhattarai (2018) argues that the recent sanction, which occurred in the aftermath of the catastrophic earthquake, was very difficult on the Nepali people and our economy. India hasn't reaped any substantial benefits, either. As a result, there needs to be a fundamental reconsideration of how India handles neighbourly disputes and responds to conflicts, so that the speed and prospects of meaningful collaboration between the two nations are not eclipsed by rash actions.

According to Acharya (2021) the sanction has had a significant impact on Nepal-India political, sociocultural, and economic relations. Due to the harsh impact of the sanction, Nepalese people realized that they needed to reduce Nepal's reliance on India. Similarly, Pandey (2021) also argues that the sanction had a bad impact on government-to-government and people-to-people relations. Though India's support to Nepal is admirable, the sanction it enforced on the country created negative feelings among Nepalese citizens. In subsequent periods, India acknowledged her miscalculation of imposing a sanction on Nepal. India seems to review the sanction, whether it was right or not.

Khanal (2021) says that India eventually lifted the sanction without playing any games. The sanction had an effect on India as well. He argues that the sanction had no benefit or result for India, and that it had been completely unproductive. As a result, the Indian government realized its error in placing a sanction on Nepal. It attempted to fill a void in the bilateral ties.

Despite the fact that India did not express it exclusively, it did so strategically. He further states that India appears to have toned down its diplomatic actions in an attempt to close the gap with Nepal that has been created by the coercive sanction. As a

consequence, the successor ambassador for Nepal following Ranjeet Ray has been absent from the political arena.

The absence of Nepal's successor ambassador, Manjiv Sing Puri, from the political scene in Nepal is unusual (Khanal, 2021). With the exception of Manjiv Sing Puri, none of the Indian ambassadors in Nepal have been out of political engagement in Nepal since 1994. Instead, the Chinese ambassador was spotted engaging in political activities in Nepal. In comparison to previous ambassadors, this was the first time the Chinese envoy publicly engaged in Nepalese politics. This implies that India have realized and reconsidered their mistake in imposing a sanction against Nepal.

Most of the observers in international relations believe that the sanction significantly enhanced Chinese influence in Nepal. This has made India aware that, as a result of their diplomatic myopia, China has gained a strong foothold in Nepal. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been widely criticized in India, with many blaming him for Chinese influence in Nepal. The rising influence of China in Nepal was India's largest worry, despite the fact that it was only natural for Nepal to look to another neighbor for help and support when one had grown so hostile.

The signing of an agreement on the import of petroleum products from China on October 28, 2015, and the following shipment of Chinese gasoline which was more symbolic than substantive shocked Delhi. If nothing else, the deal demonstrated the possibility of Nepal and China developing a strategic and political connection, which India vehemently opposed.

Khanal (2021) argues that following the sanction, India's position in Nepal does not appear to be set in stone. India, for example, made no public statement on the dissolution of parliament because it assumed that public opinion was against it. According to him everything is not exclusively expressed in diplomacy; we must see it to comprehend it. India's diplomatic behaviour toward Nepal appears to have shifted. According to him India has moderated its diplomatic behaviour but has not changed its diplomatic trajectory with Nepal.

According to Acharya (2021) the sanction consolidated the communist movement in Nepal by uniting key communist political parties and forming the largest communist political party in Nepal's history. The two leading political groups in Nepal, the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN UML) and the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN Maoist) had merged, and the merged party, Nepal Communist Political Party, has been observed in close proximity to Communist Party of China.

Khanal (2021) argues that the sanction considerably built up the political height of the UML leader K. P. Sharma oli.

He made extensive use of ultra-nationalism and anti-Indian sentiment to advance his political standing. Nepali voters were influenced by K. P. Sharma Oli's personality, which was moulded by the sanction. In the result, this helped the Nepal Communist Party win a resounding victory in parliamentary election.

Following the sanction, the Nepali Congress party sustained significant losses. Other communist groups in Nepal, aside from the Nepali Congress, took advantage of anti-Indian fervour. Similar to Khanal, Acharya (2021), also states that the sanction sparked the communist movement in Nepal. Nepal's communist political parties promised to minimize reliance on the south and strengthen links with the north.

Even though India hindered connectivity by placing a sanction, the Indian Prime Minister's vow to connect Nepal by roads and railroads could not be accomplished. The sanction had incited widespread outrage. India opened the way for China by imposing a sanction against Nepal, tarnishing India's reputation in the country. The sanction, according to Acharya (2021), hampered Nepal's democratic movement while cementing the communist movement.

India's sanction was both non-diplomatic and counterproductive. It was responsible for inciting anti-Indian sentiment in Nepal. The sanction was not in India's best interests in Nepal, and it has left an indelible mark on relations and Nepal policy even now. As a result, Nepal was forced to look to the alternative India as an option, pushing the country to open its border with China to trade and transit.

The Indian sanction resulted in quick commercial and transit deals with China, as well as a series of high-level Chinese visits to Nepal. This has not been beneficial for Indian interests in Nepal, and it has also bred confidence among Nepali leaders and the Nepalese people that Nepal can hold important decisions without the support and patronage of India. It is true that India withdrew the sanction too soon, resulting in a boost in Nepalese self-determination and confidence in her ability to determine her own fate and future. In the aftermath of the sanction, India appears to be modifying and recuperating her image in Nepal.

In this manner, India has advanced previously stalled projects in Nepal. She is worKing hard to improve her reputation in Nepal. According to (S. Sharma, 2021) India's image in Nepal has worsened tremendously as a result of the sanction. The sanction has compelled India to make significant reforms in Nepal policy. India's strategy toward Nepal appears to have changed to some extent in order to boost India's image in Nepal after the sanction.

According Acharya (2021), the sanction has pushed Indian diplomacy in Nepal back for at least two decades. It also turned two generations of Nepalese who had previously been positive about India into negatives. According to him the barrier divided the people of Hilly and *Terai* ethnicity into two groups. Both factions of Nepali society have been suspicious of each other's concerns. *Hilly* people suspect the *Terai* people's nationality citing their ties to India, and Terai people suspect the Hilly people's nationalistic concern.

According to Acharya (2021), the most significant impact of the economic sanction was the creation of anti-India sentiment in Nepal, resulting in a cultural divide between the *Madhesi* and *Pahade* people. This rift has posed a threat to Nepal, and the time has come to put an end to it and restore socioeconomic unity in the country.

The sanction, divided two distinct cultural blocks, namely hilly ethnicity and Terai ethnicity people. It publicly pushed for a specific segment of Nepalese society and attempted to destabilize Nepalese society. However, it eventually realized that it had made a mistake by representing a certain faction in Nepal, which had been a big blunder in Indian diplomacy as well as a direct threat to India's interests in Nepal. In later periods, India appears to have acknowledged that its monolithic and one-sided geopolitical and diplomatic relations with Nepal need to be readdressed.

India appears to have understood that it is losing momentum in Nepal, allowing Chinese influence to grow. India has been found engaging with the entire Nepal rather than Madhes based political groups, as evidenced by its engagement with Nepal's successive governments. India appears to be reverting to an old diplomatic pattern with Nepal.

According to Acharya (2021), the impact of the previous sanction forced Nepali people, intellectuals, development activists, political leaders, and the media to change their thinking patterns in order to make Nepal self-reliant in economy to some level. However, the distinctiveness of the Nepal-India relationship wants particularly amicable connections for Nepal's progress. India has always been significant in Nepal. In Nepal, a similar insight appears to be forming at the same time. In Nepal, the economic sanction has offered up some fresh possibilities.

The sanction had a negative impact on Nepal-India relations on a political level, relegating them to an administrative level. India tried to maintain a good relationship at the administrative level to a greater extent in Nepal. For example, after the sanction ended, the RAW chief came to Nepal to negotiate with Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli. The significance of this visit can be observed in Nepal's relations with India (Khanal, 2021).

India discredited its political level interaction with Nepal, believing that there would be a political uproar if it dealt with Nepal's policy. India has dispatched its bureaucracy to Nepal, as the country's leaders appear to be in a critical position, necessitating high-level political engagement. This is a fundamental change as well as shift in relations between Nepal India relations.

Thapa (2021) argues that Nepal has never sacrificed its sovereignty in any of the three previous sanctions. Nepal has never bowed to coercive politics or taken steps back, whether it is in its dealings with foreign countries or its internal politics. Nepal has preserved its sovereignty and conducted its affairs in accordance with its constitution.

Nepal has always maintained its independence, despite suffering significant losses and bearing the brunt of these sanctions. According to him the sanction considerably increased national awareness and feelings in Nepal. Nepal has never been a colony of any emperor country in history or today.

However, India has been a colony of those imperial powers for nearly a century. Her views on Nepal have been affected by her experiences under colonial control in India. It considers Nepal to be a satellite country. When dealing with Nepal, it employs a colonial viewpoint. However, due to her

legacy of independence, the Nepalese people are hesitant to accept it.

Moreover, the sanction bolstered the communist movement in Nepal, propelled by anti-Indian sentiment and ultra-nationalism. This resulted in significant political gains for leaders like K. P. Sharma Oli and a shift in Nepal's diplomatic engagements, with China emerging as a prominent player in the region.

Ultimately, the sanction failed to achieve its intended objectives and instead strained Nepal-India relations while bolstering China's influence in Nepal. The aftermath of the sanction underscored the need for a fundamental reconsideration of India's approach to neighborly disputes and conflicts, emphasizing the importance of fostering mutually beneficial collaboration between the two nations.

India's coercive diplomacy, particularly the 2015 blockade, significantly strained diplomatic ties with Nepal, as Nepalese leaders criticized India's interference in internal affairs, leading to a cautious and confrontational stance in bilateral discussions. The blockade faced strong opposition within India, with critics labeling it a diplomatic blunder that tarnished India's image and pushed Nepal closer to China.

The sanction led to economic hardships in Nepal, fueling anti-Indian sentiment and bolstering the communist movement, which exploited nationalism and anti-Indian rhetoric to gain political power. The strained relations prompted Nepal to reduce reliance on India and seek alternative alliances, notably with China, while India faced widespread criticism for its handling of the situation. This period underscored the need for India to reconsider its approach to neighborly disputes and emphasized the importance of respecting Nepal's sovereignty to maintain a constructive bilateral relationship.

The use of coercive diplomacy by India against Nepal through the economic sanction in 2015 has had profound and long-lasting repercussions on bilateral relations. From the perspective of coercive diplomacy, India's approach failed to achieve its intended outcome, as Nepal resisted the pressure, demonstrating resilience and strategic adaptation. Instead of coercing Nepal into compliance, the sanction backfired, fostering strong anti-India sentiments and pushing Nepal closer to alternative strategic partners, particularly China.

The unintended consequences of India's coercive strategy illustrate the inherent risks of economic coercion. The sanction not only failed to alter Nepal’s constitutional decisions but also deepened political divisions within Nepal and reshaped regional

geopolitics. Nepal leveraged the situation to diversify its trade and transit options, reducing its historical dependency on India. This shift underscores a fundamental limitation of coercive diplomacy: when misapplied, it can lead to strategic losses rather than gains.

Furthermore, India's actions triggered widespread criticism both domestically and internationally, with Indian political and academic circles acknowledging the diplomatic miscalculation. The policy not only harmed India’s image in Nepal but also set back India-Nepal relations by decades, necessitating a recalibration of India’s diplomatic approach. In the aftermath, India appears to have adjusted its diplomatic stance, seeking to restore trust and engagement with Nepal beyond its earlier focus on Madhes-based politics.

Overall, this case highlights the paradox of coercive diplomacy-when applied without careful consideration of local political dynamics; it can provoke resistance rather than compliance, leading to unintended geopolitical shifts. The Nepal-India episode serves as a crucial lesson in the limits of coercive strategies in managing asymmetrical power relations, emphasizing the need for more nuanced, dialogue-driven diplomacy in South Asia.

11.1.2.3 Economic and Humanitarian Impact

The blockade caused significant economic and humanitarian hardship in Nepal, which in turn created internal pressure on the Nepali government to comply with India's demands. The severity of the economic impact underscored the credibility of India's coercive measures.

Such a severe shortage of essential items and fuel led to an unprecedented humanitarian crisis in recent times, deeply affecting homes, women and children, schools, businesses and industries. In short, the country was forced to come to a standstill economically, socially, and in every rhythm of daily life.

The fundamental rights of citizens, particularly daily wage laborers, were severely violated by both the agitating parties and the government. While these entities engaged in mutual accusations, it was the general population that bore the brunt of the crisis, facing challenges such as black market activities and rising inflation.

Although the blockade undeniably had a geopolitical dimension-an aspect that has largely dominated discussions, particularly in international forums-it was, above all, a profound economic and social crisis for the people of Nepal. Regardless of the motivations and circumstances that precipitated it, the blockade proved to be a pivotal event that significantly impacted

the trajectory of Nepal's governance and socio-economic landscapet (SAHR, 2016)

The impact of the blockade extended across multiple sectors; however, its effects on border economies were particularly significant, jeopardizing numerous livelihoods. Daily wage laborers, who rely on cross-border trade for their subsistence, were among the most affected. Border towns and cities, which serve as crucial hubs for cross-border commerce, became the focal points of the crisis. The restrictions on cargo movement not only disrupted trade but also facilitated the expansion of black market activities, further exacerbating economic instability in these regions.

“The black market has primarily revolved around fuel, with individuals participating in illicit trade through various means-ranging from smuggling small quantities across the border to large-scale operations facilitated by organized networks and dealers supplying major markets. A notable development has been the emergence of currency black marketing, particularly in border areas, where traders have capitalized on the scarcity of Indian currency in Nepal. This shortage has been a direct consequence of the significant decline in the flow of goods between the two countries, further exacerbating economic disruptions in the region” (Shakya & Bhattarai, 2016).

“Macroeconomic indicators documenting the impact of the blockade reveal a sharp rise in inflation, reaching as high as 12%, alongside a significant decline in international trade and a subsequent contraction of the previously expanding trade deficit. However, with the reopening of border points and the normalization of trade, the trade deficit has resumed its upward trajectory. Meanwhile, public expenditure has declined sharply, with capital spending being particularly affected. Revenue collection has yet to recover, as customs duties alone contribute approximately 20% to the total tax revenue, highlighting the prolonged economic repercussions of the blockade”.

“The agricultural sector experienced a significant decline during the blockade, adversely impacting the incomes and livelihoods of nearly 70% of the population. The challenges faced by the sector were initially exacerbated by below-average rainfall, which placed considerable strain on agricultural productivity. Additionally, restricted access to chemical fertilizers, particularly in the hilly regions, along with the unavailability of fuel at regular prices for irrigation and transportation, substantially increased input costs for farmers, further intensifying the sector's vulnerability” (Shakya & Bhattarai, 2016).

“The effects of the blockade are particularly evident in the decline in the production of two major cereal crops-paddy and wheat. Paddy production is projected to decrease by 10.22%,

while wheat yields are expected to decline between 6% and 20%. This downturn in the agricultural sector is especially concerning, as it may trap farmers in a persistent cycle of poverty characterized by low output, reduced investment, and diminished income, further exacerbating their economic vulnerability" (Shakya & Bhattarai, 2016).

"The tourism sector has faced numerous challenges over the past year. Although tourist arrivals had shown signs of recovery in the months following the earthquakes of April and May 2015, the blockade led to a renewed decline, bringing arrivals to a six-year low. As the number of visitors decreased, the incomes of a substantial portion of the population dependent on tourism and related industries experienced a significant downturn, further exacerbating economic hardships in the sector" (Shakya & Bhattarai, 2016).

"In the initial four months of the fiscal year, the tourism sector incurred an estimated loss of NPR 2.9 billion (USD 28.1 million), a sum three times greater than the budget allocated to the sector for the fiscal year 2015/16. The hospitality industry, closely linked to tourism, also experienced a significant decline in revenue. Hotel occupancy rates plummeted to as low as 15%, and hotels and restaurants faced a substantial increase in operating costs. This was due to the necessity of switching to firewood for cooking and purchasing diesel from the black

market to maintain operations, further straining the financial stability of these establishments" (Shakya & Bhattarai, 2016).

The commercial and industrial sectors faced a triple set of challenges during the blockade. First, trade disruptions between Nepal and India led to hundreds of cargo trucks, carrying essential commodities, consumer durables, industrial raw materials, machinery, and spare parts, becoming stranded on the Indian side of the border. Second, for goods and raw materials held at the Kolkata port, importers and manufacturers were required to pay substantial demurrage and detention charges. Third, a severe shortage of fuel and raw materials further obstructed production and distribution processes, exacerbating the overall disruption in these sectors.

A conservative estimate of the private sector's losses during the blockade, considering only the reported daily losses and demurrage charges, indicates that the sector incurred losses ranging from NPR 212.1 billion to NPR 279.6 billion (USD 2.0 billion to USD 2.7 billion). As industries and factories either ceased operations or functioned at reduced capacity, approximately 400,000 industrial workers were left unemployed. The repercussions of this, in terms of lost livelihoods, are significant and have far-reaching socio-economic consequences (Shakya & Bhattarai, 2016).

Border towns in India, which heavily rely on Nepali customers and Indian exporters whose goods make up a substantial portion of the Nepali market, also faced significant challenges as the blockade persisted for approximately four and a half months. In addition to causing considerable economic losses, the blockade had profound social consequences.

One of the most evident and widely perceived social impacts was the exacerbation of tensions between the Hill and Madhesi communities, with the blockade being viewed as an "us versus them" issue. While pinpointing and fully understanding the various factors that contributed to this perception is complex, a combination of genuine beliefs, political maneuvering, and media influence-whether independently or in conjunction-appears to have played a significant role in shaping these sentiments.

As the blockade stretched across months inducing a major supply crunch, people were forced to turn to the black market to acquire essential commodities; especially fuel. While at other times black marketing is seen as a deviant behaviour, during such times of crisis people perceived it more as a savior than a stigma because if the black market had not eased fuel supply, life across the country would have come to a grinding halt.

This, however, poses a threat of black market becoming a socially acceptable phenomenon which would set dangerous

precedent for other social stigmas and/or crimes like abuse of power, impunity, violence, drug abuse, human trafficking and the like to be established as ‘widely prevalent therefore acceptable’ which could render the society dysfunctional.

As black market proliferated, a large amount of black money was created in the economy which spawned various kinds of social activities and spurred new consumption patterns. Rise in number of people frequenting restaurants and bars, purchasing consumer durables like mobile phones, motorbikes, was witnessed especially along the border towns where black market for fuel thrived during the five-month period. Similarly, informal transport services cropped up in different parts of the Terai region wherein private vehicle owners charged exorbitant rates to people willing to travel from one place to another thereby making money out of each private trip.

As towns like Birgunj and Janakpur became agitation hotspots, adjacent towns like Simara and Bardibas came alive attracting the newfound illicit wealth which drove consumption in these towns. Apart from these loose traffic morals, stagnancy of operations citing blockade as an excuse, inefficiencies in service delivery, and the like were commonplace during the blockade.

The blockade against Nepal exemplifies the strategic use of economic and social pressure to compel compliance. India's actions demonstrated key elements of coercive diplomacy: the

imposition of significant costs, the creation of internal pressure on the target state, and the implicit threat of further escalation.

The economic and humanitarian crisis caused by the blockade intensified domestic vulnerabilities within Nepal, creating political and social instability. The acute shortages of fuel, essential goods, and agricultural inputs significantly disrupted daily life, businesses, and industrial production, further exacerbating public discontent. The pressure on the Nepali government was intended to push it toward policy concessions in line with India's interests.

However, the blockade also underscores the limitations of coercive diplomacy. Rather than leading to outright compliance, it fostered nationalist sentiments, deepened societal divisions, and strained bilateral relations. The economic hardship, black market proliferation, and rising inflation reinforced resilience among Nepali actors rather than submission, highlighting the potential for coercion to backfire when perceived as unjust.

Ultimately, the blockade not only served as an instrument of coercive diplomacy but also reshaped Nepal’s geopolitical orientation, fostering diversification of trade partnerships and increased engagement with alternative allies, thereby reducing India’s unilateral leverage in the long run. This case illustrates that while coercive diplomacy can impose immediate hardship and pressure, its long-term success is contingent on the target

state’s perception of legitimacy and the broader geopolitical context.

11.1.3 Nepal’s Quest for an Alternate Transit Country

The efforts of Indian leadership, particularly Prime Minister Modi, to mitigate the prevailing coldness in Nepal-India relations demonstrated a strategic use of soft power diplomacy. Modi’s charismatic approach during his visit to Nepal, including an impactful address in Nepal's Parliament and his promises of cooperation, initially fostered optimism about improved bilateral ties (Jwaala, 2015).

These actions reflected the liberal international relations theory, which emphasizes mutual cooperation, dialogue, and interdependence to resolve conflicts and strengthen relationships between states. The subsequent imposition of coercive measures by India, perceived as a violation of Nepal's sovereignty, disrupted this goodwill, undermining trust and freezing the progress achieved. This juxtaposition highlights the interplay of soft and hard power in India's foreign policy towards Nepal, with the latter's consequences overshadowing the potential for deeper, cooperative ties

India's support for the Madhes agitation against Nepal's constitution, adopted in September 2015, exemplifies the realist dynamics of power politics in South Asia, where states leverage internal dissent in neighboring countries to advance strategic

interests. This intervention catalyzed Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli's landmark visit to China, marking a significant shift in Nepal's foreign policy. Rooted in domestic imperatives, this pivot sought to consolidate Oli's nationalist support base, which advocates reducing Nepal's reliance on India (Muni, 2016).

Viewed through the lens of balance of power theory in international relations, Oli's outreach to China conveyed a strategic message to India: Nepal has the capacity to diversify its alliances and counterbalance Indian influence through strengthened ties with China. This development underscores the role of domestic politics in shaping foreign policy and the growing significance of Nepal's strategic agency in navigating the geopolitical competition between its two powerful neighbors. India’s support had resulted in restricted supply of essential goods to Nepal for nearly five months, causing unprecedented hardship to Nepal’s people and generating strong anti-India sentiments among the country’s hill communities.

The acute shortages of essential goods during the unofficial blockade of Nepal in 2015 underscored the vulnerabilities stemming from Nepal's heavy dependence on India, leading to widespread public criticism of political leaders. Following its electoral victory, the Oli government faced

mounting pressure to diversify Nepal's trade and transit options to mitigate such dependencies. This aligns with Smeets (2018) assertion that states subjected to sanctions often seek to establish trade relations with non-aligned third parties. Responding to these pressures, Nepal successfully negotiated the Protocol of Transit Transport Agreement with China, finalized on September 7, 2018 (N Nayak, 2018).

This agreement marked a critical step in Nepal's strategic diversification efforts, with China offering access to seven transit points, including four sea ports (Tianjin (Xingang), Shenzhen, Lianyungang, Zhanjiang) and three land ports (Lanzhou, Lhasa, Xigatse) for trade with third countries. This shift represents Nepal’s effort to balance power by reducing dependence on India and leveraging its strategic partnership with China to enhance its autonomy in regional geopolitics (N Nayak, 2018).

The materialization of the Protocol of the Transit Transport Agreement (TTA), following prolonged negotiations after its signing during Prime Minister K. P. Sharma Oli’s visit to China in March 2016, marked a significant geopolitical development in Nepal’s foreign policy. While the practical effectiveness of this arrangement in substantially reducing Nepal’s dependence on India remains uncertain, it undeniably

enhances Nepal’s bargaining power in bilateral negotiations with India.

This agreement reflects Nepal's strategic effort to balance power by leveraging China’s infrastructure, particularly the Qinghai-Tibet railway, which is operational up to Shigatse (Xigaze) and is projected to extend to the Nepal-China border at Rasuwagadi (Kerung/Gyirong). The planned 100-km rail link to Kathmandu, coupled with the integrated rail-truck transport system, represents a significant logistical advancement, with freight trains from Lanzhou already facilitating trade via Shigatse (Nihar Nayak, 2018). This evolving infrastructure underscores Nepal's attempt to diversify its transit options and assert greater autonomy in its geopolitical positioning.

The development of a Sino-Nepal trade route via Kerung offers a significant reduction in transit time, cutting the journey to just 10 days compared to the 35-day maritime route via Kolkata (Segdel, 2018). The extension of the Qinghai-Tibet railway to Nepal, and potentially to Lumbini, holds transformative potential for enhancing trade, commerce, and tourism between Nepal and China. During Prime Minister K. P. Sharma Oli's visit to China, 10 key agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were signed, covering diverse areas

such as transit, trade, connectivity, infrastructure, energy, banKing, and education.

While some agreements, particularly those on transit through China and rail-road connectivity, have been celebrated as historic, their implementation appears to lean more toward symbolic gestures than substantive commitments (Muni, 2016). For instance, the Transit Transport Agreement (TTA) enables Nepal to access Chinese seaports like Tianjin, allowing Nepali goods to transit via multiple modes, including rail and road, with China also permitting the use of six key checkpoints Rasuwa, Tatopani, Korala, Kimathanka, Yari, and Olangchung Gola (Acharya, 2018).

These arrangements signal a strategic attempt by Nepal to diversify its transit options and reduce its dependence on India, albeit with practical challenges to full realization. This, in principle, breaks Nepal’s complete dependence on India for all its imports. The viability of this option may however be debated as Tianjin is located at a distance of 3,000 km from Nepal, as against 1,000 km from the Haldia port in India being currently used by Nepal (Muni, 2016).

Nepal's northern infrastructure to connect with the proposed Tianjin transit facility remains underdeveloped, requiring significant investment and effort to achieve operational capacity. While the facility could provide an

alternative during a complete blockade of Indian transit routes, transporting essential and perishable goods such as foodstuffs and petroleum via this route would incur high costs in both time and money.

Compared to the southern corridor, which offers multiple transit options, the northern trading routes present notable limitations. For instance, although the Lanzhou-Kyirong-Kathmandu (LKM) route is faster than the Shanghai-Kolkata-Birgunj route, it primarily connects Nepalese traders to western China’s industrial zones. This is less advantageous for Nepal, as most of its imports come from China’s southeastern industrial cities (N Nayak, 2018).These infrastructural and logistical challenges underscore the complexities of reducing dependence on India while balancing strategic and economic considerations in diversifying trade routes.

The proposal for rail connectivity between Nepal and China, initially accepted in 2008 with promises of completion by 2013, has faced significant delays, reflecting the complex logistical and technical challenges involved. Under the current Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), China's commitments are limited to feasibility studies and technical support, with no definitive timeline for project completion.

The joint statement from Prime Minister Oli’s visit merely expressed intentions to exchange ideas and proposals for constructing cross-border railways "as soon as possible" (Muni,

2016). The project involves scaling mountains as high as 6,000 meters, requiring extensive tunneling or winding tracks, which demands substantial financial, temporal, and engineering investments.

Meanwhile, India’s engagement with Nepal is often shaped by its selective alignment with political leaders, media, and parties it deems favorable. This has contributed to a perception in Nepal that deals with India are often inequitable and disadvantageous. In recent years, the reluctance of Nepali Prime Ministers to sign major agreements with India, fearing domestic opposition and political criticism, underscores the fragile and cautious dynamics of Nepal-India relations (Bhattarai, 2017). These developments highlight Nepal's strategic balancing act between its two powerful neighbors, constrained by domestic political sensitivities and external pressures.

Amid historically complex Nepal-India relations, China has emerged as a significant ally for Nepal, particularly following the border blockade of 2015, which intensified anti-Indian sentiments and opened pathways for increased Chinese influence. Nepal and China have agreed to implement the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), focusing on enhancing connectivity through ports, roads, railways, aviation, and

communications within the framework of the Trans-Himalayan Multi-Dimensional Connectivity Network (Segdel, 2018).

The blockade catalyzed China's deeper engagement in Nepal, evident not only in trade, investment, and security but also in shaping favorable public opinion. Unlike India, China has demonstrated a non-selective approach by engaging with Nepal irrespective of the party or leader in power, further solidifying its influence (Bhattarai, 2017). For instance, during CPN-UML Chairman K. P. Sharma Oli's government, Nepal signed a landmark Trade and Transit Agreement with China, challenging India's traditional dominance. Subsequent governments, including that of Pushpa Kamal Dahal, have continued to advance China-Nepal relations, signing accords such as the Belt and Road Initiative framework agreement. These developments underscore China's strategic inroads into Nepal, leveraging infrastructure diplomacy and consistent political engagement to strengthen bilateral ties.

Nepal's strategic positioning between India and China has intensified competition between the two neighbors across various sectors, with significant implications for Nepal's foreign policy. For instance, Nepal awarded the 1,200 MW Budhi Gandaki Hydroelectric Project to a Chinese firm, showcasing China's growing influence in Nepal's infrastructure and energy sectors. Connectivity is another critical domain, as China plans

to extend its railway to Lumbini, directly competing with India’s traditional dominance in Nepal. In the military sphere, India remains Nepal’s largest supplier of military hardware and provides extensive training and literatures for Nepal Army personnel.

However, China is challenging this dynamic by increasing its hardware and budgetary support and initiating joint military drills with Nepal, marKing a significant shift in bilateral military relations. Similarly, in trade and transit, China has offered alternative routes to the historically dominant Kolkata port, diversifying Nepal’s access to international markets.

As both India and China press for the prioritization of specific development, hydropower, and connectivity projects, Nepal faces growing challenges in maintaining a balanced foreign policy. The worsening relations between India and China further complicate Nepal’s position, as it must navigate competing pressures from its two most influential development partners while safeguarding its sovereignty and strategic autonomy.

In conclusion, there has been the significant shift in Nepal's foreign policy dynamics, particularly in response to India's support for the Madhes agitation and the subsequent imposition of a border sanction in 2015. This led to a deepening of Nepal's engagement with China, driven by the domestic

objective of reducing dependence on India and seeking alternative avenues for trade and transit.

The prolonged shortages of essential goods due to the border sanction generated strong anti-India sentiments among Nepalese and compelled the Oli government to explore alternative transit routes, culminating in the finalization of the Protocol of Transit Transport Agreement with China. This agreement, while symbolically significant, raised questions about its practical implications given the logistical challenges and distance involved in using Chinese ports compared to Indian ports.

Furthermore, the burgeoning Nepal-China relationship is evidenced by various agreements and memoranda of understanding signed during Prime Minister Oli's visit to China, although some of these agreements may be more symbolic than substantive in terms of actual delivery. The emergence of China as a significant ally for Nepal, particularly in infrastructure development and connectivity projects, has challenged India's traditional influence in the region. This competition between India and China in areas such as trade, military cooperation, and connectivity projects poses a foreign policy challenge for Nepal as it seeks to balance its relations between the two Asian giants.

Overall, the border sanction in 2015 contributed to anti-Indian sentiment in Nepal and provided an opportunity for China to substantially increase its influence in the country. As India-China relations continue to fluctuate, Nepal faces the

challenge of maintaining a balanced relationship between its two major development partners.

CHAPTER XII

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON INDIA'S UNOFFICIAL SANCTIONS

This chapter interprets India's actions using various theoretical frameworks, providing a deeper understanding of the diplomatic and geopolitical implications.

12.1 The Sanction as a Reflection of Colonial Hangover

'India's unofficial sanction against Nepal is a relic of colonialism. When India was freed from the British Empire in 1947, it was hoped that the new country would bring economic stability, border security, and a model of democratic administration to countries in the area that were suffering from harsh internal regimes" (Aryal, 2017).

When India mimicked and sustained the methods of its colonial masters, the opposite consequence occurred. India has attempted to build structures to exploit the resources of neighbouring countries by inciting internal conflicts and destabilizing those countries, feeding authoritarian regimes for its own benefit, and taking advantage of newly independent countries' weak or non-existent democratic institutions. After being emancipated, the oppressed have sought to become new oppressors.

Aryal (2019) argues that sanctions are often driven by power politics, aimed at influencing the target country's policies. While most sanctions are part of international diplomacy, some are specific to certain countries or regions.

Sanctions typically cause hardships for the target country and deprive its citizens of essential needs. It is observed that countries once oppressed during colonial times are now becoming oppressors themselves".

"Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister envisioned a spiritual and territorial unity with the Himalayas, seeing them as India's northern border. In 1963, during a border dispute with China, he cited Hindu scriptures to assert this claim. Nehru and his home minister, Sardar Patel, harbored expansionist aims towards Nepal, driven by historical ties and modern needs, such as Himalayan water resources" (Aryal, 2017).

India sought to maintain its market dominance in Nepal and used cultural and ideological bonds to exert influence, similar to British colonial strategies. This modern form of colonialism, involving cultural and economic control, continues to impact South Asian nations today" (Aryal, 2017).

Altbach (1975, p. 237) says that "neo-colonialism is partially a deliberate tactic of industrialized countries to retain their hegemony in poor countries, but it is also a continuation of historical behaviours." Fanon (1963) argues claims that

“colonized people have been told to believe in their own inferiority and to appreciate and mimic the conquering nation's culture and practices.

Every colonial people, in other words, every people in whose souls an inferiority feeling has been formed by the death and burial of their local cultural originality, comes face to face with the civilizing nation's language; that is, with the mother country's culture. In proportion to his embrace of the mother country's cultural values, the colonized is raised above his jungle position” (as cited in Miller, 2014).

Former colonial powers' systems, according to Fanon (1963), “continue to persist in post-colonial countries. Neo-colonialism refers to the process through which colonizing powers relinquish political control and dominance but continue to exert economic and social influence over a former colony. One way for this to happen is for the formerly colonized people to imitate the colonizer” (as cited in Miller, 2014).

“One of the challenges facing newly independent countries is that they continue to admire and copy the habits of the previous colonial power since, in the minds of formerly colonized people, that nation still symbolizes the pinnacle of learning, science, culture, and economic might. Years of persecution and servitude leave an indelible impression on a people group, even after colonialism is officially ended. They've

been told for years that they're inferior to the superior, civilizing colonial authority, and those erroneous beliefs are hard to shake. As a result, people continue to copy the former conquering power's culture" (as cited in Miller, 2014, p. 3).

Fanon (1963) states that "when a colonial power realizes it can no longer maintain direct control, it shifts focus to instilling its culture and values in the country's new leaders and educated elites. The primary aim is to teach these rising leaders to adopt the colonizer's ideals. To be accepted into the colonial system, colonized natives must stop questioning the colonizer's structures and adopt the colonialist bourgeoisie's ways of thinking. This process creates an elite group of locals who emulate the colonial power's practices and cease to challenge the existing system" (Fanon, 1963).

According to postcolonial theory, "the colonized world's feeling of inferiority leads to copying of the colonizer's culture in order to overcome colonialism" (Fanon, 1963 as cited in Aryal, 2019). As a result, the colonized world starts acting like a colonizer. India was colonized by Britain for more than 200 years. Regarding the behaviour of the colonized after declaration of independence.

Freire (2018) writes that "in seeking independence, the colonized reclaim their power and restore the oppressors' lost humanity. Growing economies often emulate the colonizer's

tactics to achieve similar status. The colonized aspire to own the colonizer's power and possessions, equating existence with possession rather than merely resembling the oppressor's experience at a specific point.”

“Postcolonial discourse demonstrates how colonialism's legacy lives on in the social, political, and cultural features of colonized governments even after their political independence. Furthermore, it depicts invaders' psychic recreation by colonized people, as Fanon (1963)

Colonialism is extremely hazardous and continues implicitly in modern states through postcolonial dynamics. It dominates natives not only militarily but also by imposing a sense of inferiority, aiding colonial hegemony. By denying native languages and cultures, colonizers risked creating psychological colonization, reinforcing the colonizers' superior attitude. According to Freire, colonialism dehumanized the colonized to the extent that they could not see themselves as independent and rational individuals.

Similarly, Said (1978) states that “western colonists established a binary opposition between colonizer and colonized in polar opposites-colonizers as civilized, logical, progressive, and standard, and colonized as barbaric, irrational, traditional, and uncivilized people” (as cited in Aryal, 2019).

“Colonial representation was so pervasive that the colonized began adopting the colonizers' prejudices, believing they must emulate the colonizers to be dignified. This mimicry weakened the colonized by isolating them and creating divisions. Government bureaucracy further manipulated individuals by pretending to help them while actually using oppressive methods and cultural actions to maintain control.

By promoting select leaders rather than the entire group, colonizers portrayed themselves as saviors, aiming to maintain their dominance and the status quo” (Freire, 2018 as cited in J. Aryal, 2019).

Linking this to the 2015 sanction, the Indian government, like its old colonizer, uses unsatisfied and marginalized groups in the southern half of the country to institutionalize the reforms they propose. India was accused of using the leaders and supporters of Madhes-based parties to raise voices against the government and impede supplies to Nepal.

“When the British left India in 1947, they left behind both infrastructure and a culture of exploiting the weak. Indians, influenced by colonialism, began to see themselves as superior and powerful, justifying their interventions in Nepal by emulating British methods. As a vulnerable country, Nepal has faced many interventions from India, which seeks to imitate

Britain to distance itself from its own history of oppression" (Perkovich, 2003 as cited in Aryal, 2019).

The perspectives of the colonized and the enslaved those who have historically been seen as other have argued the topic of acknowledgment as one that is crucial to politics. Based on the colonized and slave perspective Fanon (1963) argues that "the politics of recognition's dialectic must be regarded in a new light. The problem with Hegel's recognition dialectic is that the master wants work from the slave rather than acknowledgment, but the slave wants to be free of oppression. As a result of this feeling of inferiority, invaders' culture is imitated."

Regarding the behaviour of the colonized after declaration of independence (Freire, 2018) writes that "in their quest for freedom, the colonized stripped the colonizers of their capacity to rule and suppress, restoring the oppressors' humanity that had been lost in the process of tyranny. As a result, the oppressed of yesterday have become the oppressors of today" (as cited in Aryal, 2019).

After the constituent assembly election in 2008, when India's direct political engagement in Nepal became unnecessary, India started bullying Nepal in order to secure its own interests over hydropower energy, development projects, business, and trade. India continued to tell Nepal what it should

and should not do (Ojha, 2015). With a view to Nepal's constitution-making process, India officially emphasized its desire to see the country becoming a peaceful, stable, developed, and democratic state (GOI, 2015d).

India's interference in the constitutional debate had the declared aim of encouraging the major parties to increase the document's legitimacy (ICG, 2016). The way that the India interpreted the constitution of Nepal as a non-inclusive and discriminatory constitution devalued Nepal's long decade journey of making constitution by its people. Indian views on the constitution of Nepal can be seen from the neo-colonization perspective.

The proposed amendments in the constitution can also be analysed through 'binary opposition relation' between colonized and colonizers as discussed by (Said, 1978 as cited in Aryal, 2019). Said says that this kind of biased representation was further institutionalized and disseminated in such a way that ultimately the colonized themselves start to accept these stereotypes created by the colonizers. However, Fanon (1963) says that the colonized world's feeling of inferiority leads to the imitation of the culture of the colonizer.

India has found the constitution of Nepal non-inclusive and a list sent for amending the constitutional provisions (Roy,

2015) to end the trouble at the border are some of the examples that India behaved Nepal as junior partner and trouble maker. There was a common understating among most of the respondents that India wants Nepal to use the same lens to see the other countries. Freire (2018) explains that colonizers do not see colonized as rational and independent actor, there is a perception that India does not see Nepal capable enough to cope the complex foreign relation of 21st century though India was never a colonizer (Aryal, 2019).

Karki and Hari (2020, pp. 95-96) argues that “Indian hegemony in Nepal’s internal politics, unequal treaties, territorial encroachment, border military activities, and control over natural resources suggest a form of neo-colonialism. India, once colonized, now exerts dominance over Nepal through economic and military power to maintain political control. This challenges the narrative of Nepal’s sovereignty over its political system, economy, and resources”.

A country that was never colonized can still become a neo-colony, being theoretically independent but economically and politically controlled by an external power. A neo-colony is coerced into economic transactions with the imperialist power, losing the freedom to trade internationally. Remnants of colonialism persist long after independence, as post-colonial

studies show that colonial influences remain in many former colonies (Karki & Hari, 2020).

The big brother ideology justifies dominance under the guise of protection, undermining the sovereignty of smaller nations. India's attempt to rebrand itself as Nepal's "adult brother" instead of "big brother" is seen as a superficial change that does not alter its dominance ambitions. This ideology, used to justify control, views neighboring countries as dependent rather than sovereign, influencing various aspects of society (Aryal, 2017).

India’s unofficial sanction aimed to prevent Nepal from adopting its new constitution, which disregarded Indian concerns and proposals. India underestimated Nepal’s ability to draft a democratic constitution and overestimated the political situation in Nepal. Despite legitimate issues in the constitution, it represents a significant step in Nepal’s constitutional history. India’s reaction overlooked its own history of constitutional revisions and failed to appreciate Nepal’s progress.

Economic sanctions, historically and conceptually, are used to punish and deter wrongdoing, similar to imprisonment. They aim to penalize the offender, define unacceptable behaviour, and establish international standards of legitimate conduct, rather than rehabilitating the wrongdoer (Leyton Brown, 2017).

India imposed an unofficial sanction on Nepal after the latter promulgated its new constitution despite Indian recommendations for amendments to address Madhes demands. This action led to severe humanitarian crises and reflects India's attempt to punish Nepal for defying its influence.

12.2 Indian Sanction on Nepal and Democratic Peace Theory

Nepal and India are two democracies with much in common in terms of political systems. Despite sharing a governmental structure and other features, bilateral ties are rarely comfortable. Researchers have postulated and actually demonstrated that two democracies do not go to war. There is something about democratic states' internal composition that prevents them from attacking one another (Maoz & Russett, 1993). If that's the case, why did India impose an unofficial sanction against Nepal? Was India's sanction of Nepal just another act of aggression? Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli slammed India for the unofficial sanction, saying that the closure of vital Indian border posts is more inhumane than war (TOI, 2015).

With no prospect of reconciliation in sight, the sanction has resulted in a tremendous humanitarian crisis, with severe shortages of fuel, medications, and other supplies across Nepal (Ojha, 2015). What compelled India to impose sanctions on

Nepal? Why has India refused to acknowledge Nepal's democracy, as stipulated in the new constitution? During the sanction period, why did India explain its own concept of democracy? The researcher discovered that the answers to these questions must be investigated in order to comprehend the reasons for Indian sanctions against Nepal. This section examines the reasons for India's sanctions against Nepal using the analytical framework of democratic peace theory

Kant (1915) "maintained that democracies are peaceful by nature since the people' agreement is required to determine whether there would be war or not, and nothing is more natural than that they should weigh the matter carefully before embarking on such a dreadful affair."

"The founders of the democratic peace theory argue that democracies rarely fight and never go to war with other democracies, based on this liberal peace worldview. The universal standards for conflict resolution and generally accepted beliefs, as well as the structural constraints placed on both institutions and elected leaders, are major domestic variables that contribute to democratic peace. According to theories, the high degree of trade between democracies creates disincentives for trading partners to engage in conflict, which is bad for business" (Cox & Drury,
2006,).

“These effects of a liberalized policy (and economy) result in more peaceful interactions between democracies, but this effect fades if one of the countries is not democratic. Furthermore, when democracies have a disagreement with one another, they are more likely to seek a peaceful solution than if a non-democratic country is involved” (Dixon, 1994 as cited in Cox & Drury, 2006).

However, there is evidence that imply the opposite (Forsythe, 1992) claims that in the 1980s, the US engaged in covert conflict with a number of fledgling Latin American democracies (as cited in Cox & Drury, 2006) Similar to this argument, James and Mitchell (1995) argue that democracies use covet actions against other democracies, often much weaker and more susceptible to such force.

Cox and Drury (2006) suggest that "implications of the democratic peace literature have extended, at least in part, to other forms of hostility. Those factors which make the democracies peaceful towards each other should also make most relations cordial. The democratic dyads tend to resolve their disputes rapidly then non democratic dyads alone suggest that democracies will be less likely to resort the economic coercion."

Daase (2006) outlines "three conditions influencing how democracies manage peace or conflict with non-democracies: institutional factors, shared political ideals and social values, and the formation of security communities. Democracies often

engage in economic conflicts rather than armed wars when disputes intensify, leveraging economic coercion in lieu of militarized disputes. Although democracies do sanction each other, they are less likely to do so due to shared values that reduce justifications for penalties. The rise in trade linkages between democracies increases the cost of punitive measures, making economic sanctions more complex and costly."

Cox and Drury (2006) argues that “while democracies are less inclined to sanction each other, they are much more likely to use economic sanctions. Democracies have an incentive to put pressure on other countries to democratize and improve their human rights records. They may have an incentive to utilize sanctions as a sort of trade protection at home. Democracies are compelled to deploy economic coercion as a result of these incentives.”

“The nature of the political regime and system of governance, geopolitical position, level of dependency, relative military power and military ties, as well as public opinion in each country and between democracies, can all be possible sources of conflict between democracies. The preferences of both the public and democratic leaders play a role in inter-democracy conflicts” (Dahal, 2018).

Kaempfer and Lorwenberg (2007) states although democracies tend not to use economic sanction against each

other; they are very frequent against users of sanction. The first reason this high frequency exists is the rent that sanction can provide to domestic groups (as cited in Cox & Drury, 2006).

"While delivering rents is appealing to any regime, democracies have distinct incentives to obtain them through penalty. Another reason democracy use punishment so frequently is that they are peaceful. When a democratic public becomes aware of an international disagreement, it appears that they are more likely to favour peaceful sanctions than armed force. The fundamental policy conclusion of democratic peace, which states that extending democracy will make the world peaceful, adds to the assumption that democracies will sanction more often" (Cox & Drury, 2006).

The argument that democracies are inherently peaceful is flawed, since there are instances that they have frequently waged wars against non-democracies. Critiquing on the theory of democratic peace, (Müller, 2004) advance their arguments that the democratic peace theory has many arguments but little explanation, whereas some democracies have separate definition of democracy at home vis à vis abroad, and the same principles and values enjoyed and practiced domestically are not acceptable to them while discussing democracy abroad (Dahal, 2018). These are instances of conflict of values which can extend to the areas of security, development, and human rights signifying the elements of pillar 1 in (Sandole, 2010) conflict

analysis. Conflict between states comes under the areas of his pillar 2 as an international phenomenon where the actors can apply either confrontational or collaborative means for conflict intervention as listed in pillar 3 (as cited in Dahal, 2018).

Conflict between states is part of international relations, and although it is argued that democracies have options for negotiation in deep-rooted conflict, such is not always the case, since powerful states driven by the realist theory of international relations often prefer suppression of conflict.

In an ideal situation, the actors in conflict engage in negotiation to produce win/win situations since they focus on the problems instead of the individual (Fisher et al., 2011 as cited in Dahal, 2018). Geis et al. (2006) argue that democracies engage in democratic war under certain circumstances (as cited in Dahal, 2018). This precisely leads to Christopher Daase (2006) critical argument that "democratic peace and democratic are mutually constitutive."

Dahal (2018) argues that democracies can still engage in conflict and He criticizes India for denying the imposition of sanctions on Nepal, despite the evident humanitarian crisis caused by these sanctions. He also highlights how power dynamics in the international system often treat non-democracies as inferior, even though India is a democratic state.

Construction of such a discourse is instrumental for a democracy to wage a war against a non-democracy. Such practice of imaging of the others allows the aggressor to delegitimize the enemy, a reason to use hard power and garner public support at home (Geis, 2006).

India's definition of democracy requires that a democratic process must be acceptable to all members, including marginalized communities, and that any new constitution should achieve full consensus within the Constituent Assembly. Since Nepal's constitution did not meet these criteria, India threatened to impose sanctions.

> *In this context, we urge continuing flexibility on the part of all the political forces so that any outstanding issues are addressed through dialogue and widest possible agreement, in an atmosphere free from violence. A Constitution, which is fully owned by and accommodates the aspirations of all regions and sections of the Nepalese society, wil lay a durable foundation for a peaceful and prosperous Nepal will become the focal point lor Nepal's bright future (GOI, 2015b).*

India's criticism of Nepal's constitution and democratic process is contested, particularly regarding its insistence on consensus and inclusiveness. India argues that Nepal's political process

lacks these democratic elements, labeling it non-democratic and justifying potential intervention.

This perspective aligns with the broader view that democracies may engage in war or preventive measures against non-democracies to protect their interests. India's Ministry of External Affairs expressed concerns about violence in Nepal and its potential impact on security, reflecting its position on Nepal's political and security issues.

The series of statements issued from the Ministry of External Affairs continues, full of threats and intimidation against Nepal. The statement of September 20, 2015, continues

> *We are concerned that the situation in several parts of the country bordering India continues to be violent. Our Ambassador in Kathmandu has spoken to the Prime Minister of Nepal in this regard. We urge that runs on which there are differences should be feed through dialogue in an atmosphere free from violence and intimidation, and institutionalized in a manner that would enable bead based ownership and acceptance (GOI, 2015d)*

The statement of September 21, 2015, issued by the government of India further asserts:

> *We are deeply concerned over the incidents of violence resulting in death and injury in regions of Nepal bordering India following the promulgation of Constitution yesterday. Our freight companies and transporters have also voiced complaints about the difficulties they are facing in movement within Nepal and their security concerns due to the prevailing unrest We had repeatedly cautioned the political leadership of Nepal to take urgent steps to defuse the tension in these regions. This, if done in a timely manner, could have avoided these serious developments (GOI, 2015c)*

India's imposition of a sanction on Nepal, despite the latter's recent humanitarian crisis from a major earthquake, highlights a contradictory stance. India's statements, which express sympathy while enforcing sanctions, suggest a master-slave dynamic, where India positions itself as obligated to oversee Nepal's well-being while also punishing it for non-compliance. This approach reflects a self-serving interest rather than genuine responsibility, using democracy as a pretext to maintain influence over Nepal. Despite denying sanctions, evidence points to India leveraging its version of democracy to assert control.

Nowhere else in the world has democracy required a hundred present approvals to adopt the country's constitution and laws? Certain arguments regarding topics may arise, which

may be resolved through negotiation. However, behind the unofficial punishment on Nepal, there is a hidden and secret Indian objective.

It attempted to modify Nepal's constitution in order to encourage the governing class in Kathmandu to take control of the country's southern region. International players are not seen as peace promoters by the power dynamic of the international system; rather, they are always lobbying to serve national interests. Indian unofficial sanction is from the perspective of safeguarding India's national interests through distorting Nepal's constitution.

In conclusion, the analysis of India's unofficial sanction against Nepal reveals complex dynamics at play between two democratic nations. While democratic peace theory suggests that democracies rarely engage in conflict with one another, the reality is more nuanced. Democracies may resort to economic coercion, such as sanctions, when their security interests are perceived to be threatened by non-democratic states. India's imposition of sanctions on Nepal, despite its denial of such actions, raises questions about its adherence to democratic principles and its true motivations.

The series of statements issued by India's Ministry of External Affairs prior to imposing sanctions underscores its concerns about the situation in Nepal, particularly in bordering regions. However, the imposition of sanctions in response to the

promulgation of Nepal's new constitution suggests a deeper agenda aimed at influencing Nepal's political landscape, particularly in its southern region.

India's portrayal of itself as a protector and ally of Nepal, obligated to support it in times of adversity, echoes colonial dynamics and raises questions about the true nature of their relationship. Despite India's claims of promoting democracy and peace, its actions suggest a pursuit of national interests through the manipulation of Nepal's internal affairs.

Ultimately, the unofficial sanction imposed by India serves as a reminder of the complexities inherent in international relations, where states prioritize their own interests even at the expense of democratic norms and principles. As Nepal grapples with the repercussions of India's actions, it underscores the need for a deeper understanding of power dynamics and the role of democratic states in shaping global politics.

12.3 Indian Sanction as an Ethnic Intervention

India evidently interfered in the Madhes agitation by placing unofficial sanctions on Nepal. Throughout the sanction time, it held steady in support of Madhesis' demands, making a series of comments in support of Madhes agitation. This conduct by India raises a few issues, such as why India intervened in Nepal's ethnic strife, notably in the Madhes movement. What

circumstances prompted India to utilize the Madhes Card to alter Nepal's constitution? These questions must be answered in order to comprehend the reasons behind India's unofficial censure against Nepal. The Indian engagement in the Madhes movement will be examined in this section in the context of ethnic intervention in international affairs.

Carment and James (2000) define Economic or political intervention by one sovereign state in the internal affairs of another for the purported goal of benefiting an ethnic group existing in that state is known as ethnic intervention. Rather than resolving internal issues, third-party engagement typically results in meddling, which prolongs and even intensifies such confrontations. Indeed, high-profile and catastrophic interventions by foreign powers have distinguished many of the most persistent civil wars in recent decades.

Many ethnic wars have a mix of domestic and foreign players, which is one of their most striKing characteristics. Despite the fact that ethnic wars take place within the borders of existing governments, the parties involved are not only domestic. International organizations, neighboring nations, regional and world powers all have their own interests in certain conflicts due to the danger to international security and stability (Anaemene, 2018). Ethnic conflicts, according to the author, produce zones of instability and insecurity that are beyond the

reach of law enforcement authorities; they are also a "playing ground for common criminals" and are increasingly becoming operational bases for terrorists with a worldwide goal. Ethnic conflict's pervasiveness, as well as the way it influences present interstate behaviour, can no longer be overlooked. Ethnic conflicts provide a variety of foreign policy and interstate cooperation issues for various countries (Carment, 1993).

Ethnic conflicts create harmful side effects (or, in the language of economics, “negative externalities) in the form of regional security dilemmas that neighbouring states attempt to resolve through intervention (D Carment & P James, 2004). The authors suggest that ethnic disputes create "cleavages" that external actors might exploit to obtain access to valuable resources and boost their security (p. 19). The two broad schools of thought exist on ethno politics in general and the domestic determinants of ethnic interventionism in particular: affective versus instrumental (D Carment & P James, 2004).

According to Instrumentalist, leaders interfere in ethnic battles, to get access to valuable resources or to generate distraction or "rally around the flag" effects when they face loss at home. One theory is that ethnic conflict weakens state systems, allowing foreign players to intervene in order to gain resources or influence the outcome of the war to their benefit.

Ethnic allegiances between one state and a beleaguered community in another, according to the effective school of thinking, will urge intervention. While such inclinations exist, actual evidence shows that cross-border ethnic links do not necessarily "bind"-in some circumstances, these linkages motivate third-party action, but not in others

External involvement, according to instrumentalists, is neither a direct result nor a by-product of centuries of enmity. Instead, the focus is on the advantages that leaders who participate in ethnic interventionism have. “However, in recent years, researchers have questioned the use of the difference between instrumental and emotional elements, claiming that these categories are ambiguous and misleading. Some have argued that qualities that appear to be emotive, such as race and language, may be instrumentalized as tools for political ambition or economic gain. As a result, ethnic identity might be exploited as a basis for collective action and, eventually, monetary benefits by a third state” (Paquin & Saideman, 2017).

Researchers are increasingly regarding ethnic ties argument as a central motive for third state intervention in ethnic conflicts. Saideman (2001) argues, “states support the side of an ethnic conflict that shares ethnic ties with leaders’ constituents. Hence, when an ethnic or secessionist conflict

emerges abroad, third states would support actors with which they share an ethnic kinship.”

David Carment and Patrick James (2004) argue that “ethnic relationships are formed as a result of widespread cross-border ideas of a common past and future. Cross-border ethnic linkages are shaped by shared grievances, language, customs, religion, values, racial-cultural affinities, and humanitarian concerns. Due to the intensity of these links, conflicts impacting a group's co-ethnics may be interpreted to encompass the group itself. Intervening on behalf of the group's co-ethnics in distress might thus be a good method to obtain political support from this group”.

The effective school of thinking of ethnic intervention might be used to interpret India's unofficial sanction. India implemented an unofficial sanction in reaction to the Madhes agitation. The Nepalese border in the south is intricately related to India's concerns about its neighbors. Historically, India has supported the Madhesis, a major ethnic group in Nepal's Terai region.

The Madhesis have strong links to individuals from neighbouring Indian states in terms of family, culture, and ethnicity. In terms of family, culture, and ethnicity, the Madhesis have close ties to people from adjacent Indian states. “Perceived bias against the Madhesi is an essential component of the constitution-drafting process from an Indian perspective,

and it also resonates with those Indians who consider this as discrimination against their own blood" (Majumder, 2015).

"The stated reason for India's discontent is that Nepal's constitution restricts the rights of Madhesis living near India's border, many of whom have strong familial ties to Indians. India considers the new constitution to be detrimental to the Madhesi people's interests" (RSTV, 2015). "India has always advocated for the Madhesi people, and was present during the 2008 accord between the Nepalese government and Madhesi parties" (Jaiswal, 2015) Its goal was to find political solutions to the most pressing Madhesi issues.

On the same day that Nepal celebrated the approval of its new constitution, India made a brief mention of it and expressed concern about border tensions. India was alluding to current protests by Madhesis who think the constitution fails to address their concerns (Ojha, 2015).

"India addressed Madhesi leaders in Nepal for two reasons. To begin with, India believes that Madhesis are loyal to the Indian government because of their social affinities. Second, India seeks to promote pro-Indian Madhesi leaders to executive positions so that they may be used to further its own objectives. Madhesi leaders, who are loyal to and supportive of the Indian government, have also asked for India's help in persuading the

Nepalese government to modify the constitution to address their concerns. This is a scenario of give and take" (Aryal, 2019).

The American researcher Fredrick H. Gaige projects "the importance of Madhes thus: it contains 87 per cent of forest resources and generates 75 per cent of land revenue, 93 per cent of excise duty and 70 per cent of customs duty. Madhes is the backbone of the national economy, containing more than 60 per cent of agricultural land and contributing over two thirds of the GDP" (Jaiswal, 2015).

Aryal (2019) states that:

> *"During a sanction, a hilly respondent stated he had gone to the Indian side of the border to acquire some food and other necessities. At the border, he was handled differently than Madhesi by India's border police team. He said that his suitcase was carefully inspected and that he was only permitted to bring a certain amount of sugar, salt, oil, and other items. He did say, though, that he observed Madhesi people crossing the border without being stopped. Non-Madhesi people were considered as disadvantaged, while Madhesi people were seen as affluent. As a result, India favored the Madhes area of Nepal, and it was seen that India attempted to isolate the Madhes from Nepal".*

India's approach during the sanctions exemplifies a strategic intervention where ethnic differentiation was leveraged to exert pressure on Nepal. By favoring the Madhesi population, India sought to (1) deepen ethnic tensions, (2) gain stronger influence in the Madhes region, and (3) challenge the central Nepali state's authority over its diverse ethnic groups. This reinforces the theory's argument that external interventions often exploit internal ethnic cleavages to advance geopolitical interests. This aligns with the ethnic intervention perspective, wherein an external power (India) manipulates ethnic divisions to weaken national cohesion and enhance its influence over a specific group.

During the Madhes movement in 2008, India served as a mediator. The then-Indian Ambassador to Nepal, Shiva Shankar Mukherjee, was instrumental in bringing then-Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala and the Madhes-based parties to an accord. At the time, India's role was seen as that of an external guarantor. Throughout the preparation of the Constitution, from 2009 to 2015, India consistently supported the demands of Madhes-based parties (Bhattarai, 2019). Madhesis have deep ties to populations on the other side of the border, therefore the political and security situation in Nepal has ramifications at home. It's also worth noting that elections in the huge Indian

state of Bihar were taking place, which were critical for Modi's BJP.

“Indians are apprehensive that political upheaval in Nepal's southern plains would have an impact on Bihar's election. The uncontrolled, open border between India and Nepal is a huge security problem for both countries. Cross-border crime, smuggling, false money, and unwanted people infiltrating India, including potential terrorists, are all important security concerns. Nepal is also concerned about the smuggling of small guns into the country from India” (Gupta, 2010).

“Apart from the emotional link, anger and unrest among Madhesi people have an obvious security dimension for India: due to its proximity to India's two most densely populated states, it is concerned about the spill over consequences of ongoing protests in Nepal's Terai area” (P. Bhattarai, 2018). India interpreted the new constitution as detrimental to the interests of the Madhesi population (RSTV, 2015).

“The 2008 agreement between the Government of Nepal and Madhesi parties, which focused on finding political solutions to urgent Madhesi issues, was witnessed by India, which has long been pro-active on behalf of the Madhesi community” (P. Bhattarai, 2018). The Indian apprehension about the current events in Nepal was that the Nepalese

government was unable to take any step to address the Madhes concerns. Nepal turned down India's plea to postpone the adoption of the constitution in order to solve the concerns in the southern plains.

India's involvement in Nepal's Madhes movement and constitutional process reflects a strategic intervention driven by both political and security considerations. India's role as a mediator in the 2008 Madhes movement and its continued support for Madhes-based parties during the constitution-drafting period from 2009 to 2015 indicate its vested interest in shaping Nepal's internal ethnic politics.

The deep cross-border ties between Madhesis and Indian populations, particularly in Bihar, created a dual motive for India-ensuring stability in Nepal's Terai to prevent unrest from spilling over and securing electoral gains for the BJP in Bihar. Additionally, India viewed the new Nepali Constitution as disadvantageous to Madhesi interests, reinforcing its proactive stance on behalf of the Madhesi community. Security concerns, including cross-border crime, smuggling, and potential threats of infiltration, further justified India's interventionist approach.

By acting as an external guarantor and pressuring Nepal to delay the constitution's adoption, India sought to align Nepal's policies with its strategic interests while amplifying Madhesi grievances to exert influence over Nepal's domestic affairs. This

asserts that external actors manipulate ethnic divisions for geopolitical leverage, using ethnic ties as both a justification for intervention and a means to maintain regional dominance.

What constitutes Madhes and who are the Madhesis? The answer to these questions continues to be an area of contention-hotly debated by politicians, academics, journalists and civil society with little agreement. Two debates surround the matter. The first one revolves around the terms 'Terai' as opposed to 'Madhes'. The second point of contention, by extension, is the regional versus cultural definition who is termed a Madhesi. Several notions of what the Terai encompasses have been put forth by different groups in Nepal, including radical opinions which deny the existence of a Madhes altogether (Singh, 2011).

Gaige maintains the close association of 'Terai' with colonial mentalities, which he referred to as the process of *Nepalisation* of *Madhes*.' Others argue that while Terai exists in the context of Nepal, the word is more generic than claimed (as cited in Singh, 2011).

There are two schools of thought on what it means to be Madhesi, according to the author. In its geographical portrayal, the first school sees Madhes as a regional unit. As a result, the people who live in this region are known as Madhesi or *Madhesiyas*. According to this viewpoint, the name Madhesi

refers to all non-*Pahadis*, including conventional castes such as *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaishya*, and *Dalits*, as well as indigenous *Janjati* ethnic groups, other local tribes, and Muslims. The sociological lens of identification is used to examine the second interpretation of Madhesi identity (Singh, 2011).

The Madhes area is described by Hachhethu (2007) as "a traditional homeland of tribal people and people of Indian descent." As a result, the second concept of Madhesis claims that 'people of Indian-origin' are the source of identity. Many Madhesis have had long-standing marriage links with communities residing on the other side of the open border. In this way, Madhesis have a lot in common with the people who reside beyond the Indian border in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in terms of lifestyle, dietary preferences, language, and culture.

This has occasionally generated questions about allegiance and identity among *Pahadis* in positions of power in Nepalese politics (Singh, 2011). The cultural and linguistic area that exists as a basis of identity among the people who live in the region is referred to as *Madhes*. Apart from the emotional link, unhappiness and unrest among Madhesi people have an obvious security dimension for India: due to its proximity to India's two most densely populated states, it is concerned about spill over consequences of on-going protests in Nepal's Terai area (Bhattarai, 2019).

“During the sanction, India remained steadfast on Madhes concerns, stating that Nepal was not serious about the Madhesi people's grievances. On December 31, 2015, Prime Minister Oli contacted his Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi. Oli mentioned the obstacles at Nepali-Indian border crossings during the 20-minute talk, and asked Modi to take steps to simplify the delivery of basic commodities across various border points. In response, Modi emphasized the importance of bringing the opposing parties into talks in order to reach a "*Sahamati*" (broad-based consensus) on the constitution. He also reiterated the same rhetoric, claiming that border restrictions were caused by Nepalese demonstrations and that the Indian government had no part in the supply suspension” (TKP, 2015c).

Following this invitation, Prime Minister Oli paid a 6-day State Visit to India from 19 to 24 February 2016. This visit was mainly focused on ending the sanction and improving the shaky relationships between India and Nepal that emerged after the promulgation of Ne-pal’s new constitution. During a joint press meeting Oli stated that his visit was aimed at bringing bilateral relations back on track.

In response, Indian Prime Minister Modi appreciated that Nepal’s constitution-making process is an important achievement Nepal has made in its democratic process (MOFA, 2016b). Yet, Modi once again conveyed to Oli that the new

constitution could only be successful after resolving contentious issues through consensus and dialogue in a time-bound manner. Modi also gave emphasis on the fact that a volatile situation in Nepal on constitution related issues would have a direct impact on India.

India’s deep interest in the construction of federal states in the Terai region and adequate representation of Madhesi people in different state organs was driven by the assumption that this would enable India to influence Nepal’s decision-making on issues around water resource management, foreign policy, security policy and many more (Dinesh Bhattarai, 2015). India has attempted to destabilize a Maoist-led government by bacKing a Madhesi insurrection and it is believed that if the Maoists ever get too aggressive, Madhesi factions can give us that influence with Kathmandu (Jaiswal, 2015).

In summary, India's unofficial sanctions on Nepal, particularly during the Madhes agitation, raise significant questions about India's motives and involvement in Nepal's internal affairs. Analyzing this issue through the lens of ethnic intervention in international relations reveals complex dynamics at play. Ethnic conflicts often draw external actors seeking to exploit ethnic ties for their own strategic interests. In the case of India's engagement with the Madhes movement, historical, cultural, and economic factors intertwine, shaping India's stance

towards Nepal's constitution and the Madhesi community. The concept of Madhesi identity itself is multifaceted, encompassing both regional and cultural dimensions, which further complicates the situation. India's intervention, characterized by support for the Madhesi cause, border restrictions, and diplomatic efforts, underscores its strategic interests in Nepal, particularly regarding water resources, security, and political stability. Ultimately, India's actions reflect its broader geopolitical ambitions and the complexities of its relationship with its neighbor, Nepal.

CHAPTER: XIII

FINDINGS DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

13.1 Findings and Discussion

- India's unofficial sanction on Nepal in 2015 serves as a striking example of "plausible deniability" in coercive diplomacy. By employing this strategy, India sought to achieve its strategic objectives while avoiding direct responsibility for the sanction. In diplomatic terms, plausible deniability refers to a method used by a powerful state to exert pressure or intervene in another state's affairs without openly acknowledging its actions, thus evading international criticism and accountability. During the blockade, India applied economic sanctions, a blockade, and political pressure on Nepal but refrained from admitting the true reasons behind its actions.
- The imposition of economic sanctions and trade restrictions, as demonstrated by the 2015 blockade of Nepal by India, serves as a powerful instrument of coercive diplomacy that not only disrupts the target state's economy but also intensifies internal political and ethnic tensions. This case illustrates how economic coercion can leverage humanitarian crises to influence political outcomes and assert dominance in regional geopolitics.

- The psychological coercion during the 2015 blockade imposed by India on Nepal effectively disrupted daily life and created a climate of fear, uncertainty, and insecurity. By restricting essential goods, India applied pressure on both the Nepalese government and the population, aiming to influence political decisions in line with its strategic interests. This coercive diplomacy was multifaceted, exploiting internal ethnic tensions and demonstrating India's regional power, thereby isolating Nepal politically and creating a sense of vulnerability to ensure compliance with its demands.
- India's use of diplomatic pressure in coercive diplomacy, exemplified by high-level meetings and formal demands to delay Nepal's constitution, aimed to influence Nepal's internal political decisions. However, the timing and nature of India's diplomatic interventions, occurring close to the promulgation, were seen as intrusive by Nepal's political actors. This misalignment between India's pressure and Nepal's internal political will not only failed to alter the course of Nepal’s constitutional process but also contributed to a significant strain in Nepal-India relations, exemplifying the limits of diplomatic coercion when the target state prioritizes sovereignty and internal consensus over external influence.

- The deployment of India's Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) during the 2015 blockade against Nepal illustrates the use of limited military force as a component of coercive diplomacy, intended to exert pressure on Nepal by restricting the flow of essential goods and demonstrating India's resolve to escalate if necessary.
- In the case of India and Nepal, India's historical interventions, economic ties, and security concerns form the foundation of its coercive leverage. The 2015 blockade exemplified India using its logistical and economic superiority to exert pressure on Nepal. However, backlash within Nepal and from international actors limited the long-term success of this coercive strategy.
- India's involvement in supporting political movements like the Madhesi protests, participation in Nepal's peace process, and influencing the country's constitution-making highlights India's ability to exert control over Nepal's internal political landscape. The use of coercive tactics, such as economic blockades, support for internal dissent, and diplomatic pressures, are evident in India's approach toward ensuring its regional interests are safeguarded. However, India's coercive diplomacy faced limitations as it led to growing dissatisfaction among the Nepali public and political actors, diminishing India's long-term influence and creating space for other powers, such as China, to establish trust with Nepal.

- In India's 2015 coercive diplomacy against Nepal, credibility was key to the blockade's impact. The blockade's immediate effects reinforced India's threats, but mixed messages and international criticism undermined its credibility. For coercive diplomacy to work, the coercer must balance credible threats with the ability to follow through, making the consequences real and imminent.
- India's coercive diplomacy during the 2015 blockade lacked credibility due to internal dissent and its failure to justify the intervention as necessary for promoting democratic inclusion in Nepal. The unofficial sanction, framed as a response to constitutional concerns in Nepal, was perceived as unnecessary interference, undermining India's legitimacy and damaging bilateral relations.
- In the context of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015, India's communication of demands was central to shaping the diplomatic dynamics surrounding the constitutional crisis. Through direct diplomatic engagements, media channels, and indirect support for internal unrest, India sought to pressure Nepal to amend its constitution in favor of Madhesi concerns. However, the use of both formal and indirect means, combined with ambiguous messaging, led to increased tensions, strained bilateral relations, and a rise in anti-India sentiment within Nepal.

- India's actions during the 2015 blockade can be understood through the lens of coercive diplomacy, where a state uses threats or limited force to compel another state to change its behaviour. India's resolve, demonstrated by the blockade, reflects a key component of coercive diplomacy: the need for the coercing state to signal a credible threat. India's actions were intended to influence Nepal's political process, particularly regarding the Madhesi community, by leveraging economic power and geographical proximity. However, the humanitarian crisis, international criticism, and Nepal's shift towards China reduced the effectiveness and credibility of India's coercive approach. This case illustrates that while resolve is critical in coercive diplomacy, it must be balanced with considerations of humanitarian impact and regional stability to maintain international support and diplomatic credibility.
- Effective coercive diplomacy requires clear communication and specific demands to avoid misinterpretation and enhance compliance. George (1991) emphasizes that ambiguity can hinder the effectiveness of coercion. In the case of India-Nepal relations, India's dissatisfaction with Nepal's constitution appears driven more by geopolitical interests than genuine concern for Madhesi rights, reflecting a realist view where national

interest and power dynamics take precedence in international politics.

- In case of coercive diplomacy is that a powerful state (India) can leverage multiple dimensions economic, diplomatic, political, and security to coerce a smaller neighboring state (Nepal) into aligning with its strategic interests. India's actions in 2015, including threats of economic blockade and political isolation, illustrate how coercive measures can be used to pressure Nepal to amend its constitution to address India's concerns, particularly regarding marginalized groups like the Madhesis. This reflects the broader assumption that coercive diplomacy seeks to create conditions where the targeted state faces significant consequences unless it complies with the demands of the coercing state.
- Effective coercive diplomacy involves the strategic use of bargaining leverage by the coercing state to negotiate outcomes favorable to its interests, while maintaining enough flexibility to reach mutually acceptable terms with the target state. In the context of India-Nepal relations, India used the unofficial economic sanctions as a form of leverage to pressure Nepal into amending its new constitution, particularly regarding the grievances of the Madhesi groups. Despite diplomatic engagement and high-level exchanges, India's coercive approach ultimately

failed to yield the desired amendments, highlighting the limitations of using coercive measures when diplomatic negotiations falter. This case reflects the complex interplay between coercion, negotiation, and diplomacy in international relations.

- In coercive diplomacy, bargaining often involves a series of incremental concessions where each side adjusts its position gradually to reach a compromise. Flexibility is essential, as coercive measures may transition from hardline tactics to more cooperative gestures to foster dialogue and resolution. In India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal, incremental concessions included easing the economic blockade, engaging in diplomatic talks, addressing humanitarian concerns, and eventually recognizing Nepal's constitutional amendments. These concessions helped shift the relationship from confrontation to renewed cooperation, illustrating the importance of adaptability in diplomatic bargaining.
- A successful exit strategy in coercive diplomacy ensures conflict de-escalation while allowing both parties to claim victory. In India's 2015 coercive diplomacy against Nepal, an exit strategy involved leveraging incremental concessions, such as restoring economic aid and easing border blockades, in exchange for Nepal's constitutional amendments that addressed India's concerns. This

facilitated a shift from confrontation to cooperation, highlighting the importance of balancing pressure with diplomatic engagement to achieve a resolution.

- In Alexander L. George's theory of coercive diplomacy, *escalation* refers to the gradual increase of pressure by a state to force the target state into compliance, using measures like sanctions or military threats. In the context of India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal in 2015, this involved India's initial diplomatic pressure, followed by an unofficial economic blockade to compel Nepal to address India's concerns over the constitution. The theory assumes that escalating the costs of non-compliance can drive the target state toward negotiation or capitulation.
- Termination in coercive diplomacy is the process of halting coercive tactics once the coercing state's primary objectives are met or when a mutually acceptable resolution is reached. Successful termination fosters improved bilateral relations and requires flexibility, clear success benchmarks, and responsiveness to changing geopolitical contexts. Coercive diplomacy is effectively terminated when the coercing state's primary goals are met, and a mutually acceptable resolution is achieved. The termination process in India's coercive diplomacy against Nepal during the 2015 blockade demonstrates that India's withdrawal of coercive measures occurred not only after

Nepal made partial constitutional amendments but also due to the realization of India's declining international image and Nepal's growing ties with China. Thus, coercion must cease when geopolitical dynamics shift and achieving goals through coercion becomes counterproductive.

- The success of coercive diplomacy depends on clear objectives, credible threats, proportional measures, and a mix of economic sanctions and incentives. However, sanctions often fail to achieve political change, as governments may adapt to economic pressure, with nondemocratic regimes being less vulnerable to sanctions compared to democratic ones. In the context of India's coercive diplomacy toward Nepal, particularly during the 2015 blockade, the effectiveness of economic sanctions and diplomatic pressure relied on clearly defined objectives and credible threats. While India succeeded in prompting partial constitutional amendments in Nepal-addressing concerns of the Madhesi groups-this outcome reflects the complex dynamics of coercion. The Nepali government’s compliance indicates a response to external pressure; however, the limitations of this coercive strategy are evident in ongoing tensions and unresolved issues, suggesting that sanctions may not effectively lead to lasting political change in Nepal.
- The rise of anti-Indian sentiment in Nepal is a direct consequence of India's coercive diplomacy, perceived as

interference in Nepal's internal affairs. Indian actions during critical political events, especially the Constitution-writing process, have been viewed as undermining national sovereignty, leading to increased mistrust and animosity. Nepalese politicians have leveraged this sentiment to bolster their power, resulting in a nationalist backlash that pushes Nepal closer to China. Consequently, India's coercive tactics have backfired, complicating bilateral relations and highlighting the risks of provoKing counterproductive outcomes in coercive diplomacy.

- India's coercive diplomacy during the 2015 blockade used economic pressure to force Nepal into compliance. The severe humanitarian and economic hardships strengthened India's coercive credibility but led to unintended outcomes. Instead of compliance, the blockade intensified anti-Indian sentiments, deepened social divisions, and disrupted Nepal’s economy, particularly in agriculture, tourism, and border trade. The blockade's impact shows how coercive diplomacy can backfire, leading to long-term negative consequences, including strained diplomatic relations and internal instability, rather than achieving the desired political objectives.

- India’s coercive actions, particularly during the 2015 border sanction, inadvertently contributed to a shift in Nepal’s foreign policy by fueling anti-Indian sentiment and strengthening Nepal’s reliance on China. This case illustrates that coercive diplomacy can backfire, prompting the targeted nation to seek alternative partnerships, particularly with third-party states. In this context, Nepal’s growing engagement with China, driven by the domestic goal of reducing dependence on India, reflects how external pressure can reshape regional alliances and challenge established power dynamics.

13.2 Conclusion

The findings from the 2015 blockade of Nepal by India illustrate a multifaceted approach to coercive diplomacy, using a combination of economic, psychological, diplomatic, and military strategies. This case serves as a prominent example of how economic coercion, when applied strategically, can disrupt the target state's economy, intensify political and ethnic tensions, and influence internal decision-making. The blockade underscored India's regional dominance and its use of humanitarian crises to gain political leverage. However, the long-term effectiveness of such a coercive strategy was limited, as it led to a rise in anti-Indian sentiment, strained diplomatic

relations, and allowed for Nepal's increased engagement with China.

The imposition of economic sanctions and trade restrictions, such as the blockade, disrupted daily life in Nepal by restricting the flow of essential goods like fuel, medicine, and food supplies. This not only created a humanitarian crisis but also heightened psychological pressure on the Nepalese population, fostering a climate of fear and uncertainty. By targeting the essential infrastructure of Nepal’s economy, India sought to influence Nepal’s political decisions, particularly concerning the constitutional process. These findings align with theories of coercive diplomacy, where the target state is compelled to comply with demands under the threat of escalating economic and humanitarian costs.

India's use of diplomatic pressure, including high-level meetings and formal demands to delay Nepal’s constitution, highlights its attempt to intervene in Nepal’s internal political process. However, the timing and nature of these diplomatic efforts were perceived as intrusive by Nepal’s political actors, revealing the limits of diplomatic coercion when sovereignty and internal consensus are prioritized over external pressure.

India's inability to alter the constitutional process showcases how diplomatic coercion can backfire, particularly

when misaligned with the target state's political will and national interests. Furthermore, India’s support for internal political movements, such as the Madhesi protests, demonstrates the complexity of exerting control over Nepal’s internal politics, as such interventions fueled internal dissent and heightened social divisions.

The deployment of India's Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) at the border during the blockade is indicative of India’s willingness to use limited military force as part of its coercive diplomacy strategy. This measure reinforced India’s resolve and signaled the possibility of further escalation if Nepal failed to comply with its demands. However, the international criticism and the humanitarian impact of the blockade eroded India’s credibility and contributed to the diminishing effectiveness of its coercive tactics. This reflects the delicate balance required in coercive diplomacy, where credible threats must be proportionate to the desired outcome, and the use of force should be carefully calibrated to avoid long-term diplomatic fallout.

One of the key limitations of India’s coercive diplomacy during the 2015 blockade was its failure to maintain credibility and legitimacy. While the economic sanctions were initially effective in demonstrating India’s coercive power, mixed messaging and internal dissent weakened India’s stance. The

sanctions were widely perceived as unnecessary interference in Nepal's domestic affairs, which damaged India's legitimacy in the eyes of both Nepal and the international community. Furthermore, the rise of anti-Indian sentiment in Nepal and the country's growing reliance on China reveal how coercive diplomacy can provoke unintended consequences. Instead of fostering compliance, India's actions contributed to a shift in Nepal's foreign policy, as it sought alternative partnerships to reduce its dependence on India.

The rise of anti-Indian sentiment and the strengthening of Nepal's ties with China exemplify how coercive diplomacy can backfire, especially when the coercer underestimates the target state's ability to resist pressure. The nationalist backlash in Nepal, fueled by public resentment toward India's interference, significantly weakened India's long-term influence in the region. Moreover, the humanitarian crisis caused by the blockade attracted international criticism, further isolating India diplomatically and damaging its image as a regional power.

In line with theories of coercive diplomacy, India attempted to leverage economic pressure to negotiate constitutional amendments in Nepal. However, despite incremental diplomatic efforts, such as easing the blockade and engaging in high-level negotiations, the coercive approach

ultimately failed to yield the desired political outcomes. This highlights the complexity of balancing hardline coercive measures with diplomatic engagement. Successful coercive diplomacy requires flexibility and the willingness to adjust tactics as the situation evolves, which India struggled to achieve in this instance.

The 2015 blockade provides valuable insights into the dynamics of coercive diplomacy in international relations. It demonstrates that coercive strategies, while potentially effective in the short term, can have long-lasting negative consequences, particularly when they provoke strong nationalist reactions and realignments in foreign policy. The case also underscores the importance of clear communication and credible threats in ensuring the success of coercive diplomacy. Ambiguity and inconsistent messaging can undermine the coercer's objectives and lead to unintended outcomes, as evidenced by the strain in Nepal-India relations and the increased role of China in the region.

In conclusion, India's coercive diplomacy during the 2015 blockade against Nepal reflects both the potential power and the inherent risks of using economic, diplomatic, and military tools to exert influence. While India's coercive tactics initially succeeded in pressuring Nepal to make constitutional

amendments, the long-term effects of the blockade-namely the rise of anti-Indian sentiment, diplomatic isolation, and Nepal's growing ties with China-suggest that coercive diplomacy can easily backfire, particularly when the coercing state underestimates the resilience and agency of the target state.

In conclusion, the case of India's coercive diplomacy during the 2015 blockade of Nepal exemplifies the complexities and risks associated with employing coercive measures in international relations. The study reveals that while economic sanctions and diplomatic pressures can exert significant influence, they often come with unintended consequences that may undermine the coercer's long-term objectives. The interplay of psychological, economic, and diplomatic factors illustrates how coercive diplomacy is not merely a straightforward means of achieving political ends but rather a multifaceted strategy that requires careful consideration of the target state's internal dynamics, regional relationships, and broader geopolitical context.

The findings emphasize the importance of credibility, effective communication, and adaptability in coercive diplomacy. As India navigates its relationship with Nepal and other neighboring countries, understanding the limitations of coercive strategies and the potential for backlash will be crucial.

The rise of alternative partnerships, particularly with China, highlights the need for India to reassess its approach and seek more constructive forms of engagement that prioritize mutual interests and respect for sovereignty.

Ultimately, the study contributes to the broader discourse on coercive diplomacy by illustrating that success is contingent not only on the ability to apply pressure but also on the willingness to engage in meaningful dialogue and compromise. As international relations continue to evolve, the lessons drawn from India's experience with Nepal serve as a critical reminder of the delicate balance required in coercive diplomacy to foster stability, cooperation, and enduring partnerships.

APPENDICES

Appendix-I: Interview, Open-ended Questions

Prepared for the Award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science on topic of '**COERCIVE DIPLOMACY: A STUDY OF SANCTION POLITICS IN NEPAL-INDIA RELATIONS'** from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University.

Interview Schedule

PhD Scholar: Mr. Bhuwaneswor Pant

Ph.D. Reg. No. 073/12Magh Secession

1) India argues that last blockade is the result of Nepal's internal problems largely emanated from a combination of factors like age-old discrimination, frustration, agitation and protest by various identity based political parties who are demanding special privileges in the new constitution of Nepal. In your opinion how far it is true? And how far has the Indian role been the fundamental cause of economic sanction?

2) Why India became unhappy and dissatisfied over Nepal's decision to promulgate the new constitution? What are the provisions in the current constitution of Nepal that were not looked positively by India?

3) What were the fundamental reasons that propelled major political parties in Nepal to decide to promulgate the constitution despite strong dissatisfaction, protest and demonstration against the new constitution by Madheshi as well as ethnic groups?

4) The approach from two neighboring countries was fundamentally divergent. India showed strong dissatisfaction over the constitution, whereas China welcomed it. In your opinion why these two neighboring responded differently to the new constitution of Nepal?

5) What are the underlying flaws of Nepal's diplomacy that probably could not convey correct message to India that was harboring suspicions on Nepal's move on the promulgation of constitution?

6) How political parties failed to settle the disagreement of various ethnic groups mainly of Madhesh-based political parties with a view to building consensus on constitution?

7) In the light of the fact that the Indian intervention had been successful in Nepal in 2007, 2046 and 2063 triggering political change, India's bid to forestall the promulgation of constitution seemed unsuccessful resulting in the latest sanction on Nepal. In your opinion, what factors failed Indian intervention in Nepal for the first time?

8) How do you assess Nepal's policy towards India before and after the sanction? Is Nepal's policy practical and creditable in the changing world?

9) How far have sanctions influenced the course of Nepal-India Relations?

10) Is sanction a relevant tool in 21st century? How far have the last sanction proved productive to India? If not, Why?

11) What are the prevailing interest of China and India towards Nepal?

12) What are the areas that India deems more sensitive and pragmatic to deal with Nepal and vice versa?

13) What sort of capabilities Nepal needs to increase and upgrade with a view to tackling possible sanctions by neighboring countries in future

Appendix-2: 12-Point Understanding Reached Between the Seven Political Parties and Nepal Communist Party (Maoists)

The struggle between absolute monarchy and democracy running for a long time in Nepal has now been reached in a very grave and new turn. It has become the need of today to establish peace by resolving the 10-year old armed conflict through a forward - looking political outlet. Therefore, it has become an inevitable need to implement the concept of full democracy through a forward - looking restructuring of the state to resolve the problems related to class, cast, gender, region and so on of all sectors including the political, economic, social and cultural, by bringing the autocratic monarchy to an end and establishing full democracy. We hereby disclose that in the existence of aforesaid context and reference in the country, the following understanding has been reached between the Seven Political Parties within the parliament and the CPN (Maoists) through holding talks in different manners.

The points reached in understanding

1. The democracy, peace, prosperity, social advancement and an independent, sovereign Nepal is the principal wish of all Nepali people in the country today. We are fully agreed that the autocratic monarchy is the main hurdle for this. We have a clear opinion that the peace, progress and

prosperity in the country is not possible until and full democracy is established by bringing the absolute monarchy to an end. Therefore, an understanding has been reached to establish full democracy by bringing the autocratic monarchy to an end through creating a storm of nationwide democratic movement of all the forces against autocratic monarchy by focusing their assault against the autocratic monarchy from their respective positions.

2. The agitating Seven Political Parties are fully committed to the fact that the existing conflict in the country can be resolved and the sovereignty and the state powers can completely be established in people only by establishing full democracy by restoring the parliament through the force of agitation and forming an power full - party Government by its decision, negotiating with the Maoists, and on the basis of agreement, holding the election of constituent assembly. The CPN (Maoists) has the view and commitment that the aforesaid goal can be achieved by holding a national political conference of the agitating democratic forces, and through its decision, forming an Interim Government and holding the election of constituent assembly. On the issue of this procedural agenda, an understanding has been made to continue dialogue and seek for a common agreement between the

agitating Seven Political Parties and the CPN (Maoists). It has been agreed that the force of people's movement is the only alternative to achieve this goal.

3. The country, today, demands the establishment of a permanent peace along with a positive resolution of the armed conflict. We are, therefore, firmly committed to establish a permanent peace by bringing the existing armed conflict in the country to an end through a forward-looking political outlet of the establishment of the full democracy by ending the autocratic monarchy and holding an election of the constituent assembly that would come on the basis of aforesaid procedure. The CPN (Maoists) expresses its commitment to move foreward in the new peaceful political stream through this process. In this very context, an understanding has been made to keep the Maoists armed force and the Royal Army under the United Nations or a reliable international supervision during the process of the election of constituent assembly after the end of the autocratic monarchy, to accomplish the election in a free and fair manner and to accept the result of the election. We also expect for the involvement of a reliable international community even in the process of negotiation.

4. Making public its commitment, institutional in a clear manner, towards the democratic norms and values like the competitive multiparty system of governance, civil liberties, fundamental rights, human tights, principle of rule of law etc., the CPN (Maoists) has expressed its commitment to move forward its activities accordingly.

5. The CPN (Maoists) has expressed its commitment to create an environment to allow the people and the leaders and workers of the political parties, who are displaced during the course of armed conflict, to return and stay with dignity in their respective places, to return their homes, land and property that was seized in an unjust manner and to allow them to carry out the political activities without any hindrance.

6. Making a self-assessment and a self-criticism of the past mistakes and weaknesses, the CPN (Maoists) has expressed its commitment for not allowing the mistakes and weaknesses to be committed in future.

7. Making a self-assessment towards the mistakes and weaknesses committed while staying in the Government and parliament in the past, the seven political parties have expressed their commitment for not repeating such mistakes and weaknesses now onwards.

8. The commitment has been made to fully respect the norms and values of the human rights and to move forward on the basis of them, and to respect the press freedom in the context of moving the peace process ahead.

9. As the announcement of the election of municipality is pushed forward for an ill-motive of deluding the people and the international community and of giving continuity to the autocratic and illegitimate rule of the King, and the rumour of the election of the parliament are a crafty ploy, announcing to boycott it actively in our own respective way, the general public are appealed to make such elections a failure.

10. The people and their representative political parties are the real guardians of nationality. Therefore, we are firmly committed towards the protection of the independence, sovereignty and the geographical integrity and the national unity of the country. It is our common obligation to maintain friendly relations based on the principle of peaceful co-existence with all countries of the world and a good-neighborhood relationship with neighboring countries, especially with India and China. But we request all the patriotic peoples to remain cautious against the false attempt of the King and the monarchists to create confusion in the patriotic people by projecting the illusory

the fake ('Mandale') nationalism to prolong the autocratic and illegitimate rule of the King and to raise question mark over the patriotism of the political parties, and we appeal to the international powers and the communities to support the democratic movement against the autocratic monarchy in Nepal in every possible way.

11. We heartly invite the civil society, professional organizations, various wings of parties, people of all communities and regions, the press community, intellectuals all the Nepali people to make the Movement succeed by actively participating in the peaceful People's Movement launched on the basis of these understandings reached by keeping the democracy, peace, prosperity, forward-looking social transformation and the independence, sovereignty, and dignity of the country in centre.

12. Regarding the inappropriate conducts that took place among the parties in the past, a common commitment has been expressed to investigate the incidents raised objection and asked for the investigation by any party and take action over the guilty one if found and make informed publicly. An understanding has been made to resolve the problems if emerged among the parties now onwards

through the dialogue by discussing in theconcerned level or in the leadership level.22 November 2005

Appendix-3: Opening Statement Delivered by Hon. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Kamal Thapa on 4 November 2015 at 23rd Session of Universal Periodic Review(UPR) Working Group of Human Rights Council in Geneva.

Mr. President

Excellencies and representatives from member states and observers

Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to begin by extending the warm greetings from the people and the Government of Nepal. I feel proud to share with you about the recent promulgation of our new constitution. This marks the conclusion of the peace process initiated in 2006. A new journey towards peace, stability and prosperity has now begun.

It is a great honour and privilege for me to present Nepal's second UPR report to this august session. My delegation is pleased to have this opportunity to present this report on Nepal's efforts towards fulfilling its international obligations and commitments on the issues of human rights, update the status of implementation of the recommendations that we accepted under the first UPR cycle, highlight our achievements, and share what

remains to be done as well as the challenges and constraints we confront with. We look forward to having a productive interactive dialogue with the member states on these issues.

My delegation includes the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of Nepal to the UN in Geneva, Secretaries of relevant Ministries and other Senior Officials from different agencies responsible for the formulation of human rights policies and implementation of human rights obligations.

Mr. President,

The new democratic and inclusive constitution was promulgated in Nepal on 20 September 2015 through the Constituent Assembly elected by the people in November 2013. With it, the long-cherished aspiration of the people to have a constitution written by their own representatives has been fulfilled. It has been made possible by the rigorous democratic exercises spanning over eight years conducted in an inclusive, transparent and participatory manner giving due consideration to Nepal's vast diversity.

The promulgation of the new constitution marks the conclusion of the peace process as well as the historic political transition in Nepal. It has also institutionalized the federal democratic system of governance in the country, paving the way for political stability, sustainable peace and economic

prosperity. It also significantly ensures inclusive democracy, pluralism, the rule of law, the democratic values of governance, representative and accountable government, social and economic justice and universally accepted human rights.

The new constitution guarantees substantive equality, and promotes human dignity, identity, and opportunity for all by ending all forms of discrimination and inequalities. This fundamental law of the land safeguards every right of persons, groups and communities, embracing multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-cultural and diverse geographical specificities. It further aims to create an egalitarian society on the basis of the principles of proportional inclusion and participation, to ensure equitable economic opportunities, shared prosperity and social justice by ending discriminations related to class, ethnicity, region, language, religion and gender. For this, the proportional electoral system, inclusive representation of marginalized and disadvantaged communities in all State organs, positive discrimination and special provisions with regard to rights of women, *Dalits*, *Madheshis*, Indigenous people, *Tharus*, *Muslims*, Persons with Disabilities, and minorities have been guaranteed in the Constitution.

The constitution has ambitiously broadened the scope of fundamental rights by ensuring a wide range of economic, social and cultural rights, including right to employment, right to food, right to housing, right of social justice, right of consumers and

so on. Similarly, the directive principles of the constitution provide a framework for progressive realization of socio-economic rights and guidance for the successive governments to shape relevant laws and policies in line with those principles. In nutshell the constitution fully catches the spirit of universally accepted human rights and ensures their promotion and protection.

The new constitution has been significantly progressive in eliminating gender-based discrimination as well as empowering women through enhanced representation. It has ensured at least one-third representation of women in the Federal Parliament as well as the State Assembly and at least 40% representation of women at the lowest local level (Ward Committee). It has provisions for either Speaker or Deputy Speaker of the both Houses to be women, and also ensures right to lineage, right against all forms of exploitation, equal rights in the family matters and property, among others. The constitution has similar provisions for President and Vice-President ensuring that the two positions are held by persons of different sex or community. I wish to share with this august gathering that both the newly elected Speaker of the Parliament and President of the country are women. These historic elections have well reflected the spirit of the new inclusive constitution. Similarly, with a view to ensuring further inclusivity and empowerment of every community in society, the constitution has established and further strengthened various Commissions as independent

constitutional bodies such as the National Women Commission, National *Dalit* Commission, National Inclusion Commission, Indigenous people and Nationalities Commission, *Madheshi* Commission, *Tharu* Commission, and Muslim Commission.

The Government is committed to building on the solid foundation laid by the new constitution for the continued promotion and protection of human rights with necessary legal, institutional and administrative mechanisms. The formation and operationalization of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as well as Commission on Enforced Disappearances also reflects the Government's commitment to addressing the serious violation of human rights committed during the period of conflict, ending impunity and providing justice to victims as well as promoting sustainable peace, harmony and reconciliation in society based on the ground reality.

The independent and competent judiciary constantly defends and advances human rights agenda in the country including through judicial pronouncements and verdicts. The vibrant and free media, active civil society as well as the ever-growing awareness and consciousness of the general people about their rights continue to strengthen the human rights environment in the country.

Moreover, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) assumes central role in the protection and promotion of human rights with responsibility for independent investigation into all human rights violations as well as for overall monitoring of the human rights situation.

Mr. President,

In the last four years after the first UPR, the country has been able to accomplish many significant progresses in the overall human rights situation in the country. The basic elements of the rule of law and human rights are being incorporated into the periodic development plans. The rights-based approach has become an important consideration in every aspect of national life. By formulating an Action Plan on the implementation of UPR recommendations received in 2011, we have set stage for more effective outcomes of important human rights issues with significant monitorable progress.

The major accomplishments, the conclusion of the peace process and historic political transition in particular, have been nationally driven. The country's experience in the democratic exercise and collaboration on the overall interest of the country during the peace process and political transition has been quite important and unique. While the prolonged political transition posed, at times, serious threats to the democratic norms and values, the rule of law, and enhanced the possibility of impunity

particularly with the blurred distinction between criminal acts and political activities, it has also been an enlightening experience to guide further course of action. It is during this process that we realized the importance of compromise and flexibility to move forward from a context like ours, characterized by diversity and divergent views. The endogenous home-grown process that we pursued has proved to be an effective vehicle to arrive at a broader consensus on all critical issues, including the political system and governance. We are confident of our ability to resolve any conflicting issue with our own efforts and through peaceful means. Any disruption of this process as well as internal dynamics through any exogenous interest will only complicate matters.

It is with this conviction that the new Government is engaged in dialogue with the Madhesh-based political parties to win their confidence and resolve the differences within the constitutional framework. While the Government is quite serious and sensitive to their concerns, the nature and effects of continued agitation have been detrimental to our national interest and the overall wellbeing of the people.

In fact, we are currently at a very delicate situation resulting from the obstruction of essential supplies at the border points. Lives and livelihood of the entire population have been adversely affected; schools and hospitals also bear the brunt of

the current circumstances exposing millions of children, elderly and sick persons to greater risk and vulnerabilities; the future of our children is at stake; our regional and international trade have been constrained; our industries are on the verge of collapse; the tourism sector has been hit hard; our economy has suffered a huge setback. If the current trend is not checked, the country is likely to experience an unjust and severe humanitarian crisis. This needs to be avoided. While we seek to address political problem through dialogue, the continuous obstructions at border points under any pretext has severely impeded the exercise of rights and freedom that Nepal is entitled under the international law as a land-locked country. As a Least Developed country that has emerged from a decade-long armed conflict followed by a protracted political transition and is just taking steps forward on a path of recovery and reconstruction with the support of the international community in the aftermath of the devastating earthquakes, the challenges and pressures besetting the nation and people at present are immensely painful.

Nevertheless, we are quite optimistic in view of our ability and competence to resolve our differences on our own for the national interest of the country. The present Government has already begun the process of dialogue and is confident of arriving at a mutually acceptable solution soon. Like many other democratic constitutions, the Constitution of Nepal is also a

living and dynamic document that can be amended in accordance with the needs and aspirations of the people. It is flexible enough to adequately address the new context the nation faces through timely amendment.

We, the people of Nepal, are increasingly getting used to the significance and necessity of the democratic norms, rules and processes to resolve differences without undermining social harmony and cohesion that have been the defining features of our diverse society.

Mr. President,

The fundamental goal of the new Government, elected a few weeks back, is to effectively implement the new constitution by removing the structural and functional obstacles and challenges in the way of socio-economic transformation of the country. The Government has started to take necessary measures to formulate necessary legislative and policy tools needed for the smooth operationalization of the constitution. As the country ushers in a new era, we are also keen to give further momentum to our economic development agenda. Despite the huge devastation and setback caused by the recent earthquakes, Nepal will continue to pursue the goal of graduation from the LDC status by 2022, and becoming a middle income country by 2030.

I would like to express the Government's commitment to keep up the spirit generated by the new constitution in advancing the cause of human rights.

Mr. President,

Despite consistent efforts in the promotion and protection of human rights, Nepal continues to confront challenges in meeting some of the desired targets and fulfilling obligations. Paucity of resources, land-locked situation, low level of economic development, rampant poverty, deprivation of basic needs and amenities, low level of education, among others, have adversely affected the implementation of action plans on human rights. Moreover, the prolonged political transition had also left negative impacts on creating conducive environment required for the promotion of human rights in the country. As the political transition has come to an end with the promulgation of the new constitution, the country is in a position to undertake further steps forward for the effective realization of all human rights by all with adequate support from the international community.

We stress the importance of strict adherence to the principles of universality, objectivity and non-selectivity by all human rights mechanisms under the United Nations. As democracy, development, peace, security and human rights are interdependent, they call for a holistic approach to address the human rights issues. The efforts of the international community

must, therefore, be geared towards creating an environment for the enjoyment of all human rights, including civil and political rights; social, cultural and economic rights; and the right to development. For a country like Nepal, the enjoyment of the right to development will have significant impact on the promotion of other rights. It is in this context that we attach huge importance to the effective and balanced implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the world leaders in September this year. The transformative ambition of the 2030 Agenda along with its focus, among others, on peace, equality and freedom offers a new hope and opportunity for the enjoyment of human rights by all.

Mr. President,

To conclude, I would like to reiterate our total and unflinching commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights. There is a greater awareness and positive outlook in the country among both the state and non-state actors about the value of human rights.

As I also consider the UPR as an opportunity to learn from others, I look forward to receiving your valuable inputs during your constructive engagement in the interactive dialogue. I am confident that with the greater understanding and support of the international community Nepal will continue to make significant progress in the days ahead.

I thank you for your kind attention.

Appendix-4: Press Release on Promulgation of Constitution by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nepal on September 23, 2015

The Nepali people have overwhelmingly acclaimed the promulgation of the Constitution of Nepal, which was declared by Rt. Honorable President on September 20, 2015, following its adoption by the Constituent Assembly. With the conclusion of this process, the long-cherished aspiration of the Nepalese people to write a constitution for themselves has been fulfilled. Out of 598 Constituent Assembly members then existed, 537 signed the constitution, signifying their association with this historic process. Over 92 per cent CA members participated in the process when the bill of constitution was put on voting for adoption.

The Constituent Assembly, with 601 members, itself reflects the diversity of various backward regions and ethnic, religious, cultural and social groups including *madheshi, adibashisjanjatis, dalits, muslims.*The constitution drafting went through a long process, nearly eight years, characterized by inclusivity, participation, transparency and openness. This is the largest democratic exercise Nepal has ever had in its political and constitutional history.

The Government left no stone unturned to bring all stakeholders on board to resolve some of the key issues that

proved difficult during the course of constitution writing. Republicanism, federalism with delineation of provincial boundaries, secularism and religious freedom, separation of power, political pluralism and competitive parliamentary system of governance, rule of law, independent judiciary, human rights and proportional inclusion are enshrined in the Constitution. The debate and discussion on these issues took considerable amount of time and energy to seek a compromise.

In a society like ours that is so diverse in terms of religion, culture, ethnicity and geography, any constitution cannot satisfy everyone's demand in entirety. Given the vast diversity of Nepal and representation of political parties even with diametrically opposite political views and non-majority situation in the Constituent Assembly, promulgation of the Constitution was possible only by reaching compromise with broadest possible consensus.

The major political parties represented in the Constituent Assembly made concrete efforts towards concluding the constitution writing process even when the country was badly devastated by the April 25 earthquake and its powerful aftershocks. It is evidently clear that the early promulgation of the new constitution was an imperative to end protracted transition, which has cost the country a lot in terms of political stability, economic development and social progress. Moreover,

its promulgation is a historic achievement and a milestone to preserve and institutionalize democratic gains that the people of Nepal achieved over the years through historical people's struggles and movements.

The Government of Nepal sincerely extends its cordial thanks with appreciation to the neighbors and all friendly countries and the international community who have rendered their valuable support to the Nepali people in the constitution making process in the past and now have welcomed the promulgation of the new constitution.

The leader and the people of Nepal are cognizant of the fact that some groups still harbor dissatisfaction with some of the provisions of the constitution. The Government and Nepali political parties have repeatedly called for dialogue and expressed their commitment to address the genuine concerns of any group through appropriate process recognizing the fact that the constitution itself is a dynamic document and could be amended for the genuine cause of the people. The Government of Nepal has also been appealing to all concerned to seek the solution of all problems peacefully in the best interest of Nepal, its people and democracy. The Government is always fully committed to the principles of human rights while dealing with the violent and aggressive agitators too. However, the Government is also cognizant of the rights and duties of all

democratic sovereign states and it is equally essential to maintain law and order and to protect the life and property of the people in all circumstances.

While the Government of Nepal is determined to address law and order situation in parts of Nepal, it underlines the fact that there does not exist any serious threat to disrupt the movement of goods and services and other essential supplies within the territory of Nepal. It expresses the hope that the people of Nepal will not be affected by any shortage of essential items during impending festivities.

The Government of Nepal believes that the promulgation of the new constitution and the political development that has evolved through painstaking democratic process will further contribute to the warm and cordial relations that we enjoy with close neighbors, other friendly countries and the international community.

Appendix-5: Press Release on The Government of Nepal Concerned over Undue Delay on the Movement and Clearance of Cargo Vehicles on September 26, 2015

The Government of Nepal is concerned over undue delay on the movement and clearance of cargo vehicles resulting in significant decrease in the flow of essential goods to Nepal from India via different border checkpoints for last few days. This decreased flow has been noted particularly since September 23, 2015 whereas the security situation in Terai has remained the same for more than a month and now has been improving gradually.

Hon'ble Minister for Health and Population and Minister in charge for Foreign Affairs Mr. Khaga Raj Adhikari, during his meeting with Ambassador of India to Nepal at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Singha Durbar on September 25, 2015, had informed about this fact and requested for necessary cooperation from the Government of India for early release of cargo vehicles stuck at border checkpoints on the Indian side.

The situation of supply, however, has not improved ever since. Not a single cargo vehicle could enter Nepal throughBiratnagar, Birgunj, Bhairahawa, Krishnanagar and Nepalgunj checkpoints until 5 p.m. today. 29 cargo vehicles carrying perishable goods had managed to enter Nepal yesterday and the day before through Bhairahawa checkpoint. Only 17

cargo vehicles, including 3 with POL products, through Mechi checkpoint and 25 cargo vehicles, including 20 with POL products, through Dhangadhi check point could enter Nepal, today. Hundreds of vehicles carrying POL products and other essential goods are awaiting clearance to enter Nepal on the Indian side of the border. Tankers have not been filled up with POL products. Similarly, large number of vehicles has not been allowed to enter the Indian side in order to bring goods into Nepal. Due to this, the Nepalese people have begun to feel shortage of daily supplies on the eve of festive season.

Given the friendly relations existing between the two countries, the Government of Nepal sincerely hopes that the Government of India will take all necessary steps at the earliest to ensure uninterrupted entry of vehicles carrying essential supplies, including POL products, to Nepal as before. The Government of Nepal would like to reiterate that there would not be any problem inside the Nepalese territory for the transport vehicles and their personnel since arrangements are already in place for their security.

Appendix-6: Government of India's Official Stands and Statements on Nepal

1. External Affairs Minister was informed by Nepal's Deputy PM and Foreign Minister Kamal Thapa today that the Nepalese Cabinet has taken some important decisions to

address and resolve demands regarding the Constitution raised by agitating Madhes-based parties.

2. These decisions include amendments to the Constitution on participation in the state organs on the basis of proportionate inclusiveness and delineation of electoral constituencies on the basis of population. The demarcation of provinces is also to be addressed through an appropriate arrangement in the Constitution on the basis of political consensus. Similarly, other demands including citizenship are to be resolved through negotiations and consensus.

3. Government of India welcomes these developments as positive steps that help create the basis for a resolution of the current impasse in Nepal. As a neighbour and well-wisher, India was deeply concerned at the unrest stemming from internal differences in Nepal on the Constitution. We urge all Nepali political forces to now demonstrate the necessary maturity and flexibility to find a satisfactory solution to the Constitutional issues through constructive dialogue in an agreed timeframe.

4. We are confident that a return to normalcy in Nepal would create a more secure and predictable climate for unimpeded commerce between our two countries.

December 21, 2015

- 596 -

Appendix-7: Statement by External Affairs Minister of India on Calling Attention Motion on ''Situation in Nepal and State of Indo-Nepal Relation'' in RajyaSabha (Upper House) of Indian Parliament.

Hon’ble Chairman,

I rise to make a statement on the Calling Attention Motion on "Situation in Nepal and the State of Indo-Nepal Relations”. Hon’ble Members would agree that India and Nepal share a unique relationship of centuries old civilizational ties based on shared geography, history, culture, language and religion. The two countries have close political relations, wide-ranging economic cooperation and deep-rooted people-to-people friendship. India provides Nepal broad-based development assistance for infrastructural projects in health, water resources, agriculture, irrigation, education, culture, and rural & community development. Our 1950 Friendship Treaty provides for open borders, free movement, and gives Nepalese citizens effective ‘national treatment’ in terms of education and employment in India, including in our Army as well as in some civil services, where they are allowed to compete along with Indians.

India has always stood for a peaceful conclusion to Nepal’s on-going political transition after decades of instability and violence. At times, at the request of Nepali political parties, we have actively facilitated that process. Throughout the process

of Constitution making in Nepal, there has been a political consensus in India on providing unstinting moral and material support to Nepal in its efforts to establish a peaceful, stable and Constitutional democracy. We have remained closely engaged with Nepal during its on-going political transition and have consistently supported early promulgation of a broad-based, inclusive and durable Constitution. Prime Minister emphasized this during his two visits to Nepal in 2014, when he advised Nepal's leadership to work with a 'rishi-man' to frame a Constitution based on 'sahmat' (consensus) rather than 'bahumat' (majority). I believe that this advice, of a neighbour and well-wisher, reflects the broad opinion of the House as well as our polity.

Soon after assuming office in May 2014, our Government has embarked on a rejuvenated partnership with Nepal, injecting a new sense of optimism in this vital relationship. There was significant progress in the area of hydropower cooperation and connectivity. Prime Minister visited Nepal in August 2014 on the first PM-level bilateral visit in 17 years, and again in November 2014 for the SAARC Summit. I myself visited Nepal in July 2014 to co-Chair the Joint Commission, which met after 23 years. When a devastating earthquake struck Nepal in April 2015, India was the first responder with its largest ever disaster relief operation appropriately called 'Operation Maitri'. For the long-term rehabilitation phase, India's commitment of US$ 1 billion (1/4th of which would be as grant), was announced on 25

June 2015 in Kathmandu, which was the largest pledge among all international donors. It is over and above our existing commitment of another US$ 1 billion, 40% of which would be grant, over the next five years. India will continue to extend all assistance, in accordance with the aspirations of the people of Nepal, for peace, stability and socio-economic development of the country. This should leave no one in any doubt of our care, concern and heart-felt friendship for our northern neighbour.

Prime Minister's call for consensus and broad-based ownership, conveyed during his two visits to Nepal, in August and November 2014, was strongly and consistently conveyed by Government both before, and after the draft Constitution was put out for public consultations from June-August 2015. Our advice was reiterated on several occasions including the visits by CPN-UML Vice-Chairperson Smt. BidyaBhandari in January 2015,

UCPN(M) senior leader ShriBaburamBhattarai in March 2015, UCPN(M) Chairman ShriPrachanda in July 2015, senior leader of Nepali Congress ShriSherBahadurDeuba in August 2015, as well as other visitors from Nepal. I personally re-emphasized our advice during my visit to Nepal in June 2015, and Prime Minister re-stated it during his telephone conversation with PM SushilKoirala in August 2015. Our Ambassador in Kathmandu was also in regular touch with Nepali political parties in this matter. Therefore, any suggestion

that our position lacked clarity or that there was lack of engagement simply has no basis.

The draft Constitution that finally emerged was perceived as non-inclusive by several sections of the Nepalese society, particularly in the Terai, who became restive and came out in protest from mid-August 2015 onwards. Several contentious provisions in key areas - such as constituency delimitation, inclusion for needy sections of the society and provincial boundaries - were apparently incorporated in the draft, either at a late stage without due debate and discussion, or by diluting important provisions of the 2007 Interim Constitution under which two successful elections had already been held in 2008 and 2013.

In an effort to head off what clearly was a looming crisis, Foreign Secretary travelled to Nepal on 18-19 September as Prime Minister's Special Envoy. He advised the Nepalese political leadership to (a) give more time for dialogue to bring about broad-based acceptance; (b) send a positive signal to the disaffected sections of the Nepalese population that their grievances will be addressed; (c) reflect on our assessment that if the protests were not addressed politically, the agitation in the Terai areas could intensify; and (d) prevent a further deterioration of the situation in the Terai and on the India-Nepal border. Regrettably, these cautions passed unheeded.

As a result, the Constitution adopted on 20 September 2015 was perceived by large sections of Nepal's population as non-inclusive and diluting the representation already available to Nepal's ethnic and social groups since 2007. Unrest in the Terai escalated sharply, causing over 55 deaths and injuries to hundreds since August. The agitation, which completed 100 days on 23 November 2015, has seen protestors obstructing movements of cargo trucks across India-Nepal border crossings, thereby affecting supplies of fuel and other essential commodities from India to Nepal.

The Constitution was expected to mark the culmination of Nepal's peace process and political transition after decades of violent instability. That the new Constitution established Nepal as a federal democratic republic was duly noted and recognized by us. But we could not ignore the fact that several sections of the Nepalese society felt that their interests had not been taken care of. Our position, without being prescriptive, is that remaining issues about perceived under-representation, should be resolved through dialogue in an atmosphere free from violence and intimidation, and institutionalized in a manner that would enable broad-based ownership of the Constitution. The then Government of Nepal, led by former PM ShriSushilKoirala, had also approved two important constitutional amendments on constituency delimitation on the

basis of population and inclusion for needy sections, by the Cabinet on 2 October 2015. But the new government has not yet moved forward on these amendments.

This has caused continues resentment among disaffected sections of the Nepalese population, and the situation in many parts of the country bordering India remains violent. With a 1751-kilometres long open border with the five Indian States of Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Sikkim, India is directly affected by developments in the Terai. The unfortunate use of force on 2 November, to forcibly remove protestors obstructing the Raxaul-Birgunj route, and thereafter on 22 November against protestors in Saptari, has further vitiated the atmosphere. An Indian citizen was also killed, and we have sought an investigation into his death.

Leading members of the international community as well as many in Nepal have increasingly taken a position similar to ours. The USA, UK, EU and UN have spoken about the need to ensure an inclusive Constitution and address fundamental issues through dialogue. Moreover, India's ties with Nepal have always stood on their own merits and will continue to be so. Even as protests continued in Nepal, India has maintained constant touch with its leadership. On 11 October 2015, Hon'ble Prime Minister called PM Shri K.P. Oli following his election and conveyed his hearty congratulations. I hosted the Deputy

PM and Foreign Minister Shri Kamal Thapa on 18 October 2015. Hon'ble Prime Minister again spoke to PM Shri K.P. Oli on 2 November 2015. In addition, our officials including the Ambassador closely monitor the situation.

Let me take this opportunity to also clarify to Hon'ble Members that contrary to some canards on this issue, there is no blockade by India, which we have repeatedly clarified, of supplies going to Nepal. Obstructions are by the Nepalese population on the Nepalese side, in which GoI cannot interfere. There were incidents of violence resulting in death and injury in regions of Nepal bordering India following the promulgation of this Constitution. Our freight companies and transporters also voiced complaints about difficulties of movement and security within Nepal.

In fact, Government of India has facilitated supplies wherever possible. Several thousand trucks have remained stranded for weeks, waiting on the Indian side of the border crossings. We have kept them there to respond quickly if the blockages on the Nepal side are peacefully lifted. The primary crossing of Raxaul-Birgunj, which accounts for two-thirds of our trade, remains closed from the Nepali side for more than two months. However, every day, several hundred cargo-trucks have still been passing through those crossing points that are open

and available. Despite constraints, Indian Oil Corporation has delivered POL supplies to the extent possible. More than 400 medical consignments were cleared through the India-Nepal border in November 2015. We are also assisting in re-routing stranded POL tankers and vehicles carrying medical supplies through other available crossing points, as also airlift. But there are also logistical constraints and the best remedy remains a political solution leading to the end of the agitation.

Hon'ble Chairman,

Yesterday, I had another good meeting with the visiting Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Nepal, Shri Kamal Thapa. He assured me that there has been progress in the dialogue on the contentious issues with the agitating parties. This gives us hope that an early resolution would be found for the political problems facing Nepal. We will continue to encourage all sides to come to a solution sooner rather than later.

The causes underlying the present state of confrontation in Nepal need to be addressed credibly and effectively by the political parties and people of Nepal themselves. India's only interest is in a peaceful, united and stable Nepal. And our approach to the present crisis is completely consistent with these objectives. There has also been the broadest goodwill for Nepal

in India and full political consensus on our policy. In that tradition, I would urge the House to consider the merits of a visit to Nepal by an All Party delegation. The Government will be guided by the sentiments of the House.

December 03, 2015

Appendix-8: Name List of Interviewee

S.N.	Name	Contact Address
1	Dr. Bhek Bahadur Thapa	Kathmandu, Nepal
2	Mr. Hari Sharma	Kathmandu, Nepal
3	Pro. Dr. Nilkhantha Pant	Kathmandu, Nepal
4	Dr. Shankar Prasad Sharma	Kathmandu, Nepal
5	Mr. Pratik Pradhan	Kathmandu, Nepal
6	Mr. Puranjan Acharya	Kathmandu, Nepal
7	Mr. Sudeer Prasad Sharma	Kathmandu, Nepal
8	Mr. Surendra Pandey	Kathmandu, Nepal
9	Mr. Yubraj Ghimire	Kathmandu, Nepal
10	Pro. Krishna Khanal	Kathmandu, Nepal

REFERENCES

Acharya, P. (2021). *Causes and Consequences of Indian sanction against Nepal* [Interview].

Acharya, P. R. (2018). *Nepal to use Chinese sea, land ports*. Retrieved July 13 from https://thehimalayantimes.com/business/nepal-allowed-to-use-chinese-sea-land-ports/

ACHR. (2009). *Madhes: The challenges and opportunities for a stable Nepal*. Retrieved July 13 from https://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/madhes-challenges-and-opportunities-stable-nepal

Ahang, M. (2014). *The Art of Economic Sanctions*. Retrieved July 13 from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281285224_The_Art_of_Economic_Sanctions

Aliff, S. (2015). Indo-Sri Lanka relations after the LTTE: Problems & prospects. *Journal of emerging trends in educational research and policy studies, 6*(4), 321-330.

Allen, S. H. (2008). The domestic political costs of economic sanctions. *Journal of Conflict Resolution, 52*(6), 916-944.

Allen, S. H., & Lektzian, D. J. (2013). Economic sanctions: A blunt instrument? *Journal of Peace Research, 50*(1), 121-135.

Altbach, P. (1975). Literary colonialism: Books in the third world. *Harvard Educational Review*, *45*(2), 226-236.

Anaemene, B. U. (2018). Ethnic Conflicts in International Relations: Issues and Perspectives. *Vuna Journal of History and International Relation*, *2*(3), 1-19.

Andrew, S. (1992). *Method in Social Science*. Routledge.

Archer, M., Bhaskar, R., Collier, A., Lawson, T., & Norrie, A. (2013). *Critical realism: Essential readings*. Routledge.

Arora, V. (2015). *India's influence in Nepal*. Retrieved July 13 from https://thediplomat.com/2015/11/r-i-p-indias-influence-in-nepal/

Art, R. J., & Cronin, P. M. (2003). *The United States and coercive diplomacy*. US Institute of Peace Press.

Aryal, J. (2019). *The nature and impacts of 2015 Indian unofficial blockade in Nepal* Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Ås].

Aryal, Y. (2017). The Indian Empire and its colonial practices in South Asia. *Comparative Literature and Culture, 19*(2), 2.

Askari, H., Forrer, J., Teegen, H., & Yang, J. (2003). *Economic sanctions: Examining their philosophy and efficacy*. Greenwood Publishing Group.

Ayres, A. (2017). *Our time has come: How India is making its place in the world*. Oxford University Press.

Baldwin, D. (1985). *Economic Statecraft*. Princeton University Press.

Banerji, A. (2021, April 9). *India must settle the Teesta River dispute with Bangladesh for lasting gains*. Retrieved July 15 from https://thediplomat.com/2021/04/india-must-settle-the-teesta-river-dispute-with-bangladesh-for-lasting-gains/

Baral, B. (2016). India's 'blockade'has opened the door for China in Nepal. *The Wire*, *2*.

Baral, B. (2017a, July 19). *After the 'Blockade': China's Push into Nepal*. Retrieved February 01 from https://thediplomat.com/2017/02/after-the-blockade-chinas-push-into-nepal/

Baral, B. (2017b, February 01). *After the 'Blockade': China's Push into Nepal*. Retrieved July 01 from https://thediplomat.com/2017/02/after-the-blockade-chinas-push-into-nepal/

Baral, S. (2015). *Ajhai galā'unē bhāratakō raṇanīti*. Retrieved July 13 from

https://nepalmag.com.np/contemporary/2015/10/11/20151011155253

Barber, J. (1979). Economic Sanctions a Policy Instrument. *International Affairs, 55*(3), 367-384.

Baylis, J., Smith, S., & Owens, P. (2001). *The globalization of world politics: An introduction to international relations*. Oxford University Press.

Bergeijk, P. A. v. (2009). Success and failure of economic sanctions. *Kyklos, 42*(3), 385-404.

Bhandari, S. (2013). *The king versus the people: The abolition of monarchy and constitution making in Nepal*. Retrieved July 13 from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/259289315

Bhaskar, R. (2013). *A realist theory of science*. Routledge.

Bhatta, C. D. (2019). *What ails Nepal-India relations?* Retrieved July 13 from https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/what-ails-nepal-india-relations/

Bhattacherjee, K. (2016 February 08). *Madhesis end Nepal blockade*. Retrieved July 15 from https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/madhesis-end-nepal-blockade/article8210239.ece

Bhattarai, B. (2018). Nepal India relations: Continuty and Change. In L. R. Baral (Ed.), *Politics of Geo-politics Continuty and Change in Nepal-India Relations* (pp. 34-42). Adarsh Books.

Bhattarai, D. (2015a). *Blockade Indian mistake in diplomacy*. The Kathmandu Post. Retrieved July 13 from https://kathmandupost.com/miscellaneous/2015/11/29/blockade-indian-mistake-in-diplomacy-yechury

Bhattarai, D. (2015). *Indian Foreign Secretary Visit*. Kathmandu Post. Retrieved July 13 from http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2015–09–18/indias-foreign-secy-arriving-today-with-modi-message.html

Bhattarai, D. (2015b, October 20). *Modi advises Thapa to address demands*. The Kathmandu Post. Retrieved July 13 from https://kathmandupost.com/national/2015/10/20/modi-advises-thapa-to-address-demands

Bhattarai, K. D. (2016, May 14). *Fresh Turmoil in Nepal-India Relations*. Retrieved July 19 from https://thediplomat.com/2016/05/fresh-turmoil-in-nepal-india-relations/

Bhattarai, K. D. (2017). *India Uneasy As China Makes Further Inroads In Nepal*. South Asian Journal. Retrieved July 13 from http://southasiajournal.net/india-uneasy-as-china-makes-further-inroads-in-nepal/

Bhattarai, K. D. (2019). Why India ditched Madhes. https://theannapurnaexpress.com/news/why-india-ditched-madhes-1317

Bhattarai, P. (2018). *Negotiating Between Unequal Neighbours: India's Role in Nepal's Recent Constitution-Making Process*. SSOAR. Retrieved July 31 from https://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/handle/document/61142

Bimbetova, B., Tyurina, Y., Troyanskaya, M., Ermakova, E., Orynbassarova, A., Skakova, A., Koptayeva, G., & Agabekova, G. (2019). The impact of international sanctions on national economic regime of target states. *Academy of Strategic Management Journal, 18*(4), 1-9.

Blanchard, J. M. F., & Ripsman, N. M. (1999). Asking the right question: when do economic sanctions work best? *Security Studies, 9*(1-2), 219-253.

Bohara, R. (2015). *Nākābandīkō nāsō*. Himal Khabar. Retrieved July 13 from https://archive.himalkhabar.com/113171

Budhathoki, A. (2020, Dec 15). *To reset ties with Nepal, India must give up its colonial approach*. Retrieved July 13 from https://www.trtworld.com/opinion/to-reset-ties-with-nepal-india-must-give-up-its-colonial-approach-42373

Burchill, S. (2006). Theories of International Relations. In S. Burchill, A. Linklater, R. Devetak, J. Donnelly, M. Paterson, C. Reus-Smit, & J. True (Eds.), (pp. 55-81). Palgrave Macmilla.

Byman, D., & Waxman, M. (2002). *The dynamics of coercion: American foreign policy and the limits of military might*. Cambridge University Press.

Campbell, I. (2012). *China and Conflict-affected States: Between Principle and Pragmatism. In Case Study.* . Safer World.

Carment, D. (1993). The international dimensions of ethnic conflict: Concepts, indicators, and theory. *Journal of Peace Research, 30*(2), 137-150.

Carment, D., & James, P. (2000). Explaining third-party intervention in ethnic conflict: theory and evidence. *Nations and Nationalism, 6*(2), 173-202.

Carment, D., & James, P. (2004). Diffusion and escalation of ethnic conflict. In S. E. Lobell & P. Mauceri (Eds.), *Third-*

Party States in Ethnic Conflict: Identifying the Domestic Determinants of Intervention (pp. 11-34). Palgrave Macmillan.

Carment, D., & James, P. (2004). Third-Party States in Ethnic Conflict: Identifying the Domestic Determinants of Intervention. In S. Lobell & P. Mauceri (Eds.), *Ethnic conflict and international politics: explaining diffusion and escalation* (pp. 11-34). Palgrave Macmillan.

Carr, E. H. (1946). *The twenty years' crisis, 1919-1939: an introduction to the study of international relations*. Macmillan London.

Caruso, R. (2003). The impact of international economic sanctions on trade: An empirical analysis. *Peace Economics, Peace Science and Public Policy, 9*(2), 1-29.

Cebul, M. D., Dafoe, A., & Monteiro, N. P. (2021). Coercion and the Credibility of Assurances. *The Journal of Politics, 83*(3), 975-991.

Chand, D. (2018). Trade Embargos as a Geopolitical Tool: A Case of Nepal-India Trade Relations. *Asian Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities, 8*(5), 50-67.

Charron, A. (2011). *UN Sanctions and Conflict: Responding to Peace and Security Threats*. Routledge.

Chaudhary, D. R. (2015). *Nepal's Ambassador to India, Deep Kumar Upadhyaya, urges Indian government to ease*

supply of essentials. Economic Times. Retrieved July 13 from https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/nepals-ambassador-to-india-deep-kumar-upadhyaya-urges-indian-government-to-ease-supply-of-essentials/articleshow/49229502.cms?from=mdr

Chauhan, R. (2018, Janaury 12). *The road ahead for India-Nepal relations*. The Hindu Business. Retrieved July 13 from https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/columns/the-road-ahead-for-indianepal-relations/article9731472.ece

Chintan, G. (2015). *Bhāratīya nākābandī, antarrāṣṭriya kānuna ra abakō bāṭō*. Onlinekhabar. Retrieved July 13 from www.onlinekhabar.com/2015/10/337755

Clarke, L., Edmonds, J., Krey, V., Richels, R., Rose, S., & Tavoni, M. (2009). International climate policy architectures: Overview of the EMF 22 International Scenarios. *Energy Economics*, *31*, 64-S81.

Cortright, D., & Lopez, G. A. (2000). *The sanctions decade: Assessing UN strategies in the 1990s*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Cortright, D., Lopez, G. A., Conroy, R. W., Dashti-Gibson, J., Wagler, J., Malone, D. M., & Axworthy, L. (2000). *The sanctions decade: Assessing UN strategies in the 1990s*. Publishers Boulder, CO.

Cortright, D., Lopez, G. A., & Rogers, E. S. (2002). Targeted financial sanctions: Smart sanctions that do work. *Smart Sanctions: Targeting Economic Statecraft*, 23-40.

Cox, D. G., & Drury, A. C. (2006). Democratic sanctions: Connecting the democratic peace and economic sanctions. *Journal of Peace Research, 43*(6), 709-722.

Crotty, M. (2003). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Routledge.

Daase, C. (2006). Democratic peace Democratic war: Three reasons why democracies are war-prone. In A. Geis, L. Brock, & H. Müller (Eds.), *Democratic wars looking at the dark side of democratic peace* (pp. 74-89). Palgrave Macmillan.

Dahal, M. (2015). *Bhāratadvārā carkō nākābandī*. Nagrik. Retrieved July 13 from https://nagariknews.nagariknetwork.com/social-affairs/84314-1443213106.html

Dahal, R. K. (2010). Nepal India Relations in Post April 2006 Days. In S. K. Bhattarai (Ed.), *International relations and foreign affairs* (pp. 393-428). Makalu publications House.

Dahal, S. H. (2018). *China Nepal India triangle: The dark side of Indo Nepal relations*. SangrilaPustak P. Ltd.

Daniel, B., & Matthew, W. (2002). *The dynamics of coercion: American foreign policy and the limits of military might*. Cambridge University Press.

Daoudi, M. D., & Daoudi, M. (1983). *Economic sanctions, ideals and experience*. London; Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Davidson, J., & Shambaugh, G. (2000). Who's afraid of economic incentives? The efficacy-externality tradeoff. In *Sanctions as Economic Statecraft* (pp. 37-64). Springer.

Davis, L., & Engerman, S. (2003). History lessons: sanctions-neither war nor peace. *Journal of economic perspectives, 17*(2), 187-197.

Deen, T. (2015, Oct 31). *Nepal Appeals to U.N. to Help Lift Economic Blockad*. Retrieved Feb 05 from https://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/nepal-appeals-un-help-lift-economic-blockade

Destradi, S. (2012). India as a democracy promoter? New Delhi's involvement in Nepal's return to democracy. *Democratization, 19*(2), 286-311.

DH. (2015, December 15). *Key constitution amendment bill tabled in Nepal parliament*. Retrieved Jan 12 from https://www.deccanherald.com/archives/key-constitution-amendment-bill-tabled-in-nepal-parliament-498445.html

Dixit, A. (2017). Infrastructure Financing Strategies for Sustainable Development in Nepal. *Economic and Social Commission For Asia and The Pacific,(ESCAP)*.

Dixit, K. M. (2006). The Spring of Dissent: people's movement in Nepal. *India International Centre Quarterly, 33*(1), 113-125.

Dixit, K. M. (2012). The life and death of the Constituent Assembly of Nepal. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 35-41.

Dixon, W. J. (1994). Democracy and the peaceful settlement of international conflict. *American Political Science Review, 88*(1), 14-32.

Dobson, A. P. (2002). *US economic statecraft for survival, 1933-1991: of sanctions, embargoes and economic warfare*. Routledge.

Domke, M. (1943). *Trading with the Enemy in World War II*. Central Book Company.

Donnelly, J. (2006). Realism. In S. Burchill, A. Linklater, R. Devetak, J. Donnelly, M. Paterson, C. Reus-Smit, & J. True (Eds.), *Theories of International Relations* (pp. 29-52). Palgrave macmillan.

Doxey, M. P. (1980). *Economic sanctions and international enforcement*. Springer.

Drezner, D. W., & Drezner, D. W. (1999). *The sanctions paradox: Economic statecraft and international relations*. Cambridge University Press.

Drury, A. C. (2001). Sanctions as Coercive Diploimacy: The U.S. President's Decision to Initiate Economic Sanctions. *Political Research Quarterly, 54* (3), 485–508.

Early, B. R., & Spice, R. (2015). Economic sanctions, international institutions, and sanctions busters: When does institutionalized cooperation help sanctioning efforts? *Foreign policy analysis, 11*(3), 339-360.

Ebaye, S. E. N. (2024). Coercive Diplomacy, Military Strategy and Foreign Policy Projections. *International Journal of International Relations, Media and Mass Communication Studies, 10*(1), 23-37.

Energypedia. (2010). *Nepal Energy Situation*. Retrieved July 12 from https://energypedia.info/wiki/Nepal_Energy_Situation

EOI. (2015a, Dec 31). *Embassy of India, Kathmandu, Nepal : Press Releases*. Retrieved Jan 12 from https://www.indembkathmandu.gov.in/news_letter_detail/?id=99

EOI. (2015b, July 13). *Press Statement by the Foreign Secretary of India after visiting Nepal. Embassy of India*. Retrieved July 13 from

https://www.indianembassy.org.np/index2.php?option=hJ2VNIcdZwr-tZyUVBPCr07ClaGIY4-kHvO0PSHiSdU&id=xf5KFPiPA-jOKaTSyNhRgPXTmOCHTflPMuHP9Ya-KHQ

EOI. (2021). *About India-Nepal Relations*. Embassy of India. Retrieved July 13 from https://www.indembkathmandu.gov.in/page/about-india-nepal-relations/

EON. (2023). *Trade and Commerce*. New Delhi. Retrieved 23 July from https://in.nepalembassy.gov.np/trade-and-commerce/#:~:text=India%20is%20Nepal's%20largest%20trade,standing%20over%20NPR%20106.69%20billion

Fanon, F. (1963). The wretched of the earth. In S. Okazaki, E. David, N. Abelmann, A. Tompar-Tiu, & J. Sustento-Seneriches (Eds.), *Journal of Aboriginal Health* (Vol. 5, pp. 6-47). Grove Press.

Feaver, P. D., & Lorber, E. B. (2010). *Coercive Diplomacy: Evaluating the Consequences of Financial Sanctions*. Legatum Institute.

Fellendorf, A. (2018). *Trading the temperature-voluntary carbon offsetting as climate change mitigation tool for developing countries: lessons from cookstove projects in Nepal* Technische Universität Wien].

Ferrand, B. (2004). Quels fondements juridiques aux embargos et blocus aux confins des XXe et XXIe siècles. *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*(2), 55-79.

Fisher, R., Ury, W. L., & Patton, B. (2011). *Getting to yes: Negotiating agreement without giving in*. Penguin Books.

Førland, T. E. (1993). The history of economic warfare: international law, effectiveness, strategies. *Journal of Peace Research, 30*(2), 151-162.

Forsythe, D. P. (1992). Democracy, war, and covert action. *Journal of Peace Research, 29*(4), 385-395.

Franco, C. (2015). *Coercive Diplomacy, Sanctions and International Law*. Istituto Affari Internazionali.

Freire, P. (2018). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Bloomsbury publishing.

Galtung, J. (1967). On the effects of international economic sanctions, with examples from the case of Rhodesia. *World politics, 19*(3), 378-416.

Geis, A. (2006). Spotting the 'Enemy'? Democracies and the Challenge of the 'Other'. In A.Geis, L. Brock, & H. Müller (Eds.), *Democratic Wars: Looking at the Dark Side of the Democratic Peace. Basingstoke* (pp. 142-169). Palgrave Macmillan.

Geis, A., Brock, L., & Müller, H. (2006). *Democratic Wars*. Palgrave Macmillan.

George, A. L. (1991). *Forceful persuasion: Coercive diplomacy as an alternative to war*. US Institute of Peace Press.

George, A. L. (1994). Coercive diplomacy: definition and characteristics. In W. E. Simons, D. K. Hall, B. W. Jentleson, S. D. Sagan, R. Herrmann, P. G. Lauren, & T. Zimmermann (Eds.), *The limits of coercive diplomacy* (pp. 7-21). Westview Press Boulder, CO.

Ghimire, S. P. (2024). Constructing cultural integration through rhetoric in Modi's speech in Lumbini, Nepal. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, 11*(1), 1-7.

Ghimire, Y. (2015a). *In 'shadow boxing' between Nepal and India, China gains influence*. The Indian Express. Retrieved July 13 from https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/in-shadow-boxing-between-nepal-and-india-china-gains-influence/

Ghimire, Y. (2015b). *Nepal's Prime Minister K P Oli slams India again, praises China*. The Indian Express. Retrieved July 13 from https://indianexpress.com/article/world/neighbours/nepals-prime-minister-k-p-oli-slams-india-again-praises-china/

Ghimire, Y. (2021). *The Causes and Consequences of Indian Sanction on Nepal* [Interview].

GOI. (2015a). *Official Spokesperson's Response to a Query on Nepal*. Ministry of External Affair. Retrieved July 13 from https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/25842/Official+Spokespersons+response+to+a+query+on+Nepal

GOI. (2015b). *Statement by External Affairs Minister*. Ministry of External Affair. Retrieved July 13 from https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/25803/Statement+by+External+Affairs+Minister

GOI. (2015c). *Statement on Nepal*. Ministry of External Affair. Retrieved July 13 from http://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/26218/Statement_on_Nepal

GOI. (2015d). *Statement on the situation in Nepal*. Miniatry of Foreign Affair. Retrieved July 13 from https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/25821/Statement_on_the_situation_in_Nepal

GOI. (2016). *Office memorandum, guidelines on cross border trade of electricity*. Ministry of Foreign Affair. Retrieved

July 13 from https:// www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?51/Press_Releases

Gokhale, V. (2021, October 4). *India's Fog of misunderstanding surrounding Nepal–China Relations*. Retrieved July 12 from https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2021/10/indias-fog-of-misunderstanding-surrounding-nepal-china-relations?lang=en

GON. (2016). *Report on Nepal's Foreign Affairs*.

Goodhand, J., & Walton, O. (2019). Marginal Gains: Borderland Dynamics in Post-War Nepal. In D. Thapa (Ed.), *The Politics of Change: Reflection on Contemporary Nepal* (pp. 109-132). Himal Books for Social Science Baha and The Asia Foundation.

Gordon, J. (2010). *Invisible war: the United States and the Iraq sanctions*. Harvard University Press.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation*. Sage.

Gupta, A. (2010). *India needs a new paradigm in its Nepal policy*. IDSA. Retrieved July from https://idsa.in/idsacomments/IndianeedsanewparadigminitsNepalpolicy_agupta_180810

Haass, R. N. (1997). Sanctioning madness. *Foreign Aff., 76*, 74.

Hachhethu, K. (2007). *Madheshi Nationalism and Restructuring the Nepali State*. T. Nepal and Asian Studies. http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.694.9316&rep=rep1&type=pdf

Haidar, S. (2015). *Blame game on India and Nepal as trucks pile up*. The Hindu. Retrieved July 13 from https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/blame-game-between-india-and-nepal-as-trucks-pile-up/article7692820.ece

Hanson, F., Currey, E., & Beattie, T. (2020). The Chinese Communist Party's Coercive Diplomacy.

Hufbauer, G., Schott, J., Elliott, K., & Oegg, B. (2007). Economic Sanctions Reconsidered (3rd edition). *Journal of International Economics*, 135-137.

Hufbauer, G. C., Schott, J. J., & Elliott, K. A. (1990). *Economic sanctions reconsidered: History and current policy*. Peterson Institute.

Humphreys, A. R. (2015). From national interest to global reform: Patterns of reasoning in British foreign policy discourse. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, *17*(4), 568-584.

Ibrahim, A. (2020, July 13). *Modi's Slide Toward Autocracy*. Foreign Policy. Retrieved July 13 from

https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/07/13/modi-india-hindutva-hindu-nationalism-autocracy/

ICC. (2007). *Nepal's Constitutional Process*. https://nepalconflictreport.ohchr.org/files/docs/2007-02-26_report_icg_eng.pdf

ICC. (2016). *Nepal's Divisive New Constitution*.

ICG. (2016). *Nepal's Divisive New Constitution: An Existential Crisis* (In Asia Report N°276, Issue. I. C. Group. https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia/nepal/nepal%E2%80%99s-divisive-new-constitution-existential-crisis

IDEA. (2015). *Nepal's constitution building process: 2006–2015 progress, challenges, and contributions of international community*. International IDEA Kathmandu.

Ilario, S. (2011). *Is coercive diplomacy a viable means to achieve political objectives*. E-International Relations. Retrieved May 15 from https://www.e-ir.info/2009/06/29/is-coercive-diplomacy-a-viable-means-to-achieve-political-objectives/

Ilieva, J., Dashtevski, A., & Kokotovic, F. (2018). Economic sanctions in international law. *UTMS Journal of Economics*, *9*(2), 201-211.

INHURED. (2016). *Unofficial blockade of Nepal by India : Issue Brief*.

INSEC, & DFHRI. (2016). *Unilateral coercive blockade imposed by India on Nepal*. Kathmandu. www.insec.org.np and www.dfhri.org

Ivan, A. T. (2005). *How the weak win wars: A theory of asymmetric conflict* (Vol. 99). Cambridge University Press.

Iyengar, R. (2015, July 12). *Millions of Children Are At Risk Because of the Nepal Blockade, UNICEF Warns*. Retrieved Nov 30 from https://time.com/4130341/nepal-blockade-vaccine-shortage-children-unicef/

Jaiswal, P. (2015). *Contextualizing Madhesi Frustration in the Wake of Nepal's New Constitution*. IDSA. Retrieved July 13 from https://idsa.in/idsacomments/ContextualizingMadhesiFrustrationintheWakeofNepalsNewConstitution_pjaiswal_280915

Jakobsen, P. (1998). *Western use of coercive diplomacy after the Cold War: a challenge for theory and practice*. Macmillan Press Ltd.

James, P., & Mitchell, G. E. (1995). Targets of covert pressure: The hidden victims of the democratic peace. *International Interactions, 21*(1), 85-107.

Janjua, S. J. (2007). Political crisis in nepal 2005-2006: The india factor. *Strategic Studies, 27*(1), 81-107.

Jha, H. B. (2015). *Nepal's new constitution: An analysis from the madheshi perspective*. IDSA. Retrieved July 13 from https://idsa.in/idsacomments/NepalsNewConstitution_hbjha_240915

Jha, J. (2020). *When it comes to territorial integrity, Madheshis have no ifs and buts*. My Republica. Retrieved July 13 from https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/when-it-comes-to-territorial-integrity-madheshis-have-no-ifs-and-buts/

Jnawali, H. H. (2023). Indian intervention in ethnic movement of Nepal: Did Madheshi lose or gain? *Ethnicities, 23*(2), 235-257.

Joshi, B. L., & Rose, L. E. (1967). *Democratic Innovations in Nepal* (Vol. 26). Berkeley, California:.

Jwaala, P. (2015). *Nākābandī, rāṣṭriyatā ra ātmanirbharatā* https://ekantipur.com/ampnews/2015-10-04/20151004080938.html

Kaempfer, W. H., & Lorwenberg, A. D. (2007). The problems and promise of sanctions. In D. Cortright & G. Lopez (Eds.), *Economic Sanctions: Panacea or Peacebuildingin a Psost-Cold War World? Boulder* (pp. 61-71). Routledge.

Kafle, L. (2015). *Madhes, India and blockade*. MySansar. Retrieved July 13 from https://www.mysansar.com/2015/10/20157/

Kant, I. (1915). *Perpetual peace: A philosophical essay*. G. Allen & Unwin Limited.

Kaplan, R. D. (2002). *The revenge of geography*. Random House.

Karki, K. K., & Hari, K. (2020). Nepal-India relations: beyond realist and liberal theoretical prisms. *Journal of International Affairs, 3*(1), 84-102.

Karki, T. (2022, July 12). *Political Blackmailing: A Case Study of India's Unofficial Blockade on Nepal*. SSRN. Retrieved August, 22 from https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4197326

Katzman, K. (2011). *Iran sanctions* (Vol. 19). Congressional Research Service Washington, DC.

Kaura, V. (2018). *A report card on Modi's "neighbourhood first" approach to foreign policy.* The Diplomat. Retrieved

July 13 from https://thediplomat.com/2017/12/%20grading-indias-neighborhood-diplomacy/

KC, S. (2016). *Sagarmatha Bishes with Surendra KC*Sagarmatha TV.

Kern, A. (2009). *Economic Sanctions Law and Public Policy*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Khabar, O. (2015, Octuber 07). *Janajati leaders seek Indian support for their cause*. Retrieved Jan 16 from https://www.onlinekhabar.com/2015/10/336147

Khan, V. (2018). *Labor migration, remittances, and human capital accumuation in Nepal* KDI School].

Khanal, G. (2015). *Bhuraajniti*. Finix Books Publication.

Khanal, K. (2021). *Causes and Consequences of Indian sanction against Nepal/Interviewer* [Interview].

Kirshner, J. (1997). The microfoundations of economic sanctions. *Security Studies, 6*(3), 32-64.

Koga, Y. (2005). *Constructivist Approach of International Sanctions: Realism, Liberalism, Cosmopolitanism, and Hegemonism* Istanbul International Conference Istanbul, Turkey.

Koirala, K. P. (2016). *Nepal makes first amendment of its constitution four months after promulgation*. The

Himalayan Times. Retrieved July 13 from https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/breaking-nepal-makes-first-amendment-of-its-constitution/

Krämer, K. H. (2003). Nepal in 2002: Emergency and Resurrection of Royal Power. *Asian Survey, 43*(1), 208-214.

Lacy, D., & Niou, E. M. (2004). A theory of economic sanctions and issue linkage: The roles of preferences, information, and threats. *The Journal of Politics, 66*(1), 25-42.

Langenheim, W. S. (2002, Aug 12). *Give Peace a Chance: First, try coercive diplomacy*. JSTOR. Retrieved July 12 from https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol55/iss4/6/

Lektzian, D., & Souva, M. (2003). The economic peace between democracies: Economic sanctions and domestic institutions. *Journal of Peace Research, 40*(6), 641-660.

Lektzian, D., & Souva, M. (2007). An institutional theory of sanctions onset and success. *Journal of Conflict Resolution, 51*(6), 848-871.

Lenway, S. A. (1988). Between war and commerce: economic sanctions as a tool of statecraft. *International Organization*, *42*(2), 397-426.

Leyton Brown, D. (2017). Lessons and policy considerations about economic sanctions. In D. Leyton-Brown (Ed.), *The*

Utility of International Economic Sanctions (pp. 303-311). St. Martin's Press.

Lindsay, J. M. (1986). Trade sanctions as policy instruments: A re-examination. *International Studies Quarterly, 30*(2), 153-173.

Losman, D. L. (1979). *International economic sanctions; the cases of Cuba, Israel, and Rhodesia*. University of New Mexico Press.

Majlessi, M. S. (2002). Use of Economic Sanctions under International Law: A Contemporary Assessment. *Canadian Yearbook of International Law/Annuaire canadien de droit international, 39*, 253-331.

Majumder, S. (2015). *Why India is concerned about Nepal's constitution*. BBC News. Retrieved July 13 from http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-34313280

Malik, A. H., & Sheikh, N. A. (2016). Changing dynamics of Indo-Bhutan relations: implications for India. *International Journal of Political Science and Development, 4*(2), 44-53.

Manan, M. (2017). Foreign Policy and National Interest: Realism and Its Critiques. *Jurnal Global & Strategis, 9*(2), 175. https://doi.org/10.20473/jgs.9.2.2015.175-189

Maoz, Z., & Russett, B. (1993). Normative and structural causes of democratic peace, 1946–1986. *American Political Science Review, 87*(3), 624-638.

Markwica, R. (2018). *Emotional choices: How the logic of affect shapes coercive diplomacy*. Oxford University Press.

Masters, J. (2017). *What Are Economic Sanctions?* Retrieved July 13 from https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-are-economic-sanctions

MASUM. (2016). Report on fact-finding on impact of blockade along Indo-Nepal border. Fact-Finding Report, Forum Asia, Kathmandu/ Dhaka.

Mazumder, T. A. (2015, Sep 24). *Why India wants Nepalese constitution to make way for Madhesis*. India Tomorrow. Retrieved July 13 from https://old.indiatomorrow.net/eng/why-india-wants-nepalese-constitution-to-make-way-for-madhesis

McGee, R. W. (2004). Trade sanctions as a tool of International Relations. *Commentaries on law & public policy, 2*, 229-303.

Mearsheimer, J. J. (2001). *The tragedy of great power politics*. WW Norton & Company.

Mehta, P. B. (2011). Do new democracies support democracy? Reluctant India. *Journal of Democracy*, *22*(4), 97-109.

Menon, S. (2016). *Inside the making of India's foreign policy* (Vol. 31). Brookings.

Merli, F. J., & Ferrell, R. H. (2002). *Blockades*. American Foreign Relations. Retrieved July 13 from https://www.americanforeignrelations.com/A-D/Blockades.html

Meulen, O. (2018). *Liberal European economic sanctions against Russia: The European Union as the (last) defender of liberal norms and values?* Leiden University]. Rapenburg Netherlands.

Miller, R. (2014). *Capitalistic Christians and educated elites: Fanonian theory and neo-colonialism in Ngugi WaThiong'o's A Grain of Wheat. English Seminar Capstone Research Papers*. http://digitalcommons.cedarville.edu/english_seminar_capstone/26

MOFA. (2016a, September 16). *Joint Statement on the State visit of Prime Minister of Nepal, Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' to India*. Retrieved July 12 from https://mofa.gov.np/jointstatement/

MOFA. (2016b). *Report on Nepal's Foreign Affairs (2015-2016)*. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Nepal.

MOFA. (2017, August 24). *India-Nepal Joint Statement during the State Visit of Prime Minister of Nepal to India (23-27 August 2017)*. Retrieved Jan 12 from https://mofa.gov.np/india-nepal-joint-statement-state-visit-prime-minister-nepal-india-23-27-august-2017/

MOFA. (2019). *History of Nepal*. Ministry of Foreign Affair. Retrieved July 13 from https://mofa.gov.np/about-nepal/history-of-nepal/

Morgan, T. C., & Schwebach, V. L. (1995). Economic sanctions as an instrument of foreign policy: The role of domestic politics. *International Interactions, 21*(3), 247-263.

Morgenthau, H. J. (1948). *Politics among the nations: the struggle for power and Peace*. Alfred A. Knopf.

Müller, H. (2004). The antinomy of democratic peace. *International Politics, 41*(4), 494-520.

Muni, S. D. (1992). *India and Nepal: A changing relationship*. Stosius Incorporated/Advent Books Division.

Muni, S. D. (2015a). India's Nepal policy. In D. M. Malone, C. R. Mohan, & S. Raghava (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Indian Foreign Policy* (pp. 1997-1999). Oxford University Press.

Muni, S. D. (2015b). Nepal's New Constitution. *Economic and Political Weekly, 50*(40), 15-19.

Muni, S. D. (2016, March 28). *No zero sums in this great game*. The Hindu. Retrieved July 13 from https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/no-zero-sums-in-this-great-game/article8402444.ece

Nayak, N. (2018, September 3). *Nepal-China transit agreement: An evaluation*. IDSA. https://idsa.in/issuebrief/nepal-china-transit-agreement-nnayak-270918

Nayak, N. (2018). *Nepal-China transit agreement: An evaluation*. Retrieved Aug 12 from https://www.idsa.in/publisher/issuebrief/nepal-china-transit-agreement-an-evaluation/

Nayak, N. R. (2014). *Strategic himalayas: republican Nepal and external powers*. Pentagon Press and Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses.

Nayak, N. R. (2015, Sept 28). *Post-constitution shivers in Nepal and India's response*. Institute for Defence Studies & Analysis. https://idsa.in/idsacomments/PostConstitutionShiversinNepalandIndiasResponse_nnayak_280915

NDTV. (2016, July 19). *Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli Says India Visit Aimed At Normalising Ties*. Retrieved Feb 15 from https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/nepal-prime-minister-kp-sharma-oli-says-india-visit-aimed-at-normalising-ties-1277637

Nincic, M., & Wallensteen, P. (1983). Economic Coercion and Foreign Policy In M. Nincic & P. Wallensteen (Eds.), *Dilemmas of Economic Coercion: Sanctions in World Politics Economic Coercion and Foreign Policy*. Praeger.

Nossal, K. (1989). International Sanctions as International Punishment. *International Organization, 43*(2), 301–322.

Nozarin, A., & Yazdani, E. (2015). The Effect of Western Sanctions on the Political Will and Economic Structure of Iran. *International Journal of Resistive Economics, 3*(5), 90-106.

Nuechterlein, D. E. (1976). National interests and foreign policy: A conceptual framework for analysis and decision-making. *Review of International Studies, 2*(3), 246-266.

Nye Jr, J. S. (2008). Public diplomacy and soft power. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *616*(1), 94-109.

Ohlin, B. (1929). The Reparation Problem: A Discussion'Economic Journal, 39, June 1929. *reprinted in: Ellis Howard S. and Metzler, Lloyd A.(1950) Readings in the Theory of International Trade, George Allen and Unwin, London*, 170-178.

Ojha, H. (2015, November 27). *The India-Nepal Crisis*. The Diplomat. https://thediplomat.com/2015/11/the-india-nepal-crisis/

Palmer, N. D., & Perkins, H. C. (2012). *International relations: the world community in transition*. AITBS Publishers.

Pandey, L. (2016, Feb 16). *This was de facto Indian blockade but Nepal resolved it diplomatically: DPM Thapa*. The Himalayan Times. Retrieved July 13 from https://thehimalayantimes.com/kathmandu/it-was-de-facto-indian-blockade-says-dpm-thapa

Pandey, L. (2015). *Modi sends Jaishankar as special envoy on the eve of constitution commencement*. The Himalayan Times. Retrieved July 13 from https://thehimalayantimes.com/kathmandu/modi-sends-jaishankar-as-special-envoy-on-the-eve-of-constitution-commencement

Pandey, S. (2021). *Causes and Consequences of Indian sanction aganist Nepal* [Interview].

Pant, H. V. (2008). *Contemporary debates in Indian foreign and security policy: India negotiates its rise in the international system*. Springer.

Pant, R. (2015, Sep 24). *Bhāratīya nākābandī: Nāma madhēśakō svārtha bhāratakō*. Himal Khabar. Retrieved July 13 from https://archive.himalkhabar.com/112924

Pape, R. A. (1997). Why economic sanctions do not work. *International security*, *22*(2), 90-136.

Paquin, J., & Saideman, S. M. (2017). *Foreign intervention in ethnic conflicts*. ISAOUP. https://oxfordre.com/internationalstudies/internationalstudies/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.001.0001/acrefore-9780190846626-e-183

Pattisson, P. (2015, July 19). *Nepal border blockade 'threatens the future of the country itself', says UN*. Retrieved Feb 24 from https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/nov/18/nepal-border-blockade-india-threatens-future-un-unicef

Paudel, S. (2015, July 13). *The "unofficial blockade" has precipitated a significant shift in Nepal's relationship with its neighbours*. https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/southasia/2015/11/12/the-unofficial-blockade-has-propagated-a-significant-shift-in-nepals-relationship-with-its-giant-neighbours/

Peksen, D. (2020, July 13). *Socio-Economic and Political Consequences of Economic Sanctions for Target and Third-Party Countries*. https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Events/Seminars/CoercitiveMeasures/DursunPeksen.pdf

Perkovich, G. (2003). Is India a major power? *Washington Quarterly, 27*(1), 129-144.

Pokhrel, A. (2015, Oct 20). *Nepal's new constitution: a path to peace or further crisis?* Relief Web. Retrieved Jully 13 from https://reliefweb.int/report/nepal/nepal-s-new-constitution-path-peace-or-further-crisis

Poudel, S. S. (2022a, May 27). *Modi Visits the Buddha's Birthplace in Nepal*. Retrieved July 15 from https://thediplomat.com/2022/05/modi-visits-the-buddhas-birthplace-in-nepal/

Poudel, S. S. (2022b, December 30). *With China's Help, Nepal Chips Away at Its India-lockedness*. Retrieved July 12 from https://thediplomat.com/2022/12/with-chinas-help-nepal-chips-away-at-its-india-lockedness/

Prasain, S., & Giri, A. (2022, May 10). *Bhairahawa airport to open on May 16, but Modi won't land there*. Retrieved Aug 15 from

https://kathmandupost.com/national/2022/05/10/bhairahawa-airport-to-open-on-may-16-but-modi-won-t-land-there

Pyakuryal, B. (2016). Government seems unconcerned about economic problems. *The Himalayan Times* 1.

Rajagopalan, R. P. (2018, August 20). *Should rising China-Nepal military ties worry India?* https://thediplomat.com/2018/08/should-rising-china-nepal-military-ties-worry-india/

Ramachandran, S. (2018, February 08). *India and the Maldives Emergency*. Retrieved Nov 23 from https://thediplomat.com/2018/02/india-and-the-maldives-emergency/

Rengger, N. J. (2000). *International relations, political theory and the problem of order: Beyond international relations theory?* Routledge.

Renwick, R. (1981). *Economic sanctions*. Center for International Affairs, Harvard University.

Reus-Smit, C. (2005). Constructivismin. In S. Burchill & L. Andrew (Eds.), *Theories of International Relations* (pp. 188-212). Palgrave.

Richter, P. (2017). Trade Promotion in Nepal: 'An Impossible Task?'A Case Study on a Landlocked Least Developed Country. *Foreign Trade Review, 52*(1), 48-59.

Roche, E. (2016). *India welcomes Nepal constitution changes*. Retrieved July 24 from https://www.livemint.com/Politics/ReqgGDvx28aqG1vEyr4hbO/India-welcomes-Nepal-constitution-changes.html

Romeo, S. (2016). *Coercive diplomacy, theories and application: a case study on US administration and Libya* LUISS]. Viale Romania.

Rose, L. E. (1971). *Asia: Nepal: Strategy for Survival*. University of California Press.

Roy, S. (2015, September 24). *Make seven changes to your constitution: India tells Nepal*. http://www.indianexpress.com/article/world/neighbours/make-seven-changes-to-your-constitution-address-madhesi-concerns-india-to-nepal/

RSTV. (2015, July 13). *Indian envoy meets Nepal's new PM; Aims at easing ties*. Retrieved July 13 from http://rstv.nic.in/aiming-ease-ties-indian-envoy-meets-nepal-pm.html

[Record #659 is using a reference type undefined in this output style.]

Rudolf, P. (2007). *Sanctions on International Relations: On the Current State of Research* StiftungWissenschaft and Politik.

SAHR. (2016). *Nepal Blockade: A Humanitarian crisis amidst diplomatic Kerfuffle*. https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/55612059/nepal-blockade

Said, E. (1978). *Orientalism*. Vintage.

Saideman, S. M. (2001). *The Ties That Divide: Ethnic Politics, Foreign Policy and International Conflict*. Columbia University Press.

Sandole, D. (2010). *Peacebuilding: Preventing Violent Conflict in a Complex World*. Polity Press.

Sangraula, Y. (2016). Sanvidhāna nākābandī ra antarrāṣṭriya kānūna. In B. K. Paude (Ed.), *Nepal India Relationship: Past, present, and future* (pp. 275-300). Milestone Publication.

Sarup, A. (1972). Transit trade of land-locked Nepal. *International & Comparative Law Quarterly, 21*(2), 287-306.

SASEC. (2017, April 18). *Nepal President Embarks on India State Visit*. Retrieved July 12 from https://sasec.asia/index.php?page=news&nid=652&url=nepal-president-india-visit

SATP, & IFCM. (2016). *Nepal Assessment 2017*. SATP. Retrieved July 12 from

https://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/nepal/index.html
s

Schelling, T. C. (1970). The diplomacy of violence. In *Theories of Peace and Security: A Reader in Contemporary Strategic Thought* (pp. 64-84). Springer.

Sedliar, Y. (2017). The economic sanctions as the instrument of foreign policy. *Actual Problems of International Relations*(132), 18-26.

Sedrakyan, G. S. (2022). Ukraine war-induced sanctions against Russia: Consequences on transition economies. *Journal of Policy Modeling*, *44*(5), 863-885.

Segdel, A. (2018). *China's growing footprint in Nepal: Challenges and opportunities for India*. https://www.orfonline.org/research/chinas-growing-footprint-in-nepal-challenges-and-opportunities-for-india/

Shah, B. K. (2067). *Mailē Dēkhekō Darabāra*. Nepal Institute for Strategic Studies (NISS)

Shakoor, F. (1989). Indo-Nepal Dispute. *Pakistan Horizon*, *42*(3/4), 68-80.

Shakya, A., & Bhattarai, T. (2016). Post Disaster Assessment: Blockade 2015/16. Nepal Economic Forum Alliance for Social Dialogue,

Sharma, H. (2021). *Causes and consequeces of Indian blockade of 2015* [Interview]. Kathmandu;

Sharma, S. (2013). *Prayogsàlà: Nepàlã Saïkramaõmà Dillã, Darbàrra Màobàdã*. Fine Print.

Sharma, S. (2019). *The Nepal Nexus: An Inside Account of the Maoists, the Durbar and New Delhi*. Penguin Random House India Private Limited.

Sharma, S. (2021). *Causes and Consequences of Indian sanction against Nepal/Interviewer: B. Pant. Personal Interview, Kathmandu.* [Interview].

Sharma, S. P. (2021). *The causes and consequences of Indian sanction on Nepal* [Interview].

Sharp, P. (2009). *Diplomatic theory of international relations*. Cambridge University Press. .

Shiraz, Z. (2022, May 16). *Nepal PM Deuba inaugurates second international airport near Lumbini*. Retrieved July 01 from https://www.hindustantimes.com/lifestyle/travel/nepal-pm-deuba-inaugurates-second-international-airport-near-lumbini-101652713209277.html

Shrestha, A. M. (2006, May 21). *Declaration 2063 : Proper place to proper parties*. The Himalayan Times. Retrieved July 13 from

https://thehimalayantimes.com/opinion/declaration-2063-proper-place-to-proper-parties/

Shrestha, B. (2016). Nepal Bharat SambandhakaTitamitha Kura. In B. K. Paudel (Ed.), *Nepal India Relationship, Past, Present, and Future* (pp. 173-201). Milestone Publication.

Sijapati, B. (2007, Feb 1). *People's Participation in Conflict Transformation: A Case Study of Jana Andolan II in Nepal*. Future Generations Graduate School. https://www.future.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/nepal_people_create_peace_case_study.pdf

Simons, G. L. (1999). *Imposing economic sanctions: legal remedy or genocidal tool?* Pluto Press.

Singh, A. (2020, May 22). *From Kargil to Balakot: The Continuing Challenges to India's Modern Air Power*. Retrieved Jan 11 from https://www.orfonline.org/research/from-kargil-to-balakot-the-continuing-challenges-to-indias-modern-air-power-63233

Singh, B. (2016). India's Neighbourhood Policy: Geopolitical Fault Line of Its Nepal Policy in the Post-2015

Constitution. *Journal of International and Area Studies*, 59-75.

Singh, C. P. (2011). Origin and development of Madheshi movement in Nepal. *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 72*(22), 1047-1053.

Smeets, M. (2018). Can economic sanctions be effective?

Smith., J. (2022). *The Dynamics of Coercive Diplomacy: Strategies and Impacts.* . International Relations Press.

Soest, C. v., & Wahman, M. (2014). *The Underestimated Effect of Democratic Sanctions*. SSOAR. Retrieved July 13 from https://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/bitstream/handle/document/54949/ssoar-2014-soest_et_al-The_Underestimated_Effect_of_Democratic.pdf?sequence=1

Sood, R. (2020). A reset in India–Nepal relations. *The Hindu, May, 29*.

Sood, R. (2021, December 04). *Making friends, influencing Nepal*. Retrieved July 12 from https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/Rakesh-Sood-writes-making-friends-influencing-Nepal/article62119743.ece

Standarad, B. (2018, Aug 31). *PM Modi inaugurates 400-bed Nepal-Bharat Maitri Pashupati Dharamshala*. Retrieved Feb 12 from https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/pm-modi-inaugurates-400-bed-nepal-bharat-maitri-pashupati-dharamshala-118083100827_1.html

Stephenson, A. J. (2002). *Shades of Gray: gradual escalation and coercive diplomacy*. Air University, Air War College.

Swaraj, S. (2015, December 03). *Statement by External Affairs Minister on Calling Attention Motion on "Situation in Nepal and State of Indo-Nepal Relation" in RajyaSabha*. Ministry of Foreign Affair. https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/26104/Statement+by+External+Affairs+Minister+on+Calling+Attention+Motion+on+Situation+in+Nepal+and+State+of+IndoNepal+Relation+in+Rajya+Sabha+December+03+2015

Szasz, P. (2019). The Law of Economic Sanctions. In Michael & L. C G (Eds.), *The Law of Armed Conflict: Into the Next Millenium* (pp. 455-481). Naval War College.

TCC. (2008). *Observing the 2008 Nepal Constituent Assembly Election*. https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/news/peace_publications/election_reports/FinalReportNepal2008.pdf

TCC. (2014). *Political Transition Monitoring in Nepal, 2009-2014: Final Report.:* . http://aceproject.org/ero-en/regions/asia/NP/nepal-final-report-political-transition-monitoring

TET. (2015, Jul 12). *Nepal releases 13 SSB personnel after briefly detaining them*. Retrieved Aug 16 from https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/nepal-releases-13-ssb-personnel-after-briefly-detaining-them/articleshow/49968905.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

TET. (2017, July 14). *Indian Oil to help build pipeline to supply fuel to Nepal: Dharmendra Pradhan*. The economic times. Retrieved Mar 27 from https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/indian-oil-to-help-build-pipeline-to-supply-fuel-to-nepal-dharmendra-pradhan/articleshow/57857811.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

TEX. (2015, November 6). *Nepal's PM K P Sharma Oli slams India for stand at UN, blockade*. Retrieved March 14 from https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/nepals-pm-k-p-sharma-oli-slams-india-for-stand-at-un-blockade/

Thapa, B. B. (2021, Aug 19). *Causes and Consequences of Indian Blockade* [Interview]. Bhuwaneswor Pant.

THT. (2015a). *4 Nepalis hit by bullets as Indian SSB opens fire in Sunsari village near border*. The Himalayan Times. Retrieved Nov, 2015 from https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/4-nepalis-injured-by-ssb-shot-bullets-in-sunsari

THT. (2015b). *SSB fired in air as smugglers attacked patrol team in Indian territory across Nepal border, claims Indian Embassy*. Retrieved Nov 25 from https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/ssb-fired-in-air-after-smugglers-attacked-patrol-team-in-indian-territory-across-nepal-border-indian-embassy

THT. (2016, Feb 08). *UDMF decides to end blockade, tells Mahato to correct himself.* The Himalayan Times. https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/udmf-formally-announces-end-of-blockade/

Times, N. (2015a, December 7). *Nepal in Rajya Sabha*. Retrieved 2021 from http://archive.nepalitimes.com/blogs/thebrief/2015/12/07/nepal-in-rajya-sabha/

Times, N. (2015b, September 25). Unofficial blockade. http://archive.nepalitimes.com/blogs/thebrief/2015/09/25/unofficial-blockade/

Tiwari, N. (2015). *India Welcomes Nepal's New Constitution With Blockade!* The Rising Nepal. Retrieved from www://therisingnepal.org.np/news/6815

Tiwari, S. (2016, Aug 28). *Bhāratakō nēpāla nīti*. http://annapurnapost.com/news/54722

TKP. (2015a). *Modi's special envoy, Oli hold an-hour-long secret meeting*. The Kathmandu Post. Retrieved July 13 from http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2015-09-18/modisspecial-envoy-holds-one-hour-long-separate-meeting-with-oli.htm

TKP. (2015b, August 16). *Nepal expresses concern at undue delay at border points*. https://kathmandupost.com/miscellaneous/2015/09/26/nepal-expresses-concern-by-undue-delay-at-border-points

TKP. (2015c, September 25). *Obstruction to Nepal-bound cargo from Nepali side: Indian Embassy*. https://kathmandupost.com/national/2015/09/25/obstruction-to-nepal-bound-cargo-from-nepali-side-indian-embassy

TKP. (2015d). *Utilise time before statute promulgation*. The Kathmandu Pos. Retrieved July 13 from http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2015-09-19/utilise-time-beforestatute-promulgation.html.

TKP. (2016a, June 21, 2016). *Blockade by India resulted in losses totalling Rs202 billion*. The Kathmandu Post. Retrieved July 12 from

https://kathmandupost.com/money/2016/06/21/blockade-by-india-resulted-in-losses-totalling-rs202-billion

TKP. (2016b, July 13). *Protesters stage sit-in at major border points*. Th e Kathmandu Post. Retrieved December 10 from http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2015–09–25/protesters-stage-sit-in-at-major-border-points.html

TOI. (2015, Nov 6). *Indian blockade more inhuman than war, says Nepal PM KP Sharma Oli*. https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Indian-blockade-more-inhuman-than-war-says-Nepal-PM-KP-Sharma-Oli/articleshow/49690974.cms

Tsebelis, G. (1990). Are sanctions effective? A game-theoretic analysis. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *34*(1), 3-28.

Van Bergeijk, P. (1995). The impact of economic sanctions in the 1990s. *The World Economy*, *18*(3), 443-455.

van den Herik, L. (2008). JM Farrall, United Nations Sanctions and the Rule of Law, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge2007, xxv+ 542 pp., UK£ 65/US $125. ISBN 978-0-521-87802-9. *Netherlands International Law Review*, *55*(2), 301-304.

Vashisht, P. (2024). *Analyzing India-nepal Economic Integration $ bstatus, Challenges and Way Forward*. RIS,

Research and Information System for Developing Countries.

Von Soest, C., & Wahman, M. (2013). Sanctions and Democratization in the Post-Cold War Era. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2206849

von Soest, C., & Wahman, M. (2014, April 26). *The Underestimated Effect of Democratic Sanctions*. https://www.e-ir.info/pdf/48884

Wallensteen, P. (2000). *A century of economic sanctions: A field revisited*. Uppsala University.

Waltz, K. N. (1979). *Theory of international politics*. Waveland Press.

WB. (2018, April 02). *The World Bank In Nepal*. Retrieved July 14 from https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nepal/overview

Weiss, T. G. (1999). Sanctions as a foreign policy tool: Weighing humanitarian impulses. *Journal of Peace Research*, *36*(5), 499-509.

Wendt, A. (1999). *Social theory of international politics*. Cambridge University Press.

Wolfers, A. (1962). *National Security as an Ambiguous Symbol, in: Discord and Collaboration*. John Hopkins University Press.

Woodward, S. L. (2018). The use of sanctions in former Yugoslavia: Misunderstanding political realities. In G. Lopez (Ed.), *Economic Sanctions* (pp. 141-151). Routledge.

Wright, Q. A. (1965). *Study of War.NewYork: Midway Riprint*. Midway Riprint.

Wu, C.-H., & Lo, M.-W. (2024). The threat of China's economic coercion. In *Switching Diplomatic Recognition Between Taiwan and China* (pp. 14-49). Routledge.

Xavier, C. (2016, November 28). *India neighborhood policies: Can it deliver?* Retrieved July 13 from http://www.nepaleconomicforum.org/uploades/news-updates/file/22_20161211115433.pdf

Yadav, A. (2016, Feb 04). *Is India really behind Nepal's economic blockade?* Scroll. Retrieved July 13 from https://scroll.in/article/802653/is-india-really-behind-nepals-economic-blockade

Yazdani, E., & Nozari, A. (2019). The Effect of Western Sanctions on the Political Will and Economic Structure of Iran. *International Journal of Resistive Economics, 7*(2), 36-52.