

**THE CAUSES AND IMPACTS OF MADHESHI PEOPLE'S
MOVEMENT
OF
2007 AND 2008**

A DISSERTATION

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Recommendation

This is to certify that Mr Kalyan Mathema has completed the dissertation entitled 'The Causes and Impacts of *Madheshi* People's Movement of 2007 and 2008' under my supervision.

I therefore, recommend this dissertation to the dissertation committee for final approval and acceptance.

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Letter of Approval

This dissertation entitled “THE CAUSES AND IMPACTS OF MADHESHI PEOPLE’S MOVEMENT OF 2007 AND 2008” submitted by Mr Kalyan Mathema has been accepted as a partial fulfillment of the requirement for Master’s Degree of Arts in Sociology

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Abstract

“The Causes and Impacts of *Madheshi* People’s Movement of 2007 and 2008”

This dissertation is a study of two ethnic uprisings that swept through the Tarai region of Nepal in 2007 and 2008. It aims to understand what caused these two uprisings, the impacts they had on Nepalese politics and the future of the achievements made by them. Research methodologies used for this research were semi-structured interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), questionnaire survey and study of secondary data available from various sources.

The *Madheshi* People’s Movement of 2007 was so powerful that it forced the Government to change the interim constitution and declare Nepal as a federal state. Following this uprising the number of *Madheshi* armed groups increased and engrained communal riots in the Tarai .

In February 13, 2008 UDMF (United Democratic *Madheshi* Front) the alliance of three *Madheshi* political parties, *Madheshi* Jana Adhikar Forum, Tarai Madhesh Loktantrik Party and Nepal Sadbhavana Party launched the second *Madheshi* People’s Movement to pressurize the Government to implement the 22-point-agreement the government had signed with MJF in August 30, 2007. The movement lasted for two weeks and during this period six protesters and one police officer died during the clashes between agitators and security forces. The agitation was called off by the UDMF in February 28 after the Government signed the eight-point-agreement with them. The main points in the eight-point-agreement were to make Nepal a federal state, to declare those who died in 2007 and 2008 uprisings as

martyrs and to make state more inclusive by making more reservations for *Madheshis* and other marginalized communities of Nepal.

The research diagnosed three main elements that contributed to the launching of the 2007 and 2008 Movements in the Tarai. The first element was the discrimination that *Madheshis* felt against them at the hand of not only the state but also different mainstream political parties. The second element was the radicalization of the regional and ethnic issues including that of the *Madheshis* brought about by ten years (1996 -2006) of Maoists rebellion. The third element was the People's Movement of 2006 that demonstrated that popular movement could force even powerful state to stoop to the wishes of the people.

Madheshi People's Movements made important impact on Nepal's politics. Apart from the declaration of Nepal as a federal state, the credit for the outstanding performance of *Madheshi* political parties in 2008 election goes to the *Madheshi* movement. The fact that the first President and the first Vice President of Nepal were from the *Madheshi* community could also be seen as an outcome of this Movements. The agreements signed between the Government of Nepal and MJF in 2007 and between Government of Nepal and UDMF in 2008 the Government of Nepal making special reservations for *Madheshis* in different government jobs was another achievement of these movements.

Madheshi People's Movements were able to radicalize *Madheshis*, this radicalization in turn caused the fracture of *Madheshi* identity. Many marginalized communities within *Madheshi* community were so radicalized by the Movements that they started fighting for their own independent identity. Tharus, the Tarai Muslims and the Tarai Dalits who once had participated in the *Madheshi* People's movements

are now claiming that they are not *Madheshis*. Such revolt of different communities has weakened the leaders of these two uprisings. If such ethnic identity based divisions continue within *Madheshi* organizations, *Madheshi* forces will be weakened and the achievements made by two *Madheshi* People's Movements will be challenged and jeopardized. The *Madheshi* parties need to present themselves as the party of all marginalized communities of Nepal, not just of *Madheshi* people, if they wish to retain the positive changes that they have already brought about. If this does not happen, the identity politics which *Madheshi* political parties had started will leave them in tatters as other identities within the *Madheshi* identity, which were radicalized by the movements, will revolt for their individual identity.

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List of abbreviations

ATMM	Akhil Tarai Mukti Morch (All Tarai Liberation Front)
BHB	Bishan Hilmali Bagh (Ferocious Himalayan Tiger)
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BSP	Bahujan Samaj Party
CA	Constituent Assembly
CBES	Chure Bhawar Ekta Samja (Chure Bhawar Unity Society)
CBREP	Chure Bhawar Rastiya Ekata Party (Chure Bhawar National Unity Party)
CD	Caribbean Dog
CDO	Chief District Officer
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CPI	Communist Party of India
CPI (Maoist)	Communist Party of India (Maoist)
CPM	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
CPN (M)	Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)
CPN(UML)	Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist)
ECDC	Electoral Constituency Delimitation Commission
GMM	Gorkha Mukti Morcha (Gorkha Liberation Front)
HSS	Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS's Nepal affiliate)
JGTMM	Janabadhi Ganatantik Tarai Mukti Morcha (People's Republican Tarai Liberation Front)
JTMM(BS)	Janatantrik Tarai Mukti Morch (Bisput Singh) or (Democratic Tarai Liberation Front-Bisput Singh led fraction)
JTMM (G)	Janatantrik Tarai Mukti Morch (Goit) or (Democratic Tarai Liberation Front-Goit led fraction)
JTMM (HS)	Janatantrik Tarai Mukti Morch (Himat Singh) or (Democratic Tarai Liberation Front -Himat Singh led fraction)
JTMM (J)	Janatantrik Tarai Mukti Morch (Jwala Singh) or (Democratic Tarai Liberation Front -Jwala Singh led fraction)
JTMM (PS)	Janatantrik Tarai Mukti Morch (Pirthivi Singh) or (Democratic Tarai Liberation Front-Pirthivi Singh led fraction)
JTMM (RM)	Janatantrik Tarai Mukti Morch (Rajan Mukti) or (Democratic Tarai Liberation Front -Rajan Mukti led fraction)
KJP	Kirat Janabadhi Party (Kirat People's Party)
KMM	Krantikari Madhesi Morcha (Janamorcha front)
LMS	Loktantrik Madhesi Sangathan (UML front)
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tarai Elam (not to be confused with LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam)of Sri Lanka)
MADA	Madhesh Army
MJF	Madheshi Janadhikar Forum (Madheshi People's Right Forum)
MLA	Member of Legislative Assembly (in state legislatures in India)
MM	Mahan Madhesh Great Madhesh

MMT	Madheshi Mukti Tigers (Madheshi Liberation Tigers)
MNS	Madhesh Navnirman Sena (Madhesh Reconstruction Army)
MPRF	Madheshi Janadhikar Forum (acronym formed from English translation: Madheshi People's Rights Forum)
MRJ(R)	Madhesh Rastra Janatantrik (Revolutionary) or Madhesh National Democratic (Revolutionary)
MRMM	Madheshi Rashtriya Mukti Morcha (Madheshi National Liberation Front), Maoist front
MS	Madhesh Sena (Madhesh Army)
MSF	Madheshi Special Force
MSK	Madheshi Silent Killers
MSTF	Madheshi Student Force
MT	Madheshi Tigers
MVKP	Madheshi Virus Killers Party
NC	Nepali Congress
NC(D)	Nepali Congress (Democratic)
NDA	Nepal Defense Army
NJP	Nepal Janatantrik Party (Nepal Democratic Party)
NRA	National Republican Army
NSP(A)	Nepal Sadbhavana Party (Anandidevi)
NSP (M)	Nepal Sadbhavana Party (Rajendra Mahato)
NWPP	Nepal Workers and Peasants' Party
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PLA	People's Liberation Army (Maoist)
PX	Python X
RNA	Rasitya Nepali Army (not to be confused with erstwhile Royal Nepalese Army)
RPP	Rashtriya Prajatantra Party
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
SJTMM	Samyukta Janatantrik Tarai Mukti Morcha (United Democratic Tarai Liberation Front)
SKLTK	Santi ka Langai Tarai Kranti (Tarai Revolution for Peace)
SMM	Sahi Mukti Morcha (Royal Liberation Front)
SP	Samajwadi Party
SPA	Seven-Party Alliance (includes NC, UML, NSP(A), NC(D), Janamorcha Nepal, NWPP and ULF)
TA	Tarai Army
TB	Tarai Baghi
TC	Tarai Cobra
TCL	Tarai Commando League
TGMM	Tarai Ganatantrik Mukti Marcha
TKKS	Tarai Kalyan Kari Sangh
TMLP	Tarai Madhesh Loktantirk Party (Tarai Madhesh Democratic

	Party)
TT	Tarai Tigers
TUS	Tarai Uthan Sangathan
UCPN (Maoist)	United Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)
UD	Udayapur Dinosaurs
UDTLF	United Democratic Tarai Liberation Front
ULF	United Left Front
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMIN	United Nations Mission in Nepal
UP	Uttar Pradesh
VHM	Vishwa Hindu Mahasangh
VHP	Vishwa Hindu Parishad
YCL	Young Communist League
YF	Youth Force