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**QUESTION: IN NOT MORE THAN 3 PAGES, DISCUSS THE STAGES OF INSURGENCY.**

**Insurgency** is an asymmetric warfare; as it is focused on avoiding the strength of the enemy and exploiting their weakness. Insurgency is an act of violence on behalf of the minorities, spontaneous or planned, which is construed as politically motivated. (Fording, 2001)

Every insurgency develops differently. Due to the environment they grow from. But some general patterns can be observed. Some may evolve through all the stages, may skip stages Others, wither away or stop if they are effectively countered or before they reach the later stage. Measures that succeed against incipient insurgencies, often differ greatly from those that are effective against mature or declining insurgencies. (US Counter insurgency Guide 2009).

There are four stages of insurgency. **First, the Pre-insurgency stage**. This is the most difficult stage of the insurgency to detect. As at this stage, their activities are hidden, which makes it very difficult to get them. (e.g. how Boko Haram started). There are certain factors by which insurgents in this stage use to develop.

1. **Pre-existing conditions**- in every society where insurgency exists there must be historical factors, recent conflict which caused them to develop. Reasons being that.

A. there has been internal conflicts in the region and some groups see violence as a means to supress their dissatisfaction. So, they take advantage of a lot of hideouts, such as, forest, mountains, desserts etc. Since the region is underdeveloped, and government forces will hardly find their way around.

B. There are certain polices made by government that causes neglect, creating a need to form a group identity. (Guide to Analysis of Insurgency 2012).

C. When government do not provide basic necessities such as food, education, health services, employment etc. Which enable people live through their everyday life. Failure to do this creates capacity gap. Other factors include:

1. **Grievances:** There is always a reason behind every problem. to effectively rally the populations support. Insurgents must publicise grievances so as to justify what they do in the eyes of the population. Various ways this can be done. 1. Media airing different point of views. 2. Possible demonstrations and protests on the issue.
2. **Group identity**: Creating identity based on beliefs, to make them distinct from the rest of the population. It creates an idea of “Come join us, our course is good” We identify this when. 1. Use of sign language to see the government as a foreigner. 2. Emphasizing certain cultural, ethnic symbol that set them apart from the rest.
3. **Recruitment and recruit:** Identification of skilled people receiving training.
4. **Arms and supplies:** They gather resources- build up stock of supplies e.g. weapons to be able to afford these- 1. They involve themselves in criminal activities such as kidnapping, drug trafficking etc. 2. Evidence of multiple thefts of weapons
5. **Government Reaction.** This is the last factor of the Pre-insurgency stage. Insurgents would go through all these factors to seek a reaction from the government. It indicates that their course is going as planned.

At this stage, they are still feeble and can be defeated. However, attacking members of subgroup could escalate it. Thus, re-inventing the “Us versus them” and “Join us” becomes evident.

**The Next stage (2nd Stage) of insurgency is the “Incipient conflict stage” or “Emerging stage”.** This stage the insurgents begin to use violence on a large scale such as hostage taking, bombings, and so on. and these initial attacks, makes government conclude the actions to be works of bandits, terrorists. It’s a very risky stage. they seek an overreaction from the government. Understanding this stage is important as it helps decision makers to know if it would expand into a full-blown insurgency. The factors to look out for in this stage

1. **Insurgent Leadership**; it is important to know the identity of the leaders and they joined. What experiences do they have. Their charisma, flexibility, ability to balance grievances and maintain group unity will help identify, the insurgent movements. (Guide on the Analysis of insurgency 2012).
2. **Theory of Victory:** Deals with their vision and mission to reach the end. How do they plan to achieve their desired goals? They might want to push government to negotiate peace, get attention from outside forces, lead uprisings to bend the government to their demands, if all fails defeat the government on battlefield if need be.
3. **Insurgent Unity:** It is important to find out if there is competition within the group, little issues that cause fights. They can be used as bait. However, even with this, they still have potential, especially in the face of a weak government.
4. **Popular Support:** The battle of the heart and mind is always the most important and difficult to win. As, the insurgents cannot prevail without it. They require food, health care, shelter and intelligence when things go wrong. We know when the citizens have given their support to the insurgents when. 1. Number of sympathizers increase. 2. The insurgents begin to get details of security operations.
5. **Insurgent Logistics:** Insurgents must have sponsors as they cannot get supplies such as weapons from the citizens. Signs such as these show insurgents have expanded their bases of support. 1. Evidence of robberies of security ammunitions. 2. They begin to gain external support in logistics, training from terrorist organisations if possible. (Guide to the Analysis of insurgency 2012).
6. **Government Leadership**: The governments ability to take corrective actions to resolve the conflict. And how effective their measures are.
7. **Security Forces Effectiveness:** partly, one of the reasons insurgents develop in the first place is due to the ineffectiveness of security force. How well they are doing in protecting the population they swore to. Are they violent towards them.
8. **External support:** This Plays an important role as when government gets support from neighbouring states, they could deprive insurgents of their survival kits. and help the governments counter measures, with trained troops and expert advisers.

**The Next stage (3rd Stage) of Insurgency is the “Open Stage”.** This stage clearly shows that the government is dealing with an insurgency case. As they now challenge government openly. They exert regular aggression. With more fighters. Factors to consider during this stage.

1. **Political Factors:** They now want to overthrow government. Alternative administrative structures are created to provide administrative services such as, Education, health care, or justice. Furthermore, they establish “No go areas”.
2. **Military Factors**: Insurgents now operate professionally, Using terrorist tactics. Attacking crowded places such as- Church, schools. Indications that insurgents are going stronger military wise are- 1. They are so organised now they can split themselves into groups of part time fighters, full time and supporters. Their attacks equipment and method of communication have become somewhat sophisticated. 2. An increase in the use of modern arms such as machine guns. 3. They’ve become so disciplined, in their ability to command and control weapons. (Guide to the Analysis of insurgency 2012).
3. **External Assistance:** This becomes more evident in this stage, for both sides. Since the citizens can’t provide the insurgents with certain needs, they get financial needs, arms, intelligence from outside.

**The Last Stage of Insurgency is the “Resolution Stage”.** The concluding part of the life cycle of insurgents. It determines how they end up. An insurgent victory or negotiated one. It could also be the government outsmarted them with a good counter measure.

1. **Insurgent Victory**: This could happen if by chance the insurgents overpower government, get independence for their region. Whenever insurgents are on the verge of achieving their goals: 1. The population see the government as illegitimate. 2. Reputable individuals no longer give their support. 3. Insurgents acquire more territory. 4. Economy weakens. 5. Tendency of coups occurring increases.

Over the years, about 300 insurgent conflicts have occurred. Simultaneously, at least 2dozen were on at late 2011 for more than 21 years. Out of this about only 36% ended up with insurgent victory in space of 10years. (Guide to the Analysis of insurgency). This victory is likely to cause the emergence of another violent group.

1. **Negotiated Settlement:** delay in implementation and spoilers interfering, could ruin settlement. A lot of uncertainties occur at this time. Insurgents may just be buying themselves more time to strike again. Indicators that they actually want to negotiate- 1. There goals have become grantable. 2. Attempts to win physically on the battlefields, to improve their stance while bargaining. 3. Foreign allies begin to push both sides to negotiate. (Guide to the Analysis of Insurgency 2012).

Over the years about 28% insurgency cases had mixed outcomes. Because, the insurgents made significant demands, stretching it to a period of 8years. (Guide to the Analysis of Insurgency 2012).

1. **The last factor to consider is the Government Victory:** Though there is gradual decline in violence, the fact that the government destroy their infrastructure, makes them go back underground. Which is like returning back to the first stage. Creating a very elongated process. And the violence just keeps prevailing for years with no final full stop.

Nevertheless, a winning government becomes evident when: 1. There’s less threats on life, and people get back to their daily activities. 3. Administration is back and functioning. 4. There is open interactions and free flow of communication. 5. Security forces operate normally without pressure etc. Approximately 36% cases have gotten government victory in the space of 10years.

**Conclusively**, Insurgency is always possible in a region. However, with credible and determined response, insurgent errors can be sited. In any case, while developing on effective counter insurgency tactics and strategy, the citizens should never be neglected.

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