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**GENESIS AND GROWTH
OF
NAXALITE MOVEMENT IN INDIA**

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PREFACE

The world is familiar now with the menace of militancy that is spreading in the shape of violent activities of non-state actors that are up in arms to achieve their various agendas that neither the states nor their societies approve in any way. In fact, it is seen that such activities are opposed and confronted by governments by whatever means that their policies and resources permit; indeed efforts to engage and contain such elements are the serious concern of all countries.

On the other hand, it is also a bitter reality that no society or state has so far been able to successfully control such violent actors or groups. Reports of their subversive activities making headlines in press and broadcasts is media's daily fare. India is no exception to this growing trend of violent agitation and has been facing, what is called the Naxal uprising now for many years. The violent activities of this left ideological group of insurgents who want basic change in the socio-economic structure of the country are intensifying by the day. Out of India's 604 districts, the Naxalite movement is strong and present in 240 or more. Thousands of people on both sides have been killed and the killing continues.

The Indian Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, on more than one occasion described the Naxal insurgency as the biggest threat to the internal security of the country. This is a serious matter and deserves international attention as the rebellion can have a long-term and long-range destabilising effect in the region and beyond. India is home to one sixth of the world's population. The growth of extremism in a country of this size cannot be dismissed as a local matter; also, particularly, a stable democracy like India's should not have nurtured such developments. Yet the supposition that democracies normally do not lead to the growth of violent movements does not seem to be working in India where democracy has continued for 64 years without interruption. Moreover, the Indian economy is stable and has fared well; the graph of its progress continues to maintain an upward trend.

How can a movement like the Naxalites' grow in a country like India? This question acquires intriguing importance under such circumstances. Neutral observers therefore emphasize the need to know the causes of this phenomenon as without addressing those the menace of terrorism and extremism cannot be contained effectively.

Realising the importance of an in-depth and objective study based on the situation on the ground and direct and indirect observations, analyses and comments by observers on the causes of this insurgency, and its rapid spread, the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) has undertaken this study.

Asghar Ali Shad, Research Fellow at IPRI, has sifted through a great deal of available material in the form of news reports, official and non-

government surveys in India and statements of high officials reported in the vernacular press to thumbnail facts for this study. This distinguishes his work from more formal academic exercises and gives its findings a freshness and immediacy of its own. Written originally in *Urdu*, it has been rendered into English by Mushir Anwar, IPRI's editor.

We hope this study will prove useful in understanding the nature and the various aspects of the Naxal movement and throw some light on how the Indian government is handling to contain and control the insurgency and what in substance is the people's response to it.

Maq̄sudul Hasan Nuri
Acting President IPRI

INTRODUCTION

Human society has made such phenomenal progress in science, technology and medicine in the previous century that the advances made in the last 100 or 150 years clearly outweigh the achievements of the entire history of mankind.¹ But in the opinion of the Indian thinker, the Nobel winning economist and mathematician, Dr Amartya Sen, the greatest find and invention of the twentieth century is mankind's consensus on the notion that among all systems of government that there are, democracy is the best and most useful for it.²

Sen emphasised that the consensus on democracy was more important than man's stepping on the moon, flying machines, computer and other scientific inventions. The democratic system with all its faults was better than all other systems of government and in fact the modern concept of nation and state flows from this belief.³

Obviously, many people and groups have serious differences with this opinion of the Indian thinker and in support of their views they also advance very weighty arguments.

The Indian ruling classes insist on their claim that India is the world's largest democracy.⁴ Considering the size of the populace of India it would be difficult to disagree with this claim. As a result, in spite of all of its reservations, it is no wonder that world opinion at the international level does not totally reject this Indian claim. In any case since winning freedom from British rule on 15th August 1947 governments in India have changed through the ballot, that in itself can be termed a great achievement, notwithstanding the hiatus of emergency rule (from 25 June 1975 to March 1977) imposed by Mrs Indira Gandhi, a hard-to-erase blot on the face of Indian democracy.⁵

Naxalism: Threats to Indian State and Democracy

A brief review of the 64 years of independent India would show the following flash points that may at any time ring the bell of alarm for the state and democracy:⁶

1. Dynastic political tradition
2. Racist exploitation of untouchables
3. Discriminatory treatment of religious minorities

¹ *Dainik Bhaskar* (Chandigarh), March 13, 2009.

² *Dainik Jagran* (Lucknow), April 14, 2010.

³ *Dainik Bhaskar* (Chandigarh), February 13, 2009.

⁴ *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), April 6, 2010.

⁵ *Dainik Bhaskar* (Chandigarh), June 5, 2009.

⁶ *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), January 2, 2008.

4. Unfriendly attitude towards countries of the region
5. India's hegemonic and aggressive stance in the region
6. Abominable condition of society's backward sections
7. Rising expenditure on defence
8. Increasing deprivations of the poor majority
9. The poor have no access to health, education and other basic necessities. Unemployment is growing.
10. Expending all energies on acquiring traditional and non-traditional weapons in mad pursuit of domination in the region.
11. Separatist movements
12. Growing sense of insecurity among religious minorities
13. Growing polarisation at the international level at the end of the Cold War and since 9/11
14. Threats to internal security

Brief History of Naxalite Movement

Naxalbari is a small village in the southern part of India's Bengal province. The Naxalite movement, now known by many other names, is supposed to have originated from here.⁷

The CPI (Leninist-Marxist) emerged when the Indian Communist Party broke up into several factions in 1967. In its initial years this faction championed the cause of local farmers and labourers and its influence was confined to West Bengal.⁸

Gradually, however, this movement spread to nearly all rural areas of central and eastern India, in particular Andhra Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Orissa, Bihar and Jharkhand which became its main hub.⁹ Now, the Indian Prime Minister himself has more than once stated that the movement is the foremost threat to India's internal security.¹⁰ In fact most of India's security circles admit that in 20 of the 28 provinces of the country, the separatist movement has strong roots.¹¹ The policymakers of the movement have not minced words in stating that the establishment of an independent Naxalite state by 2050 is their objective.¹²

Observers and analysts the world over acknowledge that the Naxalite guerrillas not only enjoy influence over 40 per cent of India¹³ but they have full control in a 'Red Corridor' of some 92000 square kilometers.¹⁴

⁷ *Rastriya Sahara* (Delhi), January 10, 2009.

⁸ *Dainik Navajyoti* (Jodhpur), April 3, 2006.

⁹ *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), April 5, 2006.

¹⁰ *Sach Kaboon* (Haryana), August 7, 2009.

¹¹ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), September 8, 2010.

¹² *Dainik Jagran* (Lucknow), April 5, 2010.

¹³ *Bharat Khabar* (Ranchi, Patna), June 3, 2010.

According to India's premier secret agency RAW, the Naxalite movement employs some 20,000 guerillas and has 50,000 regular members in outfits associated with it.¹⁵ And there are tens of millions across the country among the populace who can be called its supporters and sympathizers.



But what is of utmost concern is the dangerous way the Naxalites' influence is growing. It is not for nothing therefore and few would dispute it when Manmohan Singh identifies the biggest threat to India's internal security coming from the Naxalite movement.¹⁶

Divided Opinion

Biggest among other factors that knowledgeable circles in the realm of international security and separatist movements hold as supportive to the Naxalite cause, is the division and confusion that exists in the Indian society on this issue.¹⁷ Most of the intellectuals do not consider the guerillas as anti-state in any way. In fact they regard them among those deprived classes that have been subjected to the worst kind of treatment by the Indian state and society which has forced them to take up arms for the achievement of their rights.¹⁸ Therefore they should not be called terrorists or undesirable elements of society. This movement is actually a class war.

¹⁴ *Bhaskar* (Chandigarh), November 12, 2009.

¹⁵ *Hindustan Dainik* (Delhi), March 3, 2010.

¹⁶ *Rastriya Sabara* (Delhi), June 7, 2010.

¹⁷ *Panchjanya* (Nagpur), January 8, 2010.

¹⁸ *Dainik Jagran* (Lucknow), April 3, 2010.

What can be the outcome of such confusion is not difficult to imagine, and there can be no two opinions about its logical end. It is not surprising therefore that moderate circles in India admit that the Naxalite movement might not wait till 2050 to win its armed struggle and divide India into several parts; the Naxals have the capacity to do that by as early as 2025; and that, unless a miracle happens, the Indian solidarity is destined to be splintered at the hands of this movement.¹⁹

Historical Background

Naxalbari is a small village in the state of West Bengal from which this term originated the first time on 25 May 1967 when Choru Majumdar, a communist leader, and Kanu Sanial started their armed struggle against the excesses of a big landlord of the village. At the start of his campaign, Majumdar emphasised his claim that following in the footsteps of Mao Zedong, the leader of the Chinese revolution, he would launch an active struggle to end the highhandedness of the upper classes and ultimately make this movement victorious like the Chinese revolution.²⁰

Stages of Movement's Growth

A document based on the Naxalite ideology was produced called the Eighth Historical Document together with the formation of the All India Coordination of Revolutionaries (AICR) which gave birth to the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) or the CPI (ML).

All Naxalite groups attribute their origin to the CPI (ML). However, during this evolutionary period a rather different faction, the Maoist Communist Center (MCC) emerged which became active in Southern India under the name of Deccan Desh Group.²¹

The movement splintered into several small and large factions during the 1970s which affected its consolidation and effectiveness. As a result, except for scattered acts, it could not put together a planned large scale operation.²² By about 1980, it is estimated that some 30 or so Naxalite factions were operating under their self-styled leaders. Much credit goes to the work of Indian intelligence agencies that kept the leadership apart by playing up their mutual squabbles and petty differences.²³ Yet, even at that stage, the combined membership of these 30 groups was nowhere less than 30 thousand by any account.

¹⁹ *Pehli Khabar* (Panipat, Chandigarh), January 2, 2010.

²⁰ *Peoples Samachar* (Bhopal), November 11, 2009.

²¹ *Rajasthan Patrika* (Jaipur), June 7, 2010.

²² *Bhaskar* (Haryana), May 3, 2010.

²³ *Ranchi Express* (Jharkhand), January 8, 2009.

There was no let up in these mutual rivalries which continued for another 24 years. In fact, during this period, the movement had been reduced to the position of merely a name that hardly bothered the Indian government or acquire for itself any recognition abroad.²⁴

It was not without reason therefore that the 9400 militants armed with 6500 small but modern weapons (that there were according to a survey of the Indian interior ministry) could make no impression on the government in Delhi.²⁵

But on the merger of MCC with other groups in 2004, the movement started large scale operations. In 2006, Judith Vidhal revealed a figure of 15,000 armed militants acquiring control over 45 per cent of India's forest land and 160 of the 604 districts having come under their influence.²⁶

Reports by India's premier intelligence agency, RAW, put the number of armed militants, by around the end of 2006, at as many as 20 thousand. Some of the groups have now entered electoral politics; among them the CPI (ML), the CPI Maoist and CPI (ML) Jana Shakti are prominent.



Operations in Various States

West Bengal

The Naxalites enjoy considerable influence in West Bengal. Even the state capital Kolkotta is not free of them, as many students have abandoned their

²⁴ *Rashtriya Sabara* (Delhi), January 3, 2010.

²⁵ *Punjab Infoline* (Chandigarh), April 2, 2010.

²⁶ *Turant News* (Delhi), April 7, 2010.

studies to join it. This is something that should worry the ruling elite. Modern centers of education like Kolkotta's Presidency College and other colleges and universities have responded to their strike calls.²⁷ Their influence extends even to Delhi's St. Stephens College.

Their sympathisers have gained strength and assurance from the brazen fight the Naxal guerillas gave to the Indian forces in the Lalgarh operation of May 2009.²⁸ The Naxalite leader Kishanji described this encounter as the first step towards creating a 'free zone' for the establishment of their state. He claimed that they will also turn Kolkatta into a safe haven like Lalgarh by 2011.²⁹

Losses Suffered

According to Central Ministry of Interior the number of Indian forces' fatalities is as follows:

Year	Fatalities
1996	156
1997	428
1998	270
1999	363
2000	50
2001	100
2002	140
2003	451
2004	500
2005	700
2006	750
2007	650
2008	794
2009	1134

The BBC puts the losses at 6000 lives in 20 years. The *Times of India* of 11 October 2009 puts the number of dead in three years at 2600. They were all killed by the Naxal guerillas including a number of civilians.³⁰

The largest number of violent activities occurred in the four states of Chattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Orissa where between January 2006 and August 2009 the number of people killed was 2212. During this period, 5800

²⁷ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), April 8, 2010.

²⁸ *Jagran* (UP), April 9, 2010.

²⁹ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), April 10, 2010.

³⁰ *Rajasthan Patrika* (Jaipur), April 11, 2010.

violent events took place. Out of them, in 715 attacks in Chattisgarh, the number of dead was 388 in 2006; 369 in 2007; 242 in 2008 and 180 up to August 2009. In Jharkhand the number of dead was 124 in 2006, 157 in 2007, 207 in 2008 and 150 up to August 2009.³¹

Government employed 40,000 paramilitary forces to quell the movement and offered relief package worth Indian Rupees 7300 crore for development projects. During this period the Naxalites were able to execute their operations in the following districts of the various states: Aligarh, Bankra, Behrahem in UP; Madnapur, Belpahari and Kantpahari in Assam, in addition to 17 of 30 districts of Orissa; 20 of 24 districts of Jharkand and 30 of 38 districts of Bihar.

According to a high-ranking police officer of Jharkhand, government has allowed the IAF to help the ground forces in their operations against the Naxalites. S.N. Tiwari, a former police DG, admits that the situation is worsening day by day.³² *The Indian Express* of 13th December 2009 states that Naxal groups were collecting 'bhatta' (forced tax) and revenue taxes from the people. Quite a few contractors pay them while some even invite them to destroy newly built roads, bridges and schools to cover up the use of inferior material in their construction. This is happening on a large scale.³³



³¹ *Jagran* (Lucknow), April 8, 2010.

³² *Bhaskar* (Haryana), January 1, 2009.

³³ *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), July 5, 2008.

Often the various groups fight over 'bhatta'. The zonal commander of the PWG shot dead his senior Kash Goel. Sonabahadur SP, Partinder Singh, revealed to Bihar CM, Ramesh Kumar, that the Naxalites had killed 16 persons including children in his constituency of Kokhgoria. It was a caste based massacre.³⁴

Reasons of Government Failure

Among some of the bigger Naxalite attacks was the one against the Eastern Frontier Rifles (EFR) camp at Shilda district, 75 kms from Madnapur, on 15th February 2010, in which 24 officers were killed and 40 machine guns and other weapons were carried away.³⁵ Minutes after this attack, their leader, Kishanji, demanded that the Operation Green Hunt be stopped immediately and that if Delhi did not comply with this demand the guerillas had the wherewithal to launch more such attacks. It may be recalled that earlier in 2007 in a similar attack in Chattisgarh the guerillas had killed 54 RPF personnel. Commenting on the situation several Indian analysts had said that the government's failure in controlling the Naxalite attacks was due to the following reasons:³⁶

1. The Naxalite guerillas have proved that they can operate on several fronts simultaneously. On the one hand, they are using all means to stop people from electoral politics and, on the other, they are destroying communication networks like railway lines and railway stations as well as kidnapping important government and non-government persons for ransom, together with daily incidents of murderous attacks that expose government's helplessness.
2. There is lack of political will. Electoral politics to win votes at any cost has priority over everything else. It shows the leadership is not very serious about quelling the movement. All they want is success at the hustings.³⁷ In Bihar the long rule by Laloo Prasad Yadav's RJD party not only neglected the rise of the Naxalite movement but actually fuelled its growth by its unwise steps.³⁸

Absence of Sound Strategy

There seems to be no sound strategy in place to quell this armed movement which is helping the movement to grow without hindrance and enable the guerillas to launch more attacks.

³⁴ *Nav Bharat Times* (Delhi), August 4, 2010.

³⁵ *Daily Hindustan* (Delhi), January 7, 2010.

³⁶ *Sach Kaboon* (Haryana), July 7, 2010.

³⁷ *Prabhat Khabar* (Patna), November 1, 2009.

³⁸ *Ranchi Express* (Ranchi), October 5, 2010.

All governments that have come to power have demonstrated a criminal neglect towards controlling it, focusing all attention on completing their terms in office while this monster grew in strength.³⁹

On the one hand the Indian Prime Minister holds it as the biggest challenge to the country's internal security, on the other, the actions of his government show that either he is not sincere in his efforts to control the movement or lacks the ability to do so.

The Interior Minister Chidambaram Subramaniam and his predecessor have been inviting the Naxalites to the conference table while at the same time continuing their half-hearted military campaign against them. This dual policy has neither led to holding serious and result-oriented talks with the guerillas nor has the military campaign shown it is succeeding in weakening the momentum of the movement.⁴⁰

Double Standards

The clearly distinct double standards with which the Indian government and society regard terrorism within the country and across the borders constitute one big hurdle in the containment of the Naxalite movement. If there is a slightest connection traceable to foreign hand, particularly of Pakistan's, in a terrorist activity, all hell breaks loose.⁴¹ At both official and non-official levels such a hue and cry is raised as if the sky has fallen; but when the terrorist activity is related to the Naxalites or some other local agency or group, the government is seen looking the other way, treating the whole matter as a trivial occurrence even if its severity is far greater than any event supposedly inspired by foreign agents. An example of this behavior is seen in two incidents that took place in 2010.

The Pune Explosion

Though a condemnable act in itself, the Pune bomb attack was far less serious in size and impact than the Naxalite attack in West Bengal. Both had occurred within a time span of few days, but the attention that the Pune attack got in the media, both print and electronic, pales into insignificance compared to the noise made over the attack in West Bengal.⁴²

The Pune explosion was treated virtually at the level of the 9/11 incident. From the Indian prime minister to ordinary officials all joined in expressing their concern and condemnation and the threat it posed to national security, the observers' imagination running riot in tracing the attack somehow

³⁹ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), May 4, 2009.

⁴⁰ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), May 4, 2009.

⁴¹ *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), April 6, 2010.

⁴² *Nanjyoti* (Jaipur), May 8, 2010.

to alleged links in Pakistan.⁴³ Experts in talk shows on TV dug out the wildest theories and painted horrific scenarios to prove the country might just have survived a big calamity. But on the other hand, the Naxalite attack on the military camp in Midnapur (Shalda) was treated as a non event. It inspired no serious discussion in the media and the killing of 24 paramilitary personnel was shown no great concern. The attack was not analysed in its tactical dimensions by experts nor were the dead properly mourned.⁴⁴

In such a situation it would be too optimistic and amount to foolhardiness to expect the present government policies to yield any positive outcome with regard to containing the insurgency. What is important to note is that the approach of the state, government and society seen in the case of the Pune explosion and Midnapur attack is not restricted to these two events but is characteristic of the reaction always shown in respect of attacks by the Naxalites and ULFA irrespective of the army or civilian losses, the kidnapping of railway trains or jailbreaks in which hundreds of prisoners have been freed. In all such events the Indian authorities have demonstrated their traditional policy of maintaining a studied silence.⁴⁵

Yet any happening that has the slightest chance of being attributed to Pakistan like the Pune explosion, or the Mumbai attack of 26/11 or the earlier Parliament assault by terrorists in 2001, has unleashed a storm of propaganda. The failure to weaken the Naxalite movement is understandable under such dual policies.⁴⁶

Economic Inequality and Rise in Poverty

It is widely recognised that poverty and economic inequality are on the rise in India. This aspect of the situation can only be ignored at the cost of Naxalite movement's growth. Conditions are worse in the rural areas where Naxalite growth has assumed dangerous proportions. This is just so because the movement lays its claim on the assertion that they want to eliminate inequality and the nub of their agenda is provision of basic amenities to all. In a backward and poor country like India this is naturally a very attractive slogan and explains why the Indian government has failed in its efforts to control the insurgency. In future also the prospects look grim for this since the movement is a poor-friendly mission and uses the language of the backward classes and reflects their aspirations.

⁴³ *Inquilab* (Mumbai), April 9, 2010.

⁴⁴ *Daily Hindustan* (Delhi), August 9, 2010.

⁴⁵ *Jagran* (Lucknow), April 8, 2010.

⁴⁶ *Jagran* (Lucknow), September 21, 2009.

Softness Towards Pro-Naxal Intellectuals

After the Madnapur attack, Mr Subramaniam, the interior Minister, did take those intellectuals to task who hold a soft corner for the Naxal movement, but only verbally. The severity of reaction shown in the aftermath of the Mumbai and Pune attacks was not witnessed against the Naxal guerillas.⁴⁷

Double Standards of Zero Tolerance

The Indian claims of showing zero tolerance to terrorist attacks does not seem to hold water by the way the Naxalites have been allowed a free hand in carrying out their activities.⁴⁸

Dual Policy Towards Non State Actors

The Indian government shows its hardest attitude towards non state actors of foreign origin but is lax in the matter of terrorist activities by indigenous elements of the same nature. This is also a reason why the Naxalite movement is able to increase its operations with relative freedom.⁴⁹

Parallel Government

This attitude of the Indian government towards terrorism has not only strengthened the Naxalites in 220 districts of 20 states but enabled them to practically form parallel governments in 155 districts of 9 states. In fact when night falls both police and the armed forces come under total sway of this parallel government ceasing their activities and movements.⁵⁰

Although the movement has mostly been influential in rural areas, in recent years it has been expanding in cities also. The Ninth Unity Congress of CPIM which was held in January and February of 2007 secretly in the forest areas bordering Jharkhand and Orissa had decided to spread its activities to the cities and enlist the support of the common people there. It was argued that since the organisation in cities would be more secure and effective, government agencies will find it difficult to hunt them down and take military action against them. The higher literacy among urban dwellers and better employment were recognised as some of the obstacles the movement could encounter in cities. To make a move in that direction it was decided to address the civil society, particularly the working class, creating pockets of sympathy particularly among media people.⁵¹ Trends seen over the past few years

⁴⁷ *Amar Ujala* (Lucknow), April 6, 2010.

⁴⁸ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), April 8, 2010.

⁴⁹ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), April 13, 2010.

⁵⁰ *Jagran* (Lucknow), May 12, 2010.

⁵¹ *Rashtriya Sahara* (Delhi), June 6, 2010.

indicate that the movement is meeting with success in this initiative. They have been able to establish centers in cities like Mumbai, Pune and Hyderabad. But they changed their tactics in the urban areas.⁵² Instead of attacking state establishments they are focusing on bringing intellectuals and educationists under their influence.

Police arrested Kabad Ghanary, a foreign educated member of CPIM politburo, on 22 September 2009 from south Delhi. He was in charge of the Naxal committee for gaining support in urban areas and had been in active contact with civil service officers and intellectuals.⁵³

In August 2007 police arrested Vishnu alias Shehridhar Krishna Shrinivasan, a member of the central politburo, from Mumbai. Another member of CPIM national committee and Maharashtra's state secretary-general Visram alias Vernoongonza was also arrested in Mumbai. Similarly more arrests were made in other metropolitan cities.

In the larger cities around 100 organisations were identified which were active among students, intellectuals and workers' institutions. It has also come to light that the Naxalite leadership has decided to participate in all anti government demonstrations and rallies to garner support for the cause. This effort has met with considerable success bringing many intellectuals and labour leaders in the movement's circle of influence.⁵⁴ In fact in a number of protest demonstrations in Nandigram and Senghor (West Bengal) Naxalite groups were in the vanguard leading the rallies.

In western Uttar Pardesh, members of the Balmiki caste who mostly work as sweepers in homes and offices, have been won over by the Naxalites.⁵⁵ Six members of this segment of Naxal supporters were arrested in Chennai in 2006 who were involved in the making of rocket launchers for the guerrillas.⁵⁶

The Naxal guerrillas were also involved in the attacks on police camps of Niyagarh and Daraspala in Orissa on 15th February 2008. Earlier also on 24th March 2006 they had launched similar attacks in Gajpati. These attacks have significance because Orissa is known for India's missile technology. All missiles – Agni, Prithivi, Brahmavas, Tirishol and Naag, have been launched from the Chandipur site in Orissa. Therefore the threat of an attack on the missile establishment by the Naxalites that may endanger national and regional security is in the realm of possibilities if the guerillas one day acquire the necessary capability.⁵⁷

⁵² *Pebli Khabar* (Delhi), May 7, 2010.

⁵³ *Jagran* (Lucknow), August 4, 2010

⁵⁴ *Amar Ujala* (Lucknow), April 9, 2009.

⁵⁵ *Amar Ujala* (Lucknow), January 10, 2010.

⁵⁶ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), February 22, 2010.

⁵⁷ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), February 24, 2010.

Bihar Police Lacks Courage and Morale

Although the Indian government insists that it is taking effective steps to eradicate the Naxal menace and mentions the operation Green Hunt in this respect, observers believe that ground realities negate this claim. Bihar, the second largest province after UP with a population of 120 million, has been unable to contain the spread of Naxalism, as a result, Jharkhand and Orissa in its neighbourhood have become the hub of Naxal activities.⁵⁸ It is tragic that the Bihar police lacks the courage and morale to face the Naxalite guerillas. There are many reasons for that. However one main reason is the insufficient strength of the force that is put at 59 policemen for every 100,000 population against 130 elsewhere in India. And, as is customary in developing countries, even from this small force the majority is deputed to protect high officials, ministers and advisors, leaving the guerillas free to act where they want.⁵⁹

The Bihar chief minister Nitesh Kumar has formed a special police force, the Special Auxiliary Police (SAP) to combat the Naxal guerillas that comprised 500 retired personnel of the armed forces whose services had been hired on a two-year contract. It proved to be effective initially⁶⁰ but gradually lost its impact as its personnel too started to be placed on security duty for VIPs. A spirit of rivalry between it and the regular force has developed which is also marring its work. It may also end up like its predecessor 'Special Task Force' of some years back which had also been formed for this special purpose but is now serving as traffic police and personal guards for high officials.⁶¹

The fact that in Bihar alone as many as 20,000 important personalities enjoy VIP security is a sad comment on bureaucratic culture in our developing societies where a lot many influential people acquire this facility simply to flaunt their power and pomp and use the retinue of official guard as a status symbol. Under such governance culture it would be futile to expect any relief to flow to the common people from the government which is what has been happening in Bihar where the millions have been left unprotected from the terror of the Naxalites while SAP, the force created for the purpose, is seen taking bribes from truck drivers on the roads. The Naxal movement can be said to be getting all the help it needs to grow from official apathy.⁶² The demand by Bihar's director general police, K.S. Trevedi, for an additional 20 battalions of the central paramilitary force (CPFMS) when the SAP already has 9000 personnel, underlines the gravity of the situation.

⁵⁸ *Jagran* (Lucknow), February 26, 2010.

⁵⁹ *Organizer* (Delhi), June 4, 2010.

⁶⁰ *Rajasthan Patrika* (Jaipur), January 5, 2010.

⁶¹ *Jagran* (Lucknow), August 7, 2008.

⁶² *Jagran* (Lucknow), June 4, 2008.

There is a mushrooming of big and small unlawful arms making factories in Bihar which according to a cautious estimate number as many as 1500. These factories manufacture pistols, revolvers, guns, rifles and light machine guns. A majority of these units are concentrated in Nalinda, Nawara, Geya and Moonger districts from where the arms are sold to criminal gangs across the country. These are also smuggled to neighbouring countries.⁶³ The major beneficiaries of this source of arms are the Naxalites who never remain in short supply of weapons for their terrorist activities.

The Bihar police with its strength of nearly 80,000 compares poorly with the 8000 SAP personnel not only in the matter of professional training and will to fight but also in its lack of recourse to modern weapons. Even otherwise, most of the policemen who have been inducted into the force on the recommendation of politicians to gain electoral influence among voters are unfit for police service as they do not fulfill the physical and mental requirements. To expect from such a rag tag force to combat the well armed and highly motivated Naxal guerillas would be asking for the stars.⁶⁴

Will the Andhra Model Succeed?

The 'Andhra model' is often mentioned in connection with combating the Naxalites in different states. But this is misplaced optimism as the temporary respite in Naxalite activities there had resulted from the 2004 ceasefire between the guerrillas and the government of Andhra Pradesh.⁶⁵ In that year the movement was still fractured and beside the conflict between PWG and MCC there was internecine fighting going on among several other splinter groups. In such a situation the Andhra government had succeeded in infiltrating its men among the guerilla groups taking advantage of the ceasefire interregnum.⁶⁶

However since the end of 2004, different Naxal groups have been operating under the umbrella of the CPI ML. It would therefore be unrealistic to expect that the so-called Andhra model will succeed in Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Bihar and Bengal. In Andhra, government agents had killed the leadership of the guerilla groups which it would not be possible to do now.⁶⁷ The policy of fomenting strife among the guerillas and the tribal volunteers in Chattisgarh through Salva Jodum has already proved to be harmful.

⁶³ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), May 7, 2009.

⁶⁴ *Rajasthan Patrika* (Jaipur), October 1, 2009.

⁶⁵ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), September 20, 2010.

⁶⁶ *Amar Ujala* (Lucknow), July 1, 2010.

⁶⁷ *Naijyoti* (Jodhpur), June 4, 2007.

Army's Role in Crushing the Naxal Movement

The operation Green Hunt against the Naxal guerillas is continuing with the participation of several paramilitary groups like the Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), the Border Security Force (BSF) and the CRPF.⁶⁸

Mr Chidumbrum had stated that unless necessary the Indian Air Force would not be employed. If the Naxalites fired at helicopters it would be returned. The IAF is using its helicopters to drop paratroopers in the field. The IAF helicopters on such a mission were fired at in Chattisgarh. The IAF chief, PV Naik, has obtained the permission to retaliate from the ministry of Defence. The Defence minister, Mr Anthony, has also made a statement to the effect. The Indian Home Secretary, Mr G.K. Pillai, has affirmed that IAF and ISRO cooperate in locating guerilla hideouts. If the plan to use the Air Force materialises, the Indian facility of All Weather Microwave Satellite RISAT- II will be used for the first time for guidance. It is equipped with such radar system that can locate guerilla hideouts in thick forest lands. This satellite was launched in 2009.

According to Indian army chief V.K.Singh, the 40,000-strong paramilitary force has been trained by the Indian army.⁶⁹

Status Paper on Naxal Problem

The Status Paper on Naxal Problem was presented to the Indian Parliament on 13 March 2006 by the then Home Minister, Shiv Raj Patil. According to this document, in 1594 encounters with the guerillas in 2005, the number of people killed was 669, which included 153 personnel of security agencies, against 556 dead in 1533 encounters in 2004, showing the encounter rise of 4 per cent. The rise in death toll was 18.1 per cent.⁷⁰

Media Coverage, Ideological Aspects and Naxal Movement

A prominent intellectual and research analyst, Ram Vijay, stated on 5 March 2010 that the coverage of Naxalite activities in the print and electronic media had registered an increase for some months. That was not seen earlier when it appeared the media did not give much importance to such events. However, since the mid-2008, news and analytical reports about the movement were getting front page coverage in the Press besides the TV channels which were also presenting lengthy talk shows and analytical discussions on this topic.⁷¹

⁶⁸ *Rajasthan Patrika* (Jaipur), May 5, 2009.

⁶⁹ *Daily Hindustan* (Delhi), April 9, 2010.

⁷⁰ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), November 1, 2009.

⁷¹ *Jagran* (Lucknow), November 7, 2009.

This change in media policy is likely to have an impact on the Naxal movement in the following ways:

National Level

Wider coverage of the movement is getting it increased public attention and winning it more support at the ideological level due to increase in poverty which is not hidden from anyone. To the oppressed sections of the population the Naxal way now offers a solution to their economic and social deprivation. The movement is therefore gaining rapid popularity among the masses.

Civil Society

Among the moderate circles of Indian intellectuals the ideological support for the movement is growing and this is giving the Naxalites a platform which they did not have before.

Ideological Awareness

Awareness about the movement's existence is on the increase inside the country and abroad.⁷²

Stronger Government Measures to Curb Movement

The rise in terrorist activities and their coverage in the popular media have increased pressure on government to take firmer measures against the guerilla movement. As a result, government agencies are putting up sturdier resistance to curb the Naxalites. The operation Green Hunt is also probably the result of this strong response.⁷³ Whether this is having any effect on the rise of the movement and whether the interests of the Naxalites are being served counterproductively as a result of these measures is quite another matter.⁷⁴

Human Rights Concerns

Concerns about human rights in the context of the Naxal insurgency are being increasingly expressed in the country and abroad. India's own NHRC and the Supreme Court have been vocal about their concerns as the media brings out more facts to people's knowledge. The Operation Green Hunt has attracted the attention of foreign analysts and any excesses or violations of human rights

⁷² *Bhaskar* (Haryana), July 8, 2009.

⁷³ *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), July 5, 2009.

⁷⁴ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), March 1, 2010.

in this regard are likely to draw the response of international human rights organisations.⁷⁵

Growing Cooperation among Militant Groups

There is evidence of growing cooperation among the various non state actors. There are fears that this situation may aggravate if the militant organisations and movements close rank. This could also endanger the security of neighbouring countries. In fact it could complicate the outcome of the ongoing 'war on terror'.⁷⁶

Naxal Movement's Growth in Last Decade

It would not be wrong to suggest that during the last decade, particularly since 9/11, the Naxalite movement has been enjoying what may be called a period of its renaissance. The merger of the splinter groups and the success of the Maoist Communist movement in Nepal has given an astonishing fillip to the growth of the Naxal movement in India. This indicates the possible links of the movement with outside forces like the LTTE of Sri Lanka which had a number of supporters abroad. The possibility of the Naxalites getting moral and financial support from abroad cannot be overlooked.⁷⁷

Naxal, Talangana Movements and Mao Zedong

The history of the Naxalite movement shows that it was China's Communist revolution which inspired it and gave it its ideological moorings.

The 1948 'farmers movement' in Talangana could justifiably be called the precursor of Naxalite militancy. The manifesto "Andhra Pradesh Model" testifies to the fact that the leftist ideological document that the Communist Party of India issued in June 1948 was based on what is called "Mao Zedong's New Democracy".⁷⁸ This ideological position became the cause of the division of the CPI in 1964 which led to the birth of the CPI-M. It is another matter that the CPI-M deferred armed struggle to enter electoral politics following which it was able to form the coalition government of the United Front in West Bengal in 1967. This development caused much anguish and frustration among the young cadres of the Communist Party. It was one such group of young rebels which under the leadership of comrade Choru Majumdar launched an armed rebellion against a powerful local landlord, thus laying the foundation of the Naxalbari Movement. Today this militant movement has

⁷⁵ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), June 2, 2010.

⁷⁶ *Inquilab* (Mumbai), April 3, 2010.

⁷⁷ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), November 6, 2009.

⁷⁸ *Jagran* (Lucknow), December 3, 2009.

spread far and wide in the country including the states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkand, Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnatak, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttar Anchal and West Bengal⁷⁹ where daily attacks on government assets, police and paramilitary posts, railway stations, roads, bridges, prisons and other establishments that represent the government have become a routine affair. The guerillas now launch attacks on an expanded list of government targets.

It was in this situation that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh stated at the All India Conference of Director Generals and Inspectors General of Police that the biggest danger to the internal security of the country was posed by 'our own countrymen.'⁸⁰ According to a Canadian civil society organisation, Ploughshares, which works for world peace, 6000 people had been killed in direct encounters with the Naxalite guerillas, three to four thousand of them having died in a decade alone.⁸¹

Since 1990 the figure for those killed in Andhra Pradesh was put at around 4500. In fact the present period of this armed movement has become the severest.

The South Asia Terrorism Portal, a think tank in Delhi, estimates that in 2008 alone 794 people were killed in armed encounters with the Naxal guerillas in six states of Bihar, Orissa, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Chattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh. Among them 399 were urban civilians, 221 Indian security personnel and 174 guerillas. The Indian interior ministry puts this figure at 721.⁸²

The Media and Naxalism

Although the Naxalite movement was launched in the 1960s, its terrorist activities had not picked up the intensity and regularity until the beginning of the 21st century which has been seen assuming dangerous acceleration in the century's first decade. This trend has forced the media take notice of it.⁸³

There are two main reasons for this:

- There has been a great expansion in the private media groups since the end of the Cold War. The Indian economy too has been greatly liberalised and reformed under the impact of

⁷⁹ *Sach Kaboon* (Haryana), December 1, 2009.

⁸⁰ *Amar Ujala* (Lucknow), June 4, 2010.

⁸¹ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), August 5, 2009.

⁸² *Daily Hindustan* (Delhi), January 4, 2010.

⁸³ *Nav Bharat Times* (Delhi), April 7, 2010.

globalisation.⁸⁴ Consequently the role of private newspapers, radio and television channels has increased immensely.⁸⁵

- The print media was already not hesitant in providing coverage to the activities of the movement but the induction of the electronic media in the information business with its highly effective impact on public perceptions cannot be denied and it has certainly made a big difference.

As a result the Naxalite movement has made impressive gains in its recognition as a force. And in this respect no small credit goes to the sensationalism of the media policies that is employed to secure bigger audiences among the general public. The movement is now being presented to the public in its real form. The way this is affecting public apprehensions is already causing wide spread concern about the risks involved.⁸⁶

Causes of Movement's Spread in Hindi Belt

The print media made great advances in the liberal environment of the global economic order, particularly in those areas that are called the Hindi Belt where the number and quality of newspapers rose very high. And it is no secret that in India's 64 years' history it is this area which has ruled the country; also because of the population lead it has over other parts, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh forming a quarter of India's population.⁸⁷

Popular Hindi newspapers print 20 to 30 lakh copies daily. They give adequate coverage to the activities of the Naxalite movement to reach the broadest audience. This has given prominence to the Naxal conflict in the public eye.⁸⁸

'Naxal Terror Watch' is an online blog which has compiled a report about media coverage from the year 2000 to the present time. According to this report, there has been an increase in media coverage of Naxalite activities between 2004 and 2007. For instance there were 43 reports in 2004 which have increased to 2287 in 2007. In 2008 alone as many as 1879 articles were written in the Indian media about the Naxal movement.⁸⁹

The television channels likewise gave more time to Naxal guerilla attacks during this period. The broadcast of interviews of the guerilla leadership bestowed on them a Robin Hood like aura among their followers which greatly boosted the morale of both leaders and followers of the movement.

⁸⁴ *Daily Hindustan* (Delhi), July 7, 2010.

⁸⁵ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), July 4, 2010.

⁸⁶ *Amar Ujala* (Haryana), January 9, 2010.

⁸⁷ *Amar Ujala* (Haryana), March 25, 2010.

⁸⁸ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), February 22, 2010.

⁸⁹ *Jagran* (Lucknow), June 4, 2010.

But it would not be correct to assume that greater publicity and coverage in the media spurred the guerilla activity. What would be correct to infer indeed is the fact that the greater coverage was the result of the significant increase in the incidents of violence which could not be ignored any longer.

Media Coverage in Indian View

It is generally held that the increased coverage of the Naxal activities by the media has furnished the Movement with a rationale or *raison d'être*.⁹⁰

The coverage unveils the failure of the government agencies and security forces in controlling or containing the Naxalite Movement.

These two factors have reinforced the confidence of the guerillas and their supporters and given them the resolve to make more sacrifices for their cause.⁹¹ They feel that their armed struggle will not meet with failure and ultimately it would be able to attain them success at both societal and government levels. The firmness of this impression and feeling has encouraged the guerillas to expand their operations that may in consequence induce more sections of society to join the movement and provide additional support to the armed struggle. Such a development could expose Indian security to unforeseen perils. How this would impact the regional scenario and what issues of peace and security it would raise at the international level is a different subject altogether.⁹²

Slogans of the Movement

In the beginning of the 1980s decade the slogan, “*jal, jungle, zameen hamara hai*” (water, forest and land is ours) became very popular in Chattisgarh. The claim referred to an area of 92,000⁹³ square kms. In April 2006, Manmohan Singh admitted that the Naxalite Movement was a greater danger than the Kashmir and the northeastern movements. In order to confront this threat a force of 32,000 tribals known as Salwa Judum⁹⁴, — that may be called ‘state sponsored terrorism’ — was raised furnished with ranks of special police officers and supplied with arms and ammunition. It was not stationed in any military camp. The mastermind of this scheme was Mahind Karma who was a Chattisgarh tribal and the leader of the opposition in the state assembly. The force was

⁹⁰ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), July 5, 2010.

⁹¹ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), January 7, 2009.

⁹² *Jagran* (Lucknow), February 8, 2009.

⁹³ *Jagran* (Lucknow), March 1, 2010

⁹⁴ *Ranchi Express* (Ranchi), May 1, 2010.

described as tribal volunteers who had risen against the Naxal guerillas on their own.⁹⁵

This force evicted thousands of people from their homes and held them in miserable conditions in the Salwa Judum camps. The situation caused an uproar in civil society. Five human rights organisations formed an inquiry team to inspect the camps. Its report was titled: “A state’s war on its own people.”⁹⁶

The report stated that the force was not an army of volunteers. It was an official militia which served under the District Collector who was its regular head. It has evicted 15,000 people of 420 villages from their homes. When the meetings of this organisation are held, people of surrounding villages are made to attend. Those who do not comply with the order are punished by the Naga Battalion and the men of the Salwa Judum. On such occasions incidents of looting, arson, gang rape and even murder have been witnessed. The inmates of the camps are subjected to inhuman treatment. The area looks like an occupied territory in the presence of paramilitary forces in strength. It is reported that in the tribal belt of Bastar region more than 250 people were killed by the Salwa Judum.⁹⁷

Kamlesh Parekh, a resident of Bijapur and a correspondent of a Hindi daily of Jagdalpur was beaten black and blue for speaking the truth. This was done under a black law that has been enforced recently under the name of Chattisgarh Public Security Act.⁹⁸

The tribals are being used as gun fodder under the command of aliens. The inquiry report called on the government to ensure that the killing, pillage and plunder of the poor tribals and desecration of their honour by the state sponsored militia and other government agencies is stopped forthwith and these innocent people are not subjected to further agony in the so-called volunteer operation against the Naxal guerillas.

Operation Green Hunt

Observers say that in his first stint in government, 2004-2009, when Manmohan Singh needed the support of his Communist partners, he did not undertake any effective operation against the Naxalites, because despite their denials the communists regarded the Naxalites as their ideological mates. But now that he does not need the Left support, he has launched the operation against the 22,000 alleged guerillas in which nearly 50,000 personnel of the Indian paramilitary forces are taking part.

Krishna Dhar wrote on 19th November 2009 that based on lessons learnt from its handling of separatist/freedom movements in Kashmir,

⁹⁵ *India Today* (Delhi), March 2010.

⁹⁶ *Sach Kaboon* (Haryana), July 1, 2010.

⁹⁷ *Inquilab* (Mumbai), February 5, 2010.

⁹⁸ *Amar Ujala* (Lucknow), January 9, 2009.

Nagaland, North Eastern India and Punjab, a Counter Insurgency Doctrine has been formed.⁹⁹ He thinks that the following groups are engaged in ideological and armed struggle under the Naxal movement:

1. The Communist League of India CLI (ML) formed on Feb. 20, 1978, which was separated from the CPI (ML).
2. Communist Party of India (Maoist Peoples War) formed on Sep. 21, 2004 through merger of CPI (ML) and MCL. It's the largest guerilla group.
3. Communist Party of India (ML) formed on January 5, 2005 through merger of CPI (HL Sanial group) and CPI (ML) Red Flag – a Right center organisation.
4. ML PI Bhaji group – active in Assam
5. CPI (ML) Central team formed in 1977. Its Punjab section merged with others to form the CP RCI ML
6. CPI ML Jan Shakti Rajan group, Randhar group, Chandrila Reddy group and other ML groups were jointly engaged in guerilla activities in 1999
7. CPI ML Liberation Group (descendant of the main CPI ML group) active in West Bengal, Assam and Bihar.
8. CPI ML Madho Dev Mukherji. This group separated from the CPI ML and affiliates to the Lin Piao faction.
9. CPI ML (Maharashtra).
10. CPI ML (Nainital).
11. CPI ML Naxalbari Raodaf group formed after merger with MUC CPI ML. It is affiliated with CCOMPOSA and RIM.
12. CPI ML New Democracy group formed by Patinder. Active in Bihar and believes in armed struggle
13. CPI ML New Proletarian.
14. CPI ML organising committee Bihar, BN Sharma group.
15. CPI ML Parja Prastakti Group.
16. CPI ML Parja Prastakti Peoples Power Group (armed).
17. CPI ML Prati Ghatna Chhani Baghichi Group (armed).
18. Provisional Central Committee which joined with Maltia Narid Singh group in 1977.
19. Shanty Pal formed in 1972, active in northwest Bengal and Bihar.
20. Communist Party of United States of India formed in 1977 after separating from Jana Shakti
21. Communist Party ML—the Organisation Center of India.
22. Communist Biplabi Kandhraika Communist Revolutionary Center

⁹⁹ *The Daily Milap* (Delhi), July 6, 2010.

23. Communist Revolutionary League of India, Asamjarri Social Democracy Group
24. Marxist Basant Committee.
25. Revolutionary Communist Center.
26. Revolutionary Socialist Party of India ML, formed in 1969.
27. Unity Center of Communist Revolution of India 1975, Nagi Reddy DV Rao group: believes in peaceful revolution through common people.

Other Like-Minded Groups

1. Jharkand Liberation Tigers affiliated with Jharkand Liberation Front.
2. Kangipek Communist Party, Manipur.
3. NSCN Nagaland, Assam, Manipur.
4. Peoples Liberation Army 1978.
5. Peoples' Revolutionary Liberation Army of Kangipek 1977.
6. Revolutionary Peoples Front of Manipur 1979 (armed).
7. Tamil Nado Marxist Basant Party.
8. Pratiya Prastiti Company (separated from PWG in 2002).
9. ULFA.¹⁰⁰

Besides, there are 23 other Maoist groups which are mostly non functional:

1. Coordination Committee of Maoist Parties and Organization of South Asia (CCOMPOSA) June 2001 Bangladesh Samvadi Dal IML.
2. Ceylon Communist Party (Maoist) Sri Lanka.
3. Communist Party of East Bengal, Bangladesh, CPIM Nepal, CPIML Naxal Party, Maoist Communist Centre, Puri. Arms supplies come from BoBangla Sard Chhora Party, Revolutionary International Soviet RIM 1984, Communist Party of Afghanistan, CPI Bangladesh, BSD Turkey, Italy, Tunis, Colombia, Revolutionary Communist Party USA and China via Manipur, Nagaland. Besides Assam, Bangladesh, Nepal world Maoist organizations, the Maoists of Andhra Pradesh whom the former USSR spawned. They got their arms from the LTTE previously. Chinese weapons came via coastal areas of Tamil Nadu and Andhra to Haldia, Qasba Narain Garh Madnapur, Partypara, Orissa west, Biharat Orissa, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Chattisgarh, where they are very organised

¹⁰⁰ *Bhaskar*, (Haryana), April 1, 2010.

(Hindustan Times May 9, 2002) and want to divide India into seven states.

Some of these groups are true to their cause, but the rest have their own agendas.

Ongoing Jharkhand Operation: Reward for Informers

According to Bhaskar of March 31, 2010, government has announced cash awards for persons who inform about weapons such as mines, explosives and other arms after failing in operations against the Naxalites. The informers are assured secrecy. People have been told to be watchful and asked to help the police and security agencies. The cash award for providing information about mines will be Rs one lakh; for spotting desi bombs Rs 25,000; for bomb making kits Rs 10,000; detonators Rs 500; single barrel gun Rs 20,000; double barrel gun Rs 40,000; rifle Rs 50,000; and for revolver/pistol Rs 70,000.¹⁰¹

Victims of Malaria

Bhaskar of March 31, 2010 says that in the on-going campaign against the Naxalites a large number of soldiers are falling victim to malaria and other diseases.¹⁰² Soldiers and officers of the CPRF 60 Battalion stationed in district Khoonti are proceeding on leave on the pretext of sickness. Twenty five SPs are absent from duty and several IAS officers are similarly trying to get posted elsewhere; some of them are even resigning from service. Government has therefore decided to increase the number of IAS officers in the province. Twenty four new SPs have been appointed against positions lying vacant for a year as no serving SP was inclined to be posted here. Now 65 IAS posts have been created raising the number of these positions from 143 to 208.¹⁰³

Reforms in Wake of Decline in Police Morale

According to Bhaskar of March 31, 2010, Bihar government has decided that the annual confidential reports of the SPs will be recorded by the chief minister himself. Previously this was the job of the director general of police.¹⁰⁴

It has been notified that as of 29 March 2010, SPs would report to the district magistrate; the DGP would review it for the CM's final remarks. The

¹⁰¹ *Prabhat Khabar* (Patna), April 7, 2010.

¹⁰² *Rajasthan Patrika* (Jaipur), April 8, 2010.

¹⁰³ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), April 9, 2010.

¹⁰⁴ *Amar Ujala* (Lucknow), December 3, 2009.

confidential reports of officers higher in rank than the SPs are already written by the CM. These reforms came into effect in 2007.¹⁰⁵

These reforms have been strongly opposed by Laloo Prasad Yadav, the former Chief Minister and federal minister who says that CM Natish Kumar's mandate has ended as he has failed to check the Naxalite violence and is running his administration through bureaucracy. The officers, for fear of their CR, would serve the CM as his personal servants which would indirectly help the rebels. He said that he would take up the matter with the Election Commission.¹⁰⁶ The provincial government is creating additional jobs through the Public Service Commission – 1961 in rural and 1928 in urban areas, to somehow get a grip on the Naxal situation. According to Bhaskar,¹⁰⁷ in addition to other measures to control the movement, more funds have been allocated to states where the Naxalites have greater influence so that governments may strengthen their police force and equip them with modern weapons and improve the security infrastructure.¹⁰⁸

Schemes were launched together with reforms. Among these steps was the insurance cover provided to officers who might become the victim of mines.

Mine protected vehicles were provided to police in states under attack from the Naxalites where the Indian Reserve Battalion was also created to reinforce the law enforcement agencies. The Centre allocated Rs 20.75 crore for the formation of the IR battalion. This amount had been increased from Rs 13 crore.¹⁰⁹

The SSP was given the responsibility to guard the Indo-Nepal border to check the cross border activities of the Naxal guerillas.

The Central government introduced a new scheme named the Backward Districts Initiative (BDI) for which Rs 2475 crore were allocated for use in the worst affected 55 districts of nine states – Andhra Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Orissa, Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra.¹¹⁰ This money was to be spent on welfare schemes in these states. A scheduled tribes bill was also introduced in the Parliament in 2005.¹¹¹

These preventive measures had mixed success. These were partially successful in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh but in other states the Naxal violence registered exacerbation resulting in the failure of the measures.¹¹²

¹⁰⁵ *Jagran* (Lucknow), December 6, 2009.

¹⁰⁶ *Jagran* (Lucknow), May 4, 2010.

¹⁰⁷ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), May 1, 2010.

¹⁰⁸ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), April 8, 2010.

¹⁰⁹ *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), April 9, 2010.

¹¹⁰ *Daily Hindustan* (Delhi), July 6, 2010.

¹¹¹ *Nav Bharat Times* (Delhi), August 9, 2010.

¹¹² *Daily Hindustan* (Delhi), March 3, 2010.

Demands of the Naxalites

The following are the main major demands of the Naxal movement:

1. Distribution and grant of right of ownership of farm land to the tillers who are its real owners.
2. Natural resources of forest lands be given to the dwellers.
3. Determination of minimum wages at a rate that ensures the poor a decent life for their families.
4. Status of equality and respect for all sections.
5. Right of self governance and autonomy status for all concerned areas.
6. Discrimination against women which is rampant in the country must end so that they may achieve their due status in society.¹¹³

These demands are just and are considered necessary from the humanitarian point of view by most civil society circles. Nevertheless these demands failed to impress the ruling elite class which rejected them as impracticable though they continued to pay lip service to the rights of the people of the backward regions. But their actions spoke for their real intentions as nothing concrete was done to meet any of these demands. In fact no step was taken even to take stock of the gravity of the situation let alone any move towards its amelioration.¹¹⁴ On the contrary, the government policy in this regard has centered on blocking or taking possession of the funds that the Naxalites were getting in Andhra Pradesh and other troubled areas.¹¹⁵

Government's Failure

1. The Naxal guerrillas have been forcibly collecting 'bhatta' (taxes) from the Forest department for a long time but the Central as well as the state administrations have consistently failed in stopping this practice or recovering this money from the insurgents. In fact government measures have not succeeded in stationing the 'special task force' in the inaccessible reaches of the forest.¹¹⁶
2. It has been admitted by a number of government officials that during movement of troops in the troubled areas it is often not possible to keep them supplied with food and other rations and this was one major hurdle in combating the insurgents in their safe havens.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ *Pehli Khabar* (Delhi), June 4, 2010.

¹¹⁴ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), February 3, 2010.

¹¹⁵ *Jagran* (Kanpur), May 4, 009.

¹¹⁶ *Rajasthan Patrika* (Jaipur), January 7, 2009.

¹¹⁷ *Panchjanya* (Delhi), January 5, 2008.

3. Review of government measures shows that the issue of setting up development infrastructure in the forest lands has not been given any attention; nor any plans have been made to acquire land in the forests for this purpose.
4. The Land Acquisition Act 1896 which has always been a weapon in the hands of the government has mostly been misused to achieve superficial objectives.
5. In the initial years the dislocated tribal people were given some financial aid but the hundreds of thousands who were displaced from their hearths and homes were neither resettled nor provided any wherewithal for their sustenance.¹¹⁸
6. The Land Acquisition Amendment Act 2007 and the Bill for Resettlement 2007 were brought for this purpose but the government failed to convince the tribals in this regard which resulted in further confounding the situation.
7. Governments in Andhra Pradesh and other troubled states were never able to formulate a solid plan to crush the insurgents. Yet several official circles insist on adopting the Andhra Pradesh model, although even a cursory review would show that when in 1990 the Andhra government lifted the ban on the Naxalites, the number of fatalities did register an apparent fall compared to the period of the ban.¹¹⁹ But it is no secret that this situation did not last long as all know that the active leadership of the insurgents had moved out to other states, and using this interregnum had organised the Naxal movement in Maharashtra, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and even Delhi, Bombay and other metropolitan centers.¹²⁰
8. No advance was made towards controlling the production and trade in opium which should have been an important area of concern for the government. Only recently some serious attention has been paid to this aspect through the Narcotics Control Board which has banned the cultivation of opium in Bihar, Orissa and Jharkhand. The effort has been successful, even though partially.¹²¹
9. The central and state governments will also have to pay attention to the trade in opium by strengthening the vigilance network and adopting an action plan as the mighty beneficiaries of this huge commerce have no interest in allowing government to achieve any success in controlling the Naxal movement.

¹¹⁸ *Daily Samna* (Mumbai), June 4, 2010.

¹¹⁹ *Jagran* (Lucknow), March 11, 2010.

¹²⁰ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), June 4, 2010.

¹²¹ *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), April 8, 2008.

It would be difficult to declare that the government measures to control the insurgency have failed completely or succeeded. The situation seems to lie somewhere in between. Indeed it is a big challenge for the government to implement these policy measures.¹²²

What is needed is a comprehensive policy based on the following factors: peace negotiations must be pursued alongside the campaign to root out the opium trade; development works must be taken up in the troubled areas on a large scale and their fast implementation must be closely monitored; land should be acquired for the displaced persons and they should be provided shelter on top priority along with a permanent source of livelihood.

A strategy based on the genuine needs of the people and put in place with sincerity and executed with honesty cannot fail to bring peace to the troubled regions of the country.¹²³

Undoubtedly this effort in order to succeed would need hard work over a long period of time which can be undertaken gradually and in stages since to achieve peace and security is not an easy task. In the end everything depends on the will and sincerity of the Indian ruling elite.¹²⁴

Acclaimed writer and activist Arundhati Roy and other like-minded intellectuals express deep sympathy for the socio-economic needs of the people of the areas where the Naxal movement is centred but the state response and attitude towards this problem does not give much hope.¹²⁵

Indian Planning Commission and Naxal Movement

The Indian Planning Commission had formed an expert committee to prepare a study on the economic fallout of the Naxal movement and its expansion and exacerbation so that the problems could be identified and necessary steps taken for their solution.¹²⁶

Dr Bindu Opadhiyai, a retired ICS officer, was the head of this committee who had served in senior positions in West Bengal in the seventies and was regarded as an expert in dealing with Naxalite affairs. Other members of this committee included Prakash Singh, a former Director General from Uttar Pradesh and a Naxal expert; Ajit Doval a former IB director; retired bureaucrat B.D. Sharma; Sukh Dev Tharote, a former chairman of the University Grants Commission; and Bal Gopal, a human rights activist. The committee presented its report in June 2006 which could be considered a

¹²² *Bhaskar* (Haryana), May 3, 2009.

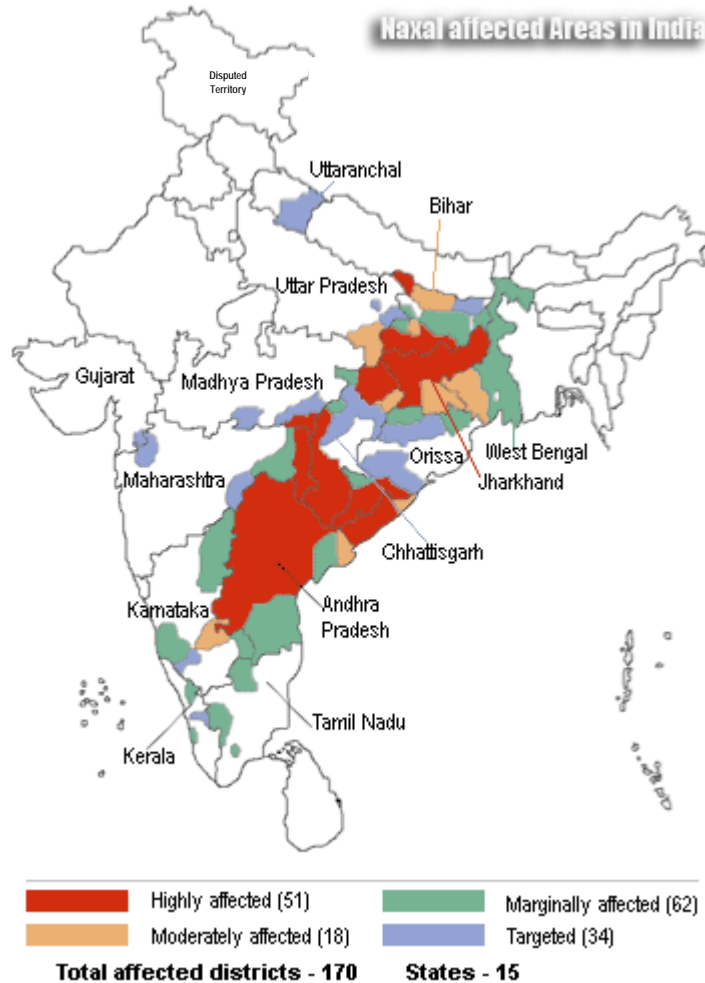
¹²³ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), February 1, 2009.

¹²⁴ *Jagran* (Lucknow), July 4, 2010.

¹²⁵ *Jagran* (Lucknow), January 8, 2008.

¹²⁶ *Amar Ujala* (Lucknow), April 21, 2010.

praiseworthy effort in so short a time. This report is available on the Indian Planning Commission website.¹²⁷



The committee toured 20 most affected districts of the five states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand and Orissa. The committee compared the situation with 20 other districts of the same states in respect of human development, social problems and resources.¹²⁸

The report found that excluding local populations from governance and the general feeling of deprivation prevailing among the masses was behind the growth of the Naxalite movement.

Choosing its words with great caution, the report said that there were two worlds existing side by side in the sectors of education, health, transport

¹²⁷ *Rashtriya Sabara* (Delhi), April 8, 2010.

¹²⁸ *Prabhat Khabar* (Ranchi), July 1, 2007.

and residential facilities.¹²⁹ It is to be noted that the former RAW chief, B. Raman, had expressed a similar opinion about the Naxal-affected regions when he said that India which apparently glitters and shines shows its real face – backward and doomed - when you lift the carpet and find that the people have no facilities. That is why Naxalism prevails and prospers.¹³⁰

The admission in the report of the committee comes as a revelation that though most of the Naxal areas are rich with natural and mineral resources, their people are to the same inverse proportion unfortunate and deprived of the basic necessities of life. That is why the Naxal guerillas have had the full backing and support of the local people.¹³¹

The report further argues that even those people who do not know much about the movement are aware of its main slogan: 'Land for the landless'. Therefore it stresses the fundamental need for providing land to the farmers on ownership basis.

It is for the first time that an official inquiry has blamed the government for the violence in the troubled states and held the central government responsible for the birth and growth of the Naxalite movement.¹³² Citing statistics from 125 districts under Naxal influence the report has admitted that government has totally failed in providing good governance to the people of these states.¹³³ The report has accused the government of observing double standards in the shabby treatment and exploitation of the indigenous populations who are even deprived of representation in the local panchayats or councils. The police lords over them in a most inhuman way such as would put a civilized society to shame.¹³⁴

The report has taken the government to task for adopting measures like Salwa Judam which have created conditions of a civil war in the troubled areas. Such steps must be withdrawn forthwith, the report exhorts. The report rejects the government claims regarding development works in the region and asserts that since independence no headway has been made towards economic uplift of these backward regions. There is no truth in such claims of the government.¹³⁵

The expert committee also believed that under such worse conditions, the Naxalite movement gets both moral and legal justification to pursue and continue its struggle for social rights. When the established democratic principles were not being followed, the right of the communities to protest could not be called into question and held to be unjustified or unlawful.

¹²⁹ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), September 1, 2010.

¹³⁰ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), April 30, 2009.

¹³¹ *Jagran* (Kanpur), April 21, 2008.

¹³² *Jagran* (Lucknow), August 2, 2009.

¹³³ *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), July 1, 2009.

¹³⁴ *Amar Ujala* (Lucknow), August 7, 2009.

¹³⁵ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), February 1, 2009.

Moderate and neutral circles of Indian opinion acclaim this report from an important official source as an honest and objective exercise that could be of help in understanding the background, present status and future prospects of the movement.¹³⁶

A number of humanist groups in India believe that the Naxal movement should not entirely be judged from the conventional security perspective since in reality this movement is a great human struggle against the social injustice that prevails in the Indian society, and which every thinking person and group must support as a collective responsibility.¹³⁷

Some observers think that a possible solution of the problem could lie in the creation of a police force that believes in human values and whose agenda is the welfare of the people. Such a force could probably tackle the insurgency. But others think that the concept of such a police force was a figment of imagination and had nothing to do with the real world.¹³⁸

However since there is great deal of confusion and division among opinion circles and the intelligentsia about the nature of the Naxalite movement, the idea that the movement should be tackled as a human problem and controlled through welfare measures enjoys wide support. It is held that the insurgency cannot be controlled through the force option purely as a security issue. The concept of security itself needs a wider horizon. It needs to be seen as part of the overall human security situation because without addressing the human development issues the Naxal movement is not going to go away.¹³⁹

Use of Children in the Naxal Movement

According to the 'UN Commission on the Status of Child', children cannot be employed in any war situation or war operation no matter who the contestants are and whatever be the objectives of the war.¹⁴⁰

Yet the situation on the ground belies all such international laws and conventions as this practice is rampant all over the world. Whether it is the LTTE of Sri Lanka or the terrorists of al-Qaeda and the Taliban, all employ children in their violent activities.¹⁴¹ The Naxalites are no different in this respect. They have a large number of children in their ranks who not only help indirectly in violent operations but quite often take part in the bigger operations. In the 44 years history of the movement all contestants, the guerrillas as well as the tribal militias under government sponsorship together

¹³⁶ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), August 1, 2010.

¹³⁷ *Daily Hindustan* (Delhi), June 4, 2009.

¹³⁸ *Daily Hindustan* (Delhi), August 5, 2010.

¹³⁹ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), July 9, 2010.

¹⁴⁰ *Jagran* (Lucknow), January 6, 2010.

¹⁴¹ *Jagran* (Lucknow), May 4, 2010.

with Indian government agencies, have made rampant use of children whom they recruit for use in the violent acts.¹⁴²

The Human Rights Watch in its report titled 'Dangerous Duty: Children and Chattisgarh Conflict' has revealed that the Naxalites use 16 year old children in 'Bal Sangam' or children's war as a matter of policy. Children of 6 to 12 years of age are formally inducted in the Bal Sangam force. They are initially brainwashed ideologically and then used in espionage.¹⁴³

Keeping their ability and aptitude in view these children are promoted from Bal Sangam level to Chetna Niti Manch, Jan Militia (armed spy) and Dalam (armed troop) units. They are trained at all these levels. Once a child reaches the Dalam level, he cannot leave or move to some other group. One can do that at the cost of one's life.

The Jan Militia and Dalam members regularly take part in attacks and other operations. The Bal Sangam and CNMS child soldiers are not allowed to join terrorist attacks. This part of the Naxalite policy under which a regular 'child liberation army' has been raised is a dangerous development.

According to several Indian newspapers 300 children are being trained in the use of small arms in the Naxal camps of Jharkhand at Dhanabad and Girdhi. Beside guerilla warfare they are also assigned on spying missions to report on Army movement. They are also used in propaganda campaigns against the armed forces and the Indian government. They publicize exaggerated accounts of Indian excesses against innocent people.¹⁴⁴ Writer and activist Arundhati Roy has given the detailed account of how in March/April 2010 a ten or twelve year old boy guided her to a Naxalite camp in Chhattisgarh.¹⁴⁵ A spokesman of the Jharkhand police, S.N.Pradhan, has also reported the presence of children in the ranks of the Naxal guerillas.¹⁴⁶

Use of Innocent Children by Indian Government

What is of more serious concern in this matter is the remorseless use of children by the Indian authorities in its war against the Naxal guerillas.

Near the end of 2007 the revelation by the Chhattisgarh police that boys of minor age have been recruited as special police officers (SPOs) in the Indian police created a storm and when criticism in the media and civil society grew, the government buckled under and announced that 150 SPOs of minor age had been relieved.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), June 9, 2010.

¹⁴³ *Sach Kaboon* (Haryana), June 4, 2010.

¹⁴⁴ *Inquilab* (Mumbai), June 9, 2010.

¹⁴⁵ *Siasat* (Delhi), July 4, 2010.

¹⁴⁶ *Navijoti* (Jaipur), April 8, 2010.

¹⁴⁷ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), April 9, 2010.

It may be noted that under the Chhattisgarh Police Act 2007 the minimum age for recruitment in police is 18 years. But the determination of age is deliberately avoided. But Indian news media have persistently said that in the tribal militia, Salva Judam, mostly minor children were inducted.¹⁴⁸

Elsewhere, it is no secret that in recent years children have been used in combat situations in Sierra Leone, Mozambique, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and by the Taliban as a normal practice.

It is for this reason that the number of children killed in war has exceeded 20 lakh, while over 60 lakh have been incapacitated and over 12 million rendered homeless.¹⁴⁹ If this trend of children's involvement in Naxal violence from both sides continues, it is feared that in the coming years this situation would become an explosive issue.¹⁵⁰

Red Corridor

The Naxal movement has spread to many states of India and most circles agree that there is no province or federal area where the rebels have garnered no support, though that may differ in extent or kind from place to place.

In some of the states their influence has increased to the extent that the guerillas have formed parallel governments. These most affected areas have been named as the 'red corridor' by official and non official circles,¹⁵¹ which reflects the dominance of the communist ideology in these areas where the Maoists following the Marxist Leninist ideology want to usher in a Red Revolution in the footsteps of Mao Zedong.¹⁵² Here it may be mentioned that in the context of its background what may be noted is the popularity the Naxalite movement gained around the decades of 1960 and 1970 among young people, particularly in the south and east of India. What price they had to pay for this flirtation with an armed rebellion is a different story when the big landlords and the government agencies got together and thousands of these young people were killed by the police and the landlords' private militias.

It is also to be noted that this movement has received greater acceptance and popularity in India's rural and backward areas.¹⁵³ The reason why the movement has not been able to achieve positive results is the factional infighting among the Naxal groups. As many as 60 big and small groups are active in the field according to their agendas. This could be a factor that might stand in the way of their success in the future.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁸ *Jagran* (Lucknow), April 10, 2010.

¹⁴⁹ *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), February 9, 2010.

¹⁵⁰ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), February 21, 2010.

¹⁵¹ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), January 8, 2008.

¹⁵² *Jagran* (UP), August 4, 2010.

¹⁵³ *Jagran* (Bhopal), September 5, 2010.

¹⁵⁴ *Bhaskar* (Chandigarh), November 1, 2009.

Popular View of the Movement

According to Bela Bhatia, a research scholar, the Indian public opinion about the Naxalites is of two kinds:

1. They are extremists who understand only the language of force and want to achieve their aims through armed struggle. This impression has been projected by the official circles and the government media.¹⁵⁵
2. These are followers of Che Guevara and want a positive change in the social set up.¹⁵⁶

The second view is nearer the truth though this too does not tell the whole story. In fact a lot many arguments can be advanced for and against this view.

Naxal Movement in Bihar State

To know the Naxal ideology and the ups and downs of the movement, a study of the situation in the state of Bihar would be useful¹⁵⁷ for the following reasons:

1. Bihar is regarded as the stronghold of the movement.
2. 95 per cent of the area of Bihar is rural.
3. It is one of the most densely populated and poorest states of India. Of its population of 150 million 60 per cent live below the poverty line. Most of them are farm labour.¹⁵⁸
4. Its territory runs along the state of West Bengal where the Naxalbari movement started. Other states that fall in its neighbourhood are Jharkhand, Chattisgarh, Orissa and UP.

Bela Bhatia, researched her thesis on the Naxalite movement in Bihar. She spent two years there to study the situation. For this reason her painstaking work is regarded as both serious and thorough in as much as it probes the ground realities and bares the factual position. Her work is divided into three sections: the Roots of the Naxal uprising; the present situation and its likely consequences and, who are the Naxals and what do they look like.¹⁵⁹

Describing who the Naxals are and what do they look like, she says that the Naxal guerilla and his sympathizer can be identified at one glance. The Naxalite of Bihar is generally a landless poor farmer and a Hindu of low caste.

¹⁵⁵ *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), March 2, 2010.

¹⁵⁶ *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), August 7, 2010.

¹⁵⁷ *Sach Kaboon* (Haryana), January 1, 2010.

¹⁵⁸ *Daily Hindustan* (Delhi), April 4, 2008.

¹⁵⁹ *Nav Bharat Times* (Delhi), April 5, 2010.

His lean and emaciated face speaks for his miserable existence. His decrepit condition seen in a pair of rough knotted hands, worn feet, bent spine and shrunk shoulders presents him as the moving picture of a human devoid of any joy or hope.¹⁶⁰ If one were to see mud houses that have no doors one can be sure a Naxal lives there. In these huts the owner does not have even a wooden stool to offer to his guest. Dressed in dirty rags their appearance bears witness to the reality of their existence.¹⁶¹

A Party of the Poor

The Naxalites seldom use the slogan of ‘revolution’ or ‘kranti’ but through their actions they demonstrate their engagement in a revolutionary struggle.

Naxalite Slogans

The insurgents claim that they are not fighting for wages or a piece of bread but their struggle was for regaining respect in society. They can live on half a loaf of bread and are ready to starve but cannot accept a life without dignity.¹⁶²

The Naxals are very clear about their concept of respect and honour which to them means that they should be given equal status as human beings and the Indian society must treat them with the respect that is due to humans. They demand that their womenfolk should also be treated with respect and they should not be addressed derogatively in the manner of domestic servants with disrespectful modes of address like ‘*abai*’ or ‘*oye*’.¹⁶³

Moreover they should have the right to wear decent clothes and be allowed to sit outside their homes on ‘*charpoyis*’ like other respectable people. They should be allowed the confidence to stand up straight without bowing and bending and face the landowner like his equal, sit with him and talk to him without lowering the gaze.¹⁶⁴

This in sum is their view of what human dignity means and how it translates into practical terms. These simple wishes cannot be denied to anyone or rejected as unjustified. But it is an irony that to get these simple rights in the world’s largest democracy the Naxalites are having to wage a war.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁰ *Daily Hindustan* (Delhi), April 8, 2010.

¹⁶¹ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), January 9, 2010.

¹⁶² *Jagran* (Lucknow), January 22, 2010.

¹⁶³ *Jagran* (Lucknow), January 23, 2010.

¹⁶⁴ *Jagran* (Lucknow), October 12, 2009.

¹⁶⁵ *Jagran* (Lucknow), October 12, 2009.

Causes of Naxal Popularity

Why is the Naxal Movement gaining popularity? To find an answer to this question and to know why people in droves are joining the mass movement, the following factors come to the fore:

- i. In Bihar and other backward states, the common people have totally lost faith in India's traditional politics and the electoral system. In their view this system is designed only to perpetuate and protect the interests of the advantaged classes and has no other purpose.¹⁶⁶
- ii. The smallest fry and the meanest soul in the world which the Naxalites have created is given due respect and nobody is treated derisively but is called and addressed as a 'comrade'. For centuries these people had been yearning to hear these words of respect, which is one of the reasons why the movement is gaining popularity.¹⁶⁷
- iii. It can be said that the common Indian is joining the movement for two reasons: 1) social equity and 2) social security against the high handedness of the rich landed class. It is interesting to note that many high caste Hindus also have no other option but to support the movement for the sake of their own safety.¹⁶⁸

Forms of Naxal Struggle

The Naxal struggle manifests itself in various forms of protest such as

1. 'dharna' (sit in), 'gherao jalao' (surround and burn), strikes, boycott, social boycott etc.¹⁶⁹
2. Looting of edibles/grains from godowns of big farmers and merchants.
3. Snatching arms and weapons from landowners and police.
4. Forcible harvesting of the standing crops of big farmers.
5. Formation of committees for village security.
6. Formation of armed groups at local level.

Reaction of the Ruling Classes¹⁷⁰

The government and the ruling classes have responded to the Naxal threat in following ways:

¹⁶⁶ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), August 4, 2010.

¹⁶⁷ *Jagran* (Lucknow), July 1, 2010.

¹⁶⁸ *India Today* (Delhi), August 5, 2009.

¹⁶⁹ *Sach Kaboon* (Haryana), July 8, 2010.

¹⁷⁰ *Rajasthan Patrika* (Jaipur), January 9, 2010.

1. Preventive operations by police and armed forces.
2. Police cooperation with landowning farmers.
3. The killing of insurgents in fake encounters.
4. Speeding up development work to appease the agitating poor people (but quite often the development funds are pocketed by powerful officials and friends in business through corrupt practices).
5. Formation of private armies and militias. Influential farmers in all Naxal strongholds keep private armies which have been created to teach a lesson to the guerillas. In this connection the creation of two groups is particularly noteworthy:¹⁷¹
 - i. Rambir Sena
 - ii. Swarn Liberation Front, which is a private army of high caste Hindus.

The Rambir Sena was raised in 1994. The sponsors of these armed groups in interviews on the media admitted that ‘they will teach such a lesson to the untouchables and the Naxals that they will forget their dreams of bringing a change in the society’.



Though the Rambir Sena was officially banned, its sponsors maintained active contacts with all district administrations and they continued their activities under government patronage. But on more than one occasion they admitted to neutral circles on condition of secrecy that the Rambir sena had attacked a village of untouchables and killed 21 women and children. Four of

¹⁷¹ *Navjyoti* (Jaipur), July 4, 2009.

these children were less than three years of age.¹⁷² This happened when there were three police camps within half a kilometer of the said village. But despite calls for help the police did not arrive to save the villagers. For three hours these mercenaries of high caste Hindus rampaged through the village playing a barbaric orgy of blood and fire.¹⁷³

Again on 1 January 1997 the Rambir Sena attacked a low caste Hindu village and murdered 61 helpless women, children and old people. In this savage bloodbath the killers not only shot dead children but also cut their throats.

Naxal Successes

1. Earlier the untouchables were not allowed to cast their vote in the elections and usually the polling booths were captured by the high ups. The situation has now changed considerably due to the fear of the guerillas. It may therefore be said that the democratic tradition has been strengthened by the greatest opponents of the system in the world's largest democracy.¹⁷⁴
2. The untouchable Hindus and Christians are regaining their position in society as respectable citizens and as a mark of their self respect have stopped the system of naming the newborn with humiliating names like Bhikari Das (a beggar's servant), Dukhia Ram (miserable) and Gharib Diyal (poor man's issue).¹⁷⁵

Instead now these low caste Hindus name their newborns as Atal (Absolute), Suraj (Sun), Prakash (Light), Kiran (Ray), Bijli (Thunder) and Pratap (Light). This evidence of confidence and self respect is a great achievement of the Naxalites from the social point of view.

Observers of India blame the rampant violation of human rights there even in the 21st century on the strong caste system that prevails there and which the high caste Hindus defend and protect staunchly. In the face of this age old vice it is a great social achievement of the Naxalite movement that the down trodden people have broken the chains of old traditions and started giving hopeful, strong and confident names to their children instead of humiliating negative ones.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷² *Jagran* (Kanpur), August 1, 2010.

¹⁷³ *Jagran* (Kanpur), August 8, 2010.

¹⁷⁴ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), June 1, 2010.

¹⁷⁵ *Jagran* (Lucknow), July 5, 2010.

¹⁷⁶ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), January 9, 2010.

Rise and Fall of Maoist Movements in Asia and Latin America

Some analysts think that armed communist movements around the world had suffered a fall following the death of Mao Zedong in 1976. They cite the example of Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, the Naxalites who splintered into factions in India, the Sri Lankan communists who merged into the mainstream and the Colombian left which joined the central government.¹⁷⁷ In Peru, the communists met the same fate when Chairman Gondalo was arrested by the security forces.

However some neutral observers think differently and cite the example of Nepal where the Maoists came to power in the first decade of the 21st century, while in India the Naxalites made impressive gains during the same period. Therefore it would be wrong to suggest that the Maoists are losing ground.¹⁷⁸

Women's Participation

The factor of women's participation in the Naxal movement has not been given due weight by the intelligentsia in their reviews of the movement's activities and its strategy.



¹⁷⁷ *Jagran* (Lucknow), February 2, 2010.

¹⁷⁸ *Rashtriya Sabara* (Delhi), April 2, 2010.

This should look strange as women have given their 'active support' to the movement right from its beginning in 1967. This is even more remarkable in a social milieu like India's where women's role is limited in life and they are the victims of oppressive customs and exploitation.¹⁷⁹

Indian Politicians' Dealings with Naxalites

Another factor that helps the growth of the Naxalites is the ineffectiveness of the government's writ in the areas where the Naxalites have a strong presence. Taking advantage of this weakness of the government agencies, the Naxalites have filled the vacuum by establishing their own administrations in these areas.¹⁸⁰

In the Bistar region of Chattisgarh, government is so weak that for fear of the guerillas the policemen avoid donning their uniforms and generally move around in civvies. On the other hand the guerillas strut about dressed up formally in their uniforms.¹⁸¹ Freeing hundreds of prisoners from state jails is a routine affair. In their place prison officials are locked up with impunity. Troops go without food for days on end as supplies are blocked or looted. In the Palomo and Dalian areas of Bihar and Adilabad, Warangal and Karimnagar of Andhra Pradesh, government's writ is negligible. According to Arjun Prashad Singh, joint secretary of the All India Peoples Resistance Forum, the law and order situation has improved in areas which are under Naxal administration. Quite a few big landowners have started to support the insurgents openly while some others do so secretly.¹⁸²

According to a report published in *The Week* of 20 April 2009, out of 3207 villages of Pamalu, 1700 are now under Naxal control. Only three big landowners survive in the district whereas previously there used to be nine Rajas, 2100 big and 600 small landowners. The practice of forced labour has been abolished. No one dares pay less to a worker than the wage prescribed by the Naxal administration. It has also been seen that incidence of crimes like theft, prostitution and other excesses has also decreased in areas under Naxal control.¹⁸³

It is interesting to note that in Bihar, Andhra and some other states large political parties help the Naxal administration to increase their vote bank and make them gifts of cash and rifles. Yet another sign of the weakening of

¹⁷⁹ *Navjyot*, (Jaipur), May 6, 2010.

¹⁸⁰ *Rashtriya Sahara* (Delhi), May 9, 2010.

¹⁸¹ *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), February 2, 2009.

¹⁸² *Bhaskar* (Haryana), April 1, 2010.

¹⁸³ *Jagran* (Kanpur), April 7, 2010.

government's writ is that most of the weapons with the Naxalites are those snatched from licensed arms holders.¹⁸⁴

In a report presented to the Maharashtra Assembly in December 2000 it was revealed that in districts of Gondia, Chandrapur and Garhcholi, local contractors and traders were regularly paying their taxes to the Naxal guerillas.¹⁸⁵ It has also been reported that in some Naxal controlled areas even the police pays tax to the guerillas.¹⁸⁶

Conduct of Police Force

Reports of fake 'chhapas' (raids) and arrests are filed by the police under government pressure for the sake of maintaining the performance records. It is also reported that besides the police, paramilitary forces are also involved in the flesh trade of low caste women. In fact it has become proverbial in Chattisgarh and other areas that troops and policemen seldom venture into the difficult Naxal terrain unless to eat chicken or grab a woman for sex.¹⁸⁷

They are also involved in the evil business of kidnapping and selling children of poor farmers in connivance with local goons and other bad characters. For this reason the poor people in Jharkhand and Chattisgarh are full of anger and hatred for the Gorkha, Naga and other alien troops stationed in their area.¹⁸⁸ Observers believe that if such ugly and inhuman practices persist, it would badly affect inter-state relations as well as damage national solidarity.¹⁸⁹

Government Measures

Government measure to deal with the Naxal problem are taken at three levels:

1. The state police tries to deal with the problem locally.
2. The central government in Delhi provides security forces and funds to quell the rebellion.



¹⁸⁴ *Pebli Khabar* (Delhi), May 8, 2009.

¹⁸⁵ *Sach Kaboon* (Haryana), January 1, 2008.

¹⁸⁶ *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), June 2, 2008.

¹⁸⁷ *Prabhat Khabar* (Patna), May 1, 2010.

¹⁸⁸ *Panchjanya* (Delhi), June 4, 2008.

¹⁸⁹ *Times of India* (Delhi), April 20, 2010.

3. International help is also sought where there is need for such cooperation.¹⁹⁰

The Home Minister Chidambaram Subramaniam had claimed on April 1, 2010 that the Naxalite movement would be contained by 2013. But only five days later the Naxalites killed 76 paramilitary troops and officers in Dantewarra reducing his boast to wishful thinking. Earlier the Home secretary Mr Pillai and his minister Subramaniam had ridiculed the Naxal leader Kotesu Rao in a statement on March 7, 2010 and said that the Naxal guerillas were free to dream whatever they liked.¹⁹¹ The Naxal leader had said that India would be divided into several parts by 2050 and a free Naxal state would come into being.¹⁹²

Chidambaram had asked the CPI(M), which had been in power in west Bengal for 33 years, to explain its position in this regard or lend its help in solving this problem.¹⁹³ It may be mentioned that the Naxal leader Kotesu Rao, or Kishanji as he is popularly called, has asserted several times that the Indian State would cease to exist not by but much before 2050.¹⁹⁴

The Indian policy makers and intellectuals are all very worried about bringing the present situation under control.¹⁹⁵ Yet in this context a great deal of difference is found in the opinion of many important personalities.¹⁹⁶ Naturally this is also causing a lot of concern among not only the Indian public but also India's neighbours who think that the danger that the vast spread of the Naxalite movement in India poses to the stability of the whole South Asian region, directly or indirectly, cannot simply be dismissed.¹⁹⁷

Separatist Movements in India

Armed separatist movements are quite common among developing and under developed countries, yet in case of India their prevalence is more abundant and prominent. These secessionist tendencies are more significant in three regions of India:¹⁹⁸

1. Jammu and Kashmir
2. North eastern states of Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura, Meghalaya, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Sikkim

¹⁹⁰ *Indian Express* (Delhi), July 28, 2010.

¹⁹¹ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), January 25, 2010.

¹⁹² *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), September 9, 2009.

¹⁹³ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), March 1, 2010.

¹⁹⁴ *Jagran* (UP), July 2, 2009.

¹⁹⁵ *Jagran* (UP), August 1, 2010.

¹⁹⁶ *Jagran* (Lucknow), April 5, 2009.

¹⁹⁷ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), January 3, 2010.

¹⁹⁸ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), April 22, 2010.

3. Together with the movements in Middle and Eastern India the Naxalites of the South have somewhat identical aims. Yet their agendas greatly differ from each other.¹⁹⁹

The movement in Kashmir for instance openly demands freedom from the Indian Union. Backing this movement there are the unanimous resolutions of the UN Security Council.²⁰⁰ How and why the international community shirks from this moral responsibility and thus probably commits a collective crime, or to put it more mildly, omission, is a subject not for here to discuss.²⁰¹

The movements agitating in the north east for over half a century are either demanding separation from the Union or calling for provincial autonomy. The government, in its opinion, has controlled some of these uprisings by creating a number of smaller provinces.²⁰² But the Naxalites have larger aims. They want to overthrow the present system through a Communist revolution even if this effort results in the dismemberment of India into several states.²⁰³

Salient Features of Naxalite Movement

Since the beginning of the Naxalite movement there has been a dangerous increase in violent incidents. The number of fatalities in the last several years has risen extraordinarily.

Armed Attacks

Statistics record the following number of armed attacks:²⁰⁴

Year	Number of Armed Attacks
2003	1220
2004	1380
2005	1748
2006	1660
2007	1650
2008	2159
2009	2300
2010	2769

¹⁹⁹ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), April 23, 2010.

²⁰⁰ *Jagran* (UP), January 24, 2010.

²⁰¹ *Daily Hindustan* (Delhi), June 1, 2009.

²⁰² *Daily Hindustan* (Delhi), April 7, 2010.

²⁰³ *Nav Bharat Times* (Delhi), May 2, 2010.

²⁰⁴ *Nav Bharat Times* (Delhi), May 4, 2010.

	(first six months of the year)
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India's defence experts are generally of the view that the government can control and quell the rebellion by adopting the following measures:²⁰⁵

1. Large scale stationing of armed troops in the Naxal affected areas
2. Unrestricted use of state's coercive power
3. Total evacuation of civilian population from the conflict zones
4. Uninhibited use of air power when needed

The opponents of this strategy believe that it would further fuel the insurgency and promote the Naxalite cause.

Why the Naxals have the Upper Hand

The Naxalites have upper hand because of:

1. Thick and impassable forest and mountain terrain
2. Existence of sympathy for the Naxal cause in the society and among official circles that continues to grow.²⁰⁶ The former Foreign Minister Yashwant Sinha revealed in the Parliament on 16th April 2010 that even some Congress Party leaders in the government possessed minds that were 'half Naxalite'.²⁰⁷ In this connection he cited the statement of the former chief minister of Madhya Pradesh, Mr Dig Vijay Singh, published in the press on 13 April 2010 in which he accused the home minister Mr Chidumbrum of being too much of an intellectual and a 'Mr Know All' whose policies were promoting Naxalism.²⁰⁸ Commenting on this statement of Dig Vijay Singh, the former Congress general secretary and spokesman, Janardan Dervedi said that people were free to hold their private views in the Congress but they must air such views only in the inside forums of the party. He thus criticized Dig Vijay Singh and asked him not to criticize the Home Minister or the government policies in this manner.²⁰⁹ It may be noted that after publication of these statements Sonia Gandhi sat down with the finance minister Pranab Mukherji, defence minister Anthony, home minister

²⁰⁵ *Inquilab* (Mumbai), July 5, 2010.

²⁰⁶ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), June 6, 2010.

²⁰⁷ *Jagran* (Lucknow), April 19, 2010.

²⁰⁸ *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), March 18, 2010.

²⁰⁹ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), October 9, 2009.

- Chidumbrum and her special assistant Ahmad Patel to discuss the serious issue.²¹⁰
3. The stark economic and social backwardness of the people and their deprivation from all fruits of progress promotes the cause of the Naxalites.
 4. Members of the paramilitary forces and law enforcement agencies have been found selling arms to the insurgents.²¹¹
 5. The drug barons and smugglers have close ties with the guerillas.
 6. Attacks on railway trains like the Rajdhani Express expose the inability of the railway department to provide security to its passengers and the growing boldness of the guerillas in launching such attacks.²¹²
 7. A number of analysts and observers regard the progressive views of Mamta Banerji, the leader of the Tiramol Congress, as supportive of the Naxal cause.
 8. The rebels have close alliance with contractors, smugglers and factory owners which is helping in the growth of Naxalism.²¹³

Naxalites' Media-Friendly Policy

It is a great achievement of the Naxalite leadership that they have been able to strike and maintain good relations with noted media persons and columnists of repute.²¹⁴ In this regard Kishanji, the Naxal leader, has played a very proactive role. He has been taking journalists and columnists around areas under Naxal control that are deemed to be the precursors of the future 'Free Naxal State.'²¹⁵ As a consequence the excesses committed by the state against the people of the backward regions have been widely discussed in the major organs of the Hindi and English press. This has won over thousands of young people to the Naxal cause adding to the morale of the guerillas and increase in sympathy for the movement. On the other side this has discouraged the paramilitary forces, police and other government agencies. In fact this has badly affected the credibility of the state functionaries in the eyes of the masses.²¹⁶

Taking cue from the Indian press and media, foreign newspapers and periodicals, specially American and European, are giving coverage to the

²¹⁰ *Jagran* (Lucknow), February 20, 2010.

²¹¹ *Jagran* (UP), March 13, 2010.

²¹² *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), June 5, 2009.

²¹³ *Jagran* (UP), April 10, 2010.

²¹⁴ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), March 9, 2008.

²¹⁵ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), August 8, 2010.

²¹⁶ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), January 4, 2010.

difficult life of the Indian farming community, the problems the poor of the backward areas face on a daily basis and the failure of the agricultural policy. This is benefitting the movement by providing it the justification it needs for its cause.²¹⁷ The growing reports of suicides among the wretchedly poor farmers in the backward region are also winning the movement many supporters on the ideological front.²¹⁸ The mafia groups operating from Dubai are being accused of providing funds to the movement and promoting its stature abroad.

The killing of 76 personnel of the security forces on 6th April 2010 as earlier discussed has added to the terror of the guerillas and exposed the helplessness of the government in confronting the rebellion. The *Indian Express* wrote in sheer exasperation that the writ of the paramilitary troops in the Naxal areas seems to have been completely compromised.²¹⁹

The Economist of March 2010 commenting in the first issue of the month advised the Indian government that it should take the Naxal militancy seriously to avoid the serious consequences of its continuance.²²⁰

The Indian government cannot interfere in provincial matters beyond a certain extent in accordance with the limits set on it by the Constitution. This is also going in favour of the rebels as the movement holds sway in several states and since the guerillas are not obliged to observe the constitutional restrictions which bind the central government, the latter has to face many difficulties in taking necessary measures.²²¹

Andhra Pradesh Factor

Naxalites all over India are getting ideological and strategic guidance from Andhra Pradesh which is an important aspect of the situation.²²² Shabu Soreen, the head of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and state chief minister is to an extent an open supporter of the Naxalites which goes to weaken the stance of the anti Naxal politicians.²²³

A number of prominent journalists have contributed pro Naxal articles to prominent periodicals like 'Outlook,' 'Bhaskar' and 'India Today'. Samita Gupta's "My Journey to Chhattisgarh" published in Outlook created waves. Publication of such pro Naxal material in prominent Indian journals goes a long way in gaining support for the Naxal cause.²²⁴

²¹⁷ *Jagran* (UP), February 24, 2010.

²¹⁸ *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), January 23, 2010.

²¹⁹ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), March 26, 2009.

²²⁰ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), October 1, 2010.

²²¹ *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), May 4, 2010.

²²² *Jagran* (UP), July 3, 2009.

²²³ *Jagran* (UP), September 1, 2010.

²²⁴ *Sach Kaboon* (Haryana), October 10, 2010.

Arundhati Roy is being blamed for declaring the activities of the guerillas in the Dantewarah area of Chhattisgarh in which over 100 security personnel were killed in one month.²²⁵ The government's campaign to win the hearts and minds of the people looks like failure though the home minister Mr Chidumbrum promises he is trying his best to secure the support of the civil society. There are few signs to see of such a happenstance.²²⁶

Neutral observers in their comments give all the credit to the Naxal leadership for rendering the Delhi government's anti insurgency strategy ineffective to a great extent and this trend seems to continue. There is confusion in government circles with regard to 'Operation Green Hunt' as contradictory statements by officials continue to come to the fore about this initiative.²²⁷ An example of this confusion is the matter regarding the large scale use of the Indian army and air force in operations to quell the insurgency. One day it is said this policy has been decided but the very next day some prominent figure denies that. Another example of this confusion is Kerala's magazine 'Peoples March' which was banned but its publication has been restored by the Press Registrar Appellate Board which held the ban to be illegal.²²⁸

In a situation like this which is obviously to the advantage of the rebels the civil society is wondering and raising this question with persistence if the Naxal were winning and their Movement marching towards success?²²⁹

Unable to answer this tricky question the Indians are using the traditional policy of blaming the mischief on external hand in this pointing its finger at Pakistan, Nepal and China.²³⁰ The chief minister of Chhattisgarh and its head of police have already named the Lashkar-e-taiba and ISI in this context.²³¹ But this story could not win much support in India itself. Home Minister Chidumbrum has admitted they were unable to find any proof of Pakistan's involvement in this.²³² But the Indian media is talking about Nepal and China and a campaign seems to have been launched to malign these two neighbours. The Indian intelligentsia itself and world opinion at large are reluctant to buy this line.²³³

In fact there is general consensus among analysts of the Naxal movement that economic and social injustice in the Indian society is behind

²²⁵ *Jagran* (UP), April 1, 2010.

²²⁶ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), May 6, 2009.

²²⁷ *Amar Ujala* (Delhi), April 7, 2010.

²²⁸ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), May 8, 2010.

²²⁹ *Jagran* (Lucknow), December 1, 2009.

²³⁰ *Inquilab* (Mumbai), April 4, 2010.

²³¹ *Times of India* (Delhi), April 17, 2010.

²³² *Bhaskar* (Haryana), April 18, 2010.

²³³ *Outlook India* (Chennai), May 13, 2010.

the rise of this mass revolt.²³⁴ However there is great disparity in views about the future of the movement and its impact on the solidarity of the country. But all agree that it is a big challenge for the Indian state and society and its ramifications can affect the whole region.²³⁵ Shekar Gupta, noted intellectual and editor of the 'Indian Express' however is hopeful that the Indian state has the capability to tide over such difficulties and this has been demonstrated more than once in the past.²³⁶ Other Indians hold very different and contrary opinion in this regard.

Government Security Strategy

According to retired colonel Anil Aatley government should formulate its policy on the following guiding principles.

1. Stationing of army troops on a large scale in the affected areas
2. Use of unrestricted coercive power by the state
3. Total evacuation of civilian population from the troubled zones
4. Effective use of air force when needed

As noted above, observers believe such a strategy would only fuel the fire of rebellion in the vast territory of the country.

Conclusion

After this somewhat detailed discussion on the ongoing Naxalite movement in India it would still remain a doubtful proposition for anyone to predict with finality if in the coming years it would meet with ultimate success or failure but the study helps us to say with some certainty that this is an uprising of a desperate populace fed up with their wretched existence and the injustice of their life who have lost all hope and have taken up arms to snatch their rights as human beings. The logical end of this class war would depend on the following factors:

Change in Priorities of the Indian Ruling Class

Influential Indian circles have created firm impression inside the country and abroad that the Indian economy by and large is set on a stable path to prosperity. To create this impression the affluent classes and the ruling elite have used the information media, modern gadgets of the communication technology and the 20 million strong Indian diaspora in a systematic way.

²³⁴ *Frontline* (Chennai), September 1, 2010.

²³⁵ *Bhaskar* (Haryana), August 1, 2009.

²³⁶ *Jagrai* (Kanpur), April 17, 2008.

It is indeed tragic to see that the Indian affluent class itself has been mesmerised by this self-created image and has become a prisoner of this delusion. The reality is different as India's accumulated wealth is concentrated in the hands of less than 10 percent of its population and is of little use for the majority. There is scant chance that the majority will have control over these resources anywhere in the near future.

On the one side we see the billionaire tycoon Mukesh Ambani building himself world's costliest palace in Mumbai at the cost of more than one billion dollars, and on the other side we see thousands of poor farmers of Maharashtra who are committing suicide as they are unable to repay small loans of a few thousand rupees. This gives strength to the view that the Indian ruling elite and affluent classes trapped in the illusion of their prosperity are not serious at all. The hope that they will relent any time soon and bring any change in their priorities is farfetched.

It is therefore feared that poverty levels instead of declining are going to rise. Against this background the large circulating Hindi daily, Bhaskar in its issue of 20 October 2010 published an article by a scholar Ms Chandrika titled "Starving Children: Mahashakti (super power) at what cost?" The article says that according to the renowned Arjun Sen Gupta Report the population under the poverty line was 78 per cent in 2005. But the Suresh Tandolkar Report puts it at 37.2 and the N.C. Saksena Report at 50. The World Bank gave a figure of 42 percent which in terms of number is one crore more than the total poor population of 26 poorest countries of Africa.

The statistical variance in these reports is due to the different standards of poverty measurements applied. The UNDP had made a list of 184 countries in order of prevailing standard of living. According to this report the standard of living in India was falling constantly: in 2006 India was at the 126th place; in 2008 it had come down to 128th and 134th in 2009.

Actually India's 58 per cent population is engaged in farming which the planners neglect at the time of drawing the development plans. Under such conditions it is amusing to note the Indian Home Minister's claim that the Naxal movement will be brought under control in three years when if the present trends in poverty levels persist the country would have suffered further decline on the UNDP scale.

How far the Indian ruling class is serious about priorities can be gauged from a statement of Vijender Singh Shekhawat reported in Bhaskar of 3 October 2010. He said that the country spent more on organising Commonwealth Games than the total money spent on health and education, combined. Budgetary details put the allocation for education at 31036 crore and health at 22300 crore, whereas the amount spent on the sports event was 70,000 crore rupees. This could be a measure of Indian rulers' seriousness about social and economic priorities.

However this class war is not only a threat to India's security but it can even affect the development of India's missile technology since all missile manufacturing and launching sites are located in Naxalite territory. It is not outside the realm of possibility if one day the guerillas attack and acquire control over one of these facilities and endanger not only the security of India's metropolitan cities but threaten the stability of the entire region.

Further the economic condition of the people in neighbouring countries of India is not anything to be satisfied about where the talk of revolution is not a rare phenomenon. It is obvious that the poor masses can find an attractive example to follow in the struggle of the Naxalites who have risen above the distinctions of religion, language and regional prejudices and are fighting for the survival and rights of the common masses.

The prospect of some such groups in the region forming an alliance cannot be ruled out and irrespective of the fact whether such a development would be right or wrong, such an alliance could result in the Naxal movement engulfing the entire region of South Asia.

India's Hegemonic Designs and Defence Expenditure

India is spending a large proportion of its resources towards its hegemonic designs in the region. This is depriving the poor masses of the resources needed not only for their uplift but even for meeting their basic needs. As a result the movement of the deprived and exploited classes against the ruling minority is picking up in the expansion of the Naxalite uprising.

The dreaded prospect that one day, fifteen or twenty years hence, due to the continuation of these elitist policies India may break up, like the mighty Soviet Union, cannot be altogether dismissed. In such an event the stability of the entire region may plunge into an unimaginable turbulence manifesting in religious extremism, that is already on the rise, turning into ethnic and linguistic movements that in their turn may cause new geographic entities to emerge in the region.

Nevertheless it all depends on how the ruling classes in South Asia, and particularly in India change their ways and agree to bring about change and put the available resources towards raising a just society so that the possibility of some major political and social upheaval is stopped from materialising.

Fatalities in Left-wing Extremism

State-wise number of incidents and casualties, 2004 to 2008

State	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths
AndhraPradesh	310	74	535	208	183	47	138	45	92	46
Bihar	323	171	186	96	107	45	135	67	164	73
Chhattisgarh	352	83	385	168	715	388	582	369	620	242
Jharkhand	379	169	312	119	310	124	482	157	484	207
M.P.	13	4	20	3	6	1	9	2	7	-
Maharashtra	84	15	94	53	98	42	94	25	68	22
Orissa	35	8	42	14	44	9	67	17	103	101
U.P.	15	26	10	1	11	5	9	3	4	-
West Bengal	11	15	14	7	23	17	32	6	35	2.6
Other States (4)	11	1	10	8	12		17	5	14	4
Total	1533	566	1608	677	1509	678	1565	696	1591	721

TABLE OF DEATHS INVOLVED IN NAXALITE MOVEMENT

2005

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	132	21	167	320
Bihar	25	29	52	106
Jharkhand	49	27	20	96
Chhattisgarh	52	48	26	126
Orissa	13	1	3	17
Maharashtra	2	17	8	27
Karnataka	2	6	4	12
Uttar Pradesh	1	0	6	7
West Bengal	5	1	0	6
Total*	281	150	286	717

2006

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	18	7	127	152
Bihar	16	5	19	40
Jharkhand	18	47	29	94
Karnataka	0	0	1	1
Chhattisgarh	189	55	117	361
Maharashtra	13	3	33	49
Orissa	3	4	16	23
West Bengal	9	7	4	20
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	2	2
Total	266	128	348	742

2007

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	24	4	45	73
Bihar	23	21	5	49
Jharkhand	69	6	45	120
Karnataka	1	1	6	8
Chhattisgarh	95	182	73	350
Maharashtra	9	2	8	19
Orissa	13	2	8	23
West Bengal	6	0	1	7
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	1	1
Total	240	218	192	650

2008

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	28	1	37	66
Bihar	35	21	15	71
Jharkhand	74	39	50	153
Karnataka	3	1	3	7
Chhattisgarh	35	67	66	168
Maharashtra	2	5	7	14
Orissa	24	76	32	132
West Bengal	19	4	1	24
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	2	2
Tamil Nadu	0	0	1	1
Total	210	214	214	638

State-wise Fatalities 2009

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	10	0	18	28
Bihar	37	25	16	78
Chhattisgarh	87	121	137	345
Jharkhand	74	67	76	217
Maharashtra	12	52	23	87
Orissa	36	32	13	81
Uttar Pradesh	1	0	2	3
West Bengal	134	15	9	158
Total*	391	312	294	997

Month-wise Fatalities 2009

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
January	22	13	32	67
February	8	31	6	45
March	30	3	12	45
April	34	48	55	137
May	18	43	17	78
June	31	60	14	105
July	16	43	12	71
August	48	8	10	66
September	37	8	67	112
October	48	28	29	105
November	50	14	18	82
December*	49	13	22	84
TOTAL	391	312	294	997

January

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	0	0	5	5
Bihar	0	1	1	2
Chhattisgarh	7	5	21	33
Jharkhand	11	7	5	23
Maharashtra	0	0	0	0
Orissa	3	0	0	3
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	1	0	0	1
TOTAL	22	13	32	67

February

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	1	0	0	1
Bihar	1	11	0	12
Chhattisgarh	0	3	0	3
Jharkhand	1	0	6	7
Maharashtra	3	15	0	18
Orissa	1	0	0	1
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	1	2	0	3
TOTAL	8	31	6	45

March

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Bihar	8	0	1	9
Chhattisgarh	11	2	2	15
Jharkhand	5	1	8	14
Maharashtra	0	0	0	0
Orissa	4	0	1	5
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	2	0	0	2
TOTAL	30	3	12	45

April

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	1	0	0	1
Bihar	1	6	11	18
Chhattisgarh	8	16	11	35
Jharkhand	9	12	14	35
Maharashtra	2	3	14	19
Orissa	2	11	5	18
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	11	0	0	11
TOTAL	34	48	55	137

May

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	3	0	2	5
Bihar	1	0	0	1
Chhattisgarh	8	27	9	44
Jharkhand	3	0	5	8
Maharashtra	0	16	1	17
Orissa	3	0	0	3
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	18	43	17	78

June

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Bihar	1	1	0	2
Chhattisgarh	9	18	10	37
Jharkhand	2	28	2	32
Maharashtra	0	0	0	0
Orissa	3	10	2	15
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	16	3	0	19
TOTAL	31	60	14	105

July

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	0	0	2	2
Bihar	1	0	0	1
Chhattisgarh	3	38	3	44
Jharkhand	3	1	7	11
Maharashtra	0	0	0	0
Orissa	0	4	0	4
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	9	0	0	9
TOTAL	16	43	12	71

August

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Bihar	0	5	2	7
Chhattisgarh	11	0	6	17
Jharkhand	10	3	0	13
Maharashtra	0	0	0	0
Orissa	6	0	1	7
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	21	0	1	22
TOTAL	48	8	10	66

September

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	0	0	1	1
Bihar	1	0	0	1
Chhattisgarh	8	6	43	57
Jharkhand	10	1	17	28
Maharashtra	0	1	1	2
Orissa	0	0	1	1
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	18	0	4	22
TOTAL	37	8	67	112

October

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	2	0	3	5
Bihar	16	0	0	16
Chhattisgarh	4	5	7	16
Jharkhand	9	1	8	18
Maharashtra	4	17	7	28
Orissa	2	3	0	5
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	11	2	4	17
TOTAL	48	28	29	105

November

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	0	0	1	1
Bihar	1	1	1	3
Chhattisgarh	10	0	11	21
Jharkhand	7	4	2	13
Maharashtra	2	0	0	2
Orissa	12	3	2	17
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	1	1
West Bengal	18	6	0	24
TOTAL	50	14	18	82

December

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	3	0	4	7
Bihar	6	0	0	6
Chhattisgarh	8	1	14	23
Jharkhand	4	9	2	15
Maharashtra	1	0	0	1
Orissa	0	1	1	2
Uttar Pradesh	1	0	1	2
West Bengal	26	2	0	28
TOTAL	49	13	22	84

State-wise Fatalities 2010

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	17	0	16	33
Bihar	54	24	20	98
Chhattisgarh	72	153	102	327
Jharkhand	71	27	49	147
Karnataka	0	0	1	1
Madhya Pradesh	0	1	0	1
Maharashtra	22	15	3	40
Orissa	62	21	25	108
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	328	36	61	425
Total	626	277	277	1180

Month-wise Fatalities 2010

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
January	30	9	28	67
February	29	29	30	88
March	30	8	17	55
April	32	87	15	134
May	230	37	19	286
June	46	34	36	116
July	39	8	25	72
August	34	12	16	62
September	39	16	16	71
October	27	17	18	62
November	53	8	41	102
December	37	12	16	65
TOTAL	626	277	277	1180

January

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	1	0	0	1
Bihar	0	0	0	0
Chhattisgarh	2	1	22	25
Jharkhand	3	7	0	10
Maharashtra	1	0	0	1
Orissa	10	0	0	10
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	13	1	6	20
TOTAL	30	9	28	67

February

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Bihar	13	1	3	17
Chhattisgarh	2	0	16	18
Jharkhand	6	1	2	9
Maharashtra	0	0	0	0
Orissa	2	1	0	3
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	6	26	9	41
TOTAL	29	29	30	88

March

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	1	0	4	5
Bihar	4	1	0	5
Chhattisgarh	0	2	4	6
Jharkhand	9	1	1	11
Karnataka	0	0	1	1
Maharashtra	1	0	0	1
Orissa	5	4	1	10
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	10	0	6	16
TOTAL	30	8	17	55

April

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Bihar	5	0	0	5
Chhattisgarh	1	76	9	86
Jharkhand	7	0	3	10
Karnataka	0	0	0	0
Maharashtra	1	0	1	2
Orissa	3	11	0	14
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	15	0	2	17
TOTAL	32	87	15	134

May

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	3	0	0	3
Bihar	7	4	1	12
Chhattisgarh	39	24	6	69
Jharkhand	3	1	0	4
Karnataka	0	0	0	0
Maharashtra	1	2	0	3
Orissa	2	1	12	15
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	175	5	0	180
TOTAL	230	37	19	286

June

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	1	0	1	2
Bihar	1	0	2	3
Chhattisgarh	9	31	8	48
Jharkhand	11	1	10	22
Karnataka	0	0	0	0
Maharashtra	2	0	0	2
Orissa	5	1	0	6
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	17	1	15	33
TOTAL	46	34	36	116

July

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	0	0	4	4
Bihar	0	0	1	1
Chhattisgarh	7	1	4	12
Jharkhand	2	6	6	14
Karnataka	0	0	0	0
Maharashtra	0	0	1	1
Orissa	5	0	0	5
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	25	1	9	35
TOTAL	39	8	25	72

August

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	1	0	0	1
Bihar	2	7	0	9
Chhattisgarh	0	5	4	9
Jharkhand	11	0	5	16
Karnataka	0	0	0	0
Maharashtra	3	0	0	3
Orissa	6	0	0	6
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	11	0	7	18
TOTAL	34	12	16	62

September

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	3	0	0	3
Bihar	4	1	2	7
Chhattisgarh	2	7	0	9
Jharkhand	7	5	12	24
Karnataka	0	0	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	0	1	0	1
Maharashtra	2	0	0	2
Orissa	7	1	0	8
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	14	1	2	17
TOTAL	39	16	16	71

October

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	2	0	0	2
Bihar	1	5	0	6
Chhattisgarh	4	3	9	16
Jharkhand	2	1	7	10
Karnataka	0	0	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Maharashtra	6	8	0	14
Orissa	1	0	0	1
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	11	0	2	13
TOTAL	27	17	18	62

November

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	3	0	2	5
Bihar	15	4	11	30
Chhattisgarh	5	2	20	27
Jharkhand	5	1	1	7
Karnataka	0	0	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Maharashtra	2	1	1	4
Orissa	10	0	4	14
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	13	0	2	15
TOTAL	53	8	41	102

December

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	2	0	5	7
Bihar	2	1	0	3
Chhattisgarh	1	1	0	2
Jharkhand	5	3	2	10
Karnataka	0	0	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Maharashtra	3	4	0	7
Orissa	6	2	8	16
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	18	1	1	20
TOTAL	37	12	16	65

State-wise Fatalities 2011

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	2	0	2	4
Bihar	11	3	13	27
Chhattisgarh	9	37	53	99
Jharkhand	42	15	31	88
Karnataka	0	0	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Maharashtra	15	6	24	45
Odisha	11	14	21	46
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	33	1	4	38

Total*	123	76	148	347
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* Data till June 12, 2011

Note: Compiled from news reports and are provisional.

January

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	0	0	1	1
Bihar	1	1	0	2
Chhattisgarh	1	2	4	7
Jharkhand	9	0	14	23
Karnataka	0	0	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Maharashtra	0	0	0	0
Odisha	2	0	16	18
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	18	0	1	19
TOTAL	31	3	36	70

February

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Bihar	0	0	6	6
Chhattisgarh	2	1	0	3
Jharkhand	4	3	1	8
Karnataka	0	0	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Maharashtra	0	0	0	0
Odisha	2	2	4	8
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	7	0	0	7
TOTAL	15	6	11	32

March

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	0	0	1	1
Bihar	3	0	7	10
Chhattisgarh	3	4	34	41
Jharkhand	5	1	5	11
Karnataka	0	0	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0	0

Maharashtra	4	0	0	4
Odisha	0	0	0	0
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	2	1	3	6
TOTAL*	17	6	50	73

April

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	0	0	1	1
Bihar	2	2	0	4
Chhattisgarh	2	0	1	3
Jharkhand	13	0	2	15
Karnataka	0	0	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Maharashtra	0	2	4	6
Odisha	3	1	1	5
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	4	0	0	4
TOTAL*	24	5	9	38

May

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	1	0	0	1
Bihar	3	0	0	3
Chhattisgarh	1	11	1	13
Jharkhand	7	11	5	23
Karnataka	0	0	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Maharashtra	7	4	20	31
Odisha	3	11	0	14
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	1	0	0	1
TOTAL*	23	37	26	86

June*

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Bihar	1	0	0	1
Chhattisgarh	0	1	0	1
Jharkhand	1	0	3	4
Karnataka	0	0	0	0

Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Maharashtra	0	0	0	0
Odisha	0	0	0	0
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	1	0	0	1
TOTAL*	3	1	3	7

* Data till June 12, 2011.

Source: Official website of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, India.
http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/maoist/data_sheets/fatalitiesnaxal.asp