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'The Biggest Internal Security Threat' Resurfaces: Naxal Violence And The State Today



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By Jai Prakash Ojha (/author/jai_prakash_ojha):

The Unending Violence

The gruesome killing of 14 CRPF personnel, including 2 officials, in Sukma district of Chhattisgarh, has shattered the 18 month calm that was prevailing on the Naxal front. This is the first major strike in the state by the Naxals after the horrific incident on 25/05/13 when 25 state Congress leaders perished in a land mine blast. The Naxals had also inflicted heavy casualties on the security forces when in 2010; they killed 75 policemen in the forests of Dantewada by trapping them.



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The Naxal movement commenced its journey from a place called Naxalbari in West Bengal. It was led by Charu Mazumdar and Kanu Sanyal. Mazumdar's 'Basic Eight Documents' broke away from CPI (M) to support the Naxal cause. The Revolutionary Writers' Group, led by Kanu Sanyal, was formed. The Srikakulam movement in Andhra gave impetus to the movement. Today there are 10 districts of the 600 odd districts nationwide covering 10 states. Starting from West Bengal, UP, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, and right up to Andhra Pradesh.

The Maoists are waging war against the state, the social and the political structures. They intend to bring about a revolution to provide power to the proletariat by resorting to armed struggle. Normally, they target the state security apparatus and police personnel. The landlords often come into conflict with them to protect their landed properties. After independence, the government of India started the ambitious land reform programmes and passed landmark legislations like Zamindari Abolition Act, Land Ceiling Act and Land

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The Problem Today

The Naxals have pockets of influence in some of the most underdeveloped forested regions of the country inhabited by the dalits and the adivasis who live in apathetic conditions. According to Schedule Five of our Constitution, the administration of forested and reserved areas will be carried out by the Governor of the state independently who would be assisted in his work by the Tribal Advisory council consisting of local representatives. However, this has been on paper only and the state governments have not shied away from plunder of natural resources in these regions.

Big dams, factories and communication lines have been set up displacing a large segment of tribal population. These mineral rich areas in the states of Jharkhand, Orissa, Andhra and Chhattisgarh are sources for heavy royalty and industrial opportunities and hence clash of interests between the locals and the outsiders can't be ruled out. The tribals and the dalits have been uprooted from their homes, their social customs are under attack and it is quite logical for them to regard the state as exploiter. The globalization process and the arrival of private investment in a big way have led to plunder of our scarce land and forest resources to satiate our development and urbanization needs.

State Action

Most of the state action to combat the Naxals is guided by the law and order dictum. Operation Greyhounds has been successful to some extent in Andhra Pradesh. The elite Cobra wing has been created by the central security agencies to break the backbone of Naxal resistance. A unified command has been operationalized in the terror hotbeds to ensure coordinated action between the CRPF and the state police personnel to defeat the ultra left forces.

The Salwa Judum concept under which tribal youths were trained and provided weapons to act as local vigilant groups to take on the Maoists in the villages was outlawed by the apex judiciary, as the Supreme Court provided security to its citizens to any external non state actor.

Unmanned aerial vehicles including drones and satellite services have been provided and provide logistic support to the ground forces. Apart from treating this problem have also taken to appeasement policies. The Jharkhand state has in fact a sub mainstream in the form of state police jobs and compensation package to starve development and welfare measures in red zone has the potential to lure the youth need to provide employment opportunities and better quality of life to the masses them from falling into Naxal trap. Tribal sub component plans received budget

Losing its Stronghold

The ideology that formed the basis of the movement at the time of its inception splinter Naxal groups have surfaced, all headed by self appointed leaders, who using innocent civilians as human shields in their fight against security forces

operations run their parallel government set up and fill their pockets. They are hand in glove with several politicians who need their support to ensure electoral victories and high level bureaucrats who provide levy to them for ensuring their safety. The contractors have to pay levy before starting any construction work. The movement has got divided on caste lines. Rather than any ideology, it is the common hatred against state that has kept the Naxals going. Naxalism has flourished in the lands of central and eastern India inhabited by tribals and dalits ravaged by poverty, illiteracy, mal nutrition and lack of access to primary healthcare and education.

The Options Ahead

The fight against Naxalism needs a multi pronged strategy. Right to Forest Act is a good beginning as it makes the forest dwellers stakeholders in the management of forest resources instilling a sense of community participation in them but the moot point is the implementation process.



The state needs to reach out to the inhabitants by a slew of measures like real reach of food bill provisions and MNREGA, NHRM and Sarv Siksha Abhiyan. Connectivity needs to be strengthened with the rest of the country. The Modi government's ambitious 'Made in India' project needs the participation of these rich mineral Naxal infested states whose unemployed youth can be imparted skill training to attain relevance in the job market. Violence And The State

Today's picture=https://dz01iyojmxk8t.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/06090919/maoist1.jpg&pco=tbxnj-1.0) : Today's picture=https://dz01iyojmxk8t.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/06090919/maoist1.jpg&pco=tbxnj-1.0) industrial corridors of Jamshedpur, Bokaro, Bhilai and Dhanbad in the red zone have failed to have a spill over and multiplier effect, remaining islands of prosperity and growth. Meaningful reforms in agriculture in the structural system will serve the nation.

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We have already seen the left government in West Bengal successfully challenge the Naxal movement by a slew of land reform measures. The state should persuade the Naxals to come out in the mainstream and participate in elections while maintaining the heat on the other end through better intelligence and security management.

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