MEASURES To COUNTER THE NAXAL PROBLEM

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ABSTRACT

In 2006, Prime Minister Shri Manmohan Singh had said that the Left Wing Extremism is the biggest threat for internal security of India. Studies indicates that till 2010 the incidents of Naxal activities had reached its peak. After 2010 a continuous decline has been registered in the incidents of Naxal violence. But the Naxal threat has still not completely been eradicated. According to Ministry of Home Affairs data Naxalism is still active in 90 districts of 10 States despite continuous effort by both the Union and State to counter the Naxal threat. The government of India has adopted a multi pronged strategy to counter the Naxal threat which included the Coercive and Non – Coercive measures. How Coercive and Non – Coercive measures would help in combating the Naxalism has been discussed in detail. For example – it is discussed in the paper that use of security forces is not the permanent solution of this problem rather we need to hit the root cause of this problem. To hit the root of this problem we need developmental approach along with Coercive measures. This paper has discussed both the Coercive and Non – Coercive measures and tried to suggest measures which would be useful in dealing with the Naxal threat.

Key Words: Conflict, Coercive Measures, Ideology, Left Wing Extremism, Naxalism, Non – Coercive Measures.

1. INTRODUCTION

India is a very diverse country. More than 19000 dialects are used in India[i]. More than 2000 ethnicities are living in India[ii]. In such a diverse and democratic environment, voices of dissent is a common phenomenon. Peoples blame government for their backwardness, sometimes they complains about discriminations. One group of people have grievances towards others that they have certain kind of prejudice against them. In such a situation sometimes people felt offended in such extent that they don't hesitate to use even violence. When these disperse incidents of violence took the form of organise violence then they known as the 'organised violent group'. These organised violent groups are als known as the terrorist.

There are three kinds of terrorism that are generally practiced by the militant outfits and the extremists in India. The first kind is known as secessionist terrorism, wherein the people involved want to be separated from the mainland and govern territory independently. In other words their aim and objective is to acquire freedom by violent means and establish a separate country under its own government. For example many Nagas of Nagaland, Mizoram and Ulfa

outfits of North –East provinces have organised and established militant outfits and they want to strengthen separatist movements following violence and bloodshed. In Punjab few years back the Khalistan movement under P.S Bhindarwala had wanted to be separated from the main land and run an independent state for the Sikh community.[iii]

Second type is Jehadi terrorism which is fundamentally based on the accolades of religious orthodoxy, bias and rigidity, aiming at establishing a regime dominated by the religionist. Jehadi movement at present flourishing in Kashmir is a clear testimony of a movement backed by religious faith , orthodoxy and prejudices.[iv]

Third type is revolutionary terrorism which is an armed struggle to throw away a government capture power by force and grab the reins of the government. It is based on an ideology the extremist movement originates progresses and takes final shapes . Its aim is to topple a regime and established a government based on revolutionary principle aiming at fulfilling aspiration of the oppressed and exploited mass. It is entwined with violence and bloodshed but is often pragmatised and motivated by a greater national cause.[v] They don't want separate nation rather they wanted to change the existing system of governance and administration according to their own ideology. They claim that they are fighting for the cause of common people. They take advantage of the grievances of the general people and try to establishe a parallel government. For example poor people are generally denied their dues and if they demand the same then they sometimes have to face physical violence. In most cases victim does not get justice, even if anyhow they get justice it is found so late that this justice has no meaning. The reason behind this is that the prevalent justice system is very cumbersome, long – lasting, corrupt and costly. Therefore whenever Naxalites claim that they will give fast and free justice then it attracted poor people towards Naxalites.   They claim that their ideology and system of governance would be free from corruption and is only for poor and downtrodden people.

Who are Naxalites

Naxalism originated as a rebellion against lack of development and poverty at the local level in the rural parts of eastern India. The term 'Naxal' derives its name from a village called Naxalbari in the State of West Bengal where the movement had its origin. The Naxals are considered far left radical communists who support Maoist political ideology. Their origin can be traced to the split that took place in the Communist Party of India (Marxist) in 1967. It led to the formation of Communist Party of India (Marxist and Leninist). Initially the movement had its centre in West Bengal. Thereafter, it spread into less developed areas of rural central and eastern India, such as, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh through the activities of underground groups like the Communist Party of India (Maoist).[vi]

In India moist movement is the example of revolutionary terrorism. Moists in India initiated the movement embracing definite ideology, political and revolutionary values. They do not want separation from the main land but want to topple the existing social and political order by force

and violence. Their aim is to establish a classless society and people's government. They take inspiration from Mao's ideology who says that political power comes from the barrel of gun[vii]. The Naxalite uprising was not a disorganised outburst of peasant anger but the result of political agitation by a group of communist organisers, though certainly not limited to the actions of these communist organisers. Second, the uprising was not a sharp, short event, soon ignited and soon put out, but a lingering and fairly long drawn – out struggle between the forces organised by revolutionaries and the groups opposed to them. The leadership of this uprising provided a focus around which organisers of communist revolutionary activity from different parts of the country coalesced to from first the All – India Co – 0rdination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries in November of 1967.[viii]

In India left wing extremism starts in a remote village of West Bengal which is known as Naxalbari. From this village Maoists movement in India took it name as Naxlism. Charu-Mazumdar a former leader of CPI observed the socio – economic condition and peoples growing discontentment and found that Naxalbari and its adjacent are suitable for an upsurge by the peasants. Labourers, and poverty stricken populace.[ix] With strict measures all big leaders of Naxalite movement have been captured and many of them eliminated. With all these efforts West Bengal government successfully checked the spread of Naxalism in the state. But the socio – economic conditions of the adjacent states were favourable for the Naxal movement. Therefore gradually it had spread in more than 160 districts of the country. With the great efforts and coordination of Union and State government it has now reduced to 90 districts.[x]

Ideology behind Naxal Violence:

In a status report presented to the parliament on march 13, 2006 the then home minister Mr. Shivraj Patil said that the Naxal ite movement continues to persist in terms of spatial spread and intensity of violence . He pointed out that it remains an 'area of serious concern.'[xi] His statement is supported by recent figure of violence by ministry of home affairs, which is given below[xii]

State-wise extent of LWE violence during 2010 to 2017 (upto 15.09.2017) Tentative

State	2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		2017 (upto 15.09.2017)	
	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths
Andhra Pradesh	100	24	54	9	67	13	28	7	18	4	35	8	17	6	17 (15)	4 (6)
Bihar	307	97	316	63	166	44	177	69	163	32	110	17	129	28	71 (103)	14 (24)
Chhattisgarh	625	343	465	204	370	109	355	111	328	112	466	101	395	107	253 (291)	105 (80)
Jharkhand	501	157	517	182	480	163	387	152	384	103	310	56	323	85	186 (256)	48 (67)
M.P.	7	1	8	0	11	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	12	2	1 (10)	0 (1)
Maharashtra	94	45	109	54	134	41	71	19	70	28	55	18	73	23	44 (58)	9 (19)
Odisha	218	79	192	53	171	45	101	35	103	26	92	28	86	27	51 (64)	21 (18)
Telangana	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	8	4	14	5	11	2	7	0	1 (6)	1 (0)
Uttar Pradesh	6	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0)	0 (0)
West Bengal	350	258	92	45	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0)	0 (0)
Others	5	0	6	1	8	0	7	0	8	0	10	0	6	0	1 (4)	0 (0)
TOTAL	2213	1005	1760	611	1415	415	1136	397	1091	310	1089	230	1048	278	625 (807)	202 (215)

*Figures in bracket show details of the corresponding period of 2016

After observing these statements and reports one could think why these cadre are involved in such a bloodshed, what are the ideology which encouraged these cadres to sacrifice their life in the path of their cause. So it is imperative for us to find out the ideology behind this huge structure of Naxlism.

Naxlism is India, like any other leftist movement around the globe draws its ideological basis from the Bolshevic revolution. After the success of Lenin led revolution in Russia the intellectual clan in many countries started thinking of ushering in a change in their respective nations.[xiii]

The inception of Naxal ideology could be traced to the advocacies of the peasant leader Swami Sahjanand Saraswati who gave a call for united front comprising of peasantry and working class. The movement was aimed at Indian freedom struggle and focussed at a three pronged objective viz. peasant revolution, national independence and liberation for downtrodden. An effort this was also attempted in the Telangana Movement. Unfortunately a united front could not manifest in Telangana due to weak divided leadership[xiv] Salient point of Naxalite ideology are given below:

1. Basic objective of any revolution has to be 'to overthrow the rule of feudalism comprador bureaucratic capitalism.

2. There is no alternative to armed struggle.

3. The main force of the democratic revolution emerges from the peasant and landless poor. They should be brought to the forefront of the armed struggle.

4. The revolutionary army would liberates the areas one after another and ultimately encircled town and cities.

5. The leadership of the revolutionary movement in India would be subordinate to the Chinese party.

Measures to Deal with Naxalism

The Government's approach is to deal with Left Wing Extremism in a holistic manner, in the areas of security, development, ensuring rights and entitlements of local communities, improvement in governance and public perception management. In dealing with this decades-old problem, it has been felt appropriate, after various high-level deliberations and interactions with the State Governments concerned, that an integrated approach aimed at the relatively more affected areas would deliver results. With this in view, a detailed analysis of the spread and trends in respect of Left Wing Extremist violence has been made and 90 districts in eleven States have been taken up for special attention with regard to planning, implementation and monitoring various interventions. However, 'Police' and 'Public Order' being State subjects, action on maintenance of law and order, lies primarily in the domain of the State Governments. The Central Government closely monitors the situation and supplements and coordinates their efforts in several ways. These include providing the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs); sanction of India Reserve (IR) battalions, setting up of Counter Insurgency and Anti Terrorism (CIAT) schools; modernisation and upgradation of the State Police and their Intelligence apparatus; reimbursement of security related expenditure under the Security-related Expenditure (SRE) Scheme; providing helicopters for anti-LWE operations, assistance in training of State Police through the Ministry of Defence, the Central Police Organisations and the Bureau of Police Research and Development; sharing of Intelligence; facilitating inter-State coordination; assistance in community policing and civic action programmes etc. The underlying philosophy is to enhance the capacity of the State Governments to tackle the Maoist menace in a concerted manner[xv] To get the better understanding of the policy of government to counter the Naxal mayhem it is imperative to study both Coercive and Non – Coercive measures separately.

Non Coercive Measures:

UNDP has developed the concept of human security to encompasses not just the achievement of minimal level of material needs but also the absence of severe threats to them of an economic or political kind: job security , income security , health security, environment security, security from crimes, these are the emerging concern of security all over the worlds.[xvi]

Above statement shows us that human security is an important aspect of a peaceful society and development is an essential part of human security. We are witnessing a long term conflict in Naxal affected areas. The main reason for this conflict is their socio-economic backwardness. Therefore, better socio – economic condition is necessary to bring peace in Naxal affected areas. Data shows that high level of inequality leads to conflict in the society. The famous theory, of 'Relative Deprivation' is relevant here. This theory argues that a large gap between a group's

expected and actual economic and living conditions can fuel conflict. However this theory does not talk explicitly about gaps between rich and poor, arguably, frustrations about the gap between expected and actual living conditions are likely to increase even more when the poor are constantly confronted in their daily lives by the conditions of the rich[xvii]. Therefore to reduce inequality the government of India has launched many schemes for the socio-economic development of Naxal affected areas. According to press information Bureau, these schemes has been launched for the development of Naxal affected areas.[xviii]

1. The additional central assistance (ACA) for the Left Wing Extremism affected districts being implemented by NITI Ayog and the Road Requirement Plan(RRP) being implemented by the ministry of Road Transport and Highways.

2. Two skill development related scheme namely ROSHNI and SKILL DEVELOPMENT in 34 districts affected by left wing extremism are also being implemented by the ministry of rural development and ministry of labour and employment respectively.

3. Ministry of communication and IT is implementing the universal service obligation fund (USOF) supported scheme of Mobile service in LWE affected areas in 10 LWE affected areas.

With the efforts of government these far flung areas are being witnessing some changes but it is not sufficient to annihilate Naxlism due to some reason which is as below.....

a. Due to lack of administration many times development schemes does not come into reality as many subordinate officers would unwillingly to visit the remote villages.

b. The financial assistance provided to the districts under the scheme are insignificant , but it could be considered as a test case to see whether the development paradigm could help tackle Naxlism, An interim review by planning commission in 2005 revealed that there were many states who failed to spend the fund for the development scheme.[xix]

c. Government has created some criterion to decide the backward districts unfortunately LWE districts did not strictly qualify to be labelled as backward districts. So they could not receive the benefits which are essential to eradicate poverty and unemployment.

Policies of development alone are not sufficient to improve the condition of the Naxal affected regions. There is a need of proper implementation of the above schemes. Government should propagate these schemes among the target group through various means. Only then the above measures would be helpful in maintaining the peace and stability in the Naxal affected regions.

Coercive Measures

Naxal problem is not only related to lack of development but it is closely related to law and order problem too. Given India's federalist structure, the onus for responding to the rising law and order problem from Naxalite threat has fallen upon individual states, although with substantial federal support during the past five years. The hardest hit states of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh—where roughly half of Naxalite activity is concentrated and continues to escalate—have raced to scale up the manpower of their state and local police forces, while being supplemented with about 40 battalions of central paramilitary forces. Meanwhile, states such as Bihar and West Bengal have also seen a rise in violence in recent years as their police manpower has declined or held steady. The composition of police is another variable that may adversely affect outcomes. The police forces of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Orissa are composed of a much higher percentage of paramilitary forces (as opposed to civil police) relative to the Indian average, potentially rendering them less locally knowledgeable or legitimate[xx].

Though law and order is the state subject, therefore states in India have all rights to deal with law and order problem but Indian constitution has some special provisions under which union government has right to deal with the security situation in states. Naxlism is also a situation in which central and state governments both are working with the help of each other. One such initiative started by Union government is known as the 'SAMADHAN'. During the review meeting of the Chief Ministers of the Left Wing Extremism affected states on May 08,2017, Union Home Minister unveiled SAMADHAN, (solution), an integrated strategy through which LWE can be countered with full force and competence. This is a compilation of short term and long-term policies formulated at different levels. SAMADHAN as defined by the home[xxi] minister as:-

1. **S**- Smart Leadership;
2. **A**- Aggressive Strategy;
3. **M**- Motivation and Training;
4. **A**- Actionable Intelligence;
5. **D**- Dashboard Based KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) and KRAs (Key Result Areas);
6. **H**- Harnessing Technology;
7. **A**- an Action plan for each Theatre;
8. **N**- No Access to Financing.

Reflecting the seriousness and urgency of its approach, the Ministry of Home Affairs has also set up a Multi-Disciplinary Group (MDG) comprising officers from the Intelligence Burea (IB), Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Enforcement Directorate, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), NIA, Central Board of Direct Taxation (CBDT), CRPF and the state police as well as their Special Branches, Criminal Investigation Departments (CIDs) and other state units(Press Trust of India 2018). This group is utilised by the MHA as a forum for evolving a well coordinated approach for handling prolonged national security challenges such as the LWE movement. It will strengthen the capabilities of agencies to unearth various LWE conspiracies which are at times developed and executed in inter-state order with ramification across the Maoist belt. This multi-agency approach will also proactively enable agencies to identify the large financial network of LWE cadres who are largely dependent on 'Tendu Patta' (Tendu leave) commissions and other conventional transactions in the past. Today, they are involved in

various dubious activities like extortion from private contractors of infrastructure projects, mining contractors, and transporters, owners of Medium and Small Scale Enterprises (MSME) and to prosecute them in a timely manner. According to the MHA, during the year 2016-2017, a total of20 bank accounts of individuals/companies suspected to be involved in Naxal funding were investigated and funds to the tune of ₹ 14.09 cr rupees relating to Naxal funding was frozen by the Government[xxii].

Some example from past COIN operations conducted by States are imperative to understand why Union government had changed their previous approach to deal with the Naxal problem. Two example of COIN strategy used by States are given below

During the initial stage of Naxal Movement in West Bengal state government measures were focused on the kinetic use of force. West Bengal Government launched Operation Steeple chase. This operation was against the Santhal tribal uprising. The army had formed the outer cordon in operation staple chase and the police had gone in for the kill. The Santhal tribes man armed with bows and arrows were no match for the fire power of Army or Police. The plain terrain of West Bengal with its well developed long . After learning the lesson from the earlier failure they changed their strategy and hide themselves in dense forest.

Another successful example of coercive measure to deal with Naxlism is Andhra Model. Andhra model comprises of security response, political response and development response.[xxiii] By the end of 1990, causalities of security forces were increasing day by day in Andhra Pradesh and the state was totally dependent on Central Para military forces.[xxiv] Then Andhra government has had redefined his strategies. Government strengthen its control over those area which had become the bastion of Naxalite. After that a well coordinated team of grey hound and local police launched the operation against the Naxals with the help of well developed intelligence network.

2. CONCLUSION

Data shows that the incidence of Naxal violence has been on a declining trajectory since its peak in 2010, but the Andhra and West Bengal experience suggest that similar trends were noticed in the past, but the Naxal movement managed to revive itself in other states other than the above. Therefore , a comprehensive and coordinated counterinsurgency policy of Union and States government is needed to check the menace of Naxal violence. Since every States has its own speciality so there is need to play a proactive role by the states.

After analysing both the coercive and non coercive measure to tackle Naxlism, we can conclude that no measures alone can annihilate Naxal challenges .The role of armed forces are very limited. They can only decreased the level of violence and stopped their activities temporarily so that the political process can be initiated. The main aim of the military operation is to neutralize all hostile elements in conflict zone that oppose peace initiative and secondly at transforming the will and attitude of the people to bring about a realisation that fighting the government is a no win situation and delay the normalisation process and stresses that this process can take years or

decades to change. [xxv] So India's approach to counter Naxlism should not be based solely on kinetic solution rather it should be focussed on to eradication of   root cause of the problem i.e. poverty, injustice, corruption etc. To address the root cause of Naxal violence government need to infuse huge amount of investment in Naxal affected regions. These regions need good hospitals and educational institutions. Once these problems are addressed, Naxal violence would lost its legitimacy and will dissolve in the river of development.

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