

Naxal Violence and India's Security

Abstract

Out of the different issues that India is fighting, the issue of the Naxal insurgency is one of the most critical. This is a Maoist Communist rebellion that seeks to overthrow the Indian Government, and has been at war with the country for almost 50 years.

The Naxalite Movement is now spread across 12 states and the most acutely affected are Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Orissa and West Bengal. There is a 'Red Corridor' consisting of large parts of eastern and central India

Naxalites have a history of disruptive behavior like preventing people from voting and demolishing government buildings and infrastructure. They have also resorted to violent attacks on security forces and government officials. The insurgency has grown more violent with time, such that the past 20 years of conflict have resulted in the deaths of over 13,000 people.

Keywords: Naxal Violence, India's Security

Introduction

Naxalite movement, an expression of socio-economic and law & order problem was born in 1967 in a small place, Naxalbari in Bengal. The young and fiery ideologies of the Marxist-Leninist movement in India formed the CPI (M-L), envisioning a spontaneous upsurge all over India. After four decades, it was the year 2006, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh warned, "Naxalism as the greatest threat to India's internal security". The credit for the survival movement for over 40 years must go to the government, which has failed awfully in addressing the causes and conditions that sustain the movement.

To be successful, insurgent/militant movements have a variety of requirements, most of which can be grouped in two categories—human material. In general, insurgents most need outside support of all kinds when they cannot obtain this support domestically. Safe havens, whether inside the country where the insurgent/militant operate or across national boundaries, are essential to the success of any insurgent/ militant movement. Sanctuaries protect the group's leadership and members, provide a place where insurgent/militant can rest, recuperate, and plan future operations; serve as a staging area from which to mount attacks; and, in some cases, function as an additional base for recruitment, training, dissemination of propaganda, and contact with the outside world. Without safe havens, insurgents/militants are constantly susceptible to security forces. There are numerous reports in open-source media in India and elsewhere that link Naxalites to a number of militant and criminal groups throughout South Asia. These groups interact with Maoists from Nepal. Secessionists in India's restive northeast, ISI-backed Islamists from Bangladesh, criminals from Myanmar and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka. The linkages among the Naxalites/Indian Maoists and other-insurgent/terrorists groups (internal or external) can be studied under following heads:

1. Regional linkages
2. Extra-regional/ International linkages
3. Internal linkages.

These linkages of Naxalites with other terrorist/insurgent groups operating within or outside the Indian territory range between, on the one hand, forging bilateral ties to floating broad fronts and, on the other; sending formal messages and 'revolutionary' greetings during conferences to exchanging tactical skills and weapons. It is also reported that the Indian Maoists also have formal, fraternal ties with similar groups operating in other.

Aim of the Study

1. Naxalism is a Major problem of India's Security. So it's our duty to educate the people about this.

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2. To tackle this extremely complicated issue, it would be worthwhile to delve into history and trace it back to the origins of the movement.

Regional Linkages

CPI (Maoist) and CPN (M)

A variety of linkages have been reported between the Communist Party of India (Maoist) and the Maoists of Nepal, the origin of which can be traced back to the year 1995 (a year before the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist launched its people's war) when the Nepalese Maoists and the then People's War Group (PWG) had their first meeting. This was followed by issuing of joint statements by the two parties on a number of occasions. To express its solidarity with the Naxal factions, the politbureau of the CPN-M, on 25 January, 2002, condemned the Indian government's proscription of the then Peoples War (PW) and the Maoist Communist Centre of India (MCCI) under the now defunct POTA, 2002 and expressed its resolve to work together with the India Maoists to oppose the ban as well as to build opinion against it. Since then the Nepali Maoists have been extending full support and cooperation to their counterparts in India not only on ideological basis but also for arms procurement, drug trade, training and resource mobilization. Together, these parties wish to form a Compact Revolutionary Zone (CRZ) extending from Pashupati, Katmandu in the north to Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh in the south traversing through the states of Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh. They are also reported to have formed the Indo-Nepal Border Regional Committee (INBRC) to 'coordinate their activities' in north Bihar and all along the Indo-Nepal border. The porous, open border between India and Nepal had facilitated smooth coordination between the two groups in the past. Over the years, this association has evolved into a strategic alliance with a steady Exchange of men and material, extension of training facilities and safe havens, and facilitation and procurement of arms and explosives. While Nepal's Maoist party, which abandoned its armed struggle in 2006 and returned to mainstream politics after contesting and winning an election two years later, denies supporting the Indian Maoists in their anti-state activities, it however admits having ideological sympathy for them. Over and above all this, the Nepalese Maoists have been conducting propaganda for the Indian Maoist groups and possibly funds are being channeled to the Naxalites from international sympathizers through CPN(Maoist). Similarly, there are also evidences that indicate that Indian Naxalite elements to publicise the activities of the Maoists of Nepal.

Naxalites & the ISI

Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), in its attempts to rope in India-based militant groups, has found the Indian Maoists more than suitable for its agenda. For this, the ISI has made use of underworld lions like Dawood Ibrahim and Chhota Shakeel to facilitate the linkage. Naxals are now part of the ISI's "Karachi Project" that aims to bleed India, both militarily and economically, without leaving any

evidence of its involvement. Reportedly, ISI has also facilitated contacts between Maoists and anti-India Islamic terror groups like the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Muhammed (JeM) based in Pakistan; Harket-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HuJI) based in Bangladesh and those that operate in India like the Indian Mujahideen and Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI). The Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bangladesh borders are used extensively by these Islamic groups as transit routes to reach out to the Naxals in India. The ISI is also using the Naxals local network in pushing counterfeit currencies all over India. These external contacts have opened a wider world for the Naxals in terms of new ways of fund raising that include trafficking of drugs and counterfeit currency, arms procurement and training. Some of the training camps are located in Bangladesh funded by the ISI and run by Bangladeshi left extremist groups.

Recently Bangalore police arrested two Maoists and seized pistol, visa, passport and 25 Lakh Rupees and this revealed the linkage between a person named Altaf residing in Dubai who is acting as an anchor between Maoists and Pakistani Islamic Terrorist groups. ISI had engaged Dawood Ibrahim and through his accomplice Chhota Shakeel to engage Maoists - that is Naxalite leaders in India - and instigate them to commit terrorist acts. The Maoists were leaving to Dubai to get trained in organizing terror activities in India. Many news papers of 13th Aug 2011 published this story without much importance. Many journalists show sympathy towards Maoists could be the reason behind STRATFOR sources in India also claim that the Pakistani intelligence has established business relationship with Naxalites to sell arms and ammunition and has lately tried to use Naxal bases for anti-India activities. There is evidence that the ISI is providing weapons and ammunition to the Naxalites in exchange for money or services, through third parties like the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) or the ostensible Bangladeshi militant leaders like Shailen Sarkar. The Naxalite leaders in India, on the other hand, deny any linkages with ISI or Pakistan but have very publicly pledged their support for Pakistan ISI sponsored separatist movements in the Indian state of Jammu & Kashmir. The involvement of the ISI and some militant groups in northeast India in facilitating the drug trade for the Naxals is also reported by the intelligence agencies. It is important to note here that the Naxal dominated areas are not only rich in minerals and inhabited by tribal but are also popular drug cultivating tracts (cannabis and poppy is particular) especially in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh. At the same time, the Naxals are a bit cautious in their liaison with the jihadist groups because of the long-term consequences. Moreover the ideology and objectives of these groups are quite different. Therefore, the Naxal leadership is said to be in favour of "specific need-based exchanges" with these groups that could be restricted to "consequential solidarity". (c) LTTE Links The linkages of Naxalites with Sri Lankan Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) date back to 1990, when it

was reported by the Indian intelligence agencies that PWG used to acquire weapons especially AK-47 series rifles from this organization. The LITE had apparently, imported land-mine know how and IED-related manufacturing techniques to the erstwhile PWG. The outfit was also reported to have acquired AK-47 and stain guns from the LTTE in 1991.⁶ In the present context, the sources also claim that the remnants of LTTE, after being defeated in May 2009 by the Sri Lankan government after decades of struggle, are providing training to the Naxalites in guerilla war tactics for which the LTTE were known including surprise 'hit-and-run' tactics and jungle warfare. The location of these LTTE-Maoist training centers is thought to be the remote parts of central and southern India, already under the complete control of the left-wing extrinsic The Naxalites' presence in Tamil Nadu with the discovery of a training camp organized by former PWGNaxals in the Periyakuluin forests of Then district on 25 June 2007, which is also believed to have strong sympathy for the LTTE, has led security agencies to suspect a renewed nexus between the Naxals' and the LTTE.⁸ Nearly 100-200 LTTE cadres, who escaped from Sri Lanka during Eelam War IV, are estimated to be hiding in the jungles of central India and training Maoist cadres inter alia in suicide attacks. In the meanwhile, it is worth mentioning that New Delhi has for now ruled out any deeper strategic ties between CPI (Maoist) and LTTE, such as them launching a combined war against the state pointing to the lack of an effective LTTE leadership in the wake of its defeat but the security officials who are monitoring coastal areas for infiltration by the LTTE in the state of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Orissa, feel that the joint expertise of the two insurgent groups could form a potent mixture.

Coordination Committee of the Maoist Parties and Organizations of South Asia (CCOMPOSA)

External linkages of Naxals also exist in the form of umbrella organizations at regional and global levels. Prominent among them is CCOMPOSA, formed in July 2001. The Maoist groups of four South Asian countries, India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, have joint hands to form CCOMPOSA to advance "Peoples War" in South Asia. The objective of the Committee is to unify and coordinate the activities of Maoist parties and organisations in South Asia and spread protracts 'Peoples War' in South Asia. So far, the Committee has met five times in June 2001, August 2002, March 2004, August 2006 and more recently in March 2011. The committee accepted Charu Mazumdar as its moving force and acknowledged him as true heir of Mao Tse Tung. This probably indicates that CPI (Maoist) is likely to emerge as the leading revolutionary party in South Asia. The implications are likely to be similar to those of Compact Revolutionary Zone, but on a larger canvas. The last conference held in March 2011 at an undisclosed location in Nepal was attended by the Proletarian party of Purba Bangla-CC, the Communist Party of East Bengal (ML) (Red Flag), the Balglades he Samyobadi Dal (ML) (all from Bangladesh), the Communist Party Bhutan (MLM), Communist Party of

Nepal (Maoist), Communist Par: of India (Maoist), Communist Party of India (ML), Naxalbari art Communist Party of India (MLM). The Communist Party of Ceylon (Maoist), which attended the meeting, is not a signatory to the resolution thereby indicating that it was invited as an observer to the conference At a time when the relevance of SAARC is being widely questioner the political leadership in South Asia can hardly afford to ignore this Maoist quest for redemption in the region. When CCOMPOSA was formed it was seen as just another Maoist platform. But, last four years, show that it has established itself as the principal coordinator Maoist movements in different parts of the region. The four CCOMPOSA meeting, through its political resolution, vowed to strengthen and expand relations among the Maoist organizations in the region and to assist each other to fight the foes in their respective countries.

International Linkages

Revolutionary International Movement (RIM)

The erstwhile Peoples' War Group maintained constant touch Maoist groups of 27 countries through Revolutionary International Movement. The party also participated in an international seminar he in December 1996 at Brussels to express and promote solidarity among the revolutionary movements in different countries. Indian Left Wing Extremist sympathisers living in foreign countries have been co-opted to publish and circulate Vanguard International Bulletin published by Vanguard Multimedia Publishing Foundation. A Turkish Maoist organization is known to have undertaken the task of publishing PWG activities through an Internet website.

Linkages with Left wing (Maoist) organizations in Philippine and Turkey.

The Maoist movement in India has also been receiving support from Maoist parties in the Philippines, Iran, Turkey, the US, UK, Italy, Peru and Greece. According to a senior intelligence official from Andhra Pradesh, Kobad Ghandy, Polit Bureau member of the CPI (Maoist), who was arrested in September 2009 in New Delhi, visited Canada and the United Kingdom in 2005 to forge linkages with like-minded people and organizations. He visited Toronto, Vancouver and Edmonton in Canada, for five weeks, and London, Birmingham and Bradford in UK for a week. He is said to have distributed 400 CDs containing two Maoist propaganda films-Blazing Trail and Bhoomkaland a few documents of the outfit. Kobad Ghandy, incidentally, was also the head of the Central Propaganda Bureau (CPB) of the CPI (Maoist). According to former Chief of the State Intelligence Bureau, during these visits abroad, Kobad Ghandy raised funds to the tune of 2, 06,000.¹⁰ Some of the above mentioned peer groups have been organizing public protests in Europe against "Operation Greenhunt", and conducting propaganda campaigns." This expansion is part of a well thought-out strategy to broaden their ties to include groups that would help them enhance their influence, strengthen their capacities and enrich their coffers.

Friends of Indian Revolution (FOIR)

FOIR is yet another umbrella organization whose representatives abroad seek to raise finances in several countries, especially that of the West, for the cause of Indian 'revolution'. Then there are also bodies like International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations (ICMLPO) and International Communist Movement (ICM) that link groups located all over the world stretching from Peru to Philippines. They sustain fraternal ties and jointly conduct programmes that are mutually beneficial.

There are also renewed attempts on the part of CPI (Maoist) to internationalize the alleged state brutalities of 'Operation Green hunt'. To express solidarity in support of the people's war in India, an international conference was held at Hamburg, Germany in the month of November, 2012.

All these external linkages have, no doubt, served one important purpose. They have given Naxalites visibility and propaganda in different parts of the world. Thus, they have been able to mobilize international political support from fraternal groups.

Internal Linkages

From the various recoveries and facts it has come to notice that Naxals have well established linkages with other Insurgent groups and few Muslim fundamental organizations active within India. These links provide the movement with not only psychological support, but also with material support in form of money and weapons. In the past, the PWG's over-grounded cadres, including those in Delhi, had helped the outfit to nurture ties with secessionist and terrorist groups and eventually procure arms from few of these groups based in India's North-east region.

North-East Insurgent Groups

It is now well known that the Indian Maoists have established good network with several key militant groups of the northeast India that commenced roughly since the mid-1990s. In fact, with some groups like People's Liberation Army of Manipur, the exact modalities of working-formal, semi-formal and informal — are spelled out through "memoranda of understanding". These linkages range from getting arms, ammunitions, communication devices to training from the northeast militant groups like National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-IM), anti-talk faction of the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) led by PareshBarua, People's Liberation Army (PLA), People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (Prepak), Revolutionary People's Front (RPF), Kamtapur Liberation Organisation (KLO), Gurkha Liberation Tiger Force (GLTF), Gurkha Liberation Organisation (GLO), Adivasi National Liberation Army, Adivasi People's Army (APA), and National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB).¹⁶ Maoists, in turn, are said to be providing explosives (ammonium-nitrate) and funds to these northeast groups.¹⁷ Chinese small arms mainly find their way to the 'Red Corridor' mainly through these groups. Also, it is through the northeast groups that the Maoists have good access to militant smuggler groups of Myanmar. The mutual support between Naxals and northeast insurgent groups is not just restricted to material, but extends to moral aspects as well. While Naxals have strongly supported "people's movements"

of the northeast, the northeast insurgent groups have stood by "Indian revolutionaries". "Enemy's enemy is a friend" is the guiding maxim in this case as well. ULFA leader PareshBaruah once remarked, "The Indian colonial government is also viewed as an enemy by the Maoists. Our enemy is also the same and so there is an understanding with them." Yet, what is more alarming for India's security are the attempts being made by the Maoists to infiltrate districts of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh in collusion with local insurgent groups being backed by Pakistan's ISI. The presence of Maoists is especially felt in pockets of Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, Sivasagar, Golaghat and KarbiAnglong districts of Assam and Lohit (adjoining Tinsukia) and Lower Dabang district of Arunachal Pradesh. The hub of Maoists activities is said to be in Sadiya area, situated in Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border. Governments of Assam and India have recently admitted to this. The northeast India has now become a new "strategic area" for the Maoists. Therefore, apart from military utility of training, arms procurement and sanctuary, the Maoists also found parts of the northeast of India as a new zone of "revolution" to establish what they call as "base areas". In this regard, two major causes are being exploited: deprivation among the tea workers of Assam and anti-dam sentiments in Arunachal Pradesh. Since there is a political vacuum in both the cases, Maoists are more than willing to fill them. Interestingly, adivasis in tea gardens are descendants of migrants from present-day Jharkhand, Bihar, Odisha, Chhatisgarh and Madhya Pradesh from the days of the British times. The Maoists have already set up local committees in these areas. From there it will become easy for them to link up to southern parts of Bhutan, where Nepali refugees are populated. Indian Maoists already have well-established links with the Bhutanese Maoists at both bilateral and global levels. They are members of umbrella organizations like Coordination Committee of Maoist Parties and Organizations of South Asia (CCOMPOSA), Revolutionary International Movement (RIM), World People's Resistance Movement (WPRM) and International Communist Movement (ICM).

J K Terrorist Groups

Vishwa Ranjan, the director-general of police of Chhatisgarh state, alleged that Naxalites have constantly been meeting with members of the outlawed Pakistani militant group Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). On 11 November 2010, Mr. Ranjan said that two LeT operatives attended a Naxalite meeting in the month of April or May. While their presence at the meeting still needs to be corroborated the likely perception according to the chief is that the Naxalites held the meeting to adopt a new policy and plans for increasing "armed resistance" in order to seize political power in India. Besides, spokespersons of CPI (Maoist) on many occasions have openly supported the action and cause of the J&K terrorist groups. The Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists who carried out the attack on the American Centre at Kolkata in 2001 had escaped to Jharkhand and had taken refuge in a Naxalitesympathisers' house. in Ranchi. In return of this and similar other favours, the J&K terrorists who are well trained in handling of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and sophisticated arms, impart training to the Naxalite groups.

Conclusion

Because of textensive linkages with both state and non-state actors within and without India, Left wing extremism (LWE) fails to strictly-qualify as an "indigenous" movement. Major drivers for these linkages are arms, training, finance, ideology, drugs trade, and the plan to forge a broad front against the

"common enemy" i.e., India, in achieving the overall objective of capturing power. These linkages are not only increasing in depth and quality but are algt, turning deadly. Naxals have deep linkages with their counterparts in Nepal (Communist Party of Nepal-M), not only on ideological basis as officially claimed by the CPN-Maoist; but also for arms proctement, drugs trade,training and sanctuaries and resource mobilization. The linkages synthesized by Naxalite-Maoist groups with North-east insurgents and radical Islamic organizations, particularly for availing terror logistics; continue to be a key concern for the internal security of India. As far as the presence of Naxalites in the North-east is concerned, they are just making a foray into the region. It is, therefore important to nip it in the bud. The idea of the government of Assam to form a special task force on the lines of Andhra Pradesh's 'Greyhounds' and coordinated operations with neighbouring states like Arunanchal Pradesh are fine. But what is more important is a 'comprehensive development approach'. All Maoists want is a cause to exploit and they spread their influence wherever grievances exist. In the current geo-strategic scenario, these apprehensions need to be taken care of on the war footing so as to prevent a strategic crisis which India may likely face in the future due to a three front security threat-from Pakistan, China and internal. To break these linkages should be part and parcel of India's counter-Naxal strategy. India has to commit its full diplomatic energy in a serious way both at bilateral and multilateral levels to make sure that the external sources of support to Maoists are disrupted permanently. India has set up more than 25 Joint Working Groups on counter-terrorism with various countries and regional organizations. These groups should be enhanced to target Naxals as well. At the same time, more vigilance should be mounted on Naxals interactions with other militant groups in India to identify and disrupt them. Now time has come that India should push aggressively for a global cooperation to ensure that no state or its agencies offer its territory to any terrorist group.

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