Naxalism in India: A Game Not Over Yet

Vaibhav Kullashri is a Research Assistant at the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), New Delhi. He obtained his master's degree in Defense, Strategic and Geopolitics Studies from Garhwal University, Uttrakhand. Mr. Kullashri is UGC-NET qualified and has taught defence studies as an Assistant professor (guest faculty) in SGRR University, Dehradun. He concentrates on China's foreign policy, the PLA, internal security, and insurgency in Kashmir and Northeast India.

Introduction

The year 1967 saw an unprecedented event when a group of far-left radical communists led by Charu Majumdar, Kanu Sanyal, and Jangal Santhal waged war against the state from the village of Naxalbari in West Bengal. The goal was to overthrow the Indian Constitutional structure and establish the reign as propagated by Mao Tse Tung (Mao Zedong) in China. The movement was generally joined by peasants (having little or no landholdings), tribals, and people from other marginalised sections of the society, demanding basic rights.[1]

The State initially responded to the Naxal uprising by repression and described it as "lawlessness".[2] The government launched massive police operations to curb the uprising without understanding its root cause. Further, the government, particularly the state

Key Points

- India's COIN strategy must now focus on a 'population-centric' approach and ethical security and ethical governance approaches must be adopted for complete eradication of the Naxalism issue.

- Learning from the successes of the Telangana peasant rebellion (1946-51), the state must redistribute land records, revamp the justice delivery system, and restore the rights of the indigenous people, especially Adivasis, on land, forest, and natural resources.

- The Naxal influenced areas are rich in minerals and have massive potential for industrial growth. Therefore, growth shall be as per the natives, and utmost priority must be given to indigenous people in employment.

- The state is relying heavily on the CRPF for its COIN operations. Instead, recruits must be drawn from the local population as per the 'Greyhound' model of Andhra Pradesh.

government, enacted the law to empower itself to curb the Naxalite movement. The West Bengal Government enacted the West Bengal (Prevention of Violent Activities) Act 1970, whereas the Andhra Pradesh Government in 1983 liberalised arms licensing to allow people procure arms to protect themselves from the Naxals.[3] However, in spite of all the repression, the Naxal movement thrived underground because the rural poor and the oppressed class started connecting themselves to its core ideology.

The ideology of creating a 'classless society' is based on the principle of communism. The state's failure to understand the root cause of the uprising resulted in armed rebellion in the subsequent years. It is no surprise that the region most affected by Naxal activities has an alarming level of poverty. Furthermore, these regions have the maximum tribal population, and the socio-economic disparity between the different sections of the society is humongous, fuelled by reasons like economic deprivation, unemployment (See **Table 1**), lack of education and the absence of 'the ideal state' in the core Naxal region.[4] However, the core reason remains the excessive exploitation of locals by feudal landlords and expropriating state government or extractive cooperation.[5]

Of late, the government (both Centre and State) tried to address the issue more seriously, and various counterinsurgency (COIN) measures were adopted over the subsequent years. However, based on various facts and figures, India's COIN measures generally remained kinetic and focused less on winning 'hearts and minds'.[6] Though, with the facts in place, Naxalism in India does not possess the same degree of threat as before but still remains the primary internal security concern. This paper aims to examine India's COIN response that drastically brought down the Maoist violence and analyses the scope for recalibration in a strategy that could eliminate the menace.

A Brief Historical Background

The trace of Left Wing Extremism (LWE) in India dates back to the Telangana peasant rebellion (1946-51)[7] —the armed struggle against the Nizam of Hyderabad, to overthrow the feudal structure of administration, exploitation against peasants, and end Bhagela (system of slavery).However, the present-day Naxalism in India started in 1967 and is named after the Naxalbari village in West Bengal, from where it originated. Subdued somewhat after the arrest of its founder Charu Majumdar on 16 July 1972, it was revived by Andhra Pradesh based Kondapalli Seetharamaiah, when he formed the People's War (PW), popularly known as PWG, in 1980.

The formation of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) in 2004, the PWG, Maoist Communist Centre of India (MCCI), and 40 other armed sections, proved to be a turning

point for Naxalism in India. [8] At its peak, the Naxalites marked their presence in more than 200 districts across the country (See **Figure 1**). With more than 20,000 regular cadres, including 10,000 hardcore fighters, the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA)— the armed wing of CPI (Maoist), had access to automatic weapons, light machine guns, self-loading guns, AK-47s, and grenades. [9] They have also learned to make and deploy sophisticated bombs and even set up various weapon manufacturing centres in various districts of the 'Red Corridor Region'(A region affected by Naxalism is generally called the Red Corridor Region). [10] Showing their capabilities in the subsequent years, they were able to carry out the deadliest attack on the security forces. The 2010 Chintalnar massacre of 76 CRPF personnel in Dantewada and the killing of top congress leaders in Sukma district in 2013 alarmed policymakers to find long-term solutions to the evolving threat.

Figure 1: LWE affected state in the year 2020 (Left) and 2008 (Right)

Source: https://www.satp.org/conflict-maps/india-maoistinsurgency
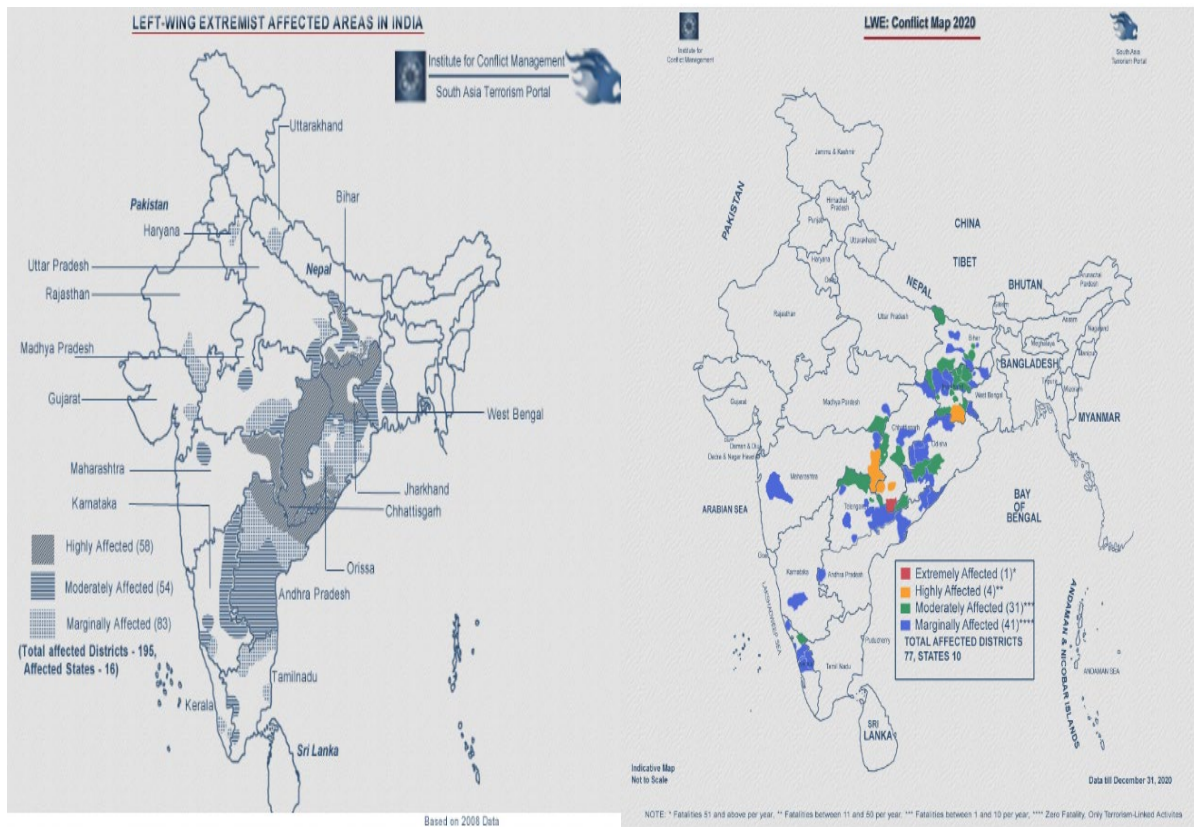
Main Drivers of Naxalism in India

Naxalism in India has been fuelled by the culmination of several factors. It found its inspiration in the Indigo Revolt (1859-1861), Munda Rebellion (1899) in Chaibasa and Chota

Nagpur region, Bhumkal Rebellion (1910), and the Tebhaga Movement (1946) in undivided Bengal.

- **Ideology.** The Naxal ideology resonates with Mao's idea of 'overthrowing the existing government or system through armed rebellion in three different phases i.e., strategic defence, strategic equilibrium, and strategic offence'.[11] They are hardcore believers of the 'idea of communism, socialism' with no believe in the parliamentary system of government; they want to establish the 'rule of the Proletariat'. They consider Liberalisation, Privatisation, Globalisation (LPG) as the root cause of exploitation of the poor, tribals, and downtrodden people. For them, revolution is the only solution to the present disparity among the masses.

    The ideology is vital as it allows the cadre to remain motivated and keep working to achieve the larger goal of overthrowing the existing system. As any disparity and exploitation are related to the present governance system's shortcomings, therefore removing the existing system seems to be the only solution. It fuelled the morale of the cadre, which proved to be essential to sustain the war for so long. According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, the central theme of Maoist ideology is 'violence'.[12] They glorify violence to overthrow the existing social-economic and political structure. The aim is to remove the government at the grassroot level by eliminating the local-level governmental official and police personnel. Thus, creating a governance vacuum remains the priority of Maoist before instigating the local population for violence.

- **Poverty, Illiteracy, Unemployment and Economic Exploitation.** The root cause of dissatisfaction among the masses is the prevailing poverty, unemployment, and economic exploitation. The so-called 'Red Corridor' has the worst record on the mentioned indices (See **Table 1**). Further, this region is bestowed with an abundance of natural resources and minerals. When the profit of mining and exploitation of resources does not percolate among the masses, they tend to revolt. Although the ideology instigates people to lift arms against the state, the prevailing poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, and sense of neglect in their homeland, keeps them sustained. Further, it is no surprise that the mentioned issues remain the most favourable conditions for Maoism to flourish.

Table 1: Data collected from various sources

State	Poverty (in percent) %	Unemployment (in percent) *	Literacy (in percent) #
Chhattisgarh	39.93	3.2	70.28
Jharkhand	36.96	9.4	67.63
Bihar	42.6	13	69.83
Andhra Pradesh	9.2	8.7	67.04
Orissa	32.59	1.1	72.09
Maharashtra	17.35	4.3	82.34
West Bengal	19.98	7.4	72.26

*Source: (%https://sdgindiaindex.niti.gov.in/#/ranking)(*https://unemploymentinindia.cmie.com/,Data up to July 2021) #Data from 2011 census.*

- ***Government Policies and Poor Governance.*** The initial government's response to the uprising was more repressive, considering it was just a law and order situation, undermining the socio-economic amelioration to resolve the issue. Further, under the seventh schedule of the Indian Constitution, the subject of police and police order rests with the state government. Thus, there is a lack of synchronisation of policies between state and union.

  For almost three to four decades, different states dealt with the Naxalite movement differently. Over the years, the GoI lacked a holistic approach to curb the menace which gave enough breathing space for Naxalism to flourish. Apart from the fifth schedule, under Article 244 of the Indian Constitution, The Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA), and Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, gave enough power to the government to decentralise power to local administration and tribal authority to remove their grievances. However, over and again the states were not able to properly implement those provisions.[13]

- ***Land Rights and Lack of Social Infrastructure & Development.*** The origin of the slogan "land to tillers" has always been core to the Naxalite movement since 1967. In order to give land to the landless, the Naxalites have undermined the laws of the land. In many cases, they even acted against the small landholders who were against the Naxalite movement.[14] According to the National Sample Survey

Organisation (NSSO) data, 60 percent of the country's population has ownership in over 5 percent of the land, and 10 percent of the population controls 55 percent of the land.[15] This huge disparity in land sharing makes the poor tribes to support the Naxalite, who promises them a system which will erase all their agonies.

Further, lack of adequate infrastructural development—road, rail, and telephone connectivity in the Naxalite affected areas, has crippled the region's socio-economic development. According to a report by the Ministry of Communication, the Tele Density in rural areas is 56.71 per cent compared to urban 156.82 per cent. [16] The situation is quite worse for the region affected with Naxalism (except for Andhra Pradesh) .[17]It has hugely affected the medical, educational facilities, public distribution systems, agricultural produces, and many vital public services. This also created a favourable ground for Naxalism to flourish. In fact, there is a difference between the grassroot cadre and leadership in Naxalism. The latter is driven by the long-term strategic goal of overthrowing the state, where the former is looking for near term improvement in their life.[18]

- ***Favorable Terrain, Availability of Arms & Ammunition and Robust Financial Support.*** The so-called 'Red Corridor' region, stretching from Nepal to Tamil Nadu, is one of the most forested regions of the country. The Naxalites take advantage of the inaccessible hideout in the forest.Further, the Naxalites have an excellent network with the militant and criminal groups operating in South Asia.[19] They easily get weapons through Nepal's porous border, from ISI-backed Islamist groups from Bangladesh, Criminal and Secessionist groups in Northeast and Myanmar, and their local arms factory. [20]

    Also, the Maoists have been collecting more than 140 crores annually from different sources, the largest being the mining industry, and collection of tendu leaves.[21] Further, in the areas where they are running a parallel government, termed as Janatan Sarkar, they are collecting 'revolutionary taxes' from the people.[22]

Government Response and Decline in Naxalism

India's COIN initiative amalgamates both 'population centric' (winning heart and mind) and 'enemy centric' (suffocating enemy through excessive force) approaches. However, the political strategy was always inclined more towards an 'enemy centric' approach rather than winning the people's hearts and minds. [23] The reason law and order being the state subject, different states drive different tactics to flush out Naxalism. The centre played a crucial role in providing support— financially, intelligence sharing, and deploying security forces. The

three states which have been successful in COIN operations are Maharashtra, Bihar, and Andhra Pradesh.

- **Andhra Pradesh.** The success of Andhra Pradesh's COIN initiatives lies in its approach of combining police action with socio-economic development. On one hand, it pushed Maoists by modernising the police force and creating an elite combat force named 'Greyhounds', and on the other, it undertook serious development measures to cut down the influence of Maoism in the region.[24] This collective approach has worked effectively to address the grievance of local people inclined to the insurgent group. The introduction of schemes like Jalayagnam, Indiramma, implementation of the Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, and strict police action, tremendously brought down Maoist activity in the state. (See **Table 1** for Maoist violence in Andhra Pradesh).This dramatic decline in Maoist activity, especially in Andhra Pradesh, is because the Naxalites are losing their local support and facing grassroot opposition.[25] The youths stand against the Maoists as they feel their activities disrupt their livelihood and keep their area underdeveloped. In undivided Andhra Pradesh, the Radical Student Union's banning in 2004 was one of the critical steps that dealt a significant blow on new recruitments.[26] Further, the Andhra Pradesh Surrender and Rehabilitation Policy, 1997, has been successful as it focussed on "winning the hearts and mind of the people" and imparting development.[27] Thus, Andhra Pradesh adopted a collective security strategy, political and developmental response to the prevailing situations.

- **Maharashtra.** Although the Naxal movement in Maharashtra is not recognised, spillover effects of neighboring states like Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh can be seen in its bordering districts. In Maharashtra, the districts like Gondia and Gadchiroli became the 'Red bastions' while Chandrapur, Yavatmal, Bhandara and Nanded districts remain prone to Naxalism. However, Nagpur has been a safe haven. The state efforts in the past two decades have reduced the influence of Naxalite in the state drastically (See **Table 1** for Maoist violence in Maharashtra).

On the 'enemy centric front', the state response was to empower the police machinery in the border district and raise the district level force— the C-60 Commando. Also, various incentives and facilities are provided to police personnel dealing with Naxalism .[29]This penetration of the state deep into Maoist territory brings back locals' confidence in the state machinery. The state's Surrender and Rehabilitation Policy (YEAR) led to the surrender of more than 500 Maoist in the last one decade.[30] To support the police action on the 'population centric front', the state government pushed for more development projects

and addressed the longstanding irrigation, health, and education challenges of the district affected by Naxalism, especially Gadchiroli.

- **Bihar.** The Bihar Government emphasised on the 'population centric' strategy to tackle Naxalism and found a political solution besides utilising the 'enemy centric' strategy. An initiative like *'Apki Sarkar Aapke Dwar'*— Your Government at Your Doorsteps— program to improve public service and infrastructure in the villages, changed the dynamics of Naxalism in Bihar.[31] The state government implemented the national schemes like mid-day meals and national employment guarantee schemes, incentivising schoolgirls by giving cash awards for buying bicycles, etc. Further, the state developed the road infrastructure to penetrate deep into the Naxalite areas and revamped the state's Public Distribution System (PDS). The developmental measures combined with political representation of different classes, curbed violence and eliminated the Maoist base in the state.[32]

    To further push the Naxalite, the Bihar Government focused on reducing crime and worked on speedy conviction of criminals. The utilisation of the Arms Act proved to be a potent instrument against Maoists as it led to decline in mass killings. [33] Further, the state created a 400-member special task force and Special Auxiliary Police for counter-insurgency operations. The use of adequate hard power and developmental measures resulted in the steady decline of the Maoist attack in the state in the subsequent years. (See **Table 1** for Maoist violence in Bihar).

    The efforts of states like Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, and Bihar in coordination with the central government have decreased the violence caused by Naxalism in the respective states. However, there still lies a pitfall in the overall COIN strategy of the nation. With all efforts in place, Naxalism is not uprooted. The reason lies in its strategy and understanding of the overall situation. Studies and various reports have shown that Special Forces like Greyhounds (Andhra Pradesh) or C-60 (Maharashtra) have not defeated the Maoists but merely displaced them in their neighbouring states of Chhattisgarh and even Jharkhand. [34] Therefore, states like Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand still have a sizeable presence of Naxalism.

- **Chhattisgarh.** Today, Chhattisgarh is considered a Maoist hotspot, and the Bastar region comprising Dantewada, Bijapur, Narayanpur, Bastar, Kanker, Sukma and Kondagaon districts remains its epicentre. The state response of strengthening the vigilant group, 'Salwa Judum' (or Purification Hunt), was one of the biggest mistakes. This strategy led to the killing of many Adivasis and gave rise to suspicion among people within the tribes (of being unsafe).[35]In numerous cases, the family members

were pitted against each other, and therefore the concept of arming the tribal against the radical tribal did more harm than benefit. The situation has worsened so much that the Supreme Court, in 2011, had to direct the state government to disband it.[36]

Learning from the 'Salwa Judum' episode and the experience of states like Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, the state government changed the strategy. However, this too was more enemy-centric and focused more on neutralising the enemy than 'winning the hearts and mind' of the locals. The state pushed for the modernisation of police forces, including creating a new battalion of Special Forces and upgrading intelligence. Besides such bold steps, the state remained at the fulcrum of Maoist insurgency—reason being decades of absence of government and security forces in the region. The trust deficit is enormous, and villagers work overtly or covertly for Maoists.[37] In such situations, the counterinsurgency operation suffers from the principle of secrecy, and our jawans become the easy scapegoats for Maoists. The fact remains that, the development of infrastructure in terms of roads had undoubtedly enhanced the region's connectivity but Maoist presence, especially in the Bastar region, still remains a matter of concern. The core reason is the 'government approach and poor governance'.

- *Jharkhand.* Jharkhand is another area which has been the focal point of Naxalism since its birth on 15 November 2000. The favourable topography, substantial Adivasi population, and mineral rich regions, make it profitable for the Naxalites. Like other states, Jharkhand, too, considered it a law-and-order issue and saw Naxalites as misguided youth.[38] However, only after 2010, the state beefed up the security forces to form Special Forces to lead anti-Naxal operations. The state launched 'Operation Anaconda' (2011) and 'Operation Anaconda –II' (2012), with central forces deployed in Saranda forests followed by a development plan.[39] The success of the operations prompted policymakers to strengthen the security forces further and keep supporting the enemy-centric strategy. It is not that the government did not focus on constructing basic infrastructures like roads, bridges, schools, and Panchayat's buildings. Still, the primary focus remains on striking down the Naxalites. Although there has been some decline in the Naxalite movement, areas like Hazaribagh, Palamu, Latehar and Ranchi districts still remain a challenge.

- *The Centre's Response.* For decades, as mentioned before, India's COIN operation remained enemy-centric, especially after the merger of the Maoist faction in 2004. The blueprint for India's approach can be seen in the UPA government's 14-point Policy, which enhances police response against Naxalite.[40] The initial step to ban the CPI (Maoist) under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in 2009 provided a

specific target to policymakers. Further, action was taken to revamp the technical and human intelligence network throughout the Naxal affected states. The centre allocated substantial funds to modernise the state and central security force. Subsequently, in 2015, the present NDA government came out with a National Policy and Action Plan. Also, the Central Government's implementation of the 'Non-Plan scheme for reimbursement of Security Related Expenditure' (SRE) was one of the critical initiatives that vested enough power in the hands of the state security forces. Later, in 2017, the SAMADHAN initiative was announced by the Ministry of Home Affairs.[41] The acronym SAMADHAN stands for S – Smart Leadership, A – Aggressive Strategy, M – Motivation, and Training, A – Actionable Intelligence, D - Dashboard Based KPIs (Key Performance Indicators), and KRAs (Key Result Areas), H- Harnessing Technology, A – An action plan for each theatre and N- No access to Financing. The aim was to choke the Naxalites by use of force and to monitor their activity extensively. Further, in 2018, a new CRPF battalion named 'Bastariya Battalion' was commissioned comprising the tribal youth.[42] Also, the armed forces were allowed to use Unmanned Aerial vehicles (UAV) and mini-UAVs in critical Maoist infected areas for better surveillance and monitoring. The fact of the matter is that extensive use of force to subdue Maoist does play an essential role in bringing down the Maoist threat, but elimination is far from reality.

Later, after realising the importance of a population-centric strategy, the government pushed for its immediate implementation, which can be seen in the launching of Integrated Action Plan (IAP) [43] for 60 Selected Tribal and Backward Districts. It was launched to build public infrastructure and services such as School Buildings, Anganwadi Centres, Primary Health Centres, Drinking Water Supply, Village Roads, and Electric lights in public places such as PHCs and schools, and many more. Later, after abandoning IAP, a new scheme called 'Special Central Assistance' (SCA) was launched to accelerate the pace of development and bridge the gap between the tribal areas and other regions.[44] The aim was to win the confidence of local people through socio-economic development and good governance. In achieving this objective, the government also pushed for reforms.

- ***Forest Right Act, 2006.*** In order to recognise the right of the Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers, the government introduced the Forest Right Act, 2006. The aim was "sustainable use, conservation of biodiversity and maintenance of ecological balance and thereby strengthening the conservation regime of the forests

while ensuring livelihood and food security of the forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers".[45]

- **National Rehabilitation and Settlement Policy, 2007.** The policy was introduced for the healthy dispersion of people affected by industrial growth. It envisages reducing the psychological, socio-cultural consequences on the marginal section of the society. Further, it also talks about providing opportunities beyond monetary compensation and providing employment opportunities to the worst affected families.[46]

- **Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013.** It was to provide adequate compensation, greater security for forcible land acquisition and proper resettlement to the people. It also aims to provide greater compensation to farmers for their acquired land along with humanitarian relief.

Recalibrating the Strategy for Eliminating the Menace

It is undeniable that the government's 'enemy-centric approach' and initiative to launch a 'population-centric approach' by imparting development, have led to a massive decline in the Naxal attack over the past decades. However, the question generally arises, why, despite all sorts of efforts, the Naxal still causes mass casualties to the security forces. As they did in April 2021, when Maoist attacked a joint team of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), including elite elements of Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (COBRA), District Reserve Guard (DRG), and Special Task Force (STF) at Terram, killing 22 jawans and leaving 30 injured. [47] The simple answer is poor governance and lack of proper implementation of policies on the ground. Further, in many cases, lawmakers' policies negate the various safeguards available to schedule tribes under the constitution. [48]

For a successful counterinsurgency campaign just adopting a military means will not bear the desired fruits. The presence of insurgents may be subdued temporarily or remain suspended until a strong police presence. However, in the long-term, a more significant focus on 'winning the hearts and minds' of the local population is a must. Statistically, military means have solved only 7 percent of insurgency while 43 percent of insurgency is solved through political dialogue backed by a strong military presence. [49] Thus, focus must be on 'population-centric strategy' while keeping the security forces to safeguard the developmental projects. The focus must be on winning the trust of the people through social integration. For decades, the tribal people have felt neglected by the government. This

negligence must be avoided by giving proper forest rights to the forest dwellers, giving more power to tribal leaders, and solving their basic issues of food, water, and shelter.

The Indian COIN strategy is based on the 'Clear, Hold and Build' approach.[50] India, over the years, has been able to clear the strong foothold of the Maoists in the region. It is also able to hold the situation as very few incidents took place over the year. However, India is still unable to 'build' the region. Building the region requires the confidence of all the members residing in the society, including tribals. It requires collective effort of the local, state, and central governments to address the concerns of all the stakeholders. 'One solution fits all' can never be the real solution. The tribals, landless peasants, are aboriginal and have all the rights over their land, water, and natural resources. Thus, India must now shift focus to a 'population-centric approach.

Decades of Maoist insurgency have reduced the state's presence in core Naxal areas. The state must ensure the infrastructure build-up on a priority basis i.e., fortified police stations, building roads and telecommunication facilities, and improving public distribution systems. However, this only amounts to the infrastructure build-up aspect; the *'ethical security and ethical governance'* [51] approaches must be adopted for complete eradication. The grassroot government official must be trained to interact with tribals ethically and not as an agent of exploiters.

- The state is relying heavily on its COIN operations on CRPF. Instead, the ***recruits must be drawn from the local population as per the 'greyhound' model of Andhra Pradesh***. Further, after serving for some years, the recruiter must become part of the regular police force. Also, state-of-the-art equipment along with the best training must be made available to the armed forces.
- The issue of rights over their land and the issue of land ownership is the ignition point of Naxalism. **Learning from the successes of the Telangana peasant rebellion (1946-51), the state must redistribute land records**, revamp the justice delivery system, and restore the rights of the indigenous people, especially Adivasis, on land, forest, and natural resources. Further, the native must be given a share in the profit of industrial activity in the form of better education, transportation, communication, and healthcare facilities.
- Electoral representation is one of the critical areas of concern in Naxal affected areas. Lack of proper representation leads to the disenfranchisement of people with the government. The Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996, was passed by the government to empower the people of scheduled tribes. However,

even after 25 years of its existence, the concerned state is yet to frame law. Thus, **implementing such a law on the ground is vital for eliminating alienation at the grassroot level**. A case study on implementation (PESA) Act in Andhra Pradesh reveals it's non-conformity with original idea and spirit of giving more power to local government.[52]

The Naxal-influenced areas are rich in minerals and have massive potential for industrial growth. **However, the growth shall be as per the natives, and utmost priority must be given to indigenous people in employment**. The aim is to win 'hearts and minds', which is not possible without stable employment opportunities for youth. Further, the resettlement and rehabilitation policy must be implemented on the ground as lawmakers make them. The private player involved in the mining activities must comply with laid policies under strict monitoring of independent authority (preferably the High Court or Supreme Court).

Conclusion

India's success in counter insurgency operations is commendable; however, to eliminate Naxalism, the authorities need to move ahead to win the 'hearts and minds' of the people. Recalibrating strategies require a framework to implement policies on the ground as they are shaped in the parliament. Just eliminating the top leaders by military means does not guarantee the end of Naxalism. Only the consolidated efforts of locals, state, centre, and even armed forces compelled with socio-economic reforms can tackle the problem of Naxalism.

End Notes

[1] Dhruv C Katoch, "Naxalism in India: Prognosis and Cure" *CLAWS Journal (Winter Edition), December 2012*. Accessible at https://archive.claws.in/images/journals_doc/1394614662Dhruv%20C%20Katochr%20%20CJ%20Winter%202012.pdf. Accessed on 10 September 2021.

[2] Raman Dixit, "Naxalite Movement in India: The State's Response", *Journal of Defence Studies*, *Vol. 4, Issue 2*, April 2010. Accessible at https://idsa.in/jds/4_2_2010_NaxaliteMovementinIndia_rdixit. Accessed on 10 September 2021.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Sameer Lalwani, "India's Approach to Counterinsurgency and the Naxalite Problem", *CTC SENTINEL*, *Vol 4, Issue 10*, October 2011. Accessible at http://sameerlalwani.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Lalwani-India-COIN-CTCSentinel-2011.pdf. Accessed on 10 September 2021.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] P Sundarayya, "Telangana People's Armed Struggle (1946-1951) Part One: Historical Setting", *Social Scientist, Vol 1, No 7*, 1973, pp. 3–19. Accessible at www.jstor.org/stable/3516269. Accessed 15 September 2021.

[8] Niranjan Sahoo, "Half a Century of India's Maoist Insurgency: An Appraisal of State Response", *ORF*, 13 June 2019. Accessible at https://www.orfonline.org/research/half-a-century-of-indias-maoist-insurgency-an-appraisal-of-state-response-51933/. Accessed on 15 September 2021.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Pawitter Mohan Bali, Pooja Jain, "Drivers of Naxalism in India: Key to Successful Resolution of Naxal Problem", *Quest Journals*, *Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, *Vol 8 , Issue 1,* 2020, pp. 66-70. Accessible at http://www.questjournals.org/jrhss/papers/vol8issue1/K08016670.pdf. Accessed on 15 September 2021.

[12] *Ministry of Home Affairs, India , Left Wing Extremism Division*. Accessible at https://www.mha.gov.in/division_of_mha/left-wing-extremism-division. Accessed on 15 September 2021.

[13] N.1.

[14] "Development Challenges in Extremist Affected Areas", *Report of an Expert Group to Planning Commission, Government of India*, 2008. Accessible at https://tribal.nic.in/downloads/Statistics/OtherReport/DevelopmentChallengesinExtremistAffectedAreas.pdf. Accessed on 16 September 2021.

[15] Iftakar Gilani, "Government revisiting Land to Tiller Policy", *DNA*, 09 April 2016. Accessible at https://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-government-revisiting-land-to-tiller-policy-2199812. Accessed on 18 September 2021.

[16] "Annual Report 2019-20", *Ministry of Communication, Government of India*. Accessible at https://dot.gov.in/sites/default/files/Annual%20Report-2019-20%28%20English%29.pdf. Accessed on 18 September 2021.

[17] VK Ahluwalia, *"Red Revolution 2020 and Beyond: Strategic Challenges to Resolve Naxalism"*, (New Delhi: Bloomsbury Publications, 2013) p.26.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Anil Kamboj, "Nishant Turan asked: How and from where do the Naxalites procure their weapons? *IDSA*. Accessible at https://idsa.in/askanexpert/Naxalitesprocuretheirweapons. Accessed on 20 September 2021.

[20] Ibid.

[21] PV Ramana, "Maoist Finances: Sources, Methods of Collection and Utilization", *IDSA*, 17 February 2014. Accessible at https://idsa.in/idsacomments/MaoistFinances_pvramana_170214. Accessed on 20 September 2021.

[22] Ibid.

[23] N.4

[24] N.8

[25] "Andhra Pradesh:Assessment-2021", *SATP*. Accessible at https://www.satp.org/terrorism-assessment/india-maoistinsurgency-andhrapradesh. Accessed on 20 September 2021.

[26] Sumit Bhattacharjee, "Is the Maoist movement in a 'critical' phase?", *The Hindu*, 24 July 2021. Accessible at https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/andhra-pradesh/is-the-maoist-movement-in-a-critical-phase/article35516834.ece. Accessed on 25 September 2021.

[27] Prathik Sharavi, "Rehabilitation Scheme of Naxalite", *Pleaders*, 20 January 2018. Accessible at https://blog.ipleaders.in/rehabilitation-schemes-for-naxalites/. Accessed on 25 September 2021.

[28] Rajat Kumar Kujur, "Naxal Warning in Maharashtra", *IPCS*, 14 January 2006. Accessible at http://www.ipcs.org/comm_select.php?articleNo=1925. Accessed on 25 September 2021.

[29] Soumitra Bose. "Maha has tackled Naxalism best, claims Home Minister", *The Times of India*, 14 December 2020. Accessible at https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/nagpur/maha-has-tackled-naxalism-best-claims-home-minister/articleshow/79710472.cms. Accessed on 25 September 2021.

[30] Deeptiman Tiwary, "Bengal to Bihar: how states dealt with Maoists", *The Indian Express*, 11 April 2021. Accessible at https://indianexpress.com/article/india/bengal-to-bihar-how-states-dealt-with-maoists-7268190/. Accessed on 25 September 2021.

[31] Rachel Kleinfeld, Rushda Majeed, "Fighting Insurgency with Politics: The Case of Bihar", *Carnegie*, 09 June 2016. Accessible at https://carnegieendowment.org/2016/06/09/fighting-insurgency-with-politics-case-of-bihar-pub-63769. Accessed on 27 September 2021.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

[34] N.4

[35] First Post Staff, "Chhattisgarh attack: The bloody legacy of Mahendra Karma's Salwa Judum, *First Post*, 27 May 2013. Accessible at https://www.firstpost.com/india/chhattisgarh-attack-the-bloody-legacy-of-mahendra-karmas-salwa-judum-817807.html. Accessed on 27 September 2021.

[36] J Venkatesan, "Salwa Judum is illegal, says Supreme Court", *The Hindu*, 05 July 2011. Accessible at https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/Salwa-Judum-is-illegal-says-Supreme-Court/article13639702.ece. Accessed on 27 September 2021.

[37] Dipankar Gosh, Gargi Verma, "Why Naxals continue to hold out in Chhattisgarh", *The Indian Express*, 11 April 2021. Accessible at https://indianexpress.com/article/india/chhattisgarh-maoist-attack-naxal-units-security-forces-killed-7268183/. Accessed on 27 September 2021.

[38] N.8.

[39] Express News Service, "Op Anaconda-II in Saranda begins", *The Indian Express*, 11 December 2011. Accessible at https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/odisha/2012/dec/11/op-anaconda-ii-in-saranda-begins-432948.html. Accessed on 27 September 2021.

[40] P V Ramana, "Measures To Deal With Left-Wing Extremism/Naxalism, *IDSA*, 2011. Accessible at https://idsa.in/system/files/OP_MeasurestodealwithNaxal.pdf. Accessed on 28 September 2021.

[41] Shaurya Karanbir Gurung, "SAMADHAN: Rajnath Singh coins an acronym to wipe out left-wing terror", *The Economic Times*, 08 May 2017. Accessible at https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/rajnath-singh-calls-for-unity-of-purpose-to-tackle-naxals/articleshow/58571588.cms?from=mdr. Accessed on 28 September 2021.

[42] Press Trust of India. "Bastariya battalion to take on Maoists", The Hindu, 21 May 2018. Accessible at https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/bastariya-battalion-to-take-on-maoists/article23944624.ece, accessed on 29 August 2021.

[43] *Press Information Bureau, Planning Commission*, 30 December 2010. Accessible at https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=68783, accessed on 30 September 2021.

[44] Press Information Bureau, "Development of Naxal affected Districts", *Ministry of Home Affairs*, 25 June 2019. Accessible at https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1575579. Accessed on 01 October 2021.

[45] "Forest Right Act, 2006", *Ministry of Tribal Affairs*. Accessible at https://tribal.nic.in/FRA/data/FRARulesBook.pdf. Accessed on 02 October 2021.

[46] "National Rehabilitation and Settlement Policy, 2007", *Ministry of Rural Development*. Accessible at https://www.centralcoalfields.in/indsk/pdf/employ_land/land_rules/natnl_rehab_restltmnt_plcy_2007.pdf. Accessed on 02 October 2021.

[47] V K Ahluwalia, "Re-calibrating Strategies to Combat Maoists' Violence", *CLAWS*, 06 April 2021. Accessible at https://www.claws.in/re-calibrating-strategies-to-combat-maoists-violence/. Accessed on 06 October 2021.

[48] N.2

[49] N.47

[50] Naman Rawat, "Naxalite Insurgency in India and Need for Holistic Counter Responses", *JSTOR*, May 2019. Accessible at https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/26631541.pdf. Accessed on 06 October 2021.

[51] Aarti Tikoo Singh, "There is only one way of solving Naxalism and that is ethical security and ethical governance" *The Times of India*, 02 September 2021. Accessible at https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/Tic-Tac-Toe/there-is-only-one-way-of-solving-naxalism-and-that-is-ethical-security-and-ethical-governance/. Accessed on 06 October 2021.

[52] Palla Trinadha Rao, "Assessment of Implementation of Panchayats Extension to Scheduled Area (PESA) Act in Andhra Pradesh – A Case Study of Scheduled Village in Andhra Pradesh", *NIRDPR*. Accessible at http://nirdpr.org.in/nird_docs/srsc/srsc230217-24.pdf. Accessed on 06 October 2021.

The views expressed and suggestions made in the article are solely of the author in his personal capacity and do not have any official endorsement. Attributability of the contents lies purely with author.