

Conclusion

New Trends of Naxalism in India

Continuity and discontinuity, though contradictory, have so far remained as inseparable characters of the Maoist conflict in India. In terms of the Maoist conflict, the past few years have been confusing. While 2010 to 2013 were the bloodiest phases when compared to the previous years, recording an upward trend in Maoist violence, the subsequent years witnessed significant decline. Many attribute this reversal of Maoist violence to the success of sustained efforts by the security forces, but others believe this to be a strategic move by Maoists for using this period for recruiting, recuperating, striking new alliances and looking for newer ways of raising funds and acquiring weapons.

Naxal Movement: Contemporary Trends

“Revolutions never proceed in a straight line. The history of all successful revolutions is a proof to this. The path is zigzag, there are ups and downs, there is victory and failure; repeated a number of times before the final victory. Of course, there is no final victory until the stage of communism is reached.” (30 Years of Naxalbari) This statement, believed to be drafted by some senior leaders of erstwhile PWG, explains the state of affairs within the contemporary Naxal Movement.

Militarization & Expansion

Certain strategic goals are deep rooted within CPI (Maoist) right from its inception but the past few years too have witnessed CPI (Maoist) coming up with newer tactics to meet the need of changing time. Militarization and expansion have always been the core areas of Maoist modus operandi. If militarization was responsible for the rise in the violence graph of the Maoist movement, their expansion saw several newer geographic areas and people being added into the Maoist fold. At times, it may appear that the Maoists have sacrificed former for the later but that has never been the case. True, during the past couple of years, many CPI (Maoist) top leaders were either eliminated or put behind the bars; this has its own impact on the course of the movement. But, the Maoists with their various acts too have proved that they may be down but they are still a force to reckon. On the other hand, the past few years have also noticed twists in the government handling of the Maoist issues. While at one point it was noticed that an over enthusiast Union Home Ministry pushing through its maiden anti

Maoist strategy of 'clear, hold and develop', the April 2010 incident of Chintalnad in Chhattisgarh which saw the killing of 76 security personnel significantly altered the government's stand on 'area domination'.

While security and development continues to be crucial to all the government sponsored anti – Naxal policies and strategies, capacity building and containment of Maoist violence are two other objectives of the government. As early as 2006, Prime Minister Dr.Manmohan Singh branded the Maoist threat Contemporary Naxal Movement in India to be the single largest internal security problem of the nation. (PM's Speech, 13 April, 2006) As per the available statistics 3,607 persons including civilians and security forces were killed in the Naxal violence between 2008 and 2012. This is no simple Mathematics because it means more than double the deaths reported from Jammu & Kashmir and north-eastern states collectively during the same period. On the other hand with the likes of Arundhati Roy branding Maoists as Gandhians with Gun, (Roy, 2010) Naxalism has also this distinction of being viewed from the looking glass of prevalent injustice and oppression in the society.

What reasons have kept this movement alive for a period of about over four decades? Despite all the tall claims made by successive governments, people in the Naxal infested regions continue to lead a miserable life. The metamorphic growth of violence and the inability of the State to come out with a well thought strategy have entirely paralyzed the rural administration in the Naxal-infested regions. The Maoist movement influences political process, especially the electoral process, though it offers a strategy of negation of the same political process in its avowed methods since its inception in 1968. From a socio-political movement to the single largest internal security problem of the nation, the Maoist transformation has indeed been phenomenal.

Escalation and Deletion of Maoist Violence

Violence, as a technique of the Naxal movement was right there from the beginning, courtesy Charu Mazumdar's Annihilation Doctrine. (Mazumdar, 1970) From 2003 up to 2013, the Maoist violence has been increasing particularly during 2009-10. Those years witnessed extraordinary rise in the number of Maoist related incidents and fatalities. However, the past two years have witnessed considerable drop in the number of Maoist related fatalities. What are the reasons which could be attributed to the extraordinary rise of Maoist violence in the country? The answer to the question holds key to crack many of the Maoist riddles. Equally important is to understand what could be the possible reasons for the

sudden and significant de-escalation of Maoist violence in the past two years. Many believe that the Operation Green Hunt, (The Hindu, 6 February 2010) as a reason behind the escalation of Maoist violence. In 2008, P. Chidambaram took over as the Union Minister of Home Affairs and 2009 witnessed general elections. As Chidambaram retained the Home ministry in the second edition of UPA, 2009 witnessed the formalization of GOSSI's first ever interstate military offensive against the Maoists. Maoists also responded to this changed strategy with an increase in the number of incidents and casualties. Decision makers and strategists within the government attribute this to be a part of the successful implementation of their long term agenda. This is what the then Home Secretary of India had to say on the escalation of Maoist violence in 2010.

If you see the violence profile of the left wing extremism itself, it has been going up year after year. Last year was possibly one of the bloodiest years and our estimate is this year it is only likely to go up whether we like it or not. Because we will no longer allow this policy of continued expansion by the Maoists to continue unabated and the State has now decided that this must stop and we will take back areas which we have lost. We are in one sense taking back those areas and much of the shouting and violence which is going on is because some of the areas we have, in fact, started to take back.

On the other hand, the Maoists have a different version. Prasad, an influential member of the Andhra Border State Committee of the CPI (Maoist) from a socio-political movement to the single largest internal security problem of the nation, the Maoist transformation has indeed been phenomenal. Considers that the Naxals have been working on a systematic strategy to increase their influence, power and area of operation. He said the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) should be transformed into a People's Liberation Army (PLA) for which a liberated zone was necessary. PLGA formations were being developed to achieve this target and it had also carried out "mobile" war by carrying out raids on targets at faraway places, by mobilising its armed cadre from different parts and taking assistance from the people along the way. (The Hindu, 8 December 2010) This statement underlines that the Maoists are preparing to enter in to another stage of their revolutionary war. The call for transformation of PLGA in to PLA underlines a tactical shift in Maoist strategy.

Opinion may vary, but increased number of deaths among the security forces during 2009-10 seriously questions the rationale of the Operation Green Hunt. The security forces deployed to carry out the Operation Green Hunt were certainly on a disadvantageous side in the absence of real time intelligence and jungle warfare training. This period 2009-10 witnessed

some of the deadliest attacks on the security forces meticulously and mercilessly executed by the Maoists; the worst being the killing of 76 security personnel in Chintaland in Chhattisgarh. Another reason for the increased Maoist Violence during 2009 – 2010 was their ability to penetrate in to people's resistance movements. Lalgah in West Bengal is a clear example where the focused infiltration by the Maoist forces in to the tribal movement enabled them to inflict maximum damages to the security forces. West Bengal registered 26 deaths in 2008, while 158 and 256 deaths in 2009 and in 2010 respectively. Opinions also differ regarding the decline of Maoist violence during 2011-12. Many attribute this to the success of sustained military operations against the Maoists since 2009. Undoubtedly in the recent years the CPI (Maoist) suffered huge losses in terms of killings and arrest of some of its top leadership; however, the relative calmness cannot be seen as withdrawal symptom. Although 2011-12 reported lesser number of Maoist related incidents and casualties as compared to 2009-10, the number still remained high compared to incidents reported in northeast and J&K during the same period.

Some incidents orchestrated by the CPI (Maoist) during 2011-12 suggest that they deliberately avoided direct confrontations with the security forces, but also never missed an opportunity to showcase their supremacy over the government forces. The January 8, 2013 incident of Latehar (NDTV, January 2013) again brings back the violent memories of 2010. Of course it is too early to make a prediction but it proves that the Maoists have never compromised over the issue of use violence for their so called 'People's War'.

Crisis of Leadership & Its Implications

Past few years have witnessed significant loss of cadre and leadership by the CPI (Maoist) and this has been a major concern for them. Politburo, the highest decision making body of its organizational structure had originally 16 members of which 2 have been exterminated, while 7 are in custody. As of now the Politburo is left with just Muppala Lakshman Rao @ Ganapathy, the party.

General Secretary, Prashant Bose, Kishan Da, Nambala Keshavarao ,Ganganna, Mallojula Venugopal Rao , Bhupathi, KatakamSudershan , Anand, MallaRaji Reddy , Sathenna and MisirBesra ,Sunirmal; all of them are undercover but active. Similarly out of 'the 39 member Central Committee which also includes the Politburo; 18 have been neutralized, 5 killed and 13 are in custody. Those killed include Sande Raja Mouli, Wadkapur Chandramouli and Patel

Sudhakar Reddy, Azad and Kishenji. Among those arrested include Sumanand Singh alias Sumanda, KobadGhandy alias Rajan, Sridhar Krishnan Srinivasan alias Vishnu, Balraj, Chintan, Varanasi Subrahmanyam alias Sukanth alias Srikanth, Vijay Kumar Arya alias Yashpal alias Jaspal and Jantu Mukherjee alias Sahebda alias Ajay. The most fatal blow that the CPI (Maoist) suffered in recent past was the death of legendary Cherukuri Rajkumar Azad and Malojula Koteshwara RaoKishenji, who were considered to be the voice and face of the Contemporary Maoist Movement in India. (Kujur, IPCS, 2011) As per their own estimates, the Maoists have lost at least 150 of their leaders at various levels just within the past few years. The most recent of these losses was Mohan Vishwakarma, a senior member of the Maoist's Central Technical Committee and Technical Research and Arms Manufacturing Unit, who was arrested in Kolkata (West Bengal) on July 26, 2012.

Past few years have also witnessed large number of Maoist cadres either being arrested or surrendered in different parts of the country. As per the available Statistics, 905 Maoists have been arrested in 2012, in addition to the 1003 arrests of 2011, 1281 of 2010 and 836 of 2009. Similarly, 414 CPI (Maoist) cadres had surrendered in 2012, as against 227 in 2011, 150 in 2010 and 73 in 2009. (South Asia Terrorism Portal) All the recent losses definitely have its impact on the course of Maoist movement. This is also one of the reasons for the significant fall in the volume of the Maoist violence. West Bengal saw an extraordinary upsurge in Maoist violence under the leadership of Kishenji. His killing has largely left the movement clueless which subsequently weakened the impact and the base of the movement in the state. Maoists know this and this realization is evident from one of their recent press statements: Our failures and shortcomings in studying the deceptive strategy of the enemy and taking up counter tactics by understanding the tactics taken by them to wipe (out) our leadership and subjective forces as part of that strategy are reasons behind the serious losses we are facing. (People's March, 2012) The above realization has its own implication. After the death of Azad, managers of India's counter Maoist operations were jubilant in believing that his death would stop the electrifying Maoist propaganda war. But it was not the case and MallojulaVenugopal, the brother of slain Maoist leader Kishenji swiftly moved into the shoes of Azad to become the official spokesperson of the party. (The Times of India, 26 November 2011) Similarly the death of Kishenji was a major blow to CPI (Maoist) particularly in Bengal – – Jharkhand region; there may not be another Maoist leader of his stature but the party has already nurtured a second level leadership that can take control in the event of a major setback. SThere are experienced leaders like Prashant Bose alias Kishanda,

Katakam Sudershan, Nambala Kesava Rao, Kadari Satya narayana Rao and Ramakrishna who have now swiftly positioned themselves to oversee the course of Maoist Movement. Politburo members Malla Raji Reddy and Misir Besra, who were arrested by the police, have rejoined the organization after escaping the police net. The crisis of leadership faced by the CPI (Maoist) cannot be ignored, but the real strength of this guerrilla organization lies with a large number of leaders who have not yet appeared and are unknown. While government measures its success on the elimination or arrest of the known figures, Maoists do have a strong network of unknown figures who can step in if the situation warrants.

Inter Organizational and Intra Organizational Conflict

The most prominent effect of the crisis of leadership has been the rising dissent within the CPI (Maoist) and creation of several new fractions within the broad tradition of Maoism. As per the available statistics, Jharkhand has seen emergence of at least eight splinter groups in the recent past; most prominent among them being the Tiritiya Prastuti Committee (TPC), the People's Liberation Front of India (PLFI), and the Jharkhand Jana Mukti Parishad (JJMP). (The Telegraph, 18 January 2013) Inter organizational and intra organizational feud apart, the cycle of competitive violence has sucked entire Jharkhand which now is grappling to tackle the Maoist violence from multiple fronts. The internal friction between various rival LWE groups in Jharkhand is the principal reason for the alarming Maoist violence in the state. Recently the Telugu leadership of CPI (Maoist) came under severe attack from the top Maoist leader Sabayasachi Panda. On 1 June 2012, Panda wrote two letters to CPI (Maoist) General Secretary Ganapathy, politburo members Prashant Bose, Narayan Sanyal, and other Maoist leaders. In the two letters, which ran up to 39 pages, he levelled serious allegations against the Party leadership of mindless violence, dictatorship, financial irregularity, tribal exploitation, sexual harassment, big brother attitude of the Andhra Border Special Zonal Committee (AOBSZC), discrimination against minorities and Christians and so on. Further, in an audio tape released to the media recently, Panda declared to have severed all ties with the CPI (Maoist) and announced the formation of his Maoist Party (OMP). Since then the Maoist Movement in Orissa has been experiencing certain new conflict dynamics which could have serious implications in the future course of the movement. In an attempt to prove his strength even after his divorce from CPI (Maoist),

Sabyasachi Panda's OMP engineered the high profile kidnapping of two Italian nationals, Bosusco Paolo and Claudio Colangelo, on 14 March 2012 from the Kandhamal district of

Orissa. Responding to it, the armed cadres of AOBSZC kidnapped the ruling Biju Janata dal legislature Jhina Hikaka on 23 March 2012. Interestingly, in both the cases, the hostages were freed unhurt after hectic negotiations. However, the unfolding of both the events has made it very clear that the Maoist Movement in Orissa is heading towards a stiff battle for turf between the OMP and AOBSZC led by Ramakrishna and Daya. (Kujur, IPCS 2013) Time will testify in whose favour the situation will tilt, but there is crisis of leadership faced by the CPI (Maoist) cannot be ignored, but the real strength of this guerrilla organization lies with a large number of leaders who have not yet appeared and are unknown. While government measures its success on the elimination or arrest of the known figures, Maoists do have a strong network of unknown figures who can step in if the situation warrants.

In all likelihood the conflict between the two would result in more Maoist related casualties, new areas coming into Maoist fold, new bases of popular support, newer issues and all these would again deteriorate the already complicated Maoist situation in the state. The history of Naxal Movement so far has been the history of conflicts and splits; however, it also represents the history of mergers. Recent happenings within the Maoist movement makes it amply clear that this particular thread of Maoist history still continues into the present trajectory of Maoist Movement in India. In a significant development in June 2012, the CPI (Maoist) decided to call off violence against various Left Wing Extremist (LWE) faction and splinter groups in Jharkhand for three months, an effort largely being viewed as an attempt to unite separate groups fighting for the same ideology. Bihar Jharkhand North Chhattisgarh Special Area Committee (BJNCSAC) spokesman Gopal in a statement categorically said that the decision of unilateral ceasefire was taken to invite the other armed groups working in individual capacity for the common people, to work from a unified and stronger front. “We can set aside our personal differences in ideology for the betterment of common people and when the government is harassing villagers and trying to suppress their movement for neo-democracy; all the groups must understand the need of the hour and join hands”. (The Times of India, 25 June 2012) Inter-organizational and intra-organizational conflicts have been the unique features of this decade long Maoist movement of India. This organizational conflict has remained an inseparable character of the movement and has resulted in the movement growing in different areas. Because the inter organizational and intra organizational conflict actually smoothens the fulfilment of larger Maoist goal of ‘area domination or area wise seizure’, at the same the reconciliation process facilitates them to consolidate and in both the

cases it's an advantage to the Maoist Movement. It is unlikely that the contemporary Maoist Movement will escape from this dominant trend.

The Maoist Expansion: One Step Back, Few Steps Forward

Underneath the dramatic decline in the number of Maoist related fatalities there were several 'behind the scene' developments which gave sufficient indication that the Maoists are certainly working on improving their operational strength. Due to massive deployment of security forces, it may appear that the Maoists have become weak in their traditional support bases. But the Maoist forces are making inroads into several untouched but strategically vital locations. Delhi's Maoist connection has always been a matter of private discussions but the arrest of Police Bureau member Kobad Ghandy on September 20, 2009, revealed the larger Maoist game plan for New Delhi and NCR region. As per the available information, Delhi now has a six member CPI (Maoist) committee which is managing the Maoist state of affairs in Delhi since the past 4 -5 years. Right from 2005, Maoist activities have been continuously reported from places closer to Delhi, such as Jind, Kaithal, Kurukshetra Yamunanagar, Hisar, Rohtak and Sonapat. In June 2009, Haryana police claimed to have arrested eight important Maoists in Kurukshetra, including Pradeep Kumar, the Haryana state secretary of the CPI (Maoist). The state police also claimed that the Maoists have formed a number of front organizations in the state, viz. Shivalik Jansangharsh Manch, Lal Salam, Jagrook ChhatarMorcha, Krantikari MajdoorKisan Union, Jan Adhikari Suraksha Samiti and ShivalikJansangharsh Manch. (Ramanna, 2010 & 2011)

A closer look at the execution of Maoist expansion plans reveal that the Maoist have been working systematically as per their 'Urban Perspective Plan (UPP)' Telengana is now back again on the Maoist radar and the CPI (Maoist) North Telangana Special Zonal Committee (NTSZC) is now pushing hard for the revival of the Naxal movement. Noticeable movement of CPI (Maoist) armed cadres in forest areas of Adilabad, Khammam, Karimnagar, and Warangal districts, which dwells with the strategy of the Maoist revolution in the urban areas. (CPI - Maoist Party Document) The UPP makes a forceful plea for making cities their guerrilla base on the ground that cities are the strongholds of the enemy and have a large concentration of enemy forces. A base inside the enemy strong hold would enable them to infiltrate in to the enemy camp. It is the successful implementation of UPP that past years have witnessed significant Maoist activities in many urban centres more prominently in the capitals and industrial hubs/cities of the country like Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore,

Hyderabad, Ahmadabad, Chennai, Kolkata, Patna, Raipur, Ranchi, Bhubaneswar and Chandigarh. As far as their urban focus is concerned Maoists certainly are not after short term goals of guerrilla warfare but they are following a long term approach which include among others congealing their existing bases in urban areas, gaining over the industrial working class, trade unions, unorganised labour, employees unions, youth & student bodies and NGOs. In other words the Maoists are looking towards the urban areas to supply them with literate cadres which would form the base of their leadership in the rural areas and which could be used to mobilise the front organisations, media, social activists and human right activists to espouse their cause.

While analysing Maoist strengths or weaknesses in terms of their area of operation there is no denying that during past one year or so Maoists suffered heavily in their strongholds of Abujmad (Chhattisgarh), Saranda (Jharkhand), Lalgadh (West Bengal) but what is more worrying is that they have added several new territories to their map which do not necessarily fall under the category of conventional Maoist areas. Maoists have always made it very clear that their ultimate political aim is to replace the parliamentary democracy in India and establish their own model of People's Government and for this they need pan Indian presence and they are systematically working towards that goal. And remember they are in no hurry.

The Corporate – Maoist Nexus: Target Infrastructure

What started essentially as an agrarian movement, Naxal Movement today has entered in to an era where the Corporate - Maoist nexus has imparted huge impetus to the extortion industry and financial and political muscle of the Maoists. Maoists are often alleged of collecting ransom and protection money from business houses. This nexus has resulted in a stunning parallel economy which in turn is enhancing the armed might and internal and external clout of the Maoists. Due to this, the Maoists have acquired huge financial and political stake in illegal mining. There are is a dilemma for the corporate houses; if they do not heed to the extortion demands of the Maoists, their personnel, property and the unit itself would be attacked. On the other hand, if the police detect their payments they can be booked. This nexus has malicious security implications for India, both internal as well as external.

CPI (Maoist) & its Growing Bonhomie with the Islamist Terrorism

There have been reports that the Pakistan based Let and the CPI (Maoist) have now established a relationship. Even the Chief Minister and Director General of Police of

Chhattisgarh on record, have expressed the possibility of such an alliance. Two Left operatives attended a CPI-Maoist central committee meeting as observers held sometime in April-May this year. They met in a jungle inside, close to Bastar. Adding fuel to the speculations the Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir recently said “While we have no experience with the Maoist insurgency, of late, we find effort being made to build bridges between the Maoists and Naxalites of rest of India with the militants of Kashmir and also some Left-thinking academicians and students in Jammu region as well.” (India Today, 19 November 2010) West Bengal Director General of Police (DGP) Naparajit Mukerjee in one of the MHA Review meetings disclosed that the link between the Maoist and the ISI was clear in four districts bordering Bangladesh, including Murshidabad. (NDTV). There has also been a media report that Dawood Ibrahim has been trying to get connected with the CPI (Maoist). His intention is to get in to the multi thousand illegal mining trades in the vast areas of Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Orissa. In one of his interviews the then Home Secretary of India G.K. Pillai admitted, “last year he paid Rs. 25 Lakhs to a Chhattisgarh operative but was coned. He is now trying to use the Maoists in Nepal to touch base with their counterparts in India and offer those arms and ammunitions.” (India Today, 6 June 2011)

CPI (Maoist) & International Recognition

Maoism in India is altogether a different experience, quite different from that of China and for that matter, Nepal. So far it has managed to sustain relying mostly on indigenous issues and formulas, nevertheless over the years Maoist Movement in India has become a dominant character of the international Maoist current. For any revolutionary movement, international support is a crucial factor and this has been realized by Indian Maoists since long. Although the Government of India so far has not given much importance (at least in public) to Maoist international connections, since 1995, Maoists in India started making contacts with the Maoist groups from Philippines, Turkey, Germany, France, Holland and Italy. In March 2012 the then state Minister of Home Affairs Jitendra Singh said “The CPI (Maoist) [has] close links with foreign Maoist organizations in Philippines, Turkey, etc. The outfit is also a member of [the] ‘Coordination Committee of Maoist Parties and Organisations of South Asia [CCOMPOSA]’”. The Minister further disclosed that “The so-called People’s War being waged by the CPI (Maoist) against the Indian state has also drawn support from several organizations located in Germany, France, Holland, Turkey, Italy, etc.”

Information available with the Maoist documents reveal that in 1996 Vernon

Gonsalves alias Pradeep, a central committee member of the erstwhile CPI-ML People's War (PW) attended the May Day seminar organised in Brussels by the Workers' Party of Belgium (WPB) where he submitted a paper on the armed struggle in India. Impressed with his talk and on being invited by CPI – ML (PW), the WPB chief Bert de Belder visited Nizamabad district, a part of the north Telangana guerrilla zone, to study the armed struggle. The international exposure of Indian Maoists in Brussels facilitated them to establish contacts with the Philippines Communist Party at another seminar, also held in Brussels. In 1998, certain Indian Maoist ideologues were in Germany to attend a meeting of Marxistisch Leninistische Partei Deutschlands (MLPD), the Marxist-Leninist party of Germany. In the same year, Maoists from India sent a representative to a meeting of the International Association of People's Lawyers (IAPL) in the Netherlands. After the formation CPI (Maoist) in 2004 it was left to Kobadb Ghandy to garner international support for the Maoist Movement in India and it has come out from his interrogations that he too had visited countries like Canada and United Kingdom.

Indian Maoist's growing international clout got a major boost when the erstwhile PW was made a member of the Coordination Committee of Maoist Parties of South Asia (CCOMPOSA) in 2001. CCOMPOSA comprises of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist factions and parties in India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka and till date it has conducted five annual conferences in different locations of South Asia. It provides an important platform of cooperation and collaboration for Maoist forces in South Asia. However, the organization was more or less defunct after the Maoists in Nepal renounced violence and joined political mainstream. The recent expansion mode of CPI (Maoist) too witnessed the reactivation of CCOMPOSA. In its 5th Annual Conference held in March 2011, CCOMPOSA congratulated CPI (Maoist) for 'successfully withstanding the state's counter revolutionary. There has also been media reports that Dawood Ibrahim has been trying to get connected with the CPI (Maoist). His intention is to get in to the multi thousand illegal mining trades in the vast areas of Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Orissa. This was attended by the representatives from the United Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and also from the Maoist organizations of Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Realignment of Maoist forces in South Asia, particularly the unification bid between CPI (Maoist) and United Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) could prove to be fatal as it will give Indian Maoist secure safe passage into Nepal also they will be able to acquire weapons from Nepal. Further the CPI (Maoist) foreign connection became public after the death of Kishenji Koteswara Rao. Organizations like Communist Party of

Philippines, Association for Proletarian Solidarity - Italy (ASP), Maoist Communist Party of France, Revolutionary Communist Party Canada (PCR – RCP), Partito Comunista Maoista (PCM) - Italia, Struggling Workers Union - Italy, Party of the Committees to Support Resistance for Communism (CARC) - Italy, Socialist Party - Malaysia, Communist Party of the Philippines, ESP International Bureau - Turkey, Communist Party of Greece (ML), and Communist Party of Ecuador sent their condolence and expressed their solidarity with the CPI (Maoist). Clearly CPI (Maoist) is working with its international agenda which could be an added advantage for them in their attempt to take the movement to a higher stage. Maoists realize that their strength lies not with their arms but with their brand of politics and acceptance of their brand of politics depend much on their tactics of visibility and propaganda. Their international connections may not have brought them money or arms but it surely have taken them in to different parts of the world and added to their strength of visibility and strength. CPI (Maoist) knows the importance of international recognition and it surely would work to make itself more acceptable globally and this is a reality that the government needs to wake up early.

Responding to the Maoist Challenge: Government's Strategies

Responding to the Maoist violence has not been easy for the policy makers. Given the complex nature of the problem, it requires sound political mind along with a compassionate heart unbiased of ideological considerations. Past few years have witnessed hectic parleys at the government level for the evolution of a grand anti Maoist strategy. For long, the rhetoric of all anti Naxal programmes was deep rooted with a fallacious law and order approach. In May 2006, the Planning Commission appointed an expert committee headed by D Bandopadhyay, along with Prakash Singh, former DGP of Uttar Pradesh and an expert on Naxal issues, Ajit Doval, former director of Intelligence Bureau, BD Sharma, a retired bureaucrat and activist, Sukhdeo Thorat, UGC chairman and K Balagopal, a human rights lawyer, as its members to study and address the causes of 'Discontent, Unrest and Extremism.' The committee in its report made a forceful plea to make a departure from the usual ways of looking at Naxal conflict and instead suggested to address the development related issues in order to have a long term solution to the problem. On the other hand, it was also difficult for the government to ignore the increasing violence graph of CPI (Maoist) and physical loss of country's territory CCOMPOSA comprises of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist factions and parties in India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka and till date it has conducted

five annual conferences in different locations of South Asia. It provides an important platform of cooperation and collaboration for Maoist forces in South Asia.

After imposing a ban on CPI (Maoist) in 2009, the Government of India set tones for a coordinated approach against the Maoists. The Ministry of Home affairs (MHA), the Government of India has emerged as the principal state actor in the Maoist Conflict. Under the leadership of the MHA, the government has now devised an integrated approach combining security and development in order to defuse the Maoist crises. It was a conscious decision at the Government level to go beyond the traditional law and order approach. The Government of India has taken a stand that the governments of the affected state will deal directly with the issues related to the Left Wing Extremism in their state while the Union Government will monitor, coordinate and supplement the efforts of the states.

Tale of Two Strategies: ‘Clear, Hold and Develop’ & ‘Containment of Violence’.

US does not have a history of Maoist insurgency nor does India use its Army for its counter Naxal operations but still the mandarins of India’s internal security strategies decided to take a leaf from the U.S Army Counter Terrorism Handbook before launching their grand anti-Maoist offensives of ‘Clear – Hold & Develop’ in 2009. Chapter 5 of the US Army Counter Terrorism Handbook elaborately discusses the counter insurgency approach of Clear, Hold and Build. Of course, there is nothing wrong in referring to the U.S model but it should be done in a realistic manner. Clearly, the Union Government focused on the objective part on which the U.S handbook says “Create, secure physical and psychological environment, establish firm government control on populace and area, gain the populace’s support” but it clearly missed the crucial strategic aspect of the CHB which as mentioned in the US Handbook is “To create success that can spread, a clear – hold – build operation should not begin by assaulting the main insurgent stronghold”. (US Army Counter Insurgency Hand Book) The way the security forces had to face setbacks after the launching of this ambitious interstate military offensive, it is clear that not much of ground work was done and was more of an adventurous design far from the ground reality. The statement by the then Union Home Secretary G.K. Pillai, on October 12, 2009, pitifully highlights government’s farsightedness over the whole issue of LWE. "We hope that literally within 30 days of Security Forces moving in and dominating the area, we should be able to restore civil administration there."

Union Government's Security Centric Interventions

The security related interventions of the Union Government has several aspects to it. Specifically, it includes police modernization, security related expenditure, deployment of Central Para Military Forces, rising of Indian Reserve battalions, Deployment of Cobra Battalions, CIAT schools, Scheme for Special Infrastructure, Recruitment in the Central Armed Police Forces, and Fortification of Police Stations. Police Modernization in the context of Left Wing Extremism needs to include professional and credible policing along with intelligent institutions in its agenda of Police Modernization. Although the MHA Annual Report, 2011-12 voices concerns over the poor performance of Police Modernization in the Maoist infested states but surprisingly it too fails to include these as the key elements of Police Modernization. Under the Security Related Scheme, the Government of India released a sum of Rs. 315.17 Crores during 2010 -11 while the budget estimate of Rs. 250 crores has been provisioned in 2011 – 12. 74 battalions of CAPFs and Cobra teams are currently deployed for assisting the state police in the Maoist infested states. In 2011, the Government approved raising of ten new Specialized India Reserve Battalion for the Naxal affected states between 2011 - and 2014. A sum of Rs. 114.52 crore has been released by the Union Government under the scheme of Special Infrastructure for the LWE affected states. Under the scheme of fortification of police stations, the Union Government so far has released Rs. 110 crore to the Maoist infested states. (Annual Report 2011 – 12, MHA, GOI) The Government of India in December 2010 announced a set of new guidelines for its Surrender and Rehabilitation Policy applicable to the Maoists and now pushing it hard for its uniform application by all the affected states. The article in its first part discusses the Maoist – foreign link and perhaps the government has started reacting. The Ministry of External Affairs was reportedly compelled to put in place stricter norms for those applying for visa particularly from certain western and northern European nations including Netherlands, Belgium and Nordic countries, as some citizens from these countries allegedly misused their visa and indulged in subversive activities. It is learnt that 'Look out Notices (LON) ' were issued against four citizens from these countries in 2011 for alleged 'subversive' activities in Maoist controlled areas.

Policy Recommendation

Irrespective of casualties high or low, the Maoist Movement never showed any signs of weakness. It suffered some loses in 2011 and in 2012 but at the same time, the government

did not succeed in transforming those Maoist loses in to its major gain. While estimating the strength and weakness of the Maoists, one needs to tread cautiously to read 'in between' the lines. Maoism is not going to vanish immediately. But the future of Maoist Movement in India will depend much on the process of change that is now going on within the movement. Maoists know their strength and they really don't expect to win from armed offensives like Operation Green Hunt. It is a political problem and its solution also lies at the political level. Undoubtedly, there is a problem of coordination and consensus on Maoist issues. There remains a problem between the bureaucrats and political leadership. At the MHA level and at the Chief Minister's Conference level, much exercise is done on the coordination but the government is yet to develop a structure where both bureaucrats and elected representatives can share their understandings and arrive at a consensus on the solution at the ground. Naxal problem is crucially linked with the problem of underdevelopment. However, these areas need to be secured and then one can go on implementing time bound participatory development projects. Real Development can't take place in an atmosphere of terror and chaos. Human Security is an important aspect of human development. Land continues to be a powerful slogan for the Maoists, and hence it's necessary to chalk out a national programme on the successful implementation of Land Reforms. Land is a state subject yet the Union Government does have a crucial role to play in motivating the states to implement phase wise land reforms. Given the fact that the Maoists also try to take advantage of the issues pertaining to industrial and mining displacement,, it is necessary that the whole process of Rehabilitation & Resettlement (R&R) should be transparent and the process of land acquisition should start only after the details of R&R is placed before and accepted by the displaced people. For the tribes, displacement does not only mean loss of land but its something deep rooted with their survival and the survival of their culture, tradition and livelihood. Hence it is necessary that the government should insist the industrial houses (both public and private sector) to make the tribes the permanent beneficiaries of the development projects. An unfortunate outcome of the Maoist Movement is the collapse of Local Self Governance. In the recent past we have seen a number of PRI members being targeted by the Maoists, it has also resulted in the mass resignation by them. Without getting over-ambitious, the government must work on the Development continues to occupy significant space in government's anti Naxal strategy while onus is more on capacity building. In a significant decision taken in 2010 the Government of India identified 35 Naxal infested districts from 9 states for special attention on planning, implementation and monitoring of development schemes. Empowerment and revival of PRIs in the Naxal infested regions as it would give

people the test of self-governance and in a way minimize the gap between the ruler and the ruled. The Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA) still is considered to be one of the finest pieces of legislation which could do wonders in empowering the rural people particularly the tribes. But the states have considerably diluted the spirit of PESA resulting in the failure to devolve power to the lowest governance structure, the Gram Sabha. This is important primarily because PESA envisages “direct local governance” through the Gram Sabha, which accounts for the smallest unit of the Local Self Government. While State Government's transfer of powers to the Panchayats, has not effectively addressed concerns of the local tribal population. Empowerment- being one of the core issues of Maoist conflict, a real de-centralization in the form of empowering the Gram Sabha to take key decisions on mining, forest produce, land etc. could help eliminate conflicts and general discontent among the tribes vis-à-vis the Indian State.

Corruption at the delivery level has severely curtailed the impact of all government flagship programmes. This needs to be addressed urgently because a nexus has been formed between the corrupt officials and the Naxals and the public money meant for development is ultimately going in to the hands of Naxals who in the name of underdevelopment are waging a war with the state of India. Corruption to a large extent can be checked if the state governments formulate and follow strict guidelines for the presence of administrative officials and functioning of administrative structure. Lack of employment is a crucial reason which allows the Naxals to win over the innocent tribal youth. Hence, schemes like MGNREGA should be extended throughout the year in the Naxal infested areas. 'The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006' is yet to give desired results and the government must ensure that the tribes get the legal rights over the land they are living. Civil – Military partnership is very much crucial for the successful implementation of all development projects in the Naxal infested areas.