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THE COUNTERINSURGENCY POLICIES OF THE HINDU NATIONALIST BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY OF INDIA AND THE NAXALITE INSURGENCY
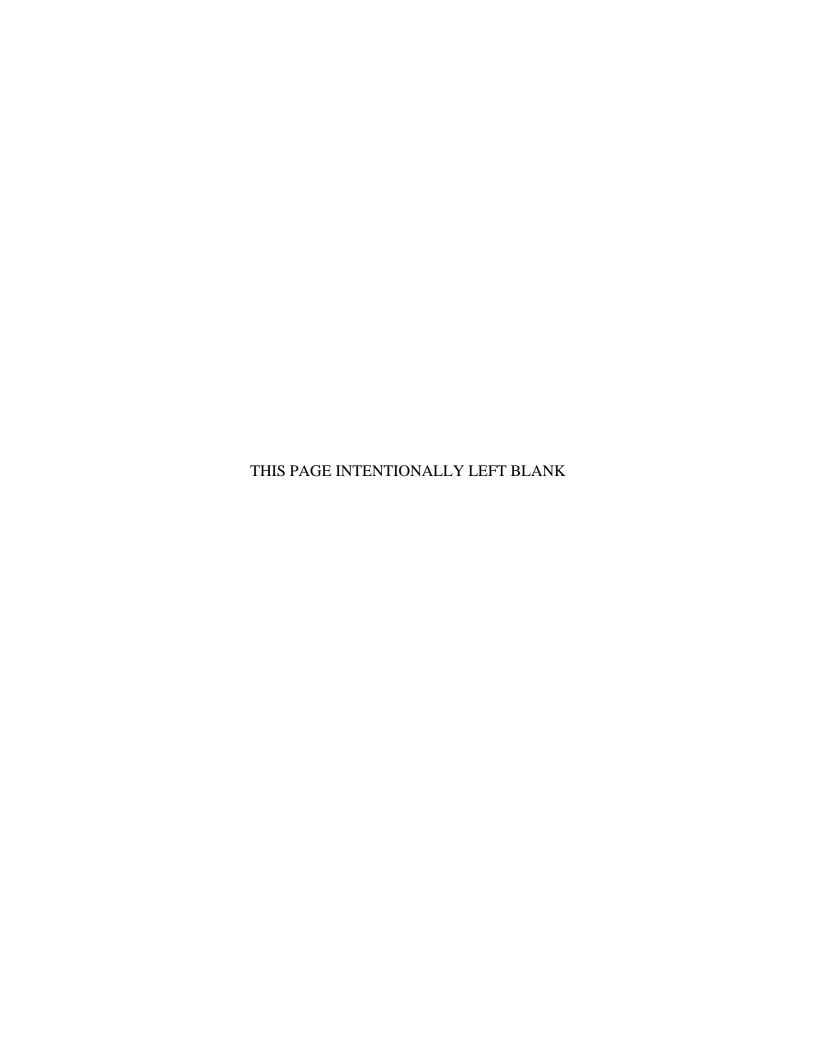
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Over the last six decades, the Naxalite insurgency has spread to over 40 percent of India and survived multiple administrations. The Naxalites adopted a flexible approach, using the government's neglect of Dalits and tribal peoples to its advantage. By 2006, the Indian National Congress (INC) government declared the insurgency a great threat to national security but implemented only half-hearted counterinsurgency efforts. In 2014, the Hindu nationalist party (Bharatiya Janata Party or BJP) came to power with the promise of aggressively dealing with the Naxalites. This thesis examines the BJP's counterinsurgency policies and practice in comparison to its election rhetoric. Since 2014, the BJP has implemented a holistic and balanced approach in its multipronged counterinsurgency strategies by using security, good governance, development, peace talks, and amnesty. The government is allocating needed resources to implement its strategy effectively. In the last two years, Naxalite violence has decreased, although the government still faces many challenges such as coordinating efforts and controlling corruption and other unlawful activities. However, in comparison to the INC, the BJP's counterinsurgency approach is more pragmatic and resourceful. It is attempting to solve the underlying causes of discontent among the indigenous people by supporting political, economic, and social justice.

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iii

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ABSTRACT

Over the last six decades, the Naxalite insurgency has spread to over 40 percent of India and survived multiple administrations. The Naxalites adopted a flexible approach, using the government's neglect of Dalits and tribal peoples to its advantage. By 2006, the Indian National Congress (INC) government declared the insurgency a great threat to national security but implemented only half-hearted counterinsurgency efforts. In 2014, the Hindu nationalist party (Bharatiya Janata Party or BJP) came to power with the promise of aggressively dealing with the Naxalites. This thesis examines the BJP's counterinsurgency policies and practice in comparison to its election rhetoric. Since 2014, the BJP has implemented a holistic and balanced approach in its multipronged counterinsurgency strategies by using security, good governance, development, peace talks, and amnesty. The government is allocating needed resources to implement its strategy effectively. In the last two years, Naxalite violence has decreased, although the government still faces many challenges such as coordinating efforts and controlling corruption and other unlawful activities. However, in comparison to the INC, the BJP's counterinsurgency approach is more pragmatic and resourceful. It is attempting to solve the underlying causes of discontent among the indigenous people by supporting political, economic, and social justice.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

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LIST OF TABLES

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABVP	Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad
AICCCR	All India Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BJS	Bharatiya Jana Sangh
BRGF	Backward Regions Grant Fund
CAPF	Central Armed Police Forces
CoBRA	Commando Battalions for Resolute Action
CPI	Communist Party of India
CPI (Maoist)	Communist Party of India (Maoist)
CPI(M)	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
CPI(ML)	Communist Party of India Marxist-Leninist Liberation
CPMF	Central Para Military Forces
CRPF	Central Reserve Police Force
GNLA	Garo National Liberation Army
HPC-D	Hmar Peoples Convention- Democracy
IAP	integrated action plan
INC	Indian National Congress
LWE	Left Wing Extremism
MCC	Maoist Communist Centre
MCC-I	Maoist Communist Center-India
NDA	National Democratic Alliance
NSCN (I-M)	National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak-Muivah)
PDS	public distribution system
PLA	Punjab Legislative Assembly
PWG	People's War Group
RCC	Revolutionary Communist Committee
RCCI-M	Revolutionary Communist Center of India
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
SAD	Shiromani Akali Dal
SRC	State Reorganization Commission

TDP	Telugu Desam Party
TRS	Telangana Rashtra Samithi
UAV	unmanned aerial vehicle
UF	United Front
ULFA	United Liberation Front of Assam
UPA	United Progressive Alliance
VHP	Vishwa Hindu Parishad

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I.   INTRODUCTION

Since gaining independence from the British Empire, India has become adept at dealing with internal conflicts and insurgencies, specifically with the Tamils and Sikhs. However, India continues to struggle to contain its oldest Maoist movement, known as the Naxalite insurgency, which emerged in the 1960s. The Naxalite insurgency is mostly unknown around the world and within India (outside of Naxal-hit areas); and various administrations have struggled to eliminate it. The main objective of this thesis is to examine the new Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) administration's approach and policies toward the Naxalite insurgency, as it considered a more hawkish party.

A.   MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

The focus of this research is to study the policies of the BJP government toward the Naxalite insurgency comparatively, primarily in five Indian states: Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha (formerly Orissa), and West Bengal.

This thesis studies counter-insurgency policies of the central government run by the BJP and BJP-dominated National Democratic Alliance (1998–2004 and 2014 to the present) and the Indian National Congress (INC) and INC-dominated United Progressive Alliance (UPA) governments (1990–1998, 2005–2014). How did the political setting and priorities shape these administrations' Naxalite policies, and specifically, how did these policies affect or shape the five states?

What are the differences, if any, between the Hindu nationalist administration's approaches when compared to the strategies of the previous governments? This thesis shows whether the BJP's Hindu nationalist ideology drives its counterinsurgency efforts.

The focus of this thesis is to understand the hawkish approach of the BJP government toward the five-decades-old problem. This study is important because it provides insight into the politics of the BJP's election promises and the actual execution thereof. Also, it helps to analyze how the Hindu nationalist ideology influences the BJP's approach to counter the Naxalite insurgency.

B.   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The Naxalite insurgency is a Maoist movement with roots in pre-independent India. In the post-independent era, this insurgency spread through multiple states and occupies about 35 percent of India. In December 2007, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh identified the Naxalite insurgency as "the single biggest security challenge to the Indian state."[1] The Indian government then, led by the INC party, was able to keep the insurgency under control. However, over the last 15 years, the insurgency has regained momentum.

In India, Hindu nationalism emerged during the independence movement against British rule. In 1984, the BJP was created after the fall of the Janata Dal government and collapse of the Jana Sangh. The BJP is notorious for its aggressive and hawkish approach against its rivals: Muslims, other minorities, and hostile neighbors.[2] The BJP is a member of the Sangh Parivar, a family of organizations.[3] The Sangh Parivar comprises many rightwing Hindu organizations including the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS; National Volunteer Organization), the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP; World Hindu Council), and the Bajrang Dal. With the help of the Sangh Parivar, the BJP has used various tactics, from socio-economic to socio-religious platforms to emerge as a powerful national party. In the 2014 parliamentary elections, the BJP was finally able to capture a clear majority. Little to no written material is available on the BJP policies against insurgencies since its rise to national level politics is fairly new. Since the BJP came to power of its own strength, it does not have to depend on other political parties for creating its policies for national and international issues, which was the case in the 1980s and 1990s. The BJP has been in power for only two years; therefore, no major studies are available about its Naxalite counterinsurgency policies.

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[1] Manmohan Singh, "Prime Minister's Speech" (speech, The Chief Minister's Conference on Internal Security, New Delhi, India, December 20, 2007), http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/document/papers/20071220pmspeech.htm.

[2] Matthew Blake Fehrs, "Tough Talk, Cheap Talk, and Babbling: Government Unity, Hawkishness and Military Challenges" (PhD diss., Duke University, 2008), http://libproxy.nps.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.libproxy.nps.edu/docview/304635228?accountid=12702.

[3] "BJP History," accessed August 30, 2016, http://www.bjp.org/en/about-the-party/history?u=bjp-history.

The Naxalite insurgency has been around for a long time, but it had never been a threat to national security. However, that situation has changed in the last few years, as the insurgency has expanded in many other areas of India. More importantly, India has become an economic powerhouse with a rising need for natural resources. The Naxalites occupy mineral-rich areas, including lands replete with iron ore. Therefore, the Naxalite insurgency is as an obstacle for India's economic growth and threat to national security.[4] This thesis focuses on how Hindu nationalists and their affiliates influence policies toward Naxalites.

C.   LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this literature review is to provide the theoretical framework for this research and to analyze the literature for historical policies and approaches of India's central and affected state governments toward the growing Naxalite insurgency. This literature review begins with the proposed democratic theory of peace process and state responses to radical elements. Then, it reviews scholarly literature on Naxalite insurgencies, the BJP's Hindu nationalistic views and politics, and the central government's approaches.

1.   Insurgency, Counterinsurgency, and Democracies

In the field manual titled *Counterinsurgency*, the Department of the Army defines *insurgency* as:

> an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict. … [or] an organized, protracted politico-military struggle designed to weaken the control and legitimacy of an established government, occupying power, or other political authority while increasing insurgent control.[5]

This field manual defines counterinsurgency as "military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat

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[4] Keith J. Harnetiaux, "The Resurgence of Naxalism: How Great a Threat to India?" (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2008), 62, http://hdl.handle.net/10945/10335.

[5] Department of the Army, *Counterinsurgency* (FM 3-24 MCWP 3-33.5) (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 2006), 1–1.

insurgency."[6] Since each insurgency is different, no single approach exists. Each government has to use appropriate measures to defeat its unique insurgencies. According to David Kilcullen, "These measures may be political, administrative, military, economic, psychological, of informational, and are almost always used in combination."[7] According to these definitions, each insurgency requires a unique and combined counterinsurgency approach.

Ben Connable and Martin C. Libicki argue that insurgency has been and will continue to be an issue for democratic and non-democratic governments, and the rise and fall of an insurgency depends on the government's approach.[8] When a government ignores the rising dissent in a particular group or community of people, discontent eventually builds up and leads to an insurgency.[9] These people are either being suppressed by bad governance or unjustly treated by particular social or economic systems. Insurgencies have been around for centuries in one form or another. Some governments are very good at countering insurgencies by political and military means. However, most governments do not know how to deal with an uprising before it becomes a serious threat and an out-of-control insurgency. Connable and Libicki argue that most of the time, "governments defeat themselves more often than they are defeated by a dominant insurgency."[10] Connable and Libicki give five reasons for government failure: the government fails to recognize a credible threat or ignores it, undermines root causes of discontent, applies half-hearted solutions to address problems or too late to address issues, does not identify major shifts in strategic momentum, fails to provide government control in rural areas, or becomes dependent on a unpredictable sponsor.[11]

According to Connable and Libicki, democratic governments like other systems tend to use the military to defeat insurgencies in the battlefield, but this approach is

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[6] Department of the Army, *Counterinsurgency* (FM 3-24 MCWP 3-33.5).

[7] David Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 1.

[8] Ben Connable and Martin C. Libicki, *How Insurgencies End* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2010), 151–156.

[9] Ibid., 152.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

mostly counterproductive.[12] The authors argue that military actions result in civilian casualties and suffering, which can further fuel anti-government sentiments and cumulate in support for insurgency groups among the local people. Militants use this type of event for recruiting propaganda. If a government wants to end an insurgency positively and permanently, Connable and Libicki prescribe that it must win the hearts and minds by bringing about social, economic, and political changes.[13] They further suggest a government needs to recognize the conflict and to find a source of discontent that addresses issues by "conducting a well-timed, aggressive, fully resourced, population-centric campaign."[14]

Atul Kohli argues that in a democracy, most insurgencies or self-determination movements can successfully overcome by political dialogues and accommodations rather than by military actions. Kohli further suggests that in defeating an insurgency in a multicultural democracy, such as India, a country requires "well-established central authority and firm but compromising leaders."[15] He also proposes that all self-determination movements generally follow an inverse U-curve.[16] In a democratic setup, an inverse U-curve represents a beginning of a movement that is almost non-existence, and then slowly grows as the group identity base energizes, and continues its struggle for a long period, until it finally withers or dies down. When a group realizes that its identity is not recognized or represented, then people have a reason a reason to mobilize and to confront state authority for justice. If the state refuses to address the group's grievances, the group starts opposing the state violently or non-violently for power negotiation, which can last for a long period.[17] Eventually, most movements decline because their

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[12] Connable and Libicki, *How Insurgencies End*, 153.

[13] Ibid., 154.

[14] Ibid., 153.

[15] Atul Kohli, "Can Democracy Accommodate Ethnic Nationalism? The Rise and Decline of Self-Determination Movements in India," in *Community Conflicts and the State in India*, ed. Amrita Basu and Atul Kohli (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 8.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Kohli, "Can Democracy Accommodate Ethnic Nationalism?"

ideology fade, their leaders are suppressed or changed; others co-opt state authority for genuine power-sharing and acceptable agreement.[18]

India is the largest democracy in the world and has dealt with several ethnic and religious insurgencies in the last six decades. India has successfully eradicated or marginalized three insurgencies. India was successful against the insurgencies as it accommodated the Tamils during the 1950s and 1960s, used force and provided a political voice to the Sikhs in Punjab during the 1980s, and applied military actions, included in the political process, and provided economic incentives against the Muslims in Kashmir during the 1990s.[19] In Tamil Nadu, the Tamil separatist movement, based on linguistic identity, died down once national leaders made concessions within firm limits. As the central government allowed the formation of states along linguistic lines, but within the boundaries of a nation-state, the local political parties obtained increased power, *realpolitik* concerns took over, and as a result, mobilizing ideology lost its steam.[20] The Sikh uprising in the state of Punjab in the 1980s was based on religious identity. The Sikh nationalist movement died because the population tired of the struggle, and the state brutally suppressed the militants. In addition, in the early 1990s, the new central government led by Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao aided a political voice to separatists.[21] Last, since 1989, Islamic militancy has been on rise in the valley of Kashmir and throughout the state of Jammu and Kashmir.[22] The Indian government used a multi-pronged strategy to contain the Muslim militancy in Kashmir. In one approach, the government cracked down very hard on Islamic militants, allowed the election to strengthen the hands of movement leaders who were seeking political solutions, and "provided substantial financial subsidy to facilitate the 'economic development.'"[23] Hence, the Indian government brought the Islamic militancy under control in late 1990s.

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[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid., 7.

[20] Ibid., 20.

[21] Ibid., 25.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Kohli, "Can Democracy Accommodate Ethnic Nationalism?" 25–26.

John Mackinlay, Alison Al-Baddawy, and Michael A. Bottiglieri argue that attacking insurgents directly with police action will not defeat an insurgency. Military solutions or police approaches provide temporary relief but eventually create more insurgents, resulting in an expanded insurgency. Mackinlay and Al-Baddawy suggest that the real solution should include the right combination of social, political, and military options.[24] They suggest that a successful counterinsurgency operation must be "politically led, internationally comprised, multisectoral, multifunctional in their span of capabilities and actors, and genuinely united."[25] Mackinlay and Al-Baddawy indirectly suggest that winning the peoples' hearts and minds is as important as using the right amount of military force.[26]

However, Bottiglieri suggests that because each insurgency is unique, it requires a unique approach. According to Bottiglieri, first, the state needs to identify the base and organization of an insurgency, and then use an inside-out approach or an outside-in approach to defeat it. The inside-out approach, Bottiglieri suggests, "target[s] the leadership of an insurgent organization first and slowly work[s] down to the local levels of insurgent activity. … [Without] any credible leadership, insurgency will facture and lose its strategic vision."[27] Eventually, an insurgency will lose steam and no longer pose any security threat. For an outside-in approach, Bottiglieri suggests first attacking outside edges of an insurgent organization, and then, slowly working toward the center. This strategy identifies the insurgents and separates them from the population. This approach will stop the expansion of the insurgency, so that the government can move systematically to destroy it.[28]

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[24] John Mackinlay and Alison Al-Baddawy, *Rethinking Counterinsurgency* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2008), ix. ProQuest ebrary, 11–12.

[25] Ibid., 48-49.

[26] Ibid., 12.

[27] Michael A. Bottiglieri, "How to Defeat Insurgencies: Searching for a Counter-insurgency Strategy" (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2000), 5, http://hdl.handle.net/10945/9342.

[28] Bottiglieri, "How to Defeat Insurgencies," 61.

David Galula compares insurgency to a civil war fought for political motives.[29] He suggests that the insurgency can be violent or non-violent. Most of the time, a non-violent insurgency does not pose a great threat to national security, but it could become politically risky if not dealt with in its infancy.[30] According to Galula, an insurgency has superiority over counterinsurgency because the "insurgent has [a] formidable asset—the ideological power of a cause on which to base his action,"[31] and could launch an offensive at his own time and place. In comparison, counterinsurgency is mostly reactive and has the "responsibility to maintain order throughout the country."[32] Also, insurgents try to sway and dissociate the population from the counterinsurgency. In Galula's view, successful counterinsurgency should consider building or rebuilding a political machine from the bottom-up.[33]

According to John A. Nagl, for a successful counterinsurgency operation, the military needs to institutionalize the culture of learning and adopt tactics and strategies according to its enemy's strategy. The author compares the British army's successful campaign against the Malaya insurgency to the United States' long, unsuccessful war in Vietnam.[34] British and American armies began fights against their respective enemies using conventional war, and both armies suffered setbacks. However, Nagl argues that the British army learned its lesson and implemented a new strategy, which resulted in a successful counterinsurgency.[35] In comparison, the American army failed to learn and continued to fight a conventional war against an opponent who fought asymmetrically, which resulted in defeat.[36]

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[29] David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006), 2–5.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid., 4.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid., 96.

[34] John A. Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam: Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), xxii.

[35] Ibid.

[36] John A. Nagl, *Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*, xxii.

According to Deepak Boyini, the Indian government should learn from the British's successful experience of defeating the Malaya insurgency. He argues that successful counterinsurgency should include balance and a combination of enemy-centric and population centric approaches.[37] Boyini concludes, "Enemy-centric measures based on reliable intelligence, a capable force, and a unified command followed by population-centric aspects of winning hearts and minds, lead to success in countering insurgencies."[38] The government has to evaluate the enemy to counter its tactics and strategies, and at the same time, address the discontent in population to win hearts and minds.

If any government wants to defeat an insurgency successfully, it must have effective counterinsurgency policies. Uprisings occur when particular groups of people have been marginalized or unjustly treated and do not have a political voice or power. Therefore, the government needs to recognize these groups early and address grievances in their infancy to prevent them from becoming a threat to national security. All scholars pointed out that a successful counterinsurgency includes a combination of military and political means supported by economic development. How to use military actions depends on the type of the insurgency and its organizational hierarchy.

2. The Naxalite Insurgency in India

The Naxalite movement is one of the oldest insurgencies in India and has been able to survive and flourish over the last five decades. The Naxalite insurgency is a Maoist movement that adopted guerrilla tactics and strategies from the Chinese revolution. This insurgency spread in many eastern and southern states of India and is slowly moving westward.

According to Rajat Kujur, after independence and the fall of the Telangana movement, the Indian communists separated into three distinct paths.[39] The first faction

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[37] Deepak Aneel Boyini, *"Explaining Success and Failure: Counterinsurgency in Malaya and India"* (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2010), v.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Rajat Kujur, *Naxal Movement in India: A Profile* (New Delhi, India: Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS), 2008), 2.

9

totally rejected Mao's teachings and "drew inspiration from Stalin."[40] The second faction followed the Marxist revolutionary path. Both groups believed in a peaceful solution through a democratic parliamentary exercise. The third group followed the Maoist revolution and took the path of armed struggle and guerrilla warfare. On March 2, 1967, the third group had its first violent conflict with the government "in a remote village called Naxalbari in West Bengal;"[41] hence, the "Naxalite" movement. In May 1968, this group formed a new organization the "All India Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries (AICCCR) [and it declared an] allegiance to the armed struggle and non-participation in the elections."[42]

According to Banerjee, the Naxalite genesis arose from within the communist movement in India. Before independence, the movement's roots planted in the northeastern part of the country. In 1964, after the India–China war, the communist party split into two, the Communist Party of India (CPI) and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)).[43] However, in 1967, the United Front (UF), a coalition of communist parties assumed the power in West Bengal, but the UF failed to convert promises into reality. Discontented armed revolutionary groups took justice into their own hands. Rebels attacked upper class landlords and moneylenders, pushed them off their land, and established a parallel administration. Within a short period, their violent and revolutionary ways spread and were adopted by the communist elements in West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh and Jammu, and Kashmir.

Tilak D. Gupta argues that after the Naxalbari event, this armed resistance survived all forms of repressive and democratic efforts by the state. By 2006, the Naxalite insurgency had spread to dozens of states and nearly 40 percent of the country's

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[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid., 3.

[43] Sumanta Banerjee, "Beyond Naxalbari," *Economic and Political Weekly* 41, no. 29 (July 22, 2006): 3159.

geographic area, which affected 35 percent of the population.[44] Gupta further explains that the Naxalite insurgency is unique to each state, which makes it very hard to counter effectively. In addition, states affected by the Naxalite insurgency have different political environments, languages, economies, political affiliations, and ruling governments; therefore, it is very difficult to coordinate policies and responses that could provide better results in defeating the insurgency.

However, Kujur argues that because of the spread of the movement and its fragmented leadership, the Naxalite movement has not sustained a unified voice over the years. Thus, the Maoist movement separated into many factions, and the threat to the central government dwindled. Currently, four major groups represent the Naxalite movement: the Communist Party of India Marxist-Leninist Liberation (CPI(ML)), the People's War Group (PWG), the Maoist Communist Centre (MCC), and the Communist Party of India (Maoist) (CPI [Maoist]).[45] According to Kujur, the CPI(ML) is keeping one foot on either side, participating in parliamentary democracy while taking part in an underground armed rebellion.[46] He also suggests that the PWG dominates the Naxalite movement and its politics and runs a parallel government in a different party of the country.[47] Kujur argues that the MCC has believed in armed struggle as a primary means of resistance from its inception, and the CPI (Maoist) is the new organization of the united Communist Party.[48]

As of 2014, P. V. Ramana, a research fellow at Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis, described the status of the Naxalite insurgency in *World Politics Review*:

> The Maoist insurgents have a presence to [a] varying degree—intense to negligible—in 182 districts across 20 states. However, of the 182 districts where they have a presence, only 76 districts have witnessed violence. The states of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Odisha account for an

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[44] Tilak D. Gupta, "Maoism in India: Ideology, Programme and Armed Struggle," *Economic and Political Weekly* 41, no. 29 (July 22, 2006): 3173.

[45] Kujur, *Naxal Movement in India: A Profile*, 4.

[46] Ibid., 6.

[47] Ibid., 7.

[48] Ibid., 11.

overwhelming majority of the violence committed by the Maoist insurgents.[49]

The Naxalite insurgency continues to spread throughout India but remains shallow in nature. Therefore, this insurgency still considered a low threat to national security. However, if the government does not deal with the Naxalites seriously, it can become a serious threat to national interest, and it would hinder economic and social development.

3. Rise of Hindu Nationalist BJP to the National Stage

In 1980, following the collapse of the Janata party, the BJP was formally established. The Sangh Parivar has been strongly supporting The BJP. The goal and promise behind the Hindu nationalist movement is to establish a *Ram Rajya* (Rule of Ram), a utopian Hindu state with the help of Sangh Parivar. In the 1998 general elections, the BJP rose to power at the national level and formed the government by creating the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). However, 2014 was the first time the BJP won a clear majority and formed a government without support from other parties.

In their separate writings, Christophe Jaffrelot and Dibyesh Anand highlight the hawkish and aggressive nature of the BJP in events, such as demolition of the Babri *Masjid* (Mosque) at *Ram Janmabhumi* (birth place of Ram, one of the main Hindu Gods), Ayodhya and the communal riots following the demolition in 1992, and the anti-Muslim violence in Gujarat in 2002.[50] The BJP and its Sangh Parivar have used numerous cross-country *yatras* (rallies) and inflammatory speeches from Uma Bharti and Sadhvi Rithambara to rouse Hindutva, Hindu ideology. As a result, on December 6, 1992, a massive gathering of angry and provoked *kar seveks* (Hindu volunteers) at the contested location of Babri Masjid/Ram Janmabhoomi led to the demolition of the Babri mosque.

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[49] The Editors, "Maoist Insurgency Still Simmers in Modi's India," *World Politics Review*, August 20, 2014, http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/trend-lines/14014/maoist-insurgency-still-simmers-in-modi-s-india.

[50] Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 458; Dibyesh Anand, *Hindu Nationalism in India and the Politics of Fear* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 123.

The BBC and other media outlets provided continuous coverage of the demolition of the Babri mosque event that "served to intensify Muslim despair and anger,"[51] which led to a wave of communal disturbance and rioting all over India. The BJP state government in Madhya Pradesh was slow to react to the violence and rioting against Muslims; instead, the government protected the Bajrang Dal.[52] Muslims continued to broil over the Babri mosque incident, which frequently led to violence over the next decade.

Anand also points out the BJP's aggressive nature and hawkish governing policies during the anti-Muslim violence throughout the state of Gujarat in 2002 in retaliation of the event in Godhara, in which Muslims allegedly burned kar seveks, returning from Ram Janmabhoomi, alive in train compartments.[53] During this time, Narendra Modi, the Chief Minister of Gujrat and his BJP government allegedly provided resources and political support for systematically killing Muslims and spreading fear among minorities.[54] Anand explains that the politics of fear "dehumanizes minorities, instills a sense of anxiety among Hindus, and allows Hindutva to legitimize their actions"[55]

According to Angana Chatterji, the Sangh Parivar treats Odisha (formerly known as Orissa) as a laboratory for Hindutva, and plans to turn Odisha into a Hindu state. Odisha's population of 37 million suffers from poverty, low literacy, and massive unemployment.[56] The Sangh Parivar is working meticulously to build its strength to convert Orissa into a Hindu state. By 2003, BJP affiliates had spread throughout the Odisha state by building 3,270 branches with more than 900,000 members.[57]

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[51] Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 458.

[52] Ibid., 462.

[53] Dibyesh Anand, *Hindu Nationalism in India and the Politics of Fear* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 123, 144.

[54] Ibid., 144–148.

[55] Ibid., 144.

[56] Angana Chatterji, "Orissa: A Gujarat in the Making," CounterCurrents.Org, November 2, 2003, http://www.countercurrents.org/comm-chatterji021103.htm.

[57] Ibid.

According to Bruce D. Graham, the BJP has gained strength and power from state to national levels because of its progressive economic agenda.[58] From its birth, the BJP has been committed to five basic principles.[59] Particularly, its fourth and fifth principles deal with the economy and social development policies.[60] In addition, the BJP adopted the economic policies of Jana Sangh to support small industries, to expand the consumer industry for domestic consumption, and to sustain a strong public sector.[61] The current BJP government has come to power because of its progressive economic agenda and Prime Minister Modi's economic success in the state of Gujarat. Hence, the BJP could use social and economic development in the impoverished Naxalite region to counter the insurgency.

The BJP could use its successful state-level tactics at the central level to bring change in the education systems, economy, and governance. The BJP may use its massive networks of volunteers from all the affiliated Hindu organizations to provide social and humanitarian work, which could help eradicate radical elements. At the same time, the BJP affiliated could increase its organization membership through aggressive recruitment for the Hindu nationalism cause.

4.   INC Party and Its Coalition UPA Government's Counterinsurgency Policies toward the Naxalites

The INC is the longest governing party of India, and it has used a unique counterinsurgency approach to deal with uprisings and insurgencies. In some cases, the INC has been successful in defeating or marginalizing the insurgencies, but it was not able to eradicate the Naxalite insurgency. However, the INC had been able to prevent the insurgency from becoming a threat to national security until 2006. Nevertheless, under

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[58] Bruce D. Graham, "The Challenge of Hindu Nationalism: The Bharatiya Janata Party in Contemporary Indian Politics," in *India's Political Parties: Readings in Indian Government and Politics-6,* ed. Peter Ronald deSouza and E. Sridharan (Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2006), 160.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid.

[61] Graham, "The Challenge of Hindu Nationalism: The Bharatiya Janata Party in Contemporary Indian Politics," 60.

the INC party's rule, the Naxalite insurgency has gained momentum from a simple leftist movement to a full-fledged insurgency.

Sameer Lalwani and Dipak K. Gupta argue that the Indian government under the leadership of the INC had been very successful even though its approach was unique compared to counterinsurgency approaches around the world. According to Sameer Lalwani, "The Indian central and state governments' COIN responses have been heavily kinetic, disregarding local public perceptions."[62] India has remained true to its historical counterinsurgency strategy with the Naxalite insurgency. In the beginning, the central government mainly used the local police force with the help of local state governments to contain the insurgency. The Indian central government imposed the "President's Rule" in the eastern state of West Bengal in March 1970 and suspended all the democratic rights. Under the President's Rule, a joint campaign was launched in April the same year by the Indian Military (Eastern Frontier Rifles) and the Central Reserve Police with the coordinated efforts of the local police to crush the Naxalite movement.[63] This initiative almost eradicated the insurgency, but it flared again in the 1990s.

Shamuel Tharu also agrees with Lalwani and Gupta about the Indian central government's flexible approach. However, he argues that the INC government frequently used emergency rule or president's rule and introduced numerous repressive legislations over the years to control the insurgency. The Indian constitution allows the President to declare states of emergency by dissolving a state government when it fails to maintain law and order.[64] President's rule normally lasts from six months to one year.[65] Politically motivated central governments have used the President's rule frequently. Between 1947 and 1996, prime ministers from all the ruling parties used the President's rule 91 times.

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[62] Sameer Lalwani, "India's Approach to Counterinsurgency and the Naxalite Problem," *CTC Sentinel* 4, no. 10 (October 2011): 7.

[63] Dipak K. Gupta, "The Naxalites and the Maoist Movement in India: Birth, Demise, and Reincarnation," *Democracy and Security* 3, no. 2 (2007): 171, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/174191607 01374911.

[64] Shamuel Tharu, "Insurgency and the State in India: The Naxalite and Khalistan Movements," *South Asian Survey* 14, no. 1 (2007): 88.

[65] Ibid.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi used this rule the most, 41 times.[66] The President's rule used 24 times in Naxalite-affected areas.[67] In addition, the Indian government has frequently passed legislation to give more authority and freedom to its security forces so they can repress any uprisings.[68] Tharu points out that the central government passed the legislation, the "Prevention of Violent Activities Act of 1970, which was designed to crush the Maoist revolution in the state of West Bengal."[69] Hence, the central government has often used force to contain uprisings under the legal authority's umbrella.

According to Raman Dixit, under the INC's leadership, the Indian government has also used soft power to influence the populations to deter them from supporting radicals.[70] The Indian central government has collaborated with state governments to develop affected rural areas.[71] In addition, the central government tries to use different programs to provide good governance in this area.[72] Most of the Naxalite-affected areas in the eastern region also happen to be rich in natural resources including coal and iron ores. The government has invited big corporations to invest in mines and projects in this area to provide employment. However, the government did not implement most of the efforts and end up creating more problems than solutions due to corrupt practices.

5.   Naxalite-affected States and Their Approach toward the Insurgency

The focus of this thesis is on the five states most affected by the Naxalite insurgency: Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, and West Bengal. Each

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[66] Tharu, "Insurgency and the State in India," 89.

[67] Ibid.

[68] These acts include but are not limited to the National Security Act (1980, amended 1984 and 1987); Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against Safety of Civil Aviation Act (1982); Terrorist Affected Areas (Special Courts) Act (1984); Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (1985, amended 1987); Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Rules (1986, amended 1987); Special Protection Group Act (1988); and the Prevention of Terrorism Act (2002).

[69] Tharu, "Insurgency and the State in India," 89.

[70] Raman Dixit, "Naxalite Movement in India: The State's Response," *Journal of Defence Studies* 4, no. 2 (April 2010): 29–30.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Ibid.

state has tried to use somewhat different types of strategies to deal with the insurgencies, ranging from political accommodations, to agrarian reforms, to brutal police actions.

Ross Mallick suggests that because of having a communist government, the state of West Bengal has had the biggest advantage in utilizing its provincial power to defuse the Maoist movement.[73] However, the state failed to bring insurgents into the mainstream polity. In 1967, communist parties first came to power as the UF coalition of the communist parties, the CPI(M) was the largest party and did not have Maoist support. After the Naxalbari incident, the UF teamed up with the central government to use repressive police action that almost wiped out the Maoists. Therefore, in 1977, when the CPI(M)returned to power after the emergency rule was lifted, it won the absolute majority in absence of a radical left and remained in power until 2011.[74] Over the three-plus decades of CPI(M)rule, it has attempted agrarian reforms by introducing programs, such as land redistribution, sharecropping, and rural credits and inputs.[75] With help from the Indian central government, the state government has implemented education, employment, as well as health and refugee rehabilitation programs to alleviate poverty. The West Bengal government has also applied the Panchayat Raj system to give voice and power to villages for the purpose of rural development implementation.[76] State government efforts have been effective in reducing the attraction to Maoist radical movements.

Lalwani concludes that, currently, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh are the hardest hit states, accounting for more than 50 percent of Naxalite activities.[77] Both states are working very closely with the central government to boost their security forces. From 2006 to 2010, these states invested heavily in their police forces. In addition, about 40 battalions of central paramilitary forces are stationed in both states.[78] These security

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[73] Ross Mallick, *Development Policy of a Communist Government: West Bengal since 1977* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

[74] Ibid. 14–15.

[75] Ibid. 29–89.

[76] Ibid., 124.

[77] Lalwani, "India's Approach to Counterinsurgency and the Naxalite Problem," 7.

[78] Ibid.

forces and other state-sponsored militia have been launching multiple operations, killing and capturing insurgents. At the same time, they were creating collateral damage and spreading dissent in civilian populations. These repressive tactics have created hatred toward the state and provided recruiting tools for insurgents.

Lalwani claims that Andhra Pradesh has focused more on police action, and it created a special commando unit call Greyhound in 1987 to "conduct small unit counter guerrilla offensives against Naxalite insurgents."[79] Over the next two decades, Andhra Pradesh built the 2,000-strong Greyhound force by providing them better pay, state of the art equipment, weapons, and technology. This force receives proper training in jungle warfare and supported by the entire police force.[80] From 2005 to 2008, Lalwani argues that as a result, the Maoist insurgents significantly decrease from rom 1,200 to 500, and Naxalite attacks dropped from 600 to 100 in 2010.[81]

India's new BJP government has many policy options for using counterinsurgency to defeat the Naxalite insurgency. The BJP could either continue the policies of previous governments, or create new policies according to its Hindu nationalist ideology, or implement social and economic development plans, or use of security forces. According to the counterinsurgency literature review, the BJP can use a combination of military and political solutions with the support of economic development to make its policies successful.

D.   POTENTIAL EXPLANATIONS AND HYPOTHESES

This thesis hypothesizes that the BJP's counterinsurgency policies will likely differ very little from those of the previous governments led by the INC party, but the character may reflect BJP's Hindu nationalist ideology. According to Matthew Blake Fehrs, the BJP is famous for its hawkish approach; therefore, it may diverge from the previous efforts.[82] The new BJP administration may take five possible approaches. First,

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[79] Lalwani, "India's Approach to Counterinsurgency and the Naxalite Problem," 8.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Fehrs, "Tough Talk, Cheap Talk, and Babbling: Government Unity, Hawkishness and Military Challenges."

as a more aggressive institution, the BJP may intensify the use of force by expanding the participation of police, military, and paramilitary security forces to put more pressure on the insurgents. Second, as the BJP has done in Odisha, it may try to change education systematically to reflect Hindu nationalist ideology. Third, as seen in the BJP's tactics and strategies in the Hindu belt states, the party may utilize its huge ocean of volunteers, including those from its affiliate organizations, to provide humanitarian services in expectation of increasing the Sangh Parivar membership and reducing the recruiting pool for insurgents. Fourth, the BJP's principals are engrained in the Hindu religion while the Maoist movement is anti-religious; therefore, the BJP may try to use Hinduism as a weapon to root out insurgents. Lastly, according to Graham, the BJP may try to present itself "as a progressive party with liberal and humanitarian concerns, [and] … intervene in economy and social affairs in order to bring about a greater measure of equality."[83]

E.   RESEARCH DESIGN

This thesis topic was researched by analyzing the Indian government's policies undertaken by previous administrations, and then, comparing those policies with the current BJP's approach in dealing with the Naxalite insurgency. The INC party ruled for a majority of the 60-plus years after independence. During the 1980s, the INC started to lose its clear majority, but it was still a major party and was able to rule by allying with other small parties. The BJP government's approach toward the Naxalites compared with the INC. Categories such as divergence from previous policies, Hindu nationalist influence, and politics of religion used to analyze the BJP's counterinsurgency policies toward the Naxalites.

In addition, a micro-level perspective of the five states affected by the Naxalite insurgency is used. Since states have different political environments, languages, economies, and ruling governments, each state is a unique case. Dependent and independent variables affecting them including state-center relations are also compared.

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[83] Graham, "The Challenge of Hindu Nationalism: The Bharatiya Janata Party in Contemporary Indian Politics," 160.

For this research, all available primary and secondary scholarly sources consulted, including but not limited to books, articles, theses, news articles, and government sources.

F.   THESIS OVERVIEW AND DRAFT CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter I covers the introduction of the Naxalite insurgency, the INC, and the BJP. Chapter II analyzes the Naxalite movement, its history, and current status. Chapter III provides a brief history of INC and its policies toward the Naxalites from independence to the year 2014, and the approach of the Indian state government affected by the Naxalites. Chapter IV provides information on the rise of Hindu nationalism, the BJP's history and rise to power in the central government, as well as the BJP's polices toward Naxalites, and compares the policies of the BJP and the INC. Finally, Chapter V presents the conclusion.

II. HISTORY OF THE NAXALITE INSURGENCY: THE FOUNDING YEARS TO 2004

It is important to understand the background of the Naxalite insurgency, a Maoist movement that appears to have become a perennial part of the Indian political landscape. It is important to understand the foundations of this insurgency and what keeps it going before looking at the counterinsurgency policies of the Indian governments. An important question needs to keep in mind: why this movement resorts in armed struggle, as their main tool and tactic, instead of looking for a political solution. This chapter reviews the last 50 years, and provides the origins of the insurgency, political development, successes, and failures, reasons for spreading throughout India, and problems of rich natural resources.

Since its independence, India has dealt with few uprisings and insurgencies; some of those efforts were successful and few were not. The Indian government successfully contained Sikh extremism in Punjab in the 1980s, the Tamil uprising for Telangana in the 1950s, and was able to contain an Islamist insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir in the 1990s, although recent violence in Kashmir suggests a reemergence. However, India has not been able to suppress one of its oldest, simmering insurgencies completely, the Naxalites. The Naxalite insurgency is a Maoist movement that claims to be fighting for Dalits and tribal people, for social justice, and economic equality. This five-decade-long insurgency initiated an armed struggle and violence in the 1960s, which provided a very promising start to the Naxalite movement. However, it failed to sustain momentum and fizzled after a government crackdown in the 1970s. In the 1990s, the insurgency remerged, and started to spread within many tribal and poor areas of eastern and southern India. In the new millennium, the threat of the Naxalite insurgency has increased, which has caused the central government to give serious attention to the Naxalite insurgency and treat it as a threat to Indian national security. Figure 1 shows the Naxalite and other insurgencies in India.

The Indian regions affected by the insurgency.

Figure 1. Map of India Shows All Active Insurgency.[84]

A.   START OF THE NAXALITE MOVEMENT (1960s)

The Naxalite insurgency gets its name from the tiny remote village called Naxalbari located in the foothills of the Himalayas in the Terai region. In the early 20th century, a small group of intellectuals in India influenced by the Marxist ideology and the rise of the Soviet Union introduced the communist movement in India. However, the movement was defeated at the national level by a stronger democratic movement led by the INC. The Indian state of West Bengal was one of the first of a few states to experience the rapid spread of the communist ideology, which began to influence its society and politics. However, radicals in the Indian communist movement were

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[84] Source: www.SignalFire.org. Signalfire website is "an independent news portal and archive focused on workers' and women's struggles, communist politics and organization, armed struggle, and counter-insurgency. "'Peoples War in India Clippings 17/2/2014,'" February 17, 2014, http://www.signalfire.org/2014/02/17/peoples-war-in-india-clippings-1722014/.

relatively unknown and mostly peaceful until the violent incident occurred in the Terai region. On March 2, 1967, in a village of Naxalbari, the court granted legal property rights to a tribal youth named Bimal Kissan. When he went to plough his land, the landlord and his hired armed personnel attacked him.[85] By April 1967, the Maoist ideology and radical communist leaders' inflammatory speeches rallied a massive base of followers; approximately "20,000 peasants were enrolled as whole-time activists. Peasant' committees were formed in every village and they were transformed into armed guards,"[86] in West Bengal. They soon occupied hundreds of acres land, burned nearly all available records of debt and dues, passed death sentences on presumed oppressive landlords, and looted landlords and their weapons.[87]

Initially, the central and state governments wanted to respond with a softer approach, but they ended up conducting a major crackdown after the Naxalbari incident. When police received the reports from landlords that armed groups are looting grains and guns from their homes, they came to investigate.[88] In a show of force, a large number of police arrived in the village; however, gathered tribal peasants (armed with bow and arrows) attacked the leading police inspector and killed him.[89] The next day, in retaliation, police open fired upon a crowd of villagers, killing nine, including six women and two children.[90] In a very short amount of time, information about this incident reached to a majority of members of the communist movement and received a respectable amount of support from the state units of the communist parties in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal.[91] The Naxalbari incident sparked the debate and division amongst the violent

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[85] Kujur, *Naxal Movement in India: A Profile*, 2.

[86] Sumanta Banerjee, "Naxalbari and the Left Movement," in *Social Movement and the Stat, Readings in Indian Government and Politics*, ed. Ghansyam Shah, vol. 4 (New Delhi: SAGE, 2002), 129–130.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Gupta, "The Naxalites and the Maoist Movement in India: Birth, Demise, and Reincarnation," 162.

[90] Indrani Bhattacharya, "Naxalite Movement Media (India)," *Encyclopedia of Social Movement Media*, 359, accessed April 21, 2016, http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781412979313.n157.

[91] Kujur, "Naxal Movement in India: A Profile," 2.

and non-violent communist followers. As a result, the rift in the Indian communist movement became even wider.

According to Atul Kohli's theoretical framework for understanding popular uprisings, when a group realizes that it is treated unfairly, its identity is in jeopardy, or it feels under-represented, it can mobilize and confront state authority for justice. If the state refuses to address the group's grievances, the group opposes the state violently or non-violently to negotiate for power, which can last for an extended period.[92] Soon after the Soviet revolution in Russia in 1917, peasants from the tribal and poor area of West Bengal and other eastern and southern states, were able to organize the Indian communist movement, channeling the frustration and anger of these tribal people, and demand social and economic justice. Therefore, the seeds for peasant rebellion were planted before India became independent.

According to Dipak K. Gupta, "no less than 110 violent peasant uprisings have been recorded between 1783 and 1900."[93] When the clothing industry expanded in England and other parts of Europe, it resulted in a significant increase in demand for indigo as a dye and as well as the prices for it. Hence, the British rulers of India forced peasants in the Bengal region to plant indigo, an inedible cash crop instead of traditional food grains.[94] Gupta claims, "This inevitably brought widespread hunger in the rural areas and led to the first rebellion in the 1860s."[95] Also during the colonial rule, the British distributed land ownership to *zamindars* (landlords) to promote property rights as a part of the capitalist system so they could charge taxes and collect revenues.[96] In turn, these *zamindars* leased their land to landless peasants for farming and collected half of their yield.[97] Hence, this system started the vicious cycle of exploitation and suppression of peasants. Thus, the disparity between rich landlords and poor sharecroppers widened.

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[92] Kohli, "Can Democracy Accommodate Ethnic Nationalism? The Rise and Decline of Self-Determination Movements in India," 8.

[93] Ibid.

[94] Gupta, "The Naxalites and the Maoist Movement in India," 162.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Ibid., 163.

[97] Ibid.

Initially in the first 20 years of independence, the radicals in the Indian communist movement waited steadfastly for the government's land reforms and justice to take place before resorting to major violent armed conflict.[98] After India received independence on August 15, 1947, the first Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru promoted a policy of socialism and promised to bring equality to all. He proclaimed that the new Indian "Constitution would guarantee its citizens justice, social, economic and political equality status; of opportunity, and before the law; freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association and action, subject to law and public morality."[99] Nehru also passed a resolution, which states, "adequate safeguards shall be provided for minorities, backward and tribal areas, and depressed and other backward classes."[100] However, the new India continued the colonial property rights systems and never implemented required land reforms fully. During the next 20 years of independence, democratic governments failed to provide the fairness for which the landless peasants were looking. According to a 1971 census, the majority of the land was owned by only four percent of landlords, while landless peasants accounted for 60 percent of the population.[101] The radical elements in the communist movement took advantage of widespread frustration, anger, and dissent amongst the tribal and landless peasants, recruiting them and setting forth a path of armed struggle. Eventually, in March 1967, the event in the village of Naxalbari, described previously, marked the new but distinctly violent path for the Maoist movement. These radicals got the name as the Naxalite insurgency.

B.   THE CPI AND ITS DIVISIONS

The Naxalite insurgency branched out from the original communist movement in India, which itself has a long history. The communist movement in India has provided an ideology, a platform, and a structure to the many directionless uprisings of landless

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[98] Ramachandra Guha, "Adivasis, Naxalites and Indian Democracy," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 42, no. 32 (August 11–17, 2007): 3307, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4419895.

[99] Ibid., 3305.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Gupta, "The Naxalites and the Maoist Movement in India," 163.

peasants. In the beginning, India had only one communist party, the CPI, but due to the national and international political events and turmoil, as well as internal disputes and differences, over the years, the communist movement divided in several fractions. Historically, on December 26, 1925, a few intellectuals influenced by the social revolution in Russia and the Marxist ideology, established the CPI to fight colonial repressive rule "with a view to fight for national independence and a future of socialism."[102] The history of the communist movement started with the communist-led peasant uprising in the district of Telangana (1946–51), where the peasants attacked and killed landlords.[103] Another similar movement started in West Bengal, known as "tebhaga," where peasants demanded that they only turn over one-third instead of the traditional 50 percent of yielded crops required by the landlords.[104]

These experiences led the CPI down two distinct paths, but it remained a unified party. Bhalchandra Trimbak Ranadive was the first leader to take a separate path from the other followers of the communist movement. He rejected the Chinese revolution and promoted the idea of democratic and social revolution in urban areas among the working class, inspired by Stalin, whereas the Chinese revolution was more rural based.[105] The second group learned from the Telangana movement, drawing inspiration from the Chinese revolution, and Mao Zedong's teaching of guerrilla warfare. Ajay Ghosh and Shripad Amrit Dange led a third group, and they adopted the centrist view, taking the path of parliamentary democracy.[106]

In the 1950s and 1960s, the divisions continued in the Indian communist party as the first group left the CPI and created a new party, the CPI(M). Two different ideological groups already existed, but the division became even clearer as the rift between the Soviet Union and China started to increase and the border dispute between India and China became unpleasant. In the 1962 war, India suffered a humiliating defeat

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[102] "Brief History of CPI," accessed August 23, 2016, https://sites.google.com/a/communistparty.in/cpi/brief-history-of-cpi.

[103] Gupta, "The Naxalites and the Maoist Movement in India," 163.

[104] Ibid.

[105] Kujur, *Naxal Movement in India: A Profile*, 2.

[106] Ibid.

at the hands of the Chinese, which created a dilemma for the Indian communist followers of Mao. Due to this war, many followers of the CPI (for patriotic reasons) denounced Maoism. In addition, in 1964, the confrontations of the Soviet Union and China over the Siberian border were enough to split the CPI into two segments.[107] The older generation remained part of the original CPI and followed the path of the Soviet Union. However, the younger generation decided to build a new party, the CPI(M).[108] According to Kujur, "Though there were serious differences on ideological and tactical grounds, both the parties went ahead with their parliamentary exercises and formed the UF government in West Bengal."[109] In 1967, the CPI and the CPI(M) won major seats in the state parliamentary elections and formed the UF government in West Bengal but it only survived a few months. However, in 1969, CPI(M) won clear majority and formed the government until the state was placed under President's rule in March 1970.[110]

The failure of the UF and CPI(M) governments to deliver promised and overdue land reforms, in a timely manner, led to further splits within the movement and ideology. The UF's coming to power in the state government had escalated the expectations of the poor and landless peasants. They expected faster land redistribution to overcome, poverty, and exploitation by the landlords. After coming to power, the UF government also pledged land reforms, and immediately "announced a policy of quick distribution of surplus land among the landless and the stopping of eviction of the sharecroppers."[111] The new government also announced many new programs to help poor and landless peasants. Although the UF government made promises, it did not know how to recover the land from the landlords and they were hamstrung due to litigation filed by the landlords.[112] The duel obligation of fulfilling their promises, while remaining tied to bringing about change through judiciary and bureaucracy, placed the UF government in a

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[107] Gupta, "The Naxalites and the Maoist Movement in India," 166.

[108] Ibid.

[109] Kujur, *Naxal Movement in India: A Profile*, 2.

[110] "The Rise and Fall of the Left in West Bengal," May 12, 2011, http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/the-rise-and-fall-of-the-left-in-west-bengal/1/137951.html.

[111] Banerjee, "Naxalbari and the Left Movement," 126.

[112] Ibid.

difficult situation. The delay caused more frustration of the democratic process and fueled the anger of poor peasants, leading to the Naxabari incident. This incident provided two paths to pursue socialist revolution, either using violence or a peaceful political process, via the democratic system. In May 1968, the AICCCR was formed, which declared "allegiance to the armed struggle and non-participation in the elections."[113] Hence, the AICCCR became face of the Naxalite insurgency known today.

Leaders and members of the AICCCR were conflicted in their views on how to carry out an armed struggle, and to deal with the class enemy. The AICCCR had of two major groups. T. Nagi Reddy led one group from Andhra Pradesh, and Kahai Chatterjee led a second group from West Bengal. When the AICCCR adopted the strategy of the "annihilation of the class enemy," Chatterjee led his group out and formed the CPI(M) in May 1969.[114] In 1970, during the first congress, the CPI(ML) formally elected 59-year old infirm Charu Majumdar as a general secretary.[115] In 1965, Mazumdar wrote eight documents on democratic revolution, which provided the basic framework for the CPI(ML) movement to achieve an Indian revolution using the Maoist path.[116] According to Kujur, "During this period, Charu Majumdar became the undisputed Naxalite guru and With the help of Kanu Sanyal and Jangal Santhal, the [Naxalite] movement spread to different corners of the country,"[117] such as Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, and Odisha. On October 20, 1969, because of tactical and technical differences, Chatterjee and others, separated from the AICCCR and created a new group, initially known as Dakshin Desh.[118] Later in 1975, the group changed its name to the MCC. According to Kujur, the MCC believed in "armed struggle as the main form of resistance and waging a protracted

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[113] Kujur, *Naxal Movement in India: A Profile*, 3.

[114] Ibid.

[115] Ibid.; Banerjee, "Naxalbari and the Left Movement," 128–129.

[116] Banerjee, "Naxalbari and the Left Movement," 129.

[117] Kujur, *Naxal Movement in India: A Profile*, 3.

[118] Ibid., 11.

people's war as the central task of the party."[119] T. Nagi Reddy went on to form the Revolutionary Communist Committee (RCC) of Andhra Pradesh.[120]

In 1972, after the death of Majumdar , the CPI(ML) withered away for a while and the movement suffered from further splits in the next decade. Without the strong leadership and directions of Majumdar , the CPI(ML) lacked vision, which then brought many individual differences to the surface. One of the founders of the CPI(ML), Kanu Sanyal left the movement and joined the activity of the parliamentary democratic revolution.[121] On June 25, 1975, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi declared a state of emergency, and she arrested thousands of politicians and journalists.[122] Under this rule, the central and the state governments' security forces suppressed and significantly marginalized the Naxalite insurgency. Therefore, Jauhar (Subrata Dutt), Nagbhusan Patnaik, and Vinod Mishra reorganized the CPI(ML) and renamed "CPI(ML) Liberation" to keep all followers interested and engaged.[123] However, in 1980, further disputes led Kondapalli Seetharamaiah in Andhra Pradesh to create the PWG, and N. Prasad from Bihar to start the CPI(ML) Party Unity organization.[124] The CPI(ML) Liberation did not want to reject completely the solution of parliamentary politics. In contrast, PWG and MCC completely rejected parliamentary politics. Kujur points out that in 2003, "MCC merged with the Revolutionary Communist Center of India (RCCI-M) to form the Maoist Communist Center-India (MCC-I)."[125] Finally, in 2004, two major armed guerilla groups, PWG and MCC-I merged to create the CPI(M).[126] The primary goal for the CPI(M)is to overthrow the parliamentary democracy though prolonged armed struggle

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[119] Kujur, *Naxal Movement in India: A Profile*, 3.

[120] Banerjee, "Naxalbari and the Left Movement," 149.

[121] Kujur, *Naxal Movement in India: A Profile*, 3.

[122] Vernon Hewitt, *Political Mobilisation and Democracy in India* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 122–123.

[123] Kujur, *Naxal Movement in India: A Profile*, 3.

[124] Ibid.

[125] Ibid., 11.

[126] Ibid.

and bring the new democratic revolution.[127] The CPI(M) is now the united face of the Naxalite insurgency.

C.   THE NAXALITES' SUPPORT AND RECRUITING BASE

The Maoists thrive on the displaced and dissented Adivasi people, who are their main source of recruitment and core of resistance; however, most Maoist leadership does not come from the Adivasi people.[128] The Maoist leadership was mostly made up of people from affluent and upper-class families. These young leaders had a higher level of education, financial resources, and more free time on their hands to create this radical movement. Poor peasants would have been unable to create the sustainable movement while buried under daily laborer work. However, the Naxalite insurgency draws its majority of support from the Adivasi and Dalit inhabited areas in all affected states. The mainstream population and the state historically marginalized these communities. Banerjee describes that the Adivasi and Dalits have experienced "widespread displacement, forest issues, insecure tenancies and other forms of exploitation like usury, land alienation and imperfect market condition."[129] These phenomena started long before India became a free country, back in the 18th century while under British rule. Asad Ismi agrees with Ramachandra Guha, arguing that the practices have continued in post-colonial India, "The Adivasis … were among the poorest people … being denied basic services by the Indian state with their land being stolen by New Delhi since 1947 ... This thievery violates the Indian Constitution itself, which protects the land rights of Adivasi."[130] Therefore, these conditions and issues make them prime candidates for radicalization and a force against the state and their exploiters. The Naxalite propaganda is very successful in tapping into their frustration, desperation, and misery; using it not only for their advantage of potential recruits, but also for safe havens.

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[127] Kujur, *Naxal Movement in India: A Profile*, 12.

[128] Asad Ismi, "Maoist Insurgency Spreads to over 40% of India. Mass Poverty and Delhi's Embrace of Corporate Neoliberalism Fuels Social Uprising," *Global Research*, December 20, 2013, http://www. globalresearch.ca/maoist-insurgency-spreads-to-over-40-of-india-mass-poverty-and-delhis-embrace-of-corporate-neoliberalism-fuels-social-uprising/5362276.

[129] Sumanta Banerjee, "On the Naxalite Movement: A Report with a Difference," *Economic and Political Weekly* 43, no. 21 (2008): 11, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40277487.

[130] Ismi, "Maoist Insurgency Spreads to over 40% of India."

About one-fourth of the Indian population falls in the Adivasi and Dalit categories, which mostly live in rural areas.[131] As of 2007, according to Guha, out of 85 million Adivasi tribal people, nearly half of these populations live in the areas controlled by the Naxalites.[132] These people live in the heartland of India, in forests, hills and largely inaccessible areas of states spread north to south, largely concentrated in the eastern part of India: the states of West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Maharashtra.[133] These people are very poor, mostly relying on day-to-day labor, using products and food that the forest has to offer. In the Naxalite affected area, 32 percent of people live below the poverty line, on less than $1 a day.[134] However, their culture is full of rich traditions, music, and dances; women receive equal treatment, and their rituals and religion center around village gods and spirits.[135] Loss of their livelihood, forest, and extreme poverty makes them an easy target for recruitment and mobilization by the Maoists.

Literacy rates among the Adivasi are the lowest in India; however, they have improved over last five decades. This rate has had an impact on mobilization, as educated people are more politically active. According to a census taken in 1961, literacy rates among tribal people had been only 8.53 percent compared to 28.3 percent for total populations, but it steadily increased from 29.60 percent in 1991 to 58.96 percent in 2011, compared to 72.99 percent for the total population (see Table 1).[136] Most tribal people have primary educations with only 12–13 percent with a certificate or high school degree. These factors make tribal people more vulnerable to well-organized communist radicals.

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[131] Banerjee, "On the Naxalite Movement: A Report with a Difference," 11.

[132] Guha, "Adivasis, Naxalites and Indian Democracy," 3305.

[133] Ibid.

[134] Vani K. Borooah, "Deprivation, Violence, and Conflict: An Analysis of Naxalite Activity in the Districts of India," *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* 2, no. 2 (2008): 322.

[135] Guha, "Adivasis, Naxalites and Indian Democracy," 3306.

[136] "Section 2: Status of Education among Scheduled Tribes," 13, accessed August 30, 2016, http://www.tribal.nic.in/WriteReadData/userfiles/file/ScheduledTribesData/Section2.pdf.

Table 1. Comparative Literacy Rates of Schedule Tribes and Total Populations
(in Percent).[137]

Category/Census Year	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Total Population	28.3	34.45	43.57	52.21	64.84	72.99
Schedule Tribes	8.53	11.30	16.35	29.60	47.10	58.96
Gap	**19.77**	**18.15**	**19.88**	**22.61**	**18.28**	**14.03**

From the beginning of the Indian independence, the local and central governments had been promising equality and prosperity to the poor and aboriginal people of the country, but the government had yet to deliver on its promises. During colonial rule, the British recognized the problem in Indian society, so they began efforts to develop and protect the Adivasi and Dalit and other minorities, to prevent these communities from rebelling. When India became independent, the efforts to improve the lives of the Dalits and tribal people continued. In 1947, the Indian constitution granted special status to the Adivasi and Dalits, classifying them as "scheduled tribes" and a "scheduled cast" making them eligible for special development programs and equal opportunities.[138] However, by the 1960s, government reports confirmed a total "failure of the state in providing a life of dignity and honor to tribal citizens."[139] The government failure was due to widespread corruption within the system, and unsympathetic behavior toward the government's official representatives to poor and neglected tribal and Dalit people. Guha argues that wide disparity occurred between the government official in-charge of development schemes and their knowledge of the tribal area and its requirements; hence, they failed to identify the real needs and problems of the people.[140] In addition, government

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[137] Source: "Section 2: Status of Education among Scheduled Tribes."

[138] "Scheduled Communities: A Social Development Profile of SC/ST's (Bihar, Jharkhand & W.B)," 1, August 30, 2016, http://planningcommission.nic.in/reports/sereport/ser/stdy_scmnty.pdf.

[139] Guha, "Adivasis, Naxalites and Indian Democracy," 3307.

[140] Ibid.

recommendations were never implemented, which failed to reduce the widespread support for radical communist elements.

D.   CREATING A CLASS IDENTITY

India is one of the most socially complex countries in the world because of its unique cultures and identities. India is a huge country, the home for the world's second largest population. India has huge diversity including many regions, religions, and languages in addition to its intricate caste and class systems. For example, India has two official national languages, Hindi and English; however, it has 22 recognized languages, 31 languages received the status of official languages for the Indian states, and 880 languages and over 1,000 dialects spoken today.[141] In addition, India has 3,000-year-old caste system, which has four main categories, and "the main castes were further divided into about 3,000 castes and 25,000 sub-castes, each based on their specific occupation."[142] The Naxalite affected areas made up of more than 500 communities, which come under the label "schedule tribes," and each shares in its unique culture, language, and region.[143] Every Indian is born with multiple identities, and each identity has a different importance and meaning for an Indian's existence. For example, two Indian individuals can have two distinct identity groups, one can be Hindu by religion, an upper caste, Hindi-speaking, rich Brahman, and the other can be Sikh by religion, lower cast, Punjabi-speaking, poor Dalit. Hence, each person can at least recognize or belong to four different identities. Therefore, many scholars agreed that the British were able to rule India for more than 200 years by exploiting these identities. Even after independence, the Indian political leaders from different political parties and ideologies are successful in manipulating these identities to rally the masses behind their party and cause, to come into and stay in power. Thus, how was the Naxalite insurgency able to create an identity in which to unify and rally people behind its cause?

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[141] "How Many Total Languages in India—Past to Present," September 10, 2016, http://www.read meindia.com/how-many-languages-in-india/.

[142] "What Is India's Caste System?" February 25, 2016, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-35650616.

[143] Guha, "Adivasis, Naxalites and Indian Democracy," 3306.

The Naxalite insurgency claimed to fight for social and economic equality; hence, the class-based movement. The Maoists are mostly successful in uniting the tribal and Dalit people, to fight for economic and social injustice; hence, undermining their other identities, such as religion, caste, and linguistic. Dalits, untouchables, and tribal people, are treated equally (without any religious or caste prejudice and hierarchy) when they join the ranks of the Maoists. The French revolution was based on poverty and social injustice.[144] Thereby, the Maoists realized that they must unite their base of followers under one common identity and cause to bring revolution. For years, the poor landless tribal and Dalit peasants were unable to produce a mass movement until the radical elements from the communist movement provided a direction and leadership. The younger generation of Indian communists started the radical Maoist movement. Most of these radical leaders and activist were neither Dalit nor tribal but mostly urban educated middle and upper class youth.[145] These young radical leaders lived and worked with poor and suppressed groups to win their trust and confidence, eventually uniting them under one cause. According to Gupta, "The motivations are shaped by an actor's collective identity."[146] Therefore, there was a lack of mass movements, despite prevalent frustration and disparities. Gupta further explains:

> Collective action takes place when political entrepreneurs give shape to a collective identity. The collective identity, which defines "us" and "them," is socially determined, and is constructed by political leaders. When a large number of people accept the leaders' version of what constitutes a community and who the enemies are, a collective action is born.
>
> The basis of a collective identity can be "ascriptive" or "adoptive." Thus, collective identities based on ethnicity, religion, language, or national origin can be seen as ascriptive or based on birth characteristics. On the other hand, when people form groups on the basis of environmental causes or, on the basis of Marxist idea of economic class, we may call these groupings adoptive.[147]

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[144] Gupta, "The Naxalites and the Maoist Movement in India," 160.

[145] Ibid., 171.

[146] Ibid., 161.

[147] Ibid.

Years of unprecedented suppression and exploitation of landless Indian peasants had created frustration and anger, which made them ready for violent revolution.[148] Charu Majumdar and his comrade Sanyal worked and lived with landless peasants for years, so when they recognized that the conditions for uprising were ripe, they were able to ignite "class hatred" by the "killings of landlords and the rapacious moneylenders."[149] Hence, the radical communist leaders were successful in establishing an economic class identity for poor and landless peasants.

E.   NEW DIMENSION FOR THE NAXALITE INSURGENCY

The initial Maoist movement was due to the perceived social, political, and economic alleged injustice and inequality. The Maoists started to use violence against village's hardliner landlords and rapacious moneylenders. Later, the government became its new enemy, because, instead of trying to improve their lives, the state started to implement several new economic policies that resulted in worsening their lives. Since 1991, India adopted a new economic policy, neoliberalism. Under this policy, India liberalized its economy, to bring more foreign direct investment, economic growth, and development. When the Indian economy started to take off, it needed more energy sources and natural mineral resources to continue to fuel it. Consequently, India's mineral-rich lands, located within the forests and rugged areas of the eastern region, affected the Naxalites, where 84 million tribal people lived and survived on forestland. The Indian state, ignoring the problems of social and economic injustice faced by these people, started to lease these mineral-rich lands to big corporations. This situation created more trouble for the Adivasis, which fueled more frustration and anger amongst them. Hence, these natural resource rich areas become a curse for the indigenous people.

Strong economic growth in India increased the demand for energy and mineral resources provided a new lifeline for the Naxalite insurgency. However, since 1991, the Indian center and local states started to lease forestland to national and international companies including Tata, Jindal, Mittal and other national and international

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[148] Gupta, "The Naxalites and the Maoist Movement in India," 169.

[149] Ibid.

corporations.[150] In addition, the Indian state security forces provided security for these industrial corporations to protect the area for mining and industry. Using coercion, money-power and armed government and private security forces, industrial powerhouses grabbed the forestland, which affected the livelihood of the Adivasis and displaced them. This event provided a new cause for landless tribal people to join the Maoists and fight against the state with even more tenacity.

Indian elites and big corporations experienced economic advantage from industrial projects and mining within forest areas, while leading to a massive displacement of its natives while having devastating effects on the environment. According to Ismi, "Jharkhand, along with four other states in which the insurgency is strongest, accounts for 85% of India's coal deposits. Jharkhand also contains the world's biggest iron ore deposit."[151] As a rising economic global power, India needs more natural resources for its energy and industrial needs. Therefore, center and state governments are rapidly leasing and distributing mining rights to national and international industrial corporations. Ismi further argues, "The corrupt Jharkhand government has signed 42 Memorandums of Understanding with various large iron and steel companies."[152] These companies and the state are using armed paramilitary and militia forces to force out tribal people from their land, and are denying them access to their livelihood. These government policies, instead of bringing progress and alleviating economic problems, have further impoverished and ostracized large groups of poor tribal people. Hence, tribal people resorted to violence and joined the Naxalite insurgency.

Since the 1990s, new developments have provided a new narrative to strengthen the position of the Naxalites, their apparent recruiting of the people, and the opportunity to extort money. Due to industrial development within the Naxalite's stronghold areas, displaced and disgruntle Adivasis have provided a great recruiting opportunity and safe havens for the Naxalite's insurgency. At the same time, the Naxalites learned to take advantage of this development and use it in their favor. According to Xavier Dias, "the

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[150] Ismi, "Maoist Insurgency Spreads to over 40% of India."

[151] Ibid.

[152] Ibid.

insurgents also attack Adivasi villages, extort money from mining companies, and protect the ones that are grabbing land from Adivasi."[153] The Naxalites are using the Maoist ideology to create guerrilla groups, while resorting to extortion for money and power. In the process, they are also terrorizing and killing poor peasants and those who are against their tactics and demands.[154] In other words, lines between the Maoist ideology and criminalities have become blurry. The Naxalite extremist groups, such as the MCC, are selling protection to corporations, protection against their investment and economic activities, and protection to avoid damage and danger from violent groups.[155] As Alpa Shah suggests, "Terrorism, banditry, piracy, gangland rivalry and state-making all belong on the same continuum, selling protection. In Jharkhand, the MCC—like state representatives—is selling protection to access the informal economy of the state, but also protection from the possibilities of its own activities."[156] Despite the Naxalite's criminal type of activities, people still support these organizations because of their coercive power and control, out of fear, and because they benefit from their activities.[157] These activities also occur due to the lack of government police and servicers in the Naxalite affected areas.

F.   CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter provides a detailed background of the Naxalite insurgency, its origin, political ideology and support, its recruitment base, and economic dynamics. The roots for the peasant uprising planted long before Indian independence, but they became more organize when the radical leaders of the communist movement provided a proper direction, an inspiration, organization, and collective identity. However, this movement was very peaceful during the first 20 years of independence, but they then resort to violence and armed struggle when the government failed to provide

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[153] "The Maoist Insurgency in India," no. 1315 (March 2014), http://www.worldsocialism.org/spgb/socialist-standard/2010s/2014/no-1315-march-2014/maoist-insurgency-india.

[154] Alpa Shah, "Markets of Protection: The 'Terrorist' Maoist Movement and the State in Jharkhand, India," in *Critique of Anthropology* 26, no. 3 (September 2006): 308, doi: 10.1177/0308275X06066576.

[155] Ibid., 299.

[156] Ibid.

[157] Ibid., 309.

political and social justice and economic equality. Since 1991, the Naxalite insurgency resurrected to new life, due to the Indian states' neoliberal policies, which further affected the livelihood of tribal peoples. Now, the government is facing a new, widespread, more violent insurgency, which is using the economic development as moneymaking business, leaning toward criminal activities and undermining their main ideology. India's economic development depends on the vast amount of natural mineral resources found within the Naxalite manifested area. The next chapter explores the history of the Indian state and affected regional government policies to mitigate the Naxalite insurgency.

III. STATE RESPONSE TO NAXALITE INSURGENCY (1967–2014)

India is a huge country with a very diverse population. It has frequently benefited from its diversity, and at the same time, faced many problems. In the post-colonial period, several distinct minority groups have fought for autonomy or to form a discrete state from the Indian state. The fight for freedom led to several uprisings and insurgencies; they caused by either religious, linguistic, or ethnic identities, or even economic and social equality and justice. Due to such conflicts, the Indian government has gained significant experience in dealing with insurgencies and uprisings. The major insurgencies India has tackled include the Sikh insurgency in Punjab, the insurgency in Kashmir, the Telangana movement in Tamil Nadu, the Bodo and United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) insurgency, as well as the separatist insurgencies within Assam and the Naxalite insurgency of the eastern and southern parts of India. Of all these insurgencies, the Naxalite insurgency has been one of the strongest and the longest; spread over more than 40 percent of India and in existence since 1967.[158] It is therefore paramount to learn of the past Indian governments' policies and responses to the Naxalite insurgency to compare it with the current governmental approaches to understand its future. This chapter focuses on the Indian central government's approach toward the Naxalite insurgency during the rule of the INC political party and its alliances between 1947 and 2014. Also, this chapter answers questions of the governmental policies of the five states affected by the Naxalite insurgency during the same time period. These states include Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, and West Bengal.

As the world's largest democracy, the Indian government has to consider many things before responding to any insurgency. India has its limitations because it is a democratic country. In a legitimate democratic system, ruling political parties must go through an election process to receive the people's mandate. Therefore, like every legitimate government, it has to deal with opinions and concerns raised by both domestic and international communities. The Naxalite insurgency knows this dilemma and uses it

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[158] Ismi, "Maoist Insurgency Spreads to over 40% of India."

to its advantage. Therefore, it has outlasted many states and the central government over its five decades old history. During this period, New Delhi has seen several different political parties ruling India, including the INC centrist party, the BJP rightwing Hindu party, and their coalitions with communist and socialist parties. Similar patterns can be observed at the state level governments as well.

A. HISTORY OF THE INC PARTY AND ITS APPROACH TO INSURGENCY

The INC party is one of the oldest parties in India, and more importantly, India was able to establish a strong democratic foundation in the country. According to Christopher Candland, "The Indian National Congress party was founded in 1885 to petition the British government in India, for administrative and political reform. Under British rule, the Congress gained experience in contesting elections and in governing at provincial and municipal levels."[159] In the first few decades of existence, the primary agenda of the INC was to gain greater political autonomy within the British Empire and not to fight for independence.[160] Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi arrived in the 1920s, and reorganized the party to attract millions from all walks of life. On August 15, 1947, India received its independence from the British, and the INC became the first ruling party, overwhelmingly winning the first general election in 1952.[161] In 1953, Jawaharlal Nehru became the first prime minister of India and led a shaky independent India into a stable and united India within the next decade.[162] For the next five decades, the INC dominated the Indian political arena; however, its political stake declined over the years, eventually losing the central government to the BJP and many states' governments to other local and national parties in 2014.

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[159] Christopher Candland, "Congress Decline and Party Pluralism in India," *Journal of International Affair* 51, no. 1 (Summer 1997): 19.

[160] "Making Britain: Discover How South Asian Shaped the Nation, 1870–1950," accessed October 5, 2016, http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/makingbritain/content/indian-national-congress.

[161] Candland, "Congress Decline and Party Pluralism in India," 19–20.

[162] Francis Robinson, "The Indian National Congress," *History Today* 32, no. 10 (October 1982), http://www.historytoday.com/francis-robinson/indian-national-congress.

During the INCs lengthy control of the center from 1947 until 1996, it encountered several insurgencies that included (but not limited to) political, identity, and economic reasons. According to Shahid R. Siddiqi, in India, "In all, an estimated 30 armed insurgency movements are sweeping across the country, reflecting an acute sense of alienation on the part of the people involved."[163] In the 1950s, in the state of Hyderabad and later Andhra Pradesh, the Telangana movement, based on linguistic divisions, lasted until they received a separate state of Telangana in 2013.[164] The Kashmir region is the home of an ongoing ethnic insurgency based on political rights. The Sikh insurgency in Punjab, the Khalistan movement of the 1980s, was also for religious and political rights. India's northeastern region has seven states, also known as the Seven Sisters, and home of several armed insurgencies. As Siddiqui explains:

> The Seven Sisters are significantly different, ethnically and linguistically, from the rest of the country. These states are rocked by a large number of armed and violent rebellions, some seeking separate states, some fighting for autonomy and others demanding complete independence, keeping the entire region in a state of turmoil. These states include Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura.[165]

Finally, the five decades old Maoist movement, also known as the Naxalite insurgency, has taken arms against the state to demand social and economic justice. The Indian central government led by the Congress party (INC) used a unique hands-on approach to deal with each insurgency, having mixed results.

1.   Telangana Movement and Linguistic Issues

After independence, India faced its first major uprising based on linguistic identity, the Telangana movement. In 1950, at the time when the constitution inaugurated, India was divided into four kinds of states.[166] According to Partha

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[163] Shahid R. Siddiqi, "Insurgency Movements in India. Failure of the Indian Government to Address the Root Causes Could Lead to a Domino Effect in South Asia," Axis of Logic, December 26, 2010, http://axisoflogic.com/artman/publish/Article_61885.shtml.

[164] "From 1948 to 2013: A Brief History of the Telangana Movement," updated July 30, 2013, http://www.firstpost.com/politics/from-1948-to-2013-a-brief-history-of-the-telangana-movement-998093.html.

[165] Siddiqui, "Insurgency Movements in India."

[166] Partha Chatterjee, "Introduction: A Political History of Independent India," in *State and Politics in India*, ed. Partha Chatterjee (Delhi, India: Oxford University Press, 1997), 7.

Chatterjee, "The part A states were former provinces of British India, … The Part B states were the products of the integration of the princely states; … The Part C states were either the former Chief Commissioner's provinces or smaller units formed by the integration of the princely states, … a Part D state—the Andaman and Nicobar Islands."[167] This particular way of forming states did not follow any logical principles of organization. The INC government realized that to hold the country together, it had to deal with the issue of different identities. In this huge diverse nation, one of the biggest identity issues was languages. Hence, after independence, the new government decided to form states into linguistic provinces.[168]

The INC government responded to massive popular agitations and further created states on the bases of linguistic identity. The Telangana movement desired state autonomy based on language; hence, in December 1952, Nehru announced the state of Andhra Pradesh based on the Telugu speaking majority district of Madras (currently Chennai).[169] Consequently, Sikh, Marathi, Gujarati, Kannada, Tamil, and other major languages (with speaking populations) also started to demand the further division of states based on languages. In 1954, as political pressure mounted, and as mass agitations built up to address this matter, the government of India (led by the INC) established the State Reorganization Commission (SRC).[170] The SRC led the formation of several new states based on languages. In the next few years, the SRC had completely erased the legacy of British India and the princely states. A few of the new states are Gujarat for the Gujarati language speaking population and Maharashtra for the Marathi language speaking population instead of Bombay, and the same as Kerala for the Malayalam language speaking populations, and Karnataka for the Kannada speaking population. Ramachandra Guha argues, "Linguistic reorganization seems rather to have consolidated

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[167] Chatterjee, "Introduction: A Political History of Independent India," 7.

[168] Ibid.

[169] Ramachandra Guha, *India after Gandhi: The History of the World's Largest Democracy* (New York: HarperCollins Publisher, 2007), 207–208.

[170] Chatterjee, "Introduction: A Political History of Independent India," 7–8.

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the unity of India. … the creation of linguistic states has acted as a largely constructive channel for provincial pride. … as well as contentedly Indian."[171]

2. Sikh Insurgency

For the Islamist insurgency in Kashmir and the Sikh separatist insurgency in Punjab, the Indian central government used a different approach. These insurgencies started based on religious identity and political rights (seeking autonomy in both). In 1947, at the time of partition, the Hindu dominated central government in New Delhi promised the Sikh community autonomy for their state of Punjab and renaming it Khalistan.[172] However, the central government accomplished neither, which caused the Sikh community to feel betrayed. In the 1980s, the Sikh separatist movement turned into a violent uprising; however, the central government of Indira Gandhi decided to crush the insurgency by force.[173] In June 1984, she sent Indian security forces to storm the Golden Temple in Amritsar (the holiest shrine of Sikhism) to root out armed militants in an operation known as "Operation Blue Star."[174] During this event, more than 3,000 people died, including militants and innocent pilgrims.[175]

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was able to subdue the insurgency although she angered the entire Sikh community. As a result, five months into Operation Blue Star, her own Sikh bodyguards assassinated Prime Minister Gandhi.[176] In retaliation, the Hindu community all around the nation killed numerous Sikhs. Edward A. Gargan estimated more than 20,000 casualties resulted during the Sikh insurgency over the years.[177] Eventually, the Sikh nationalist movement died because of a combination of population

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[171] Chatterjee, "Introduction: A Political History of Independent India," 7–8.

[172] Siddiqui, "Insurgency Movements in India."

[173] Ibid.

[174] Palash Ghosh, "Khalistan: Almost Three Decades after Operation Blue Star, Movement for Sikh Homeland Fading Away," *International Business Times*, June 13, 2013, http://www.ibtimes.com/khalistan-almost-three-decades-after-operation-blue-star-movement-sikh-homeland-fading-away-1304493.

[175] Siddiqui, "Insurgency Movements in India."

[176] Ibid.

[177] Edward A. Gargan, "Though Sikh Rebellion Is Quelled, India's Punjab State Still Seethes," *New York Times*, October 26, 1993, http://www.nytimes.com/1993/10/26/world/though-sikh-rebellion-is-quelled-india-s-punjab-state-still-seethes.html?pagewanted=all.

fatigue, political, and the brutal state suppression of the militants. The new central government led by Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao provided a political accommodation to separatists in the early 1990s.[178] Thus, the Sikh insurgency ended due to the Indian central government's military and political actions. The latter approach of political accommodation was more effective than military action.

3.   Kashmir Insurgency

In the case of the Islamist insurgency of the Kashmir region, the Indian government has been using all kinds of approaches to contain it, but the insurgency has been on a roller coaster ride for several decades. The issue of Jammu and Kashmir is as old as the independence of India and Pakistan from the British, the time of partition of a united India. Both countries have held numerous diplomatic talks and have fought three wars over this region, unable to come to any solid peace agreement acceptable to both sides. However, in 1990s, the Indian government was able to contain the insurgency. India used a mixed soft and hard approach to control this insurgency. M2 Presswire,[179] the world's third largest electronic press release distribution service, has described in detail the Indian government's approach to counterinsurgency. The Union and the state governments executed a policy towards Jammu and Kashmir that included the following four principles:

[1] Deepening of the democratic process,

[2] Isolation of the militants and foreign mercenaries from the people

[3] Pro-active role within Jammu & Kashmir to neutralize the hostile designs of militants and foreign mercenaries.

[4] Galvanizing the Development Programs.

Due to operationalization of a carefully crafted action plan to contain, and eventually [in the 1990s] wipe out militancy in Jammu & Kashmir—the ground situation has improved significantly. Trade and economic activities

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[178] Kohli, "Can Democracy Accommodate Ethnic Nationalism? The Rise and Decline of Self-Determination Movements in India," 25.

[179] "Products Overview," 2010, https://www.m2.com/m2/web/publication.php/m2presswire.

have shown sure-signs of revival, with greater number of tourists visiting the State [through the 1990s and early 2000s].[180]

During this entire time, the Indian government approach resulted in containing the insurgency but was unable to destroy it. The aforementioned approach does not include the frequent military crackdowns by the Indian government. India has responded with a very strong hand to any terrorist activities, not only targeting armed militants, but frequently the civilian communities perceived to be disloyal and supporting the rebels.[181] As a result, often-violent militant activities and popular uprisings occur in the Kashmir Valley. As seen in 2016, the Kashmiri militancy has taken another violent turn, and the Indian state has responded with a suppressing military force. India and Pakistan are again on the verge of another conflict due to the Jammu and Kashmir region.

4.   Insurgencies in the Seven Sisters States

The northeastern region of India is another very diverse and complex region, a feeding ground for several insurgencies. Prakash Singh puts it well, "Its northeastern states are to India what the Balkans are to Europe."[182] India's northeastern states, known as the "Seven Sisters," are very diverse and not well integrated with the rest of India. This region is geographically connected with the Indian mainland by a small stretch of land, the Siliguri Corridor, or commonly known as the "Chicken's Neck." Also, all the Seven Sisters states have international borders and are surrounded by five neighboring countries: Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Myanmar, and Nepal. The Indian government and mainland of India often neglected this region, and "These states accuse New Delhi of apathy toward their issues. Illiteracy, poverty and lack of economic opportunities have fueled the natives' demand for autonomy and independence."[183]

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[180] "Indian Government: Implementation of Internal Security Policies Accelerated," April 23, 1999, http://search.proquest.com.libproxy.nps.edu/docview/446266351/fulltext/3EF70790CF984C92PQ/10?acco untid=12702.

[181] Sumantra Bose, *Kashmir: Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 3.

[182] Prakash Singh, *India's Northeast: The Frontier in Frement* (Hurlburt Field, FL: The JSOU Press, 2008), 1.

[183] Siddiqui, "Insurgency Movements in India."

Fear of losing their identities, and perceived social, political, and economic injustices, have led a few ethnic groups to take up arms against the state. Government failure to address injustices and issues around the illegal Bangladeshi migration, gave rise to the Bodo and ULFA insurgencies within Assam.[184] Bodo resentment against Bangladeshi immigration and against ULFA (Bodo is an anti-ULFA movement) and the consequent loss of land and cultural identity is the cause of frequent riots and violence between Bodo and Muslim populations in Assam. Meghalaya faces rising insurgency problems from the Garo National Liberation Army (GNLA) and ULFA militants. Mizoram's main concern is the Hmar Peoples Convention-Democracy (HPC-D) insurgency.[185] Since pre-independence, the Naga people have been seeking a "sovereign Naga state," as well as a "Greater Naga Area" comprising "all contiguous Naga-inhabited areas," along with Nagaland. That area includes several districts of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, and Manipur, and a large tract of Myanmar, which is about eight times greater than the current Nagaland.[186] The National Socialist Council of Nagalim(Isak-Muivah) or NSCN (I-M) is the current organization carrying a baton for "Naga sovereignty," which concerns Myanmar and neighboring states.

The central government has implemented several approaches (both soft, political and development and hardline, military solution) to curb insurgencies in the northeastern region. New Delhi has passed a number of legislations, such as 'Unlawful Association' under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act [1967] to outlaw armed rebels, as well as "Declaring the most seriously insurgency-affected States [and] areas … under the Armed

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184 "The Indian State of Assam: Origins and Causes of Conflict," accessed August 30, 2016, http://www.hafsite.org/media/pr/indian-state-assam-origins-and-causes-conflict.

185 "Mizoram Assessment 2016," accessed August 30 2016, http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/mizoram/index.html.

186 "Explained: Everything You Need to Know about Nagaland Insurgency," updated August 4, 2014, http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/everything-you-need-to-know-about-nagaland-insurgency-and-the-efforts-to-solve/.

Forces (Special Powers) Act [1958]."[187] The central government deployed Central Para Military Forces (CPMF) to affected areas, provided economic incentive to state governments to fight against insurgencies, invested in infrastructure development, strengthened local security and police forces, implemented several development programs, and established security cooperation with the neighboring countries.[188] All these efforts resulted in an improved security environment. The central government is able to contain and subdue a few insurgencies, but not all. In the case of some insurgencies, such as ULFA and Naga, their safe heavens and the support within the neighboring countries prolonged their campaigns. The next sections discuss India's central and federalist state government's policies toward the Naxalite insurgencies.

B. THE NAXALITE INSURGENCY AND THE GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Of all political parties, the INC party ruled India for the longest period and has the more experience dealing with the Naxalites and other insurgencies. As seen previously in different insurgencies, the government's approach with the Naxalites is somewhat similar but also unique. Over the years, the Naxalite insurgency has taken on a different meaning for the central and state governments. Initially, it was just considered another communist movement that could eventually join the main political stream. Later, it became more of a threat to the nation than just a local problem. In 2013, while addressing a conference on internal security, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh declared, "Naxal violence has no place in democracy and the central and State governments must join hands to curb the violence by Left extremists … The Indian government has instituted several measures in 34 Naxal-hit areas to combat the Naxal menace."[189] This statement suggests that this five

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[187] The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958: Indian government implemented "Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Ordinance was promulgated by the President on May 22, 1958, in which some special powers have been given to the members of the armed forces in disturbed areas in the State of Assam and Union Territory of Manipur." Indian Government, *The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958* (India: Indian Government, 1958), http://nagapol.gov.in/PDF/The%20Armed%20Forces%20 Special%20Powers%20Act%201958.pdf.

[188] "Indian Government: Implementation of Internal Security Policies Accelerated."

[189] "Indian PM Urges States to Work Together to Fight Naxalite Menace," June 5, 2013, http://news. xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-06/05/c_132432789.htm.

decades long insurgency is finally starting to demand a much deserved preference from the governments.

C.   THE INDIAN CENTRAL GOVERNMENT POLICIES UNDER THE INC RULE

Even though the Indian central government has experienced several different kinds of insurgency, the Naxalite insurgency is unique compared to the others. Almost all past and current insurgencies within India had been located in one confined area, such as the Sikh insurgency in Punjab, the Kashmiri insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir, the Bodo and ULFA insurgency in Assam, and the Naga insurgency just within Nagaland. In comparison, the Naxalite insurgency, which has spread to almost 13 Indian states and hundreds of districts, has had a far broader impact. Also, in most of the insurgencies, the central government has utilized the Army, but in the case of the Naxalites, police and para-military forces have mostly been deployed. Thus, what were the policies of the Indian government under the control of the INC party?

Each government has to use appropriate measures to defeat its unique insurgencies. According to David Kilcullen, "These measures may be political, administrative, military, economic, psychological, or informational, and are almost always used in combination."[190] Each insurgency requires a counterinsurgency approach that is both combined and unique to the insurgency. However, Connable and Libicki gave five reasons for the government's failure: the government fails to recognize a credible threat or ignores it, undermines the root cause(s) of discontent, applies half-hearted solutions in which to address problems or is too late in addressing the issues, does not identify major shifts in strategic momentum, and fails to provide governmental control in rural areas, or becomes dependent upon an unpredictable sponsor.[191] India has been using a multi-pronged approach to defeat the Naxalite insurgency over the last five decades, including social and economic development and political inclusiveness, but largely

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[190] Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency*, 1.

[191] Connable and Libicki, *How Insurgencies End*, 152.

depends on the military solution. Hence, on a few occasions, it found success but unable to eradicate the insurgency.

The Indian government used a variety of policies toward the Naxalite insurgency over the three major periods of its insurgency. After India gained independence, the Maoist insurgency came in three different waves. The first wave was from 1948 to 1951, as the CPI faction, the second wave was from 1967 to 1971, as the CPI (Marxist) faction, and the third wave has been from 1980 to present, as the PWG, MCC, and their merger into CPI(M).[192] In the first wave (the Pre-Naxalbari period), insurgency emerged to address the "grievances related to the political and socioeconomic structure of rural society in the plains of Telengana"[193] during the Nizam's rule in Hyderabad, and it continued for few years after the Indian takeover of the princely state.[194] The second wave of insurgency picked up momentum after the Naxalbari event and ended after a government security forces crackdown, during the Emergency rule.[195] The third wave of insurgency reemerged a few years after the end of Emergency rule in Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal, then spread to one third of India within the next two decades. This section discusses the policies of the Indian government under the INC rule during all three waves.

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[192] Jonathan Kennedy and Sunil Purushotham, "Beyond Naxalbari: A Comparative Analysis of Maoist Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Independent India," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 54, no. 4 (2012): 833, doi: 10.1017/S0010417512000436.

[193] Ibid., 836.

[194] Ibid., 842. The Emergency Rule in India: "The Emergency was set in motion by the Indira Gandhi government on June 25, 1975 and was in place for 21 months till its withdrawal on March 21, 1977. The order gave Ms. Gandhi the authority to rule by decree wherein civil liberties were curbed. An external Emergency was already in place even before the imposition of the internal one. The Emergency was officially issued by the then President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed. With the suspension of the fundamental rights, politicians who opposed Ms. Gandhi were arrested. Threat to national security and bad economic conditions were cited as reasons for the declaration. In Tamil Nadu, the Karunanidhi government was dissolved. The DMK leader's son M. K. Stalin was arrested amidst protests under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act." "Emergency: The Dark Age of Indian Democracy," updated June 27, 2015, http://www.thehindu.com/specials/in-depth/the-emergency-imposed-by-indira-gandhi-government/article7357305.ece.

[195] Ibid.

1. Pre-Naxalbari Insurgency (1946–1951)

During the first wave of the Naxalite insurgency, the INC government pursued a dual-pronged approach; however, it heavily relied on a military solution, and seldom-used soft approach, development measures.[196] In mid-September 1948, after the Nizam of Hyderabad surrendered the Indian government, the newly appointed military governor ordered the deployment of the following security forces, two Army brigades and more than 9,000 policemen, a few battalions from the Hyderabad Army, as well as two cavalry squadron.[197] An Indian special commissioner successfully advocated for an improved development program along with the strong police action, to win the "hearts and minds."[198] According to Jonathan Kennedy and Sunil Purushotham, "The proposed development measures included construction and repair of irrigation tanks, sinking of wells, provision of medical aid, opening of schools, distribution of food and other essential commodities, and, most importantly, agrarian reform legislation."[199] Some experts argue that wining "hearts and minds," essentially brought down the insurgency; however, the government did not implement development measures properly or sufficiently. In addition, due to harsh police actions, this initial insurgency fizzled in Hyderabad but spread out to the neighboring regions, where it was not totally defeated.

During this first period of insurgency, the government's development programs designed to benefit its own counterinsurgency efforts rather than to address the root cause of the insurgency, displaced and dissented Adivasi people. The administration constructed hundreds of miles of roads to improve infrastructures, but ended up just providing security forces better access into internal areas.[200] The government forcibly removed aboriginal people in the name of development, but most moved to basic roadside camps, where many died due to various diseases and a lack of medical aid.[201] In

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[196] Kennedy and Purushotham, "Beyond Naxalbari," 842.

[197] Ibid.

[198] Ibid.

[199] Ibid.

[200] Ibid.

[201] Ibid., 843.

another counterinsurgency measure, the government created home guard units and distributed firearms. These units became mercenaries, also known as "tiger squads," tasked to kill suspected insurgents.[202] The government security forces also used false "encounters" to kill suspected insurgents, and ended up murdering more suspected communists, than captured.[203] All these counterinsurgency efforts were able to marginalize the Maoist insurgency but were unable to destroy it.

2.   Immediate Years after the Naxalbari Incident (1967–1975)

After subduing the initial uprising in 1951, dissatisfaction and dissent among the tribal and poor people continued slowly brewing, finally coming to a tipping point when the Naxalbari incident took place; thus began the second wave of insurgency. In March 1967, when a landlord prevented a tribal peasant from ploughing his land, a violent protest among landless peasants was triggered, killing a police inspector. The radical Maoist followers exploited this event and recruited more than 20,000 peasants for a violent takeover of the land. They soon occupied hundreds of acres land, burned nearly all records of debt and dues, looted the landlords of their weapons, and passed death sentences on alleged hardliner landlords.[204] The insurgents now claimed control over a vast territory. At the same time, in March 1967, the UF, a communist coalition, won the state assembly elections and sworn into govern the Indian state of West Bengal.[205] Initially, the UF government wanted to negotiate with the rebels but under pressure from the center, they had to take police actions, which are covered in detail in the section on the West Bengal government response. However, the central government regarded this situation as a law and order problem rather than treating it as socioeconomic and political issues.[206] Hence, the central and the Indian state of West Bengal relied more on police actions to establish security, and did not try to solve the actual problems, which had caused the insurgency in the first place.

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[202] Kennedy and Purushotham, "Beyond Naxalbari," 843.

[203] Ibid., 843–844.

[204] Sumanta Banerjee, "Naxalbari and the Left Movement," 129–130.

[205] Kennedy and Purushotham, "Beyond Naxalbari," 846.

[206] Dixit, "Naxalite Movement in India," 22.

According to Raman Dixit, "When the Naxal uprising began in 1967, the Indian government looked at it as a law and order problem. It did not analyze the causes of the movement and the extent of mobilization of people. Hence, it believed that it could and would put an end to it in a short span of time using force."[207] Treating the Naxalite insurgency as a law and order problem allowed the Indian central government to use a heavy-handed approach with strong police actions. In July 1967, the federalist state government with help from the center launched a massive police operation, quickly defeating the insurgency in the Naxalbari area.[208] However, the Naxalbari incident had already ignited a fire among the Maoist rebels in neighboring states and they started to take up arms against the state. In the Srikakulam district in Andhra Pradesh, large Adivasi populations, also known as *girijans,* influenced by the AICCCR leader Majumdar and the Naxalbari event, adopted guerrilla tactics.[209] By 1969, Girijan Sangham insurgents claimed control of nearly 300 villages, a total of 700 to 800 square miles.[210] Between 1971 and 1975, during the President's Rule[211] and the Emergency rule, the central government sent 10,000 paramilitary forces, and along with the help of the Andhra Pradesh state police, it was able to crush the insurgency. In a simple counterinsurgency strategy, they burnt several villages to the ground, killed numerous important leaders in alleged "encounters," while others were detained, defeating the movement.[212]

In India, law and order are individual state's responsibility but the center used a loophole in the constitution, declaring the President's Rule and taking over for the state. In 1971, the INC government led by Gandhi also imposed the President's Rule. Gandhi's

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[207] Dixit, "Naxalite Movement in India," 22.

[208] Kennedy and Purushotham, "Beyond Naxalbari," 846.

[209] Ibid., 849.

[210] Ibid.

[211] The President's Rule: "Article 356 is inspired by sections 93 of the Government of India Act, 1935, which provided that if a Governor of a province was satisfied that a situation had arisen in which the government of the province cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the said Act, he could assume to himself all or any of the powers of the government and discharge those functions in his discretion. The Governor, however, could not encroach upon the powers of the high court." Seema Chishti, "What is Article 356?," *The Indian Express*, updated January 27, 2016, http://indianexpress.com/article/ explained/article-356-use-misuse/.

[212] Kennedy and Purushotham, "Beyond Naxalbari," 849.

government was riding on the victory wave after liberating Bangladesh; therefore, it sent massive security enforcement to West Bengal. In addition, during the Emergency rule, the central government marginalized the Naxalite insurgency by taking the following steps. It introduced a series of laws to empower the police, who now with boosted security support, could cordon off the area and search house by house. The government separated non-committed insurgents and offered them police jobs, included them in the INC party, or had them join the Home Guards. Once they identified the Naxalites, the government either killed or held in custody indefinitely. Kennedy and Purushotham suggest, "In July 1972, Charu Majumdar died in police custody. The CPI (Marxist-Leninist) fragmented into numerous groups … this marked the end of the second wave."[213] By 1975, the Naxalite insurgents and their leaders had died, been jailed, or went underground. However, it was not the end of the Naxalite insurgency.

3. Resurgence of the Naxalites (1990–Present)

After 1975, most of the Naxalite insurgency was defeated either due to police actions, social and economic development, or political solutions. As discussed in the previous section, the government detained or killed many insurgent leaders during the Emergency rule. However, after the Emergency rule, Indira Gandhi's government suffered a severe defeat at the center, as well as at the states' level that gave the insurgents an opportunity for to come out from hiding. After releasing from the jail, many leaders started to rebuild the armed struggle.[214] It took another decade and a half for the Naxalite movement really to expand in several eastern and southern states. Kennedy and Purushotham observed, "From 1990 onward the insurgency spread from Andhra Pradesh and Bihar to contiguous areas of the central tribal belt in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, and what became Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand in 2001."[215] Also in the 1990s, the government of India changed its economic policy and adopted the open market economy. Asad Ismi points out, "The insurgency stems from the Indian government's turn to

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[213] Kennedy and Purushotham, "Beyond Naxalbari," 850.

[214] Ibid.

[215] Ibid., 851.

neoliberal capitalism that began in 1991 and which has massively increased poverty and inequality in the country, especially to the detriment of farmers and Adivasis."[216] This economic policy change increased the division between classes even more, and the government started to bring several private companies into the Naxalite affected area to mine natural resources. All these new developments provided more motives for the insurgency to resurface.

Since the 1990s, the central government has taken several steps to strengthen the states affected by the Naxalite insurgency and to enhance security toward its law and order approach. Under a police modernization scheme, the central government provided funding to the state government to modernize their weapons, gear, communication, transportation, and infrastructure facilities.[217] The center provided mine protected vehicles to protect against improvised explosive devices, extended 36 battalions of CPMF deployed to help the state governments, relieved state governments from paying a charge regarding CPMF worth almost $200 million, increased special forces to 14,000 personnel, set up the Indian reserve battalions, increased the funding for each battalion and deployed massive security forces along the Indo-Nepal border to prevent the Nepalese Maoists from helping the Indian Maoists.[218] The central government also provided a few helicopters with pilots, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) for reconnaissance and intelligence, and hired around 5,000 ex-servicemen to conduct and supervise mine sweeping operations.[219] Hence, the Indian central government invested a significant number of personnel and funding for the cause of law and order. The central government would also either encouraged the rise of the special forces units, such as the Greyhound forces of Andhra Pradesh or ignored the state sponsored militia, such as *Salwa Judum* to boost its effort to bring so called law and order. They also launched special operations, such as the "Operation Green Hunt."[220]

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[216] Ismi, "Maoist Insurgency Spreads to Over 40% of India."

[217] Dixit, "Naxalite Movement in India: The State's Response," 27.

[218] Ibid., 27–28.

[219] Ibid., 28.

[220] Kennedy and Purushotham, "Beyond Naxalbari," 855–56.

4. Socio-economic Development Approach

In the late 1990s, the Indian government realized that the use of police action alone was not sufficient to diminish the insurgency; rather, it would also need to concentrate on the social and economic development of this region. This dual-pronged policy strategy came down from the top level of government. The former Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh pointed out, "[the] Naxalite insurgency should not be viewed as a purely law and order problem: underlying this insurgency, and lending it support, was the social and economic deprivation experienced by a significant part of India's population."[221] In 2003–2004, the central government provided a sum of $40 million to 55 areas of nine states, by starting the backward districts initiative and the Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF). These participant states have the highest areas of poverty and under-development.[222] Later, the government included 250 districts and other Naxal affected areas under the BRGF by providing another about $80 million.[223] The government also launched several initiatives including the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana to develop road infrastructures, the National Rural Employment Guarantee program to increase employment, and several health and education initiatives in which to develop the Naxal affected region.[224] From 2010 to 2012, the government also implemented integrated action plans by allocating approximately $700 million for development projects in this region.[225] The government began focusing on providing good governance and began investing in building roads and fortifying police stations, all to increase the states' capacity to project power.[226] These developmental efforts can bring positive change if all the development programs can implemented without lengthy bureaucratic processes or corrupt practices.

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[221] Vani K. Borooah, "Deprivation, Violence, and Conflict: An Analysis of "Naxalite" Activity in the Districts of India," Munich Personal RePEc Archive, University of Ulster, paper number 19425, December 25, 2009, 1, http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/19425/.

[222] Dixit, "Naxalite Movement in India: The State's Response," 29.

[223] Ibid.

[224] Ibid., 29–30.

[225] Kennedy and Purushotham, "Beyond Naxalbari," 856.

[226] Ibid., 587.

D.   THE INDIAN FEDERALIST STATE GOVERNMENTS' RESPONSES

Arguably, if the central government and the state governments work in harmony then they are most likely to defeat insurgency, but as in most cases, they do not work together for many reasons, including political, fundamental, or leadership issues. From the beginning of independence, the INC ruled over all India, both in the center and at the state level. However, soon after one decade of independence, the INC started losing control over state governments, especially in the Naxalite affected areas. The state government mostly complied with the center's demands and approach, but it also used its own political, social and economic power to deal with the Naxalite insurgency.

1.   Andhra Pradesh

Out of all the states, Andhra Pradesh is the most successful in conducting counterinsurgency operations in eradicating the Naxalite insurgency. Andhra Pradesh was the only state to recognize the Naxalite insurgency as a serious threat. Therefore, it has invested in the Greyhounds, an elite anti-Maoist commando unit prepared for a counterinsurgency response, based on a full understanding of the Maoist "protracted war" model, trained in guerrilla warfare to combat and defeat the insurgency.[227] The state government has integrated work and training of the state police force with the Greyhound forces to boost recruitment. It has also created several programs to help police personnel and their families if killed in the line of duty. At the same time, the state government provided comprehensive rehabilitation packages to repatriate the former Maoists. The Andhra Pradesh model follows an "explore-and-evolve strategy," a carrot-and-stick policy to discourage prospective supporters of the Maoists.[228]

Andhra Pradesh's counterinsurgency policy is unmatched in the entire nation, especially with such a strong police action force. In 1987, the state started to fund a well-trained specialized force, the Greyhound force. By 2010, to boost recruitment efforts and

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[227] Anonymous, "Andhra Model: The State Shows How It Can Be Done by Formulating an All-round and Successful Strategy to Deal with the Maoist Menace," *India Today*, April 19, 2010.

[228] Amarnath K. Menon, "Red Badge of Courage: The Naxalite Threat Grows by the Year, Impacting Development As Well As Governance. Andhra Pradesh Leads the Response with Iron-fisted Development," *India Today*, November 29, 2010.

sustain the Greyhound forces, "the state has insured all 121,343 police personnel for Rs 65.69 crore [US $10 million)."[229] It has also established the rehabilitation packages for families of those policemen "killed on duty, the legal heir is paid the last pay drawn till the date of superannuation, allowed to retain government accommodation, given a government job, a house site besides a cash grant ranging from Rs 9 lakhs [US $15,000] to Rs 12 lakhs [US $ 20,000]."[230] In addition, the Greyhounds receive 60 percent more pay than normal.[231] Sameer Lalwani confirms, "The 2,000-strong Greyhound force is better paid and equipped than federal or state paramilitary forces, operating with state of the art weapons and technology, better trained in jungle warfare, and moves in nimbler, highly capable units to target, track, and destroy insurgent networks by modeling guerrilla tactics."[232]

At the same time, the state has created rehabilitation packages for the ex-Maoists, and also updated the police infrastructure, as well as augmented the entire Andhra police force to support the Greyhounds. To rehabilitate former Maoist insurgents and their influential leaders and supporters, the state is helping them to rebuild their lives by providing access to employment and small business opportunities in which to generate income.[233] All new recruited police officers are required to train with the Greyhounds and serve with them for three years before going to their regular unit.[234] The state has also built fortified police stations with protective walls, proper lighting, and guards.[235] The state government is supporting the Greyhounds forces with logistical support, and most importantly, a deeply rooted intelligence network. As a result, Naxalite activities have dropped from 1,200 in 2005 to 500 in 2008 and 600 attacks in 2003 to just around

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[229] Menon, "Red Badge of Courage."

[230] Anonymous, "Andhra Model: The State Shows How It Can Be Done."

[231] Ibid.

[232] Lalwani, "India's Approach to Counterinsurgency and the Naxalite Problem," 8.

[233] Anonymous, "Andhra Model: The State Shows How It Can Be Done."

[234] Saurabh Singhal and Rahul Nilakantan, *Naxalite Insurgency and the Economic Benefits of a Unique Robust Security Response*, working paper 127 (Falmer, Brighton, United Kingdom: Households in Conflict Network, 2012), http://www.hicn.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/HiCN-WP-1271.pdf.

[235] Ibid.

100 in 2010.[236] In addition, according to Saurabh Singhal and Rahul Nilakantan, Andhra Pradesh's counterinsurgency policy, "yielded a 'security dividend' equal on average to 16.11% of its per capita net state domestic product … over the period 1989 to 2000."[237] Even Prime Minister Singh suggested that all the Naxalite affected states should build the special task forces, such as the Greyhounds of Andhra Pradesh to tackle the Maoist insurgents.[238]

2.   Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Odisha

The Naxalite insurgency entered later in these three states: Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Odisha (formerly known as Orissa); however, they are the worst affected states due to their geography and demography. The Maoist armed struggle started in West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh in the beginning, but due to a heavy crackdown by the state police and central para-military forces, the Naxalite insurgents spilled over to these neighboring states. Since these states have a large population of tribal people, massive poverty, and forested rough terrain, they were the perfect locations for the insurgents to hide and grow. None of these states has a strong counterinsurgency policy or any comprehensive approach. Chhattisgarh has applied similar guerrilla tactics to deal with the Naxalite insurgents. Jharkhand has conducted several offensive operations with the help of the center and tried to ban Maoist organizations, but have to achieve expected results. Orissa does not have any comprehensive counterinsurgency policies to deal with the Naxalite insurgency. The state has been promising land reforms that have not yet implemented. All three states are rich with natural resources, and competing economic interests make the situation worse.

Without any effective counterinsurgency strategy, the Chhattisgarh state government indirectly supported a so called "spontaneous people's uprising against the Maoist" known as Salwa Judum 'purification hunt' to deal with the Naxalite

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[236] Lalwani, "India's Approach to Counterinsurgency and the Naxalite Problem," 8.

[237] Singhal and Nilakantan, *Naxalite Insurgency and the Economic Benefits of a Unique Robust Security Response*, 2.

[238] Ibid., 6.

insurgency.[239] In 2005, the Salwa Judum movement originated to mobilize people against the Maoists. After Mahendra Karama (Congress MLA from Dantewada and leader of the opposition in the state assembly) took control of the Salwa Judum and supported by the BJP state government, the movement started to take its own shape. According to Nandini Sundar:

> The government has appointed some 3,500 special police officers, many of them minors, equipped them with lathis [sticks], bows and arrows and .303 rifles, supposedly to counter the Naxalites. Many were attracted by the promise of Rs 1,500 a month, the machismo of weapons, and the hope of getting permanent employment in the police force.[240]

The rise of the Salwa Judum created a war-like situation between the Maoists and the members of this group. Both sides are squeezing the poor tribal people; the government is favoring the Salwa Judum. By 2006, according to government figures, at least 268 civilians were killed and 706 injured by Maoists.[241] According to the Maoists, Salwa Judum killed 116 civilians and 72 police personnel, and 30 Naxalites.[242] However, the government has lost control over the Salwa Judum and its activities; consequently, it is running a parallel government. The state government has also banned the CPI (Maoist) party from operating freely in the state.

Jharkhand is one of the worst Naxal hit areas and has become a "laboratory" for the Naxalite insurgency. Rajat Kumar Kujur suggests, "The Naxals have transformed 16 out of the 22 districts of the state into a 'guerrilla zone,'"[243] In addition, the Naxal established a parallel system of governance. According to Kujur, they have "claimed the lives of nearly 700 people so far, which includes over 200 policemen."[244] Poverty and a sense of injustice drive the people toward the Maoist movement. The state has launched

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[239] Ramachandra Guha et al., "Salwa Judum: War in the Heart of India," *Social Scientist* 34, no. 7/8, (July–August 2006): 47.

[240] Nandini Sundar, "Bastar, Maoism and Salwa Judum," *Economic and Political Weekly*, July 22, 2006, 3187.

[241] Ibid.

[242] Ibid.

[243] Rajat Kumar Kujur, "Red Terror over Jharkhand," article# 1881, IPCS, November 3, 2005.

[244] Ibid.

multiple offensives including Operation Eagle, Operation X, Operation Shikhar, Operation Hill Top, and Operation Thunder, but none of them has made any significant difference.[245] The state government tried to ban the MCC and PWG but did not block their merger into the CPI (Maoist) and is therefore not able to stop its influence. Arguably, for the government efforts in countering the Maoist influence to succeed, it needs to revise its strategy to address the socioeconomic issues of tribal people.

The Naxalite movement has established deep roots in Odisha because of the acute poverty and rampart corruption. In addition, the state government does not have solid counterinsurgency policies to deal with it. Odisha shares borders with Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh. These neighboring states clamped down on the CPI (Maoist) insurgency by using the Greyhound forces in the Andhra Pradesh and the Salwa Judum militia in Chhattisgarh; hence, the Naxalites shifted their hideouts and camps to Odisha. Kujur points out, "the Orissa government has neither banned nor engaged the Naxals in talks;"[246] there is no significant progress in countering the insurgency. Several developmental and reconciliation programs are announced by the government but have not been fully (or properly) implemented to be effective.[247]

3.   West Bengal

The Naxalite insurgency began in the state of West Bengal and spread to other parts of India. However, it can be argued that this state is the most successful in wiping out the insurgency. One of the main reasons for this success is that out of all the states affected by the Naxalites, only West Bengal had a communist parties' rule from the beginning. Hence, it had several advantages over other states in dealing with the Maoist movement. Although this state experienced all three waves of insurgency, the first two periods were affected the most and not so much by the third, because it was able to address the grievances of poor and tribal people more effectively than the other states.

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[245] Kujur, "Red Terror over Jharkhand."

[246] Rajat Kumar Kujur, "Naxal Movement in Orissa," article# 1902, IPCS, December 6, 2006.

[247] Ibid.

After the 1967 Naxalbari event, the Maoist armed struggle quickly spread thought out the tribal and poor areas of West Bengal, but it was quickly putdown by violent military action. In the 1950s and 1960s, the CPI(M) discouraged militancy, advocating instead for a peaceful transition to socialism. Henceforth, followers of Mao's ideology separated to form a new party.[248] In 1967, the UF coalition led by the CPI(M) formed a first non-Congress government in West Bengal.[249] The same day, the UF took control of the government, and violence broke out in Naxalbari. Initially, the UF government wanted to work with their demands but under pressure from the center, they had to take a police action.[250] In July 1967, police operations began and quickly subdued the insurgency.[251] The state government also received help from the central government in the form of an increased amount of troops and equipment to provide security against the insurgents.[252] The state police used an effective counterinsurgency tactic by dividing urban insurgents into three categories. The first were "non-committed Naxalite students" given employment by the state in police jobs or who joined Gandhi's Congress party.[253] The second were criminal elements asked to join the Home Guards for 150 rupees per month. The third were the loyal supporters and activists of the insurgency who were shot or detained indefinitely.[254] According to Kennedy and Purushotham, "This strategy was remarkably successful; by the beginning of 1972 the movement's support base was destroyed and almost all top leaders were either dead or in prison."[255]

The CPI(M) represented themselves as the only legitimate representative of the poor and suppressed people, which helped the CPI to increase its base support during the insurgency period. At the same time, the insurgents were unable to generate the mass support they needed to continue their movement. The CPI won 43 seats out of 280 in

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[248] Kennedy and Purushotham, "Beyond Naxalbari," 845.

[249] Ibid.

[250] Ibid., 846.

[251] Ibid.

[252] Ibid., 849.

[253] Ibid.

[254] Ibid., 849–50.

[255] Ibid., 850.

1967, 80 seats in 1969, and 113 seats in 1971 state elections.[256] Post Emergency rule (from 1977), the CPI(M) led the leftist government to power and remained in power for the next three decades. During this period, the leftist government carried out several reforms, and introduced many land laws and such reforms to give better rights and security to sharecroppers. The government made positive efforts in a massive campaign to register and educate sharecropper for their rights.[257] Sharecroppers were given "inheritable rights" to cultivate their land. In addition, the state government acquired surplus lands and distributed them to landless peasants. This strategy was very effective in curbing the attraction of the Naxalite insurgency; hence, the leftist government was able to rule West Bengal for more than three decades. Stable, with relatively good governance and the support of the police actions, the government of West Bengal was able to remove the majority of the insurgents from state territory.

E.   CONCLUSION

Over the years, the Naxalite insurgency has learned to adopt the government counterinsurgency efforts and has become irrepressible, spreading slowly but surely to more areas of India. Violent activities from this insurgency were at a peak during the 1960s and 1970s, and later in the 1990s. However, the number of violent events and fatalities due to the Naxalites has decreased over the last decade or so; although, it has dispersed to more states and district than ever before. According to one statistic, more than one-third to 40 percent of India is under the influence of the Maoists. However, the Naxalite insurgency severely affected only a few districts in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Orissa.

The Indian central government led by the INC and the state governments have carried out a long counterinsurgency policy, in which they had mixed results most of the time using strong military actions to engage the Naxalite insurgents. Due to police repression, the insurgents are moving one place to another to deny the state authorities an upper hand. The central and the state governments have implemented several

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[256] Kennedy and Purushotham, "Beyond Naxalbari," 850.

[257] Ibid., 851.

developmental programs to discourage tribal people form joining the Maoists. However, due to corrupt bureaucratic practices of the government programs or improper implementation, tribal populations are even wearier of the government. Out of the five states discussed in this chapter, only Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal are successful in counterinsurgency operations; other states are struggling to contain it. Strong military action has not worked effectively so far. To be successful, the government would have to use a dual-pronged or multi-pronged approach, which should include social, economic, and political justice, with appropriate police actions against the military arm of the insurgency. The next chapter focuses on the current BJP-led central government's history and its policies toward Naxalites. It also attempts to compare and contrast previous government policies.

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IV.   THE NEW BJP GOVERNMENT POLICIES TOWARD THE NAXALITE INSURGENCY FROM 2014

Within its eight decades old democratic system, India witnessed one of its biggest political turnovers in 2014, when the Hindu nationalist BJP won a clear majority in the parliamentary general election. For the first time in Indian political history, some party other than the INC party was able to win a clear majority and form a central government in New Delhi. A couple of times before 2014, the BJP was able to form a central government through a coalition with other parties, known as the NDA. Even though the BJP is known for its aggressive and hawkish approach in dealing with domestic and international issues, it had to tone down its rhetoric due to its dependence on other parties; thereby, unable to execute everything within their own agenda. Since the BJP has a clear majority within parliament, most likely it will be able to operate without constraints. While it was in the opposition, the BJP constantly criticized the INC and the dealings of its coalition government in containing the Naxalite insurgency and favored a more hardline approach. Therefore, this chapter addresses BJP's policies towards the Naxalites by asking, is BJP's approach different from that of previous governments?

This chapter has four major sections. The first section provides a brief history of the BJP, and its accession to power in the central government. The second section examines BJP's activities as an opposition party and its demands for aggressive action, making it a hawkish party. The third section reviews the history of the NDA coalition's approach towards the Naxalites, while it was in power at the center from 1998 to 2004. Finally, this chapter looks at the current BJP government's policies on paper, its actual approach, and its outcomes so far.

A.   THE BJP HISTORY AND ITS PATH TO VICTORY IN 2014

In the general elections of 2014, the Hindu nationalist party BJP under the leadership of its prime ministerial candidate Narendra Modi was able to achieve a clear mandate to rule India for the next five years. Since its creation in 1980, it had only been marginally successful, limited to a small percentage of people in Hindi speaking states

known as the "Hindi belt." In the last three decades, it was the first time any single party in India was able to win a decisive majority of seats, in the general election for Lok Sabha (House of the People), the lower house of India's bicameral-parliament, with the higher house being the Rajya Sabha). In addition, since India's independence, it was the first time any party other than the INC had achieved this milestone. The Modi government accepted responsibility for running a very diverse country that is enjoying many successes on the international stage and in the global economy. At the same time, Modi's new government also must address several protracted domestic problems, including a growing population, poverty, an energy crisis, and insurgencies. A few of the protracted insurgencies requiring immediate attention from the new government include those in Kashmir, in the Seven Sister states of the northeast, and the Naxalite insurgency.

In its first two decades, the BJP had marginal success and was only limited to the Hindi-language belt. Since 1998, the BJP has started to gain support outside of the Hindi belt. Historically, outside of the Hindi belt, especially in the eastern and southern states of India, the BJP was considered a party of Hindi speakers and upper castes. By 1990, the BJP had captured the assemblies of five states, and by 2014, it controlled eight state assemblies.[258] Since 1984, the BJP continued to improve its performance and increase its constituency in successive general elections. In the 1984 general election for Lok Sabha, the BJP was only able to win a single seat in two states with 7.74 percent of the vote; by the 1998 elections, it won 182 seats in 20 states with 25.59 percent of the vote. During the last general election in 2014, it won 282 seats in 26 states with 31.34 percent of the vote, becoming the largest national party.[259]

To attract voters, the BJP implemented different strategies within different federalist states. The BJP expanded in the northeast, the east, and the south of India, by exploiting issues, such as economic growth, national security, and anti-immigrant messages. Although its messages regarding such issues were framed as a threat to the Hindus, it was not clear however that the Hindu messages were what gained it support

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[258] "Election Results—Full Statistical Reports," accessed November 15, 2016, http://eci.nic.in/eci_main1/ElectionStatistics.aspx.

[259] Ibid.

because in each area, the platform targeted issues specific to the region. In the last general election of 2014, Prime Minister Candidate Modi's popularity and his message of progress, especially anti-corruption, economic growth, building India, and good governance, played a significant role in the BJP's surge.[260]

The BJP, a Hindu nationalist party of India, claimed to be the "most prominent member of the family of organizations known as the 'Sangh Parivar', nurtured by the RSS."[261] The Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS—Indian People's Association) was the original political party before the creation of the BJP. In 1951, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee founded the BJS with the support of the RSS.[262] After independence, the BJS advocated rebuilding a strong unified state according to Hindu culture. In 1967, the BJS began to gain a strong foothold in northern India. In January 1977, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi announced elections were to be held in March, after lifting the emergency rule.[263] Immediately, the BJS and three other parties formed a coalition, and the chairman of the Janata party was Morarji Desai.[264] The Janata party won 295 out of 542 seats in Lok Sabha and took control of the government.[265] In July 1979, this coalition and government collapsed due to internal factions and conflicts associated with the clash between the BJP and the left parties. In 1980, following the collapse of the Janata party, the BJP was formally established. The Sangh Parivar strongly supported the BJP. Major organizations in the Sangh Parivar include the RSS, VHP, Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP—All Indian Student Council), Bharatiya Kisan Sangh (Indian Farmer's Organization), and Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (Indian Labor Organization). The Sangh Parivar's goal (and promise) behind the Hindu nationalist movement is to establish a Ram Rajya.

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[260] Bharatiya Janata Party, *Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat, Election Manifesto 2014*, *Bharatiya Janata Party* (New Delhi: Bharatiya Janata Party, 2014), http://www.bjp.org/images/pdf_2014/full_manifesto_en glish_07.04.2014.pdf.

[261] "BJP History."

[262] Graham, "The Challenge of Hindu Nationalism: The Bharatiya Janata Party in Contemporary Indian Politics," 156.

[263] Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India*, 282.

[264] Ibid.

[265] Ibid.

After its birth, the BJP experienced a major setback in the first general election of 1984. To distance itself from the BJS (and the RSS) and to widen its base, then party president Atal Bihari Vajpayee proposed the party's new creed, "Gandhian socialism" and "positive secularism."[266] The BJP featured a more inclusive agenda, including inflation and corruption in its campaign theme, and avoided the mention of Hindu nationalism. Unfortunately, on October 31, 1984, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's Sikh bodyguards assassinated her, which caused a major political shift that greatly affected the new party. Consequently, in the December 1984 general election, Indira's son, Rajiv Gandhi, and the INC, won a huge majority within parliament (415 out of 542 seats). Scholars argue that this win was largely sympathetic in nature, and because Rajiv was a young, new face; the INC wiped out all the other parties.[267] Moreover, at this time, Rajiv Gandhi started to visit temples in public, which divided the Hindu nationalist and RSS supporters. Consequently, the BJP lost the support of the RSS in that election. For the BJP, it was a major setback; even though it included a more inclusive message, it won only two seats in parliament and lost a few seats in the state assemblies.[268]

After the 1984 losses, the BJP returned to its Hindutva roots. The BJP started to work very closely with the RSS and the VHP to develop its ethno-religious strategy. Although to maintain its secular façade, the BJP continued to promote Atal B. Vajpayee and L. K. Advani, relatively moderate Hindu nationalists, as the faces and voice of the party. The BJP decided to exploit the issue of Ram Janmabhoomi with the help of the Sangh Parivar's extensive network of volunteers to provoke a massive mobilization of Hindus.[269] Without any archaeological evidence, Hindu nationalists claimed that a Ram temple "stood on this holy site and was supposedly demolished in 1528 at the order of Babur (the founder of the Mughal dynasty) in order to build a mosque, the Babri Masjid."[270] In the 1850s, Hindu organizations tried to exploit this issue for the first time,

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[266] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalist Movement in India*, 316.

[267] Ibid., 318.

[268] Ibid., 91.

[269] Ibid.

[270] Ibid.

but it did not gain any traction. In the late 1980s, the Sangh Parivar worked out a concrete plan to mobilize the enormous masses of Hindus to hold onto their support.

Finally, the BJP's grand strategy of capturing a Hindu vote started to gain momentum, which resulted in capturing 182 parliamentary seats in the 1998 election. By 1998, with its methodical and disciplined approach, the RSS had already expanded its network to 1.8 million volunteers, distributed between 25,000 branches in 18,890 different locations, covering 250,000 villages, almost half of the entire country beyond the Hindi belt.[271] The VHP also had a large devout following throughout the country. The triple network of the BJP, the RSS, and the VHP was ready to accomplish almost any task it was offered.

In the next couple of decades, the BJP and its Sangh Parivar used multiple techniques to build grassroots support, to establish Ram Rajya. Under the leadership of Advani, the BJP and its affiliates used the tool of yatra to expand their base. In 1991, Murli Manohar Joshi launched Ekta Yatra (National Unity Rally) to raise the Kashmir issue. Advani steered multiple yatras. In 1993, the Janadesh Yatra (People's Mandate Rally) was led against the Constitution's 80th Amendment Bill and the Representation of People (Amendment) Bill; in 1997, the Swarn Jayanti Rath Yatra celebrated the golden jubilee of independence of 2004; in 2006, Bharat Uday Yatra was organized to celebrate a rising India; the Bharat Suraksha Yatra was led to draw attention to threats to national security; and in 2011, the Jan Chetna Yatra (Awakening People's Conscious Rally) was led to take on the UPA government on the corruption issue and to press for the return of black market money stashed away abroad. Above all, in 1990, Advani began the most controversial cross-country yatra "the communally divisive and provocative *Ram Rath Yatra* … demanding a Ram temple at the Babri *Masjid* site."[272] This yatra managed to polarize India, which led to the demolition of the Babri Masjid two years later, in a

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[271] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalist Movement in India*, 383.

[272] "A Yatra Like No Other," November 23, 2011, http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/a-yatra-like-no-other/article2650871.ece.

devastating chain of events.[273] The BJP leaders chose the time and theme of yatra to maximize the political yield for the party and themselves.

Heightened Hindu identity and rhetoric against Muslims and other minorities created tensions between religious communities that led to communal riots throughout India. On December 6, 1992, the VHP organized more than 200,000 Hindu karsevaks gathered in the disputed area of Ram Janmabhoomi and Babri Masjid to construct the Ram Temple.[274] The situation got out of control, leading to the demolition of the mosque, with communal riots erupting throughout India. As a result, more than 2,000 people lost their lives.[275] Demolition of the Babri Masjid reflected badly on the current central ruling party (the INC) and helped to build momentum for the BJP, which eventually led it to power in the 1998 general elections. Interestingly, the INC lost Muslim support in the country as a result because they felt that the party was not able to protect them. The country saw an emergence of a third front at this point, which is critical to understanding the loss of the INC in the country, as many minorities and lower caste supporters of the INC, saw the third front as an option. In other words, the BJP's victory has to be also understood in terms of losses for the INC, as it supporters shifted to other parties including some towards the BJP.

Most strategies used by the BJP were effective within the Hindi belt among upper castes, but proved to be relatively ineffective outside of the northern Indian states.[276] Therefore, the BJP had to come up with unique strategies according to each non-Hindi speaking state. If the BJP wanted to capture power in New Delhi, it had to win Lok Sabha seats beyond the Hindi belt. States located in the northeast, the east, and south of India are outside of the Hindi belt, the home of different languages, culture, and political party affiliations. These states and people have their own problems and concerns, which may or

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[273] "Padyatra Politics in India," accessed March 17, 2016, http://indiatoday.intoday.in/gallery/pad yatra-politics-in-india-rahul-gandhi-mahatma-gandhi-advani-sunil-dutt-mamata-banerjee-nt-rama-rao-mur li-manohar-joshi-chandra-shekhar-ys-rajasekhara-reddy/8/5055.html.

[274] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalist Movement in India*, 9.

[275] Ibid.

[276] Michael Gillan, "Bengal's Past and Present: Hindu Nationalist Contestations of History and Regional Identity," *Contemporary South Asia* 12, no. 3 (2003): 381–398, doi: 10.1080/09584930320001 75905.

may not be related to the northern Indian people, nor understood by the BJP. Even though the Hindu religion is a big part of their lives, the construction of a Ram Mandir (temple) was not their priority. In addition, communist parties or local parties are more popular in these states, and they are the longtime rulers of these states; thus, the BJP had to use different strategies to make headway in these states. The BJP used issues, such as immigration, security, corruption, and progress to gain popularity outside of the Hindi belt.

Dravidian languages, which are distinct from Indo-aryan languages, such as Hindi, dominate the southern states of India, and the local politics of these states have a long history of anti-Brahmin, caste politics. In addition, most of the local parties rose to dominance through their anti-Hindi stance, as Hindi was associated with Sanskrit and Brahmins.[277] In comparison, the BJP was known as the party of the Hindu heartland and the party for the upper caste. Therefore, the BJP's Hindu nationalism and ideology did not resonate among the people of southern India. Hence, the BJP adopted different tactics including the caste dynamics to make inroads in these states.

1.   Karnataka: Making Inroads

The BJP gained significant electoral support among the non-Hindi speakers in the state of Karnataka, and was able to create its strongest base. In the 1984 general election, the BJP had no representative from Karnataka with only 4.68 percent of the vote, and in comparison, in the 2014 general election, it won 17 seats and 43.37 percent of the vote.[278] This impressive improvement over the years suggests that the BJP finally made inroads into the politics of an important southern constituency. Caste continues to be an important factor in this state with 18 percent of the Scheduled Castes: 12.5 percent Muslims, 9.8 percent Lingayats, 8.16 percent Vokkaligas, 7.1 percent Kurubas, 7 percent Schedule Tribes, and only 2.1 percent Brahmins.[279]

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[277] Francine R. Frankel, *India's Political Economy, 1947–1977: The Gradual Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978).

[278] "Election Results—Full Statistical Reports."

[279] TNM Staff, "Are Dalits the Biggest Caste Group in Karnataka? Census Results Trigger Debate, Political Panic," *The News Minute*, April 12, 2016, http://www.thenewsminute.com/article/are-dalits-biggest-caste-group-karnataka-census-results-trigger-debate-political-panic-41511.

Table 2.   Caste Survey in Karnataka: Census 2011.[280]

CASTE / COMMUNITY	SUB-CASTES	POPULATION in million	PERCENTAGE
Scheduled Castes	180	10.8	18
Muslims	84	7.5	12.5
Lingayats	90	5.9	9.8
Vokkaligas	10	4.9	8.16
Kurubas	-	4.3	7.1
ST	105	4.2	7
Brahmins	-	1.3	2.1

The percentage has been calculated with Karnataka's population as 60 million, although the 2011 Census shows the state population as 61 million.

The BJP adopted the caste system politics of these states and placed its Hinduva ideology on the back burner to gain support. In the 1991 general election, the INC and Janata Dal, the two most powerful parties in the state, nominated Brahmin candidates in the Bengaluru South Lok Sabha seats, while the BJP nominated a Vokkalinga candidate since the Vokkalingas are the most numerically powerful caste in this constituency.[281] In Tumkur, the BJP exploited communal tensions between Hindus and Muslims and ran a strong candidate.[282] The BJP applied a similar strategy in other constituencies and won big. In addition, following the implementation of the Mandal Commission report,[283] the dominating communities of Lingayats and Vokkaliga felt that their own parties, the INC and Janata Dal, abandoned them; hence, they switched to the BJP's camp. In the next decade and half, the BJP championed the caste politics to win 19 seats in 2009 and 17 seats in the 2014 general elections.

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[280] Source: TNM Staff, "Are Dalits the Biggest Caste Group in Karnataka? Census Results Trigger Debate, Political Panic."

[281] James Manor, "BJP in South India: 1991 General Election," *Economic and Political Weekly* 27, no. 24/25 (June 1992): 1269.

[282] Ibid.

[283] Mandal Commission report: "On August 7, 1990, then PM V P Singh announced in Parliament that his government had accepted the Mandal Commission report, which recommended 27% reservation for OBC candidates at all levels of its services. With the implementation of the report, OBC or Other Backward Classes made its way into the lexicon of India's social justice movement." "Sunday Story: Mandal Commission Report, 25 Years Later," September 1, 2015, http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/sunday-story-mandal-commission-report-25-years-later/.

2.   Andhra Pradesh: Forming Coalitions

In Andhra Pradesh, the BJP strategized about creating an alliance with the local popular party, the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), and placed lower caste and minorities on the ticket to win their support. As a result, the BJP's performance has improved moderately in this state since 1998. The INC used to be very popular in the state of Andhra Pradesh until it started to decline in the 1990s. Andhra Pradesh also has strong regional parties, the TDP and Telangana Rashtra Samithi(TRS). Until the 1998, the BJP struggled to make inroads in Andhra Pradesh, due to a strong INC presence, and an equally good showing of the TDP and TRS parties.

The BJP's success has been significant since its creation. In 1980, the BJP did not have any seats in the state assembly elections and received only 2.76 percent of the total vote, but it did show a big jump in 1999, winning 12 seats and 3.67 percent of the total vote.[284] In the Lok Sabha elections, the BJP won one seat each in 1984 and 1991, but suddenly jumped to win four seats in 1998 and three seats in 2014, and for the rest of the elections years, did not win any seats.[285] Although its voter turnout steadily increased from 2.2 percent in 1984 to 18.3 percent in 1998, and declined again but gained some momentum due to the Modi wave, it received 8.52 percent of the vote.[286] The BJP's success was due to its alliance with the TDP and decline of the INC. The BJP took advantage of the polarization between Muslims and non-Telugu speaking Hindus to win the Secunderabad seat in 1984.[287] R. Upadhyay argues that "improved parliamentary poll performance of the BJP in Andhra Pradesh from four seats in 1998 to seven in 1999 could be partly attributed to its tactical poll alliance with Telugu Desam Party (TDP), the ruling regional party in the state," along with an anti-Congress party wave of sentiment.[288] The BJP also changed its strategy in the 2014 election to field candidates from minorities, even Muslims, Dalit, and the backward class to see success.

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[284] "Election Results—Full Statistical Reports."

[285] Ibid.

[286] Ibid.

[287] R. Upadhyay, "BJP in South India," South Asia Analysis Group, October 28, 1999, 4, http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/paper89.

[288] Ibid.

3.   Orissa: Priming the Base

The BJP with its affiliates have long struggled to build and establish a strong political base in Orissa. The Sangh Parivar is building schools all over the state, and the RSS and Bajrang Dal help run these schools. The Sangh Parivar is aggressively recruiting members for all its affiliate organizations. Orissa, with the population of 37 million, continues to battle issues including poverty, a very low literacy rate, massive unemployment, and the Naxalite insurgency.

The Sangh Parivar is working meticulously to convert Orissa into a Hindu state. By 2003, in Orissa, the Sangh Parivar had spread throughout the state: 100,000 plus RSS members, 60,000 VHP members, 20,000 Bajrang Dal members, 450,000 BJP members, 182,000 Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh cadres, 30,000 Bharatiya Kisan Sangh members, and 20,000 ABVP student members.[289] The Sangh actively works and promotes anti-Muslim and anti-Christian sentiments to ignite enmity between Dalits, Adivasi, Muslims, and Christians.[290] In addition, many women's organizations linked to the Sangh Parivar are very active in this state. The RSS created the Vidya Bharati Akhil Bharatiya Shiksha Sansthan (all India learning centers) network that focuses on moral, extracurricular, and physical education for "mind, body and spirit." This center runs 391 schools, with more than 110,000 students in Orissa. In these schools, "history, science, geography, literature, religious texts are interpreted into Hindutva."[291]

The BJP gained significant ground in the last two decades. The BJP benefits in Orissa due to the increasing anti-Congress sentiment, its coalition with the BJD, a local party, and the massive network of members through its affiliate organization. In the 2014 general elections, like in all other states, Orissa also fell for the Modi wave. Modi's message of progress and good governance, and anti-Congress sentiment, resonated with people who were looking for change.

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[289] Chatterji, "Orissa: A Gujarat in the Making."

[290] Ibid.

[291] Angana Chatterji, "Learning in Saffron: RSS Schools in Orissa," *Dissident Voice*, November 13, 2003, http://www.dissidentvoice.org/Articles9/Chatterji_RSS-Orissa.htm.

4. Punjab: Taking Advantage of an Anti-INC Wave

To access the Pujab electorate, the BJP created a political alliance with the dominant local party of Pujab, the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), and it supported the SAD and majority Sikh community during the INC crushing of the Sikh insurgency and condoning the programs against Siksh in Delhi.[292] In 1992, the SAD boycotted the Punjab Legislative Assembly (PLA) elections; as a result, the INC came to power in a landslide victory.[293] The new INC administration of Beant Singh stepped up the campaign against Sikh insurgents and the SAD leadership. Consequently, the SAD activists supported the BJP against the INC in the Delhi elections; hence, both formed an alliance. The BJP supported the SAD in its political objectives and rhetoric against the INC leadership in Punjab. In the 1997 PLA elections, the BJP and SAD alliance won 93 out of 117 seats and 48 percent of the vote. Since then, the BJP has been building its strong base in the state.[294] From Punjab, the BJP won one Lok Sabha seat in 2009 and two seats in 2014.

In the last three decades after its creation, the BJP has made tremendous progress in becoming the largest national party and acquiring a clear majority in the Lok Sabha. The BJP and its affiliates (the Sangh Parivar) have leveraged a well-planned strategy and seamless execution to build their base systematically. The Sangh Parivar masterfully exploited the issues around Ram Janmabhoomi and Babri Masjid to unite all Hindus for a greater cause. The BJP used all tactics available in the political handbook to create a Hindu identity, and successfully organized nationwide yatras, jatras, and other mass mobilizing events. The Sangh Parivar has also successfully used the soft power. Up until the 1990s, the BJP was unable to expand beyond the Hindi belt. The BJP went on to use flexible and tailor-made approaches to gain access to each state. Since coming into power in 2014, the BJP continues to be under the microscope and scrutiny by the media and opposition alike. The current government policies and their performance in other areas

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[292] Gurharpal Singh, "India's Akali-BJP Alliance: The 1997 Legislative Assembly Elections," *Asian Survey* 38, no. 4 (April 1998): 399.

[293] Ibid.

[294] Ibid., 405.

are not within the scope of this thesis but simply illustrated to examine its approach towards the Naxalite insurgency. The next section illustrates BJP's hawkish and aggressive demands as an opposition party.

B.   THE BJP: A HAWKISH AND AGGRESSIVE APPROACH AS AN OPPOSITION PARTY

Since the creation of the BJP, the aggressiveness and hawkishness are evident in the majority of its political moves. After the independence of India, the INC and Nehru made deliberate efforts to build a secular India where all religions could live in harmony. However, the BJP consciously uses "a single religion" as its main political weapon to create and secure a vote bank. From the beginning, systematically and with a great success, the BJP has used the Hindu card to gain support among India's majority Hindu populations. The BJP promotes itself as the only party that can fight and protect the Hindu culture and religion. To win support from the majority of the Hindu population, it has used both a soft and hard approach.

The BJP uses craftily inflammatory statements and speeches to provoke anger and excitement in its supporters. The case of Ram Janmabhoomi and Babri Masjid is an example of assertiveness that resulted in the demolition of a historical mosque. After losing the election in 1984, the BJP and its family organizations made the Ram Janmabhoomi one of the most important points of its political agenda. It systematically increased support for its cause by using multiple aggressive tactics. The BJP with Hindu religious and nationalist leaders often held mass rallies, presenting inflammatory speeches. Their national leaders, such as Advani and Joshi, launched yatras to gather support and to awaken Hindutva. They organized frequent events at the disputed location of Ram Janmabhoomi and Babri Masjid. Finally, during one of the biggest VHP organized mass gatherings (of more than 200,000 volunteers) on December 6, 1992 to construct the Ram Temple, the historical Babri Masjid was tragically demolished.

The BJP frequently used anti-Muslim and anti-Christian rhetoric to unite and inflame the Hindu sentiment. The partisan politics of the BJP often led to confrontation and riots between Hindus and Muslims, which caused many people from both sides to

lose their lives. After the demolition of the Babri Masjid, riots erupted all over India between Hindus and Muslims, and more than 2,000 people lost their lives.[295] However, the focal point rested on the current prime minister but then the chief minister of Gujarat, Modi, with his strong RSS roots. As a chief minister, he was continuously accused of aggressively dealing with Muslims. On February 27, 2002, 58 Hindu pilgrims killed in an attack on a train in Godhra, Gujarat.[296] In response, riots broke out between Hindus and Muslims, and several hundred people from both communities died within hours while the police stood at bay. The INC, and even the U.S. government, accused the BJP, but primarily Modi, of promoting and instigating violence against Muslims.[297] The BJP also promoted violence against India's Christian minorities. Under the rule of the INC, Christians were relatively safe, but during the BJP's governance, Christians would suffer extensive persecutions, which discussed later.

As an opposition party in the Indian Parliament, the BJP always portrayed and demanded that the INC pursue an aggressive foreign policy and harshly deal with insurgencies. It had consistently demanded tougher stands on issues, such as the Kashmir disputes, as well as dealing with Pakistan, Bangladeshi illegal immigration, China, and insurgencies. In the case of Kashmir, the BJP has long advocated the removal of article 370 of the Indian constitution.[298] Article 370 grants special autonomy rights to the state

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[295] Carsten Busch, "The Policy of the Bharatiya Janata Party, 1980 and 2008: Possible Influence of Hindu Nationalism on Indian Politics" (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2009), 1.

[296] Chris Ogden, "Lasting Legacy: The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance and India's Politics," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 42, no. 1 (February 2012): 27.

[297] Busch, "The Policy of the Bharatiya Janata Party, 1980 and 2008," 84.

[298] Article 370 of the Indian Constitution: "Article 370 of the Indian Constitution is a 'temporary provision' which grants special autonomous status to Jammu & Kashmir. Under Part XXI of the Constitution of India, which deals with "Temporary, Transitional and Special provisions", the state of Jammu & Kashmir has been accorded special status under Article 370. All the provisions of the Constitution which are applicable to other states are not applicable to J&K. According to this article, except for defense, foreign affairs, finance and communications, Parliament needs the state government's concurrence for applying all other laws. Thus the state's residents live under a separate set of laws, including those related to citizenship, ownership of property, and fundamental rights, as compared to other Indians. As a result of this provision, Indian citizens from other states cannot purchase land or property in Jammu & Kashmir. Under Article 370, the Centre has no power to declare financial emergency under Article 360 in the state. It can declare emergency in the state only in case of war or external aggression. The Union government can therefore not declare emergency on grounds of internal disturbance or imminent danger unless it is made at the request or with the concurrence of the state government." TNN, "What is Article 370? Three Key Points," *Times of India*, updated May 28, 2014, http://timesofindia. indiatimes.com/india/What-is-Article-370Article-370/articleshow/35678708.cms.

of Jammu and Kashmir, which granted to the state in 1947, right after independence. It did not want to give any special concessions to Kashmiris or to any other region.[299] The BJP always raised questions and blamed the INC for creating for the possibilities for insurgencies in the region. The BJP demanded to build a fence on all the international borders neighboring Pakistan, and then weed out all foreigners from these territories.[300] The BJP always insisted on removing Article 370 and the distinct advantage provided to Jammu and Kashmir; however, after coming to power in 1998, it softened its position, although, the BJP continued to use this issue in its election rhetoric.

Within the Indian federalist states bordering Bangladesh, the BJP has used the existing communal tension between native Hindus, Hindu refugees, as well as legal and illegal Muslim migrants, in its strategy to gain inroads within the region. The BJP promised to build a fence on the borders and remove illegal Muslim migrants, as this region is facing a major problem of unrestricted migration from Bangladesh of both Hindu and Muslim migrants. The BJP makes a distinction between Hindu and Muslim migrants, considering "the Hindus who cross over from Bangladesh are 'refugees, fleeing from religious persecution,' and the Muslims who cross over are without [any] exception, illegal infiltrators with malevolent intents."[301] The BJP has demanded (and promised) to build a fence and control the borders to halt illegal migration. The BJP took a similar position on China before coming to power. Modi and other leaders criticized China's aggressive policies demanding a strong response from the previous governments. Every time insurgent groups attacks and kill government security forces or a large number of civilians, the BJP is swift to condemn the violence. At the same time, the BJP demanded "the Government to crush the violence stringently ... [and] would have to take strong measures to ward off such barbaric attacks and there can be no leniency shown to such ghastly killers."[302]

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[299] Busch, "The Policy of the Bharatiya Janata Party, 1980 and 2008," 112.

[300] Ibid., 113.

[301] M. S. Prabhakara, "BJP and the North-east," *South Asia Bulletin* XIV, no. 1(1994): 69.

[302] "BJP Urges Government to Take Stringent Steps Against Naxalites," United News of India, April 6, 2010.

From the beginning of its birth from the BJS, the BJP has shown aggressiveness, polarization, and partisan politics, which reflected during its time as an opposition party. To establish a Hindu nation, the BJP used a rightwing Hindu nationalist strategy, as reflected in its strong and aggressive stands. It promoted a hawkish approach towards Muslims and Christians, and the Jammu and Kashmir regions. However, it is different to be on the opposition and to demand, than in taking actual steps when in power. Therefore, the next couple of sections shed light on the BJP's approach as a ruling party.

C.   THE BJP'S APPROACH AS A RULING PARTY

In the 1998 elections, the BJP won 182 out of 543 parliamentary seats to become the largest party; hence, under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the BJP was able to form a government in the center.[303] The BJP quickly figured out two different things, to use inflammatory rhetoric as an opposition party and to make flamboyant promises during the electoral process. Since the BJP needed 273 seats for a majority to form the government, it needed substantial support from the other parties to form an alliance. As Matthew Blake Fehrs suggests:

> The BJP ran on a Hindu nationalist platform that included references to Kashmir as well as the status of Muslims in India. However, in order to cobble together a coalition, the BJP were forced to make concessions to their governing partners, perhaps most significantly renouncing their desire to repeal Article 370 of the Constitution that granted Jammu and Kashmir special status.[304]

These types of changes within the BJP policies and approach were observed throughout its tenure. Prime Minister Vajpayee was a more moderate and secular face of the party, which its coalition partners accepted, and Home Minister L. K. Advani was a

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[303] Election Commission of India, New Delhi, *Statistical Report on General Elections, 1998 to the 12th Lok Sabha: Volume 1 (National and State Abstracts & Detailed Results)* (New Delhi: Election Commission of India, New Delhi, 1998), 90, http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/StatisticalReports/LS_1998/Vol_I_LS_98.pdf.

[304] Fehrs, "Tough Talk, Cheap Talk, and Babbling: Government Unity, Hawkishness and Military Challenges," 205–206.

hard-liner who satisfied its Hindu nationalist hardline affiliates, such as the RSS and the VHP.[305]

In the Indian political system, the BJP portrayed its image as "a Hindu nationalist party with hawkish views on foreign [and domestic] policy."[306] The BJP used rhetoric against Muslims in India and against Pakistan. The BJP, like its predecessor the BJS, heavily criticized any dealings with Pakistan and wanted to have nuclear weapons. Since the BJP had to compromise on repealing Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, to conciliate hardliners within the party and its family organizations, the Vajpayee government conducted its first nuclear test on May 11, 1998, weathering worldwide condemnation and retaliatory nuclear tests from Pakistan.[307] Between 1998 and 2004, the BJP government continued to announce aggressive policies and harsh rhetoric against the Kashmiri terrorists. The BJP announced "a policy of 'hot pursuit' of terrorists into Pakistan-controlled Kashmir."[308] In addition, as a home minister, Advani announced a new approach to "deal firmly and strongly with Pakistan's hostile designs and activities in Kashmir."[309]

From 1998 to 2004, during the BJP-led NDA government, violence against India's Christian minority saw an upsurge, and since 2014, it has again dramatically increased after the Modi-led BJP government came to power. According to Chris Ogden, "Violence against Christians during the BJP-led NDA involved the setting fire of prayer halls, churches, shops and houses during December 1998 and, most infamously, on 27 January 1999, the burning to death by Hindu extremists of an Australian missionary, Graham Staines, and his two sons."[310] Ogden also argues, "Much of this violence

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[305] Fehrs, "Tough Talk, Cheap Talk, and Babbling: Government Unity, Hawkishness and Military Challenges," 207.

[306] Ibid., 211.

[307] Ibid., 207.

[308] Ibid., 212–213.

[309] Ibid., 215.

[310] Ogden, "Lasting Legacy: The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance and India's Politics," 29.

stemmed from the Christian conversion of Hindus and the presence of Christian missionaries in tribal areas."[311]

Again, the BJP and its sister organizations were becoming active after coming back into power in 2014. In 2015, according to the *World Watch Monitor*, "The country saw 355 incidents of violence, including 200 major incidents, during the last year [2015] … Seven pastors were killed, nuns were raped and hundreds of Christians were arrested under India's anti-conversions laws."[312] By mid-2016, more than 134 attacks reported against Christians and their churches.[313] Prime Minster Modi has yet to condemn these attacks on Christians. Hence, the BJP government is using an aggressive approach towards minorities, most of the time indirectly, using its affiliates.

Since coming to power in 2014, the Modi government aggressively approaches the extremists in the east and west, even if that meant crossing international borders. India's most northeastern state of Nagaland shares an international border with Myanmar. Since pre-independence, the Naga people have been seeking a "sovereign Naga state." A "greater Naga area," comprising "all contiguous Naga-inhabited areas," along with Nagaland would include several Indian states and a large tract of Myanmar, which is about eight times greater than the current Nagaland.[314] The NSCN (I-M) and the National Socialist Council of Nagalim(Khaplang) are the current insurgent organizations with a strong military outfit. After carrying out terrorist attacks in India, Naga insurgents hide in the neighboring Myanmar jungles, a perfect hideout for them. In 2015, the Indian Army conducted a cross-international border operation in Myanmar that targeted the Naga insurgent military camps in retaliation for 18 soldiers killed in Manipur.[315] In September

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[311] Ogden, "Lasting Legacy: The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance and India's Politics," 28.

[312] "In India, One Case of Anti-Christian Violence Every Day," January 21, 2016, https://www.world watchmonitor.org/2016/01/4257104/.

[313] World Watch Monitor, "Attacks in India against Christians Rising in 2016," *Baptist Press*, September 14, 2016, http://bpnews.net/47554/attacks-in-india-against-christians-rising-in-2016.

[314] "Explained: Everything You Need to Know about Nagaland Insurgency."

[315] Praveen Swami, "Targeting NSCN(K) Camp, Army Entered Myanmar," *The Indian Express*, updated August 21, 2015, http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/targeting-nscnk-camp-army-entered-myanmar-2988133/.

2016, a terrorist attacked an Indian Army base in Kashmir that killed 18 soldiers.[316] In retaliation, the Indian Army carried out a "surgical strike" on other side of the line of control, the Pakistani controlled Kashmir, causing "significant damage to terrorists." These cross-borders strikes show the willingness of Modi's government to deal aggressively with insurgencies.

The hawkish nature of the BJP party is evident at all given opportunities. During 1998–2004, the BJP was the largest party but it did not have a clear majority, and as such, had to rely on other parties for support. Consequently, it was not able to execute all the hardline agenda it set forth, and as a result, pulled closer to the center. However, at all opportune occasions, the BJP displays its hawkish nature evident in conducting nuclear tests, actions against Muslim and Christian minorities, and in dealing with the Kashmiri insurgency. Since 2014, the BJP's Modi government has had a clear mandate and no obligation to other parties; it has promptly revealed an increasingly aggressive stand on many issues and policies. It does not falter from targeting insurgents in neighboring countries either. The next section discusses the current approach and policies of the Modi government towards the Naxalites.

D.   THE BJP'S APPROACH TOWARD THE NAXALITE INSURGENCY

On May 26, 2014, Chief Minister of Gujarat Narendra Modi assumed the Office of the Prime Minister of India. Currently, his government is nearly 30 months old; it may be a bit premature to say what the impact of his polices and approach on both the domestic and international level over long term is, but studying them provides a general idea of the direction the Modi government. This section examines its dealing with the Naxalite insurgency; however, it will take a long time to see the real effect of its policies. The Naxalite insurgency is one of oldest in India, and as such, it has a very strong narrative about fighting for social and economic inequality for the tribal and Dalit people. It has spread to more than 40 percent of the country (mostly in remote and tough terrains) and has survived several governments and their efforts; therefore, the Modi government

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[316] "Kashmir Attack: India 'Launches Strikes against Militants,'" September 30, 2016, http://www. bbc.com/news/world-asia-37504308.

must come up with a very distinct and effective approach to make a distinct transformation. The Modi government includes lessons learned from the past when drafting a "new multi-pronged 'National Policy and Action Plan to address Left Wing Extremism,' aimed at eliminating the menace in the 'shortest possible timeframe by using any element of the country's national power.'"[317] In addition, in May 2015, Modi became the first Prime Minister to visit the Naxalite's worst-hit area, Dantewada in Chhattisgarh, which was never done by the INC prime minister.[318] This action shows Modi's priority in dealing with the Naxalites. However, Lalwani argues, "those expecting Prime Minister Modi's government to overhaul the existing strategy—his plan to tinker at the margins notwithstanding—should not hold their breath."[319] This section covers the current policies of Modi's government in detail and its immediate impact on the insurgency.

Even though Modi and the BJP ran an aggressive election campaign and declared a "zero tolerance" policy towards Naxalites,[320] it took a softer approach in the actual implementation. It is walking in the same footsteps of its predecessors, as recognizing the Naxalite insurgents as "'misguided' people who only rebel 'tactically.'"[321] Previous governments have treated the Naxalites quite differently from other insurgencies, such as in Kashmir and Nagaland; the current government is doing the same. Many Indian leaders have "describe[d] them in inclusive language—'backward Hindus' and 'true Indians,' … as 'our children' and … 'Naxals are our own people,'"[322] which requires relatively restraint and selective action against them. The current Indian government describes the Maoists as "some sections of the society, especially the younger generation, have romantic illusions about the Maoists, arising out of an incomplete understanding of

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317 Rakesh K. Singh, "Modi Government Firms UP Anti-Naxal Strategy," *The Pioneer*, May 31, 2015, http://www.dailypioneer.com/todays-newspaper/modi-govt-firms-up--anti-naxal-strategy.html.

318 Anuradha Sharma, "Life in an Indian Police State," *The Diplomat*, August 11, 2016, http://thediplomat.com/2016/08/life-in-an-indian-police-state/.

319 Sameer Lalwani, "Understanding India's Counterinsurgency Strategy against the Naxal Threat," *Center of Advanced Study of India*, July 14, 2014, https://casi.sas.upenn.edu/iit/sameerlalwani.

320 Ibid.

321 Ibid.

322 Ibid.

their ideology."[323] Previous governments have approached this viewpoint with comparatively "limited" military actions, as well as half-hearted development programs plagued with significant corruption and insurgent extortion that have led to limited success.[324] However, the BJP wants to continue most of this scheme, not in limited scope, but with tough measures and a full throttle approach into dealing with the Naxalite threat.

Hence, the BJP has announced a multi-pronged counterinsurgency strategy, considered as being "balanced, holistic and robust"[325] designed to win the hearts and minds of the tribal and other marginalized populations.[326] At the same time, the government will consider peace talks with the Maoists if they lay down their arms and declare trust in the democratic system and process.[327] Modi appointed Rajnath Singh as Union Minister of Home Affairs, who also started his career through the Hindu rightwing organization RSS and is famous for his strong stance. The first step Rajnath Singh took was to change the name from Naxal Management division to Left Wing Extremism (LWE) division, in an effort to include a large number of communist insurgent groups.[328] Singh describes his anti-Naxalite strategy as, "It is a balanced approach where on the one hand our effort is to bring the Adivasi into the mainstream and on the other, to strictly deal with those who indulge in violence."[329] Under the new doctrine, the Modi government planned to set up an oversight mechanism different from the previous INC-led governments, a group of five ministers, "Singh as the chairperson, with Finance, Tribal, Rural Development, *Panchayati Raj* and Environment and Forest Ministers as

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[323] "Ministry of Home Affairs of the Government of India," accessed November 5, 2016, http://mha.nic.in/naxal_new.

[324] "Ministry of Home Affairs of the Government of India."

[325] Singh, "Modi Government Firms UP Anti-Naxal Strategy."

[326] Ibid.

[327] Ibid.

[328] "Modi Government Plans to Tackle Maoism with Incentives, Benefits for Troops," June 7, 2014, http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Modi-govt-plans-to-tackle-Maoism-with-incentives-benefits-for-troops/articleshow/36183490.cms.

[329] Rahul Tripathi, "Red Terror Flag," *India Today,* October 16, 2014, http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/nda-government-naxal-modi-policy-terror-upa-adivasis/1/396121.html.

members."[330] The BJP's approach is distinctively different from the previous government's approach. The BJP emphasizes achieving "short-term goals" in its effort to tackle the LWE problem.[331] The Modi government counterinsurgency strategy against the Naxalites includes a hand-in-hand dual-prong approach; one prong is to use security forces to establish security, and the second is to provide development measures to win hearts and minds. Previous governments used the similar strategies, but due to a lack of coordination and uneven implementation between affected states, it produced mixed results. According to a government source, "The focus of the Government is to address security, development and governance deficits in 106 LWE district especially the 35 most affected LWE districts spread in 7 States."[332]

1. Role of Security Forces in Establishing Security

One of the primary approaches of the Modi government is to establish security in the regions hit by the LWE, which appears to be the use of a stronger language than the previous INC-led government's policies. To establish security, the government is focusing on the four main aspects that include increasing troop levels to recommended levels, increasing incentives and benefits for government officers and security personnel to attract and retain talent, improving intelligence gathering and sharing, and fortifying and increasing the number of police stations. This approach also includes strengthening the unified command in each affected state and including officers from the security forces and civilian administrations in the planning committee, to plan effective counterinsurgency policies.[333]

Currently, about 92,000 troops from more than 100 Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) battalions and 9,000 Commando Battalions for Resolute Action (CoBRA) battalion personnel are deployed to the Naxalite insurgency affected areas, in addition to

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[330] Ibid.

[331] Ibid.

[332] "Ministry of Home Affairs of the Government of India."

[333] Ibid.

security forces of each federalist state security forces.[334] The government would like to deploy 10 additional battalions and CoBRA teams by the end of the year and increase more in the coming years.[335] It is also planning to "expedite the creation of an engineering wing in the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), the lead counterinsurgency force in these areas."[336] The government's strategy is to fill the security vacuum to provide development within these areas. This development can be accomplished through an increase in recruiting the local tribal youth in CAPF and in filling vacancies within state security forces. The government also would like to attract more recruits from other parts of India and fill the key positions in government and security forces with talented and competent officers. Therefore, the government decided to provide more incentives and benefits, which is a continuation of the previous government's approach but supported with better resources this time around.

Inspired by the U.S. Armed Forces and Andhra Pradesh's Greyhound forces models, the government announced special incentives and benefits to government and security personnel serving in the dangerous LWE affected areas to attract competent personnel.[337] The government first flagged the LWE areas as the "most dangerous zone' in the country as an incentive.[338] That designation allowed the government to increase the hardship allowance to security forces deployed in these regions.[339] The incentives and benefits include "special monetary benefits, out-of-turn promotions … choice posting after the completion of their tenure in these 'dangerous' places, [exposure visits abroad and central deputation]."[340]

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[334] "Ministry of Home Affairs of the Government of India"; "Modi's New Anti-Naxal Strategy: Here is What You Need to Know," October 14, 2014, http://english.pradesh18.com/news/bihar/modis-new-anti-naxal-strategy-here-is-what-you-need-to-know-622549.html.

[335] "Modi's New Anti-Naxal Strategy: Here is What You Need to Know."

[336] Tripathi, "Red Terror Flag."

[337] "Modi's New Anti-Naxal Strategy: Here is What You Need to Know."

[338] Ibid.

[339] Ibid.

[340] Ibid.; Tripathi, "Red Terror Flag."

Counterinsurgency operations can only become successful if supported by good intelligence information; hence, the government recognized the problem and decided to strengthen the intelligence program. To boost the intelligence collection, the government had to invest in all five types of intelligence information sources: signal, imagery, measurement and signature, human-source, and open source information.[341] Therefore, the government decided to strengthen the intelligence setup of the affected states, to increase the police to population ratio, and boost the basic policing.[342] At the same time, the CAPF and the state security forces are provided with the "capability for using small/micro UAVs that can be launched from the battalion/district headquarters and remotely operated vehicles to defuse IEDs."[343] The government emphasized improving the inter-state coordination and intelligence sharing to prevent the Naxalites from escaping. However, this approach is not new; instead, it is using the already existing strategy implemented by the previous government and is trying to make it more agile.

The government also wants to help each Indian state affected by the Naxalites by providing funding to strengthen their police stations' security. All the aforementioned problems have occurred due to the unsecured police stations. Most of the LWE affected areas' police stations were ill equipped and unsecure, and Naxalites insurgents frequently and easily attacked those. The government has already fortified about 300 hundred police stations (out of a planned 400), and plans to add another 250 fortified police stations throughout the worst-hit districts.[344] This fortification will help increase the presence of police forces and strengthen counterinsurgency capabilities. In addition, the government is streamlining the surrender program and providing funding to each state for the "rehabilitation of Left Wing Extremist cadres who surrender in accordance with the surrender and rehabilitation policy of the State Government."[345]

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[341] "A Guide to Intelligence," accessed November 6, 2016, http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/dod/intel_sum_gulflink.htm.

[342] Singh, "Modi Government Firms UP Anti-Naxal Strategy."

[343] Ibid.

[344] "Modi's New Anti-Naxal Strategy: Here is What You Need to Know."

[345] "Ministry of Home Affairs of the Government of India."

2. Provide Development Measures to Win Hearts and Minds

Nearly all effective counterinsurgency strategies include rectifying the root cause of the insurgency, which includes economic and social developments. Social and economic injustice are perceived as the root causes of the Naxalite insurgency. Therefore, the Modi government has announced a holistic approach, which includes development measures to deal with social and economic injustice to compliment the security efforts. Developmental measures include implementing better infrastructure development, improving and providing basic services, and recognizing the tribal contribution to the Indian society.

The government infrastructure improvement projects include rail and road connectivity and establishing a better communication network. Singh also emphasized "completing the existing development projects in Naxalite-hit areas, including construction of 5,[6]00km roads [and 48 bridges] at a cost of Rs.10,000 crore [approximately US$ 1500 million] and setting up of 2,199 mobile phone towers at a cost of Rs. 3,000 crore [US$ 450 million]."[346] Improved connectivity for both transportation and communication will increase the economy of the region, as well as the combat effectiveness of the security efforts. Under the integrated action plan (IAP), the government will give Rs. 30 crore (US$ 45 million) for the 88 worst-hit districts, to be distributed to development works by a committee comprising district magistrates, the Superintendent of Police, and the district forest officer, which is different from the UPA government's district-wide approach.[347] The goal behind this approach is to bring economic development to the remote regions.

The government is also focusing on social development by providing basic services so that the area does not become a recruitment base for the LWE. In the new development plan, the government is proposing to setup a development hub in three to four locations in each of the worst affected districts to build or improve schools,

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[346] "Modi Government Plans to Tackle Maoism with Incentives, Benefits for Troops."

[347] "Modi's New Anti-Naxal Strategy: Here is What You Need to Know."

hospitals, and the public distribution system (PDS).[348] Sing also "asked the officials to review the policy under which forest lands are given to landless tribal so that '*pattas*' [piece of land] can be given to genuine applicants after showing leniency."[349] The government plans to bring more tribal people into the mainstream by recognizing the Adivasi icons and their contribution to society by naming airports and roads after them, and celebrating their anniversaries.[350] This strategy is more inclusive than that of previous governments.

3.   Is There Any Impact on the Naxalite Insurgency?

Since the Modi government came to power in May 2014, the number of violent incidents and deaths related to the Naxalite's insurgency has relatively decreased. In 2015, the Naxalite violence was at its lowest in years, but it has been creeping back up in the current year. Either way, according to Thomas F. Lynch, the BJP should not get all the credit for the decrease in violence because this declining trend began in 2012 because of the previous government's counterinsurgency policies. Lynch summarized the situation carefully but accurately stated, "in 2016 the Naxalite insurgency in eastern India remains a security factor, but one far from the menace publicly announced by then–Prime Minister Singh in 2006 and again in 2010."[351] Tables 2 to 4 show the data on the Naxalite's violence of the last five years.

In 2010, the Naxalite's insurgency reached its peak, with the total number of people killed reported as 1,180 (626 civilians, 277 security force personnel, and 277 insurgents), which prompted then-Prime Minister Singh to declare the Naxalites a national security threat, again.[352] The government started serious counterinsurgency

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[348] Tripathi, "Red Terror Flag."

[349] "Modi Government Plans to Tackle Maoism with Incentives, Benefits for Troops."

[350] Tripathi, "Red Terror Flag."

[351] Thomas F. Lynch, *India's Naxalite Insurgency: History, Trajectory, and Implications for U.S.-India Security Cooperation on Domestic Counterinsurgency*, Center for Strategic Research, Institute of National Strategic Studies, Strategic Perspective 2 (Washington, DC : National Defense University Press, 2016), 20.

[352] "Fatalities in Left-wing Extremism: 2005–2016, India Year Wise Breakup," accessed November 7, 2016, http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/maoist/data_sheets/fatalitiesnaxal05-11.htm.

efforts, which resulted in a reduction in violence. From 2010 to 2015, the total number of deaths significantly decreased by 79 percent (Table 2). Also, from 2011 to 2015, the total numbers of incidents related to the LWE decreased by 38 percent (Table 3). According to Table 3, while the Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Odisha states remain the worst affected by the LWE violence, however, West Bengal reported zero incidents and deaths. According to Table 4, the number of LWE cadres arrested remains high and an increasing number of rebels are surrendering (that is positive sign). Telangana, a newly created state, has been experiencing some violence in the last few years.

Table 3.   Fatalities in Left-wing Extremism: 2005–2006, India Year Wise Breakup.[353]

Years	Civilians	Security Force Personnel	LWE/ CPI-Maoists	Total
2005	281	150	286	717
2006	266	128	343	737
2007	240	218	192	650
2008	220	214	214	648
2009	391	312	294	997
2010	626	277	277	1180
2011	275	128	199	602
2012	146	104	117	367
2013	159	111	151	421
2014	128	87	99	314
2015	93	57	101	251
2016	100	59	178	337
Total*	2925	1845	2451	7221

* Data until October 23, 2016

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[353] Source: "Fatalities in Left-wing Extremism: 2005–2016, India Year Wise Breakup."

Table 4.   State-wise Extent of LWE Violence during 2011 to 2016 (up to October 15, 2016).[354]

State	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016*	
	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths
Andhra Pradesh	54	9	67	13	28	7	18	4	35	8	16 (26)	6 (7)
Bihar	316	63	166	44	177	69	163	32	109	17	112 (90)	26 (13)
Chhattisgarh	465	204	370	109	355	111	328	112	466	101	326 (371)	93 (83)
Jharkhand	517	182	480	163	387	152	384	103	310	56	275 (266)	71 (51)
M.P.	8	0	11	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	10 (0)	1 (0)
Maharashtra	109	54	134	41	71	19	70	28	55	18	63 (48)	19 (14)
Odisha	192	53	171	45	101	35	103	26	92	28	69 (77)	19 (24)
Telangana	NA				8	4	14	5	11	2	6 (7)	0 (1)
Uttar Pradesh	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0)	0 (0)
West Bengal	92	45	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0)	0(0)
Others	6	1	8	0	7	0	8	0	10	0	5 (3)	0 (0)
Total	1760	611	1415	415	1136	397	1091	310	1088	230	882 (888)	235 (193)

* Figures in bracket show details of the corresponding periods of 2015

* Reported up to October 15, 2016 and it is tentative

354 Source: "State-wise Extent of LWE Violence during 2011 to 2016 (up to 15.10.2016)—Tentative," accessed November 6, 2016, http://mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/Lweviolance_28102016.PDF.

Table 5.   Comparative Important Parameters of LWE Violence during 2011 to 2016.[355]

Sr. No.	Parameters	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
A	Number of Incidents	1760	1415	1316	1091	1088	882 (888)
B	Civilians killed	469	301	282	222	171	176 (139)
	(Out of which Police informers killed)	218	134	113	91	92	97 (72)
C	Number of Security Forces Killed	142	114	115	88	59	59(54)
D	Number of encounters with Police	223	216	218	221	247	277 (182)
E	Number of attack on police (including land mines)	131	135	143	155	118	93 (104)
F	Number of LWE Cadre killed (during encoutners as well as attacks on police)	99	74	100	63	89	157(64)
G	Number of LWE Cadre arrested	2030	1901	1397	1696	1668	1492 (1301)
H	Number of LWE Cadre Surrendered	394	445	282	676	570	1277 (340)
I	Total number of arms snatched	67	55	89	58	18	3 (18)
J	Total number of arms recovered	636	591	628	548	723	644 (561)
K	Arms training camps held	84	53	27	34	18	14 (15)
L	Number of Jan Adalat held*	97	62	63	54	40	18 (34)

* Figures in bracket show details of the corresponding periods of 2015

* Reported up to October 15, 2016, and it is tentative

In the current year 2016 until October, both the number of total incidents and deaths related to the LWE have increased a little bit, which could be concerning. According to the data, the new BJP government had some immediate impact on the insurgency, and it looked like a turn around, but there are signs of increasing violence. Although the highest increase is seen in the worst-hit areas, such as Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, the overall picture is otherwise relatively similar to 2015. The most positive news about the insurgency is the number of surrenders. In 2016, the number of the Naxalite insurgents surrendering increased three fold compared to the previous year. In addition, the number of attacks on security forces and personnel deaths is also significantly down, as well as weapons looting. Overall, the new counterinsurgency policies seem to be working.

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[355] Source: "State-wise Extent of LWE Violence during 2011 to 2016 (up to 15.10.2016)—Tentative."

E. CONCLUSION

In 1980, after its creation, the BJP systematically worked to build its base over the last three decades, and finally was able to come to power on its own in 2014. The BJP's main political platform is based on the Hindutva, but it had to revise its strategy based on the political, social, and economic environment according to each Indian federalist state to win other reluctant supporters. In 2014, the main reasons the BJP came to power were due to the relative failure of the previous INC-led government, its broad agenda, and most importantly, the popularity of its prime ministerial candidate Modi. Modi and the BJP were known for their hawkish approach and hardline rhetoric against minorities, neighbors, and almost all other issues involving insurgency. Therefore, Modi's government expected to deal with the Naxalite insurgency very aggressively and decisively. However, as per past-experience in 1998–2004, the BJP-led NDA coalition ruled more dovish than hawkish because of not having a clear majority and its reliance on the other parties.

Modi's government has taken a holistic and balanced approach into dealing with the Naxalite insurgency. The new government quickly realized that an aggressive military solution is not the only answer to solve this five-decades-old insurgency. The government designed a multipronged approach, from boosting the number of deployed security forces to developing a grassroots base. It focuses more on improving its governance and in providing security. At the same time, the Modi government has promised to invest large sums of money into the development of LWE affected areas. The government has also focused on dealing with the worst-hit areas first. To attract competent personnel, it is increasing the incentives and benefits for the government and security forces. Also, the government is offering attractive "surrendering packages" for the rebels willing to put down their arms. Most importantly, the government has taken the Naxalite problem very seriously, and is applying concrete steps in the counterinsurgency process. It appears that the insurgency is coming under control and the situation has improved significantly compared to 2010 due to the previous government's policies and the current government's improved policies. Out of all the states affected by the Naxalite insurgency, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand are the worst-hit states; Bihar and Odisha are next in line. If

the current government can effectively implement all the plans and policies it has designed, then the Maoist movement's days are apparently numbered.

Although known for its hawkish and aggressive approach, the BJP's dealings with the Naxalite insurgency are anything but hawkish. In fact, its approach is more in line with proper counterinsurgency response theories proposed by many counterinsurgency experts, such as Galula, Nagl, and Kholi. It appears the BJP's election rhetoric and aggressive approach when in opposition, is an electoral strategy to win voter support and show toughness, but when it actually comes to execution, it operates more towards the center. The politics of reality is the only explanation for the BJP's change in behavior from more hawkish to dovish. After coming to power, the BJP probably realized that if it wants to govern effectively, it does need support from the opposition and other parties. It realized that making far right decisions and having hawkish policies might alienate the majority of the moderate voters. The BJP must have also realized that the problem looks a lot different as a ruling party then as an opposition party. In addition, the BJP and other political parties do not treat the Naxalites as outsiders compared to the Kashmiri and Naga insurgencies. They always treated the Naxals as "our own people," "backward Hindu," "true Indian," etc., which thus requires a softer approach. All these reasons may have caused the BJP to pull closer to the center from the right. Overall, the current BJP government's policies are more dovish than hawkish.

V.   CONCLUSION

This thesis examined the Naxalite insurgency and its long history of surviving through multiple administrations in New Delhi and each affected state for more than six decades. However, the main research topic for this thesis was to analyze the current BJP government's policies and approaches toward the Naxalite insurgency, as it is a more hawkish party. The goal was to find out the differences in policies and approaches, if any, between the BJP and previous governments led by the INC in dealing with the Naxalite insurgency. This thesis also examined multiple other factors that could have influenced and shaped the BJP policies including political settings and priorities, and Hindu nationalist ideology. The ultimate goal was to see if the BJP's hawkish and aggressive rhetoric during elections and demands as an opposition party translated into policies or not. The first section is about the Naxalite insurgency. The second section is about the previous governments' counterinsurgency approach. The third section addresses the BJP's policies and approach. The final section provides a few policy recommendations.

A.   THE NAXALITE INSURGENCY

The Naxalite insurgency is a great example of a classical insurgency, which shows how an insurgency starts and becomes resilient, just as described by counterinsurgency experts. As Connable and Libicki suggested, when a government ignores the rising dissent in a particular group or community of people, discontent eventually builds up and leads to an insurgency.[356] Suppressive political and economic systems multiplied by bad governance have suppressed and unjustly treated these people, which is what exactly happened with the Naxalite insurgency in last six decades. It is successful in establishing a resilient armed struggle and is deeply rooted in the Dalit and mostly tribal communities.

Most of these communities are very poor and have been marginalized over the years. For more than two centuries, the British colonizer and Indian governments largely ignored these areas and people. However, actions or the lack of actions by the Indian

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[356] Connable and Libicki, *How Insurgencies End*, 152.

governments contributed the most to exacerbating this problem. Since these areas were economically and politically insignificant for the central governments, they were slow to bring development to these areas and recognize widespread dissent. People supporting the Maoists feel socially, politically and economically suppressed, and unjustly treated over the years. The central and state governments for one or more reasons displaced these communities from their ancestor's home and land without providing an acceptable solution; as a result, these communities have lost their livelihood and source of income. As Banerjee described, the Adivasi and Dalits have experienced "widespread displacement, forest issues, insecure tenancies, and other forms of exploitation like usury, land alienation and imperfect market condition."[357] They have mostly remained uneducated, the least developed, and poor compared to the rest of India. As a result, these communities provided support to the Maoist movement, as well as became a recruiting pool for it over the last six decades.

The Maoists were successful in recognizing a depressed, deprived, and discontented people in these poor communities, and were able to provide them a voice and political platform to express their anger and frustration through violent rebellion. The Maoists also provided a common identity of a destitute economic class to unite tribal and the Dalit people in the fight against economic and social injustice; hence, undermining their other identities, such as religion, caste, and language. Even though most of the radical leaders, activists, and intellectuals came from an urban educated middle and upper class, the Maoists treated the Dalit people, untouchables, and tribal people equally (without any religious or caste prejudice and hierarchy) when they joined their ranks.[358] The Naxal guru, Majumdar , and his comrades worked and lived with indigenous people for years and were successful in earning their trust and establishing an economic class identity for poor and landless peasants. Thus, the Maoists were able to recognize frustration and dissent in these communities due to a lack of representation and acceptance of their identity, and they were able to mobilize them to confront state authority for justice.

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[357] Banerjee, "On the Naxalite Movement: A Report with a Difference," 11.

[358] Gupta, "The Naxalites and the Maoist Movement in India," 171.

B.   THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENTS' APPROACH

The previous central and federalist state governments' counterinsurgency efforts mostly relied on heavy police actions rather than winning the hearts and minds of the populace. In addition, the Maoists created a narrative that the government was not out to help poor and disadvantaged people but just to control them and steal their resources. Hence, the governments' actions fell right into their narratives and helped their cause. Whatever efforts done by the governments to provide a life of dignity and honor failed due to widespread corruption within the system, and unsympathetic behavior of the governments' officials towards the poor and neglected tribal and Dalit people.[359] As Connable and Libicki argued, military actions result in civilian casualties and suffering, which can further fuel anti-government sentiments and cumulate in support for insurgency groups among the local people.[360] The Maoists did exactly that; they used police brutality and suppression for their recruiting propaganda, which resulted in enhancing support among these communities for their armed struggle.

C.   THE BJP COUNTERINSURGENCY STRATEGY

As a ruling party, the BJP is not hawkish at all while designing and implementing counterinsurgency policies towards the Naxalites; instead, it has shown an approach that is more pragmatic. Over the years, the BJP has used aggressive tactics and hawkish behavior to establish its base support and to attract followers from all walks of life. As a result, in 2014, the BJP gained a clear majority and formed the government in the center. However, after reviewing the BJP's polices in dealing with the Naxalite insurgency, its approach is more logical and practical, as shown in its multipronged strategy. The Modi government is pursing the "balanced, holistic and robust"[361] counterinsurgency strategy by focusing on providing security, good governance, and development programs (winning the hearts and minds).

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[359] Guha, "Adivasis, Naxalites and Indian Democracy," 3307.

[360] Connable and Libicki, *How Insurgencies End*, 153.

[361] Singh, "Modi Government Firms UP Anti-Naxal Strategy."

The BJP has implemented an ambitious, aggressive, and well-rounded multipronged counterinsurgency strategy that includes security, good governance, development, peace talks, and amnesty. The BJP's strategy is to bring stability and peace to the affected regions by providing security, which would create an environment for needed development and good governance. It also does not want to rule out any peace talk opportunities with the Maoists who are willing to denounce violence. The BJP has a good amnesty program, which attracts loosely affiliated and semi-committed followers and fighters to surrender and join the mainstream. However, it has failed to persuade hardcore fighters and leaders to surrender.

However, the BJP faces many challenges to implement its counterinsurgency strategy because of the immense area covered by this insurgency. The BJP's main challenge is to coordinate effectively with all the affected states' governments, because all, except one, have non-BJP governments. All the ruling parties in their respective states have their own political and economic agendas that may or may not fit well with the BJP's strategy. In addition, demography, geography, and other factors, such as ethnicity, languages, etc., are very different in each state. Therefore, what works in one state or area does not mean it will work in another. Hence, the BJP has to come up with a tailor-made approach for each region rather than having one big umbrella strategy. In addition, the central and state governments are still struggling to fill vacancies in security forces and other government positions, especially, in highly volatile areas. Other challenges include corruption, violent armed groups, such as Salwa Judum, and multinational corporations' unlawful practices, which continue to create dissent in indigenous people and undermine the governments' other efforts.

D.   POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

If the current BJP government wants its counterinsurgency strategy to be successful, then it needs to bring sweeping social, economic, and political changes in the affected region. The government has already acknowledged that the Naxalite insurgency is a credible threat but it has to solve the underlying causes of discontent by

implementing time sensitive solutions with total commitment.[362] All efforts should come from legitimate government sources recognized by the indigenous people, which mean using local solutions for local problems. The government should think about a long-term commitment with a long-term impact and stay away from short-term solutions, such as arming local militia. Since this insurgency has spread to more than 40 percent of India, and is located in very remote areas, the central government must implement coordinated efforts including all affected states' governments and their agencies. Intelligence is one of the most important parts of the counterinsurgency efforts; the governments should focus on tapping into locals who are against the insurgency for collecting vital intelligence.

All involved governments should steer away from emphasizing only military solutions rather than give importance to political solutions. According to the U.S. counterinsurgency manual, primary efforts must consider an 80 percent political solution and refrain from using military actions as much as possible.[363] Only military solutions alienate the majority of the populations by fomenting more dissent and anger, which can be counterproductive. By accommodating political representation and addressing grievances, the central government will be able to narrow the recruiting pool for the insurgents. If the government is able to create safe zones for affected communities, it will be able to isolate the insurgents, which can prove detrimental to insurgents' narrative and resources. The counterinsurgency process takes a long time to have a meaningful impact. It is a slow and prolonged process, especially for insurgencies, such as the Naxalites. Hence, the governments must make a long-term commitment for the overall counterinsurgency process and for individual solutions.

Many large natural resources are located in the Naxalite affected areas, and the government should use these resources to its advantage to win Naxalites' hearts and minds. The government needs to provide better oversight and direction to multinational corporations mining in these regions. It needs to mandate that each corporation invest 25 percent or more of its profit into developing these regions. These corporations must give

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[362] Connable and Libicki, *How Insurgencies End*, 152.

[363] U.S. Department of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency Field Manual* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Army, 2006), 1–22.

preference to local populations for employment and provide them fair wages. The government needs to compensate these indigenous people properly and justly for the loss of their land and livelihood. Thus far, it seems that the BJP government is on the right track and has the right approach and intent. However, time will tell how much long-term impact its strategy and commitment is able to produce. When it comes to policy implementation, the BJP government is more pragmatic than hawkish.

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