

Demonetization: Impact on Combating Naxalism

An Impact Assessment In Hotbeds of
Naxal Violence in Chhattisgarh

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I. Introduction

On November 8, 2016, the Honorable Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi announced the demonetization of high currency denomination notes of Rs. 500 and Rs.1000. The move aimed at curbing corruption, black money, reducing Naxal movement, eliminating counterfeit currency, and terrorism funding.

The biggest objective of demonetization is linked to unearthing black money, corruption and its impact on the terror related activities.

One very significant and talked about impact has been on the Naxal movement in the country which has about 106 districts under its control.¹

However, there has been no significant study to substantiate the impact with on ground empirical research. In this background PPRC (Public Policy Research Centre) commissioned this study. Through this research we attempted to understand the manner in which demonetization hampered the Naxal movement by choking its finances. The study brought forth certain pointed insights and attempts to lucidly explain how lack of finances has put a strain on Left Wing Extremism.

II. Background

Naxalism

Started as an ideological movement in the late 1960s from a small place in West Bengal, it has today captured the 106 districts of India under its arm control. There are several parts of the country in which the rule of Naxalites is unchallenged, and the area is totally controlled by them. The then Prime Minister Shri Manmohan Singh during a function in 2010 was quoted as terming Naxal movement- the biggest internal security threat to the Nation.

Money Matters: Funding involved in the Naxal Movement

Shri P.V. Ramana from Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis reports, The CPI (Maoist), at the 9th/Unity Congress held in January 2007, adopted a document on financial policy. This document, titled 'Our Financial Policy', states that, in the main, the outfit has three types of economic needs, namely, the needs of war, political propaganda and the people. To cater to these needs, there are three broad categories of resources: (a) membership fee, levy and contributions from the people; (b) confiscation of the wealth and income of the enemy; and (c) 'revolutionary taxes' collected in guerrilla zones and base areas. Most of the money is collected in the form of cash to avoid its traceability by the intelligence and police officials. The Maoists have also been worried about their income not increasing at par with their growing expenditure. In other words, there is a mismatch between income and expenditure. To rectify this, the document says it is necessary to improve economic resources and regulate expenditure through a 'centralized policy and planning'.

Money in the form of cash is also collected from individuals as well as businesses, ranging from petty to big industries. The Naxalites also levy taxes in their strongholds.

¹ Home Ministry Latest report on Naxal affected Districts

In fact, as one senior police officer told the researcher, 'Chhattisgarh is the treasury of the Maoists. There is a convenient relationship between the Maoists and illegal mining, as well as forest produce.' The local businesses are run with the permission of Naxalites and a share of income goes to them in the form of cash which they store in currency of big denomination considering the fact that it is highly inconvenient to store huge amounts in small denominations.

Naturally, to meet their expenses, the Maoists annually collect the required amounts. However, according to their scheme of things, they envisage collecting thrice their annual requirement (one year's requirement, plus one year's reserve and an additional one year's requirement). As per media reports and corroborated by the police reports, the annual collection from Chhattisgarh alone ranges somewhere between Rs 350–400 crore. This amount of money is being collected every year and at least two third of it is stored at some safe space for future or some urgent use, considering the fact that Naxalites collect at least thrice the amount they need in a year.

Various reliable sources from the administration and the Naxal groups have stated to the research team that when demonetization happened, the government agencies had already planned to keep an eye on the economic activities of the Naxalites and their supporters. An estimated amount of money was known to the intelligence agencies, which they have corroborated from the interrogation of arrested Naxal leaders. The administration knew that Naxalites will try to get the currency notes exchanged and hence they were keeping an eye on all the suspicious deposits and exchange being done. Since Demonetization, numerous incidents of attempting to exchange old currency notes through banks by the Naxalites have taken place in Chhattisgarh. All these transactions were put on the radar of intelligence agencies. According to a media report it was stated that 20 crore cash which was deposited in different banks of the Bastar region of Chhattisgarh, was frizzed by the security agencies suspecting the money belonging to Naxalites. This amount may be a small amount in comparison to the annually collected money. The reason being, they understood that getting to the banks to exchange these invalidated notes will lead to their exposure to the intelligence and police officials. Thus, after the initial shock, they waited and later involved several voluntary organizations and shell companies for the exchange of their invalidated currency. The data on the amount of money exchanged through this process is not available through several investigative agencies were tracking these transactions and later many of these voluntary organizations and shell companies were banned and blacklisted by the government. The huge role of cash in the Naxal movement cannot be denied. Demonetization by invalidating the notes of higher denominations curbed the financing of the Naxal movement and especially the cash, which is stored from the annual collections, became useless.

III. Significance of study

Demonetization aimed at curbing corruption, black money, reducing Naxal movement, eliminating counterfeit currency, and terrorism funding. Today several reports state the achievements that demonetization has achieved towards its different objectives and the challenges which were faced. Naxal movement has been one of the longest interior arm conflicts faced by any country. Recent data from home ministry proves that Naxalism in India is at its all-time low. There are certainly different factors responsible for that and demonetization is one of the prime reasons. So, at PPRC (Public Policy Research Centre), it was conceived that the impact of demonetization be assessed and studied by doing the primary field research along with scanning the available data.

IV. Research Objectives

- To find the nexus between available monetary resources of Naxals and the violence caused by them.
- To study the impact of the demonetization on the Left-Wing Extremism Movement.
- To propose certain recommendations based on the key learnings from the ground.

V. Research Methodology

The research is based on the empirical and qualitative data. This study aims to access the impact caused by the demonetization in the weakening of Naxal movement in the country. The impacts are manifold- both tangible and non-tangible. For this purpose, case study method was taken as an important tool.

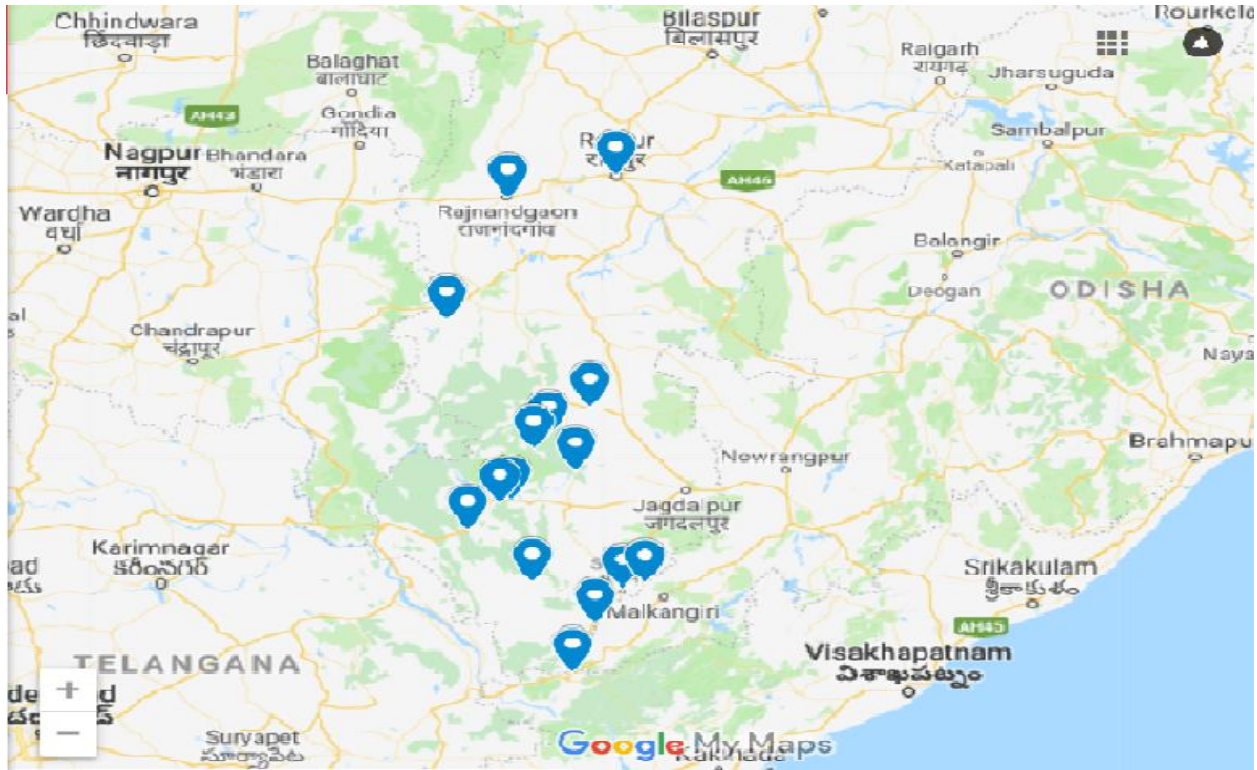
This report is a part of the PPRC's comprehensive study on the "Multi Sectoral Perspective of Chhattisgarh's growth story". The districts were selected based on their base ranking in the aspirational districts programme and the list of most Naxal hit districts of Chhattisgarh.

The sources used for this study included both primary and secondary sources. The research team visited Rajnandgaon, Sukma, Bijapur, and Narayanpur. The research team went to the interior parts of these areas and conducted a field-based survey too. This included visits to gram sabhas, district headquarters, media organizations; and interviews of Civil Governance officials, Police officers, Naxal leaders, surrendered Naxals and local tribals.

VI. Research Stretch

The research team conducted the research in two phases travelling to 33 villages located in Rajnandgaon, Sukma, Bijapur and Narayanpur districts of Chhattisgarh. In the first phase, The research team covered 14 villages of Rajnandgaon district travelling about 700 KMs and interviewing around 350 people including the police officials, certain Naxal sympathizers and civil governance officials. The trip started by Interviewing the District Magistrate and concluded at ITBP camp in Madanwada, the place where Naxalites killed then SP Sh. Vinod Chaubey and 24 policemen in an ambush on 12thJuly, 2009.

In the second phase, the research team visited 19 villages located in Sukma, Bijapur and Narayanpur districts of Chhattisgarh travelling around 1,674 km and interviewing 170 people including the police and CRPF officials, Naxal leaders and other officers. The study started from the Sukma District quarters and concluded at Orcha Block HQ in Narayanpur.



There has been increased focus on the eradication of Naxal movement in the country since the present government came in power. Be it through special assistance scheme of the central government or the extra central support received by the state government in the project implementation at the ground level. There are various factors which are responsible for combating Naxalism such as the increased number of forces, special scheme for the implementation of projects, surrender and rehabilitation policy for Naxals, demonetization, and proactive approach by the police forces, etc. During this study, the research team learnt that all other factors except for demonetization were same for the years 2015, 2016 and 2017. Only demonetization was a variable introduced in 2016 and hence the observation of the research team is based on the fact that demonetization was the only variable factor that led to this change.

VII. Research Observations

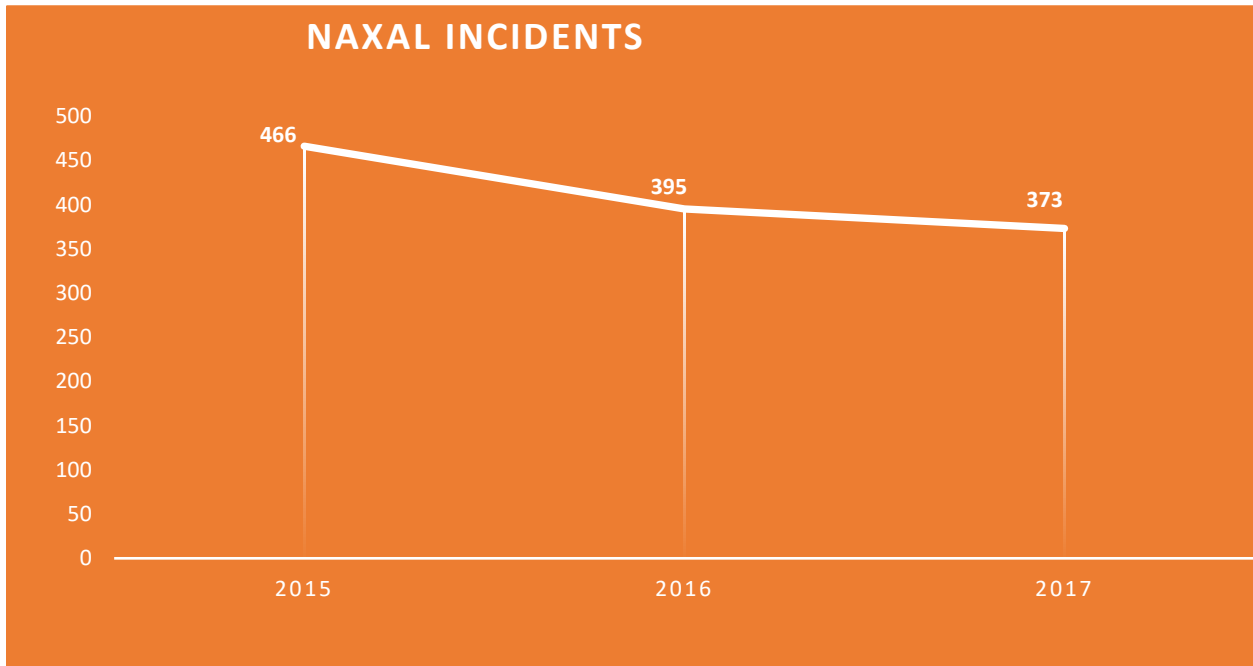
1. *Demonetization broke the backbone of LWE movement by Curbing its finances:*

According to the strategy planned by the Naxalites, they envisage collecting thrice their annual requirement (one year's requirement, plus one year's reserve and an additional one year's requirement). Demonetization invalidated maximum of the stored currency of high denominations. Media reports suggest that transaction worth crores were attempted in the Bastar area of Chhattisgarh in the next few weeks of Demonetization. Obviously, all these transactions were put on hold by the intelligence agencies. Police reports suggest that in Chhattisgarh alone, money worth crores were seized from various locations in LWE hit districts after

demonetization. As per a PIB report, since illegally held cash forms the major chunk of Naxalite funding, after the demonetization, most of the cash held with the Naxalites turned worthless. It is because of the demonetization that in comparison to 2015, the number of incidents of Naxal offences has decreased in the year 2016 and 2017. The role of monetary resources is very significant in the violence caused by Naxalites to the common people and the security forces. Demonetization, which led to curbing those resources, has been instrumental in highlighting the linkage between the monetary resources accumulated by the Naxalites through different sources and using those resources to unleash barbaric violence on the local tribals and the forces.

2. Reduced number of incidents of Naxal offences:

It was observed that the number of incidents of Naxal offences have reduced magnificently in the year 2016 and 2017 when we compare it to the data of 2015. Inputs received from Naxal leaders as well as the police officials suggest that due to cash crunch which lead to the lack of necessary resources, Naxalites were not able to implement their strategy of ambush on the forces and hence this decrease in the number of Naxal offences. It is important to note here that no other policy level change except the Demonetization was introduced either by the central government or the state government in the said time that would have affected the Incidents of Naxal offences. *Compared to 2015, the number of incidents of Naxal offences decreased by 20% in 2017 in Chhattisgarh.*

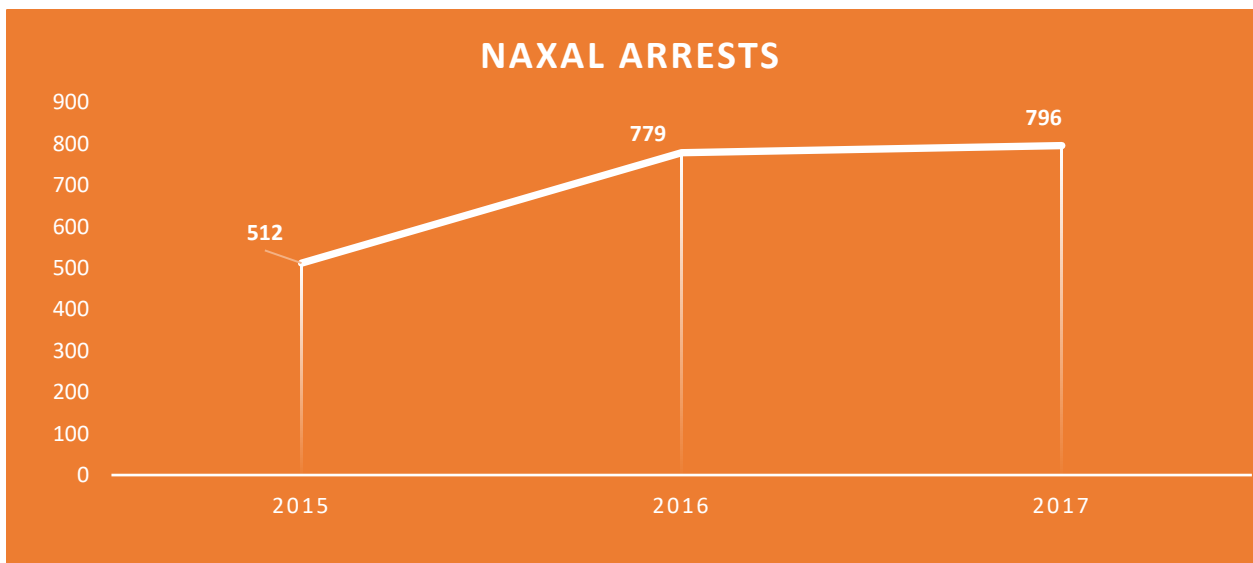


3. Increased Number of Naxals Arrested:

It was learnt that after the announcement of demonetization was made, the physical movement of Naxalites in the village area increased significantly- primarily to collect necessities such as medicines and food. The police officials and the Naxal sources inform that cash crunch caused by the demonetization forced the Naxalites to visit villages and meet their sympathizers to get the invalidated currency exchanged through banks. Intelligence officials were keeping a close

eye over all the transactions and the movement of the Naxalites, since it was on the expected lines of the officials. Chhattisgarh's rehabilitation policy for the Naxals that was significantly amended in 2015 also played an important role. As per the surrender policy, a fixed sum is given to the surrendered Naxals. The lack of resources to the Naxals gave an opportunity to the security forces to bring the Naxalites in the mainstream after surrendering with the arms. The special civil engagement program was run by the forces to engage the villagers who often act as the messenger between the police officials and the Naxalites. The lack of supply of necessity food items, medicines, etc. caused huge stress to the Naxalites because the villagers who frequently used to supply these items were now engaged by the security officials.

All of this led to this increase in the number of arrests and surrenders of the Naxal cadre. Graph shows year wise analysis of number of Naxals arrested and surrendered from the mentioned area. There was a rise of 55% in the arrests of the Naxals in the year 2017 compared to 2015.



4. *Implementation of Government projects:*

Officers who are responsible for the implementation of the government projects told the research team that the obstacles to the proper implementation of the government projects like construction of roads, new school, and health centers have reduced significantly post the decision of demonetization. Interview of a district magistrate in one of the districts from the sample study suggests that the benefits of social welfare schemes are now reaching in the interior parts that were very unlikely previously. In the entire Bastar division, roads and mobile networks are being built on a war footing. In areas where the Maoist rule has been there for at least three decades, road construction is going on in full swing, even at night, under a heavy security cover. In the past, construction companies were reluctant to bid for work due to the fear of a Maoist backlash. But now, in Chhattisgarh at least, no tender for road construction has gone unfulfilled, as reported by Rahul Pandita in an article². More than 1500 solar pumps were installed in the last two years,

²In a detailed report published in Open Magazine by Sh. Rahul Pandita, a noted author who has authored the book Hello Bastar, analyses the current situation of Naxal movement in Chhattisgarh's Bastar.

<http://www.openthemagazine.com/article/cover-story/is-it-the-end-of-the-road-for-maoists>

in Sukma alone.³ It is important to note here that the several factors like the administrative set up, government policies, the contractors, etc. which are responsible for the implementation of the government projects like road construction, etc. haven't changed in the last three years and the only variable which was introduced in 2016 is Demonetization.

5. *Recruitments in Naxal Cadre:*

There are several reasons for a youth to join the local Naxal cadre. To fight for the local rights of the tribals had been one of the most basic reasons for them to join the arm rebellion. Pradhan of the village Mulaguda in Sukma informed the research team about the personal reason for the youth to join the movement. If any family member has died because of the violence, then the young member of the family is brainwashed by the Naxal recruiter that police killed your family member and they try to woo them in the movement. It is also observed that among the newly recruited, maximum is from the affected families. After the initial training, once they are included in the cadre, they start getting a fixed amount of money which acts as the continued motivation for them to remain in the cadre. The lack of exposure among the tribal youth is another very pertinent factor for their involvement in the Naxal activities. They are unaware of the constitution, their rights and the duties. The preachers of the movement engage them and provide them the short-term solutions like solving their petty disputes which they find very attractive and they join it. In the last few years, the security forces have increased the civil engagement program through different methods like the community policing through which they organize several camps and distribute essential goods. Especially after demonetization when there was shortage of essential goods like food items like *Namak*, and medicines, we increased our activities of community policing and distributed maximum of the essential items free of cost to the villagers, said the TI of the Madanwada Police Station. This helped them to engage the villagers in their activities. Security forces used this situation by showing them videos about the country, constitution and the rights and duties of the citizens. Increase in the education facilities in the Bastar region has also been very instrumental.

'Recruitment in Sukma district has come down to a two-digit number', said a local businessman who does recruitments on behalf of the local Naxal leadership. Several media reports corroborated by the police officials suggests that the government's focus on development projects and creating new avenues of employment for the tribals supported by the bold decisions like demonetization have resulted in the reduction of recruitments in the Naxal cadre.

6. *Role of villagers and local contractors:*

Post demonetization Naxalites approached the common villagers and the contractors to get their notes exchanged through different banks. Many of them agreed and attempted to get it exchanged which was put on hold by the officials suspecting their Maoists connections, as reported by certain media reports. The other set of people informed the police secretly about the plan of getting the notes exchanged and hence helped the police in nabbing the currency notes of high denominations. Police officials suggests that due to prevailing poverty conditions people often tend to support and work for the Naxals in lieu of small amount of money. They often used to supply food, daily necessities and sometime small number of explosives to the Naxalites only in the return of some money. The demonetization effect reduced the cash in hand with the Naxalites and hence they weren't left with much amount to give to the villagers. Police officials realizing

³ As per data received from District Administration, Sukma

the situations started special campaigns to encourage the villagers to support the police in ending the arm rebellion by the Naxalites in the region. Contractors earlier used to pay a fix amount of security tax to the Naxalites for their involvement in the development projects. Demonetization invalidated the existing high value notes, the notes in which the contractors usually gave donations to the Naxalites. As per a Naxal leader, there was drastic decrease in the donations received by the Naxals through contractors because the money lying with the contractors was also invalidated. In the Civic Action Programme (CAP) initiated by the government, special camps for the awareness and distribution of essential goods among the villagers has also being done continuously and has helped a lot in convincing the people to join the government in uprooting the Naxals, especially after demonetization.

7. *Involvement of lobbyists, activists, supportive and subordinate organizations:*

During an interactive session with the police officials when the research team asked about the biggest roadblock in the eradication of the Naxal problem, voluntary organizations, rights activists, Naxal sympathizers and lobbyist was the quick response from the officers posted in Sukma district of Chhattisgarh. The fundamental problem is the lack of a uniform nationwide system which can track all the voluntary organizations and NGOs, Societies, Trusts, etc. The government has created a platform called NGO Portal, but the registration is not compulsory for every organization. There are several front organizations through which the propaganda for the Naxal movement is done. Kabir Kala Manch, one of such organization was recently in news when many of its members were arrested for their links with Naxalites.

Popularly called as urban Naxals, these are the people whose goal is the same as to the Naxals fighting with arms and ammunition in the jungle area of the country. The only difference being that the Naxals are fighting openly with the state in the jungle while these urban Naxals fight silently and take forward their agenda in the name of fighting for oppressed class and and the marginalized. In the name of human rights activism, the fight that they do against the state is to support the Naxals in their movement against the nation.

Post demonetization many of these organizations which were used by the Naxals to get the invalidated currency exchanged through banks and their transactions were put under scanner and after several level of scrutiny many of them have been banned and blacklisted already.

VIII. Conclusions:

- 1. *Demonetization led to cash crunch:*** The research team learnt from several media reports and the reports from government agencies which reported the seizure of crores of cash from several Maoist groups in Chhattisgarh. Police officials report that the Naxalites were not even able to buy the necessities like food items and medicines after the demonetization. The decrease in the number of Naxal incidents post demonetization is evident to the fact that the violence caused by them is in proportion to the monetary resources that they have. The cash crunch caused by the demonetization forced the Naxalites to reduce their operations and attacks. It also increased the surrenders and arrests in the last few years.

- 2. Reduction in the level of Naxalism:** Compared to 2015, Number of Naxal offences decreased by 20% in 2017 in Chhattisgarh. There was a rise of 55% in the arrests of the Naxals in the year 2017 compared to 2015.
- 3. No doors were left open for the Naxalites then to join the mainstream:** The increase in the number of surrenders of Naxalites over the years is evident to the fact that the local cadre joining the mainstream society. Many of them understand that the arm rebellion is not the answer to the problems faced by the tribals. The surrender and the rehabilitation policy of the state of Chhattisgarh which was complemented by Demonetization have contributed significantly to the increased number of surrendered Naxals.
- 4. Police and the paramilitary forces improved their network of informers and inside intelligence:** The most challenging thing for the forces that are deployed in the Naxal hit areas of Chhattisgarh was the lack of information and the lack of local intelligence. It is said that one of the prime reasons for the success of the Naxal movement is only because of their strong network of informers. The crisis among the Naxal cadre caused by the demonetization helped the police officials to engage the local community by providing necessary items like food and medicines through different community engagement programs. This helped the police in gaining the trust and confidence of the locals which has further improved their local intelligence. The police have also been successful in employing numerous informers which has significantly helped the police and intelligence officials to counter Naxals.
- 5. Speed of the implementation of government projects has increased:** Unless and until the civil governance reaches to the interiors in the jungle, Naxalism will not be finished, says the Bijapur DM. As observed, the speed of implementation of the projects has increased significantly. The obstacles in the implementation of the infrastructural projects have decreased evident by the fact that no tender in this area goes un-applied now. The civil governance is reaching to the interiors. All other factors responsible for the implementation of the development projects were same during the said time. Only demonetization is the new measure taken by the government. As observed, demonetization led to decrease in the number of Naxal incidents which further helped the security forces to focus on ensuring the implementation of the development projects like road construction.

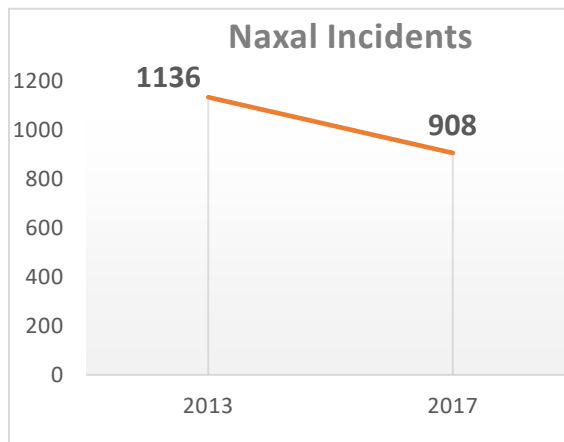
IX. Comparative study of UPA and NDA in combating Naxalism at National level

Once a very serious challenge, the effect of Naxalism today has reduced further in the last few years because of the serious efforts by the government and the forces. Earlier the casualty among the security forces used to be higher but now it has turned reverse and casualties among Naxalites are higher. With a clear vision and commitment, the government initiated very strong reforms to control the menace of Naxalism. From launching a special assistance scheme for all the Naxal hit states and the bold measure of demonetization, the central government under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh has effectively put all

the resources to end the arm rebellion by the Naxalites. The government has also been very effective in unmasking the true nature of the rights activists who actually supports the armed struggle by creating a positive atmosphere for them in the university campuses and the other urban space. The then PM Dr. Manmohan Singh recognizing the danger of Naxalism termed it as country's biggest internal security threat. But unlike the current scenario, not much was done to end the menace. Tough talks were generally not followed by the tough actions which can be easily be shown by the available data. To compare the actions and outcomes of UPA run Government and the NDA run Government, the research team compared the data of the corresponding years 2013 with that of year 2017 on the following indicators. Year 2013 was the last full year of governance of the UPA rule and Year 2017 is the last full year of governance of NDA rule for which all the data is available.

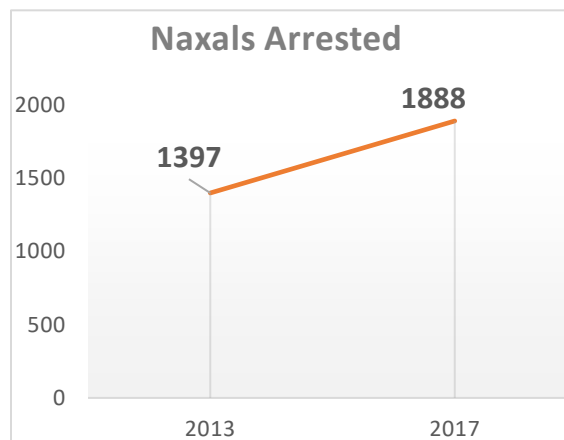
i. Number of Naxal Incidents:

In comparison to UPA rule, the number of Naxal incidents has decreased by 20% in the Government run by NDA.



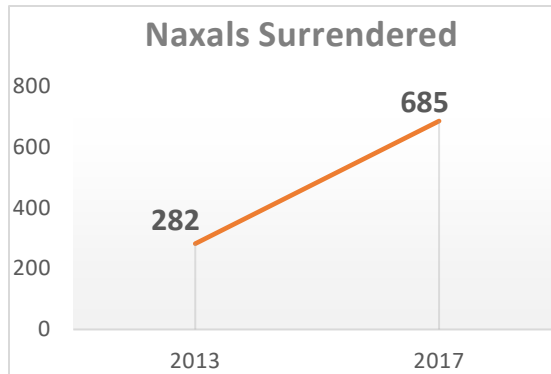
ii. Number of Naxals Arrested:

In comparison to UPA rule, the number of Naxals arrested has increased by 35% in the NDA rule.



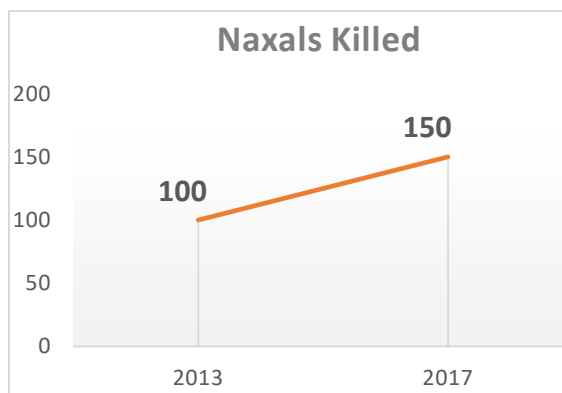
iii. Number of Naxals Surrendered:

In comparison to UPA rule, the number of Naxals surrendered has increased by 143% in the NDA Government.



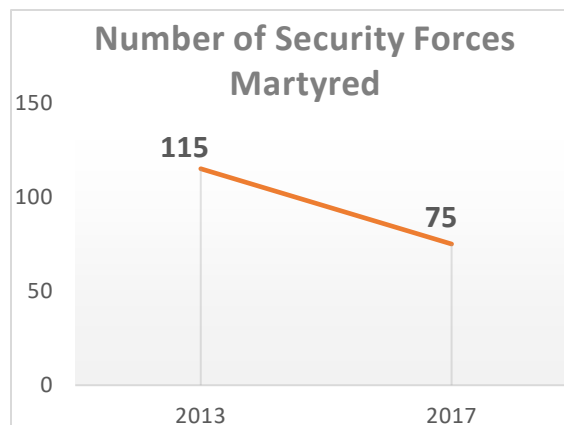
iv. Number of Naxalites Killed:

In comparison to the government run by UPA, the number of Naxals killed by the security forces has increased by 50% in the government run by NDA.



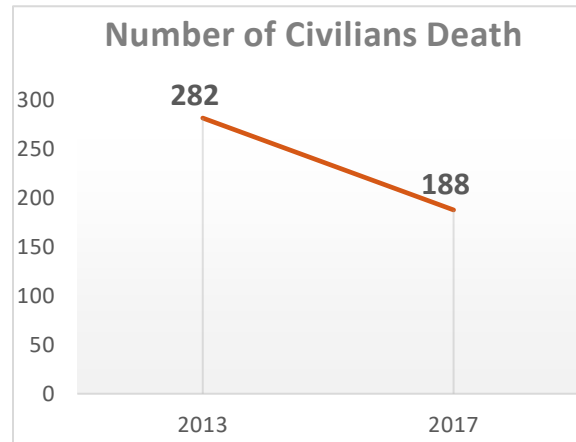
v. Number of Security Personnel Martyred:

In comparison to the UPA rule, the number of security forces martyred has decreased by 35% in the NDA rule.



vi. Number of Civilians Who Died Because of LWE Violence:

In comparison to the UPA rule, the number of civilians who died because of the LWE violence has decreased by 33% in the NDA rule.



This result can be attributed to the numerous reforms taken by the present government which has been very instrumental in pushing the Naxal movement in its last leg today. The central government recently created 'Bastariya' battalion of CRPF which for the first-time recruited more than 500 tribal youths from Chhattisgarh. The battalion is named 'Bastariya' as its members are from the Bastar region in southern Chhattisgarh, bordering Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Telangana. The unique battalion - recruited from Sukma, Dantewada, Narayanpur and Bijapur districts of undivided Bastar - has been raised with a specific purpose to strengthen security forces' operations in areas where they have witnessed maximum reverses for a few years owing to a lack of concrete intelligence and familiarization with locals and the topography. The hardcore, localized battalion of the young combatants was immediately deployed for anti-Naxal operations in some of the worst Left-Wing Extremism-hit areas such as Sukma, Dantewada and Bijapur.

Unique initiatives like this have been at the center of reforms taken by the government to end the menace of Naxalism and the data shows how the government is successful in doing that. Surely there are many challenges and government should be aware of the two instances of the past in which the movement almost ended but started again in its new form.

Today the government is in a position of strength. As it is said that any offer of peace from a position of strength is always credible and has greater chance of success. The present situation offers an ideal opportunity to solve the problem permanently and save the future generations from the arm rebellion which has captured the 106 districts of India. The government will, of course, must be careful that the Maoists do not use the peace period to gain time and regroup their forces.

X. Way Forward

Demonetization happened for several good reasons. Leaving all the other objectives it has achieved so far, it is beyond any doubt that demonetization has hit the backbone of Naxalism. The base of today's Naxalism is the finances involved i.e. the money that they earn from it. As the research team has learnt during the visit to Sukma, Bijapur and the other parts of the Naxal hit Chhattisgarh, the Naxalites have again started accumulating wealth and now they are being extra cautious by not storing the money in hard cash but to invest it in other forms. There are media reports which claim that Naxalites have now started channelizing their funds investment in gold and infrastructural projects. In the light of the background, there is certain recommendation which the research team finds relevant in the current scenario:

- 1. Continuous surveillance on the suspected bank accounts:** There are many accounts in which transactions were put on hold during demonetization. Continuous surveillance will help the intelligence agencies in breaking the nexus between Naxalites and their sympathizers.
- 2. Winning the contractors:** Naxalites get their huge money from the contractors belonging from road construction or tendu leaves collection. They often pay the tax levied on them by the Naxalites for ensuring the safety and allowing them in the project work. The police officials and the government must try to persuade the contractors to stop paying taxes to the Naxalites. This can be done by ensuring their safety for the entire duration of the project work.
- 3. Banning the subsidiary and the allied organizations:** One of the major aspects of the Naxal movement in India is the presence of their sympathizers in Indian Universities and in other urban spaces through several organizations which supports the Naxal movement discreetly but fights for the rights of tribals, women and other underprivileged on the face of it. Any such organizations supporting the Naxal movement in any form whether with intellectual inputs or in any other way should be blacklisted and the funding be banned.
- 4. Compulsory registration for all the voluntary organizations and NGOs:** Voluntary organizations (VOs) / Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) include organizations engaged in public service, based on ethical, cultural, social, economic, political, religious, spiritual, philanthropic or scientific & technological considerations. VOs include formal as well as informal groups, such as: community-based organizations (CBOs); non-governmental development organizations (NGDOs); charitable organizations; support organizations; networks or federations of such organizations; as well as professional membership associations.
The registration should be made compulsory for every VOs and NGOs. This will help in help in tracking the organizations, their work, source of funding, etc. which will further help the government in tracking the organizations working for Naxals/Terror groups.

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About PPRC

Public Policy Research Centre (PPRC) is a research organization established in 2011. The Centre aims at constructively impacting the policy formulation process with emphasis on good governance practices, efficient implementation mechanisms and evidence-based policy-making including policy-audit and evaluation, in the larger interest of the nation.

Public interest is of paramount importance in a democracy. No democratically elected government can perform its duties as the custodian of public good without evidence-based research. Solid research is a prerequisite of sound policy formulation and design making. Dispassionate and objectively conducted research enhances democracy as it can reduce the ability of those with vested interests to influence the public policy debate. The idea behind PPRC is to undertake structured research and carry field-study projects to explore constructive solutions on important policy issues in an institutionalized manner, through discussions, debates, seminars, study circles and brainstorming sessions.

Since its inception, PPRC has worked on several short-study projects as well as full length research products and has come out with occasional papers, study reports, research tools and similar publications.

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