

Naxal Conflict Monitor

[A quarterly newsletter of the Asian Centre for Human Rights (ACHR)]

C-3/441-C, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058, India

Tel/Fax: +91-11-25620583, 25503624

Website: www.achrweb.org; Email: achr_review@achrweb.org

Embargoed for: 04 July 2007

THE NAXAL CONFLICT: KILLINGS DECREASE, CONFLICT INTENSIFIES

Table of contents

I. OVERVIEW	2
II. ANALYSIS OF THE CONFLICT DURING APRIL-JUNE 2007	3
A. KILLINGS BY THE SECURITY FORCES	4
B. KILLINGS BY THE NAXALITES	5
<i>a. Indiscriminate use of improvised explosives</i>	6
<i>b. Killings of political activists</i>	7
<i>c. Killings of alleged "police informers"</i>	7
III. SCHOOLS ARE BEING TURNED INTO SECURITY CAMPS	8

I. Overview

According to the estimate of the Asian Centre for Human Rights, a total of 249 persons including 69 civilians, 113 security forces, and 67 alleged Naxalites have been killed in the Naxalite conflict during January – June 2007. The highest number of killings were reported from Chhattisgarh (141), followed by Andhra Pradesh (39) and Jharkhand (29).

There has been about 45% decrease in the number of killings in comparison to the same period in 2006 which saw the killing of at least 460 persons. However, the conflict is intensifying as reflected from the number of killing of the security forces. In addition, during April-June 2007, Jharkhand (24) witnessed increased killings.

The Central and the state governments continued with security approaches to address the Naxal conflicts.

According to the Ministry of Home Affairs of the government of India, the 23rd meeting of the Co-ordination Centre of the Naxalite issue in its meeting on 26 April 2007 stressed on both security and development aspects. The Coordination Centre stressed on the need for adopting security measures such as raising more India Reserve Battalions, strengthening security structures and intelligence gathering machinery, keeping a “constant watch on the movement of Naxal groups, their weaponry, training camps, hideouts, sources of weapons and funds, areas of current activity and areas in which they plan to spread violence and activity”. The Co-ordination Centre also stressed on the urgent implementation of developmental projects/policies of the government including Backward Regions Grant Fund, Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act of 1996, National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme and the Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act of 2006, review of the respective Resettlement and Rehabilitation policies on priority basis, and filling up vacancies in government departments especially in tribal-dominated rural areas.¹

Asian Centre for Human Rights (ACHR) consistently reiterated that there has been no dearth of development schemes in India but the implementation of such schemes perennially remained problematic and implementation of the schemes in the Naxalite affected areas almost came to virtual halt because of the increased conflict. An estimated Rs 6,500 crores meant for implementation of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme were not spent during 2005-2006² and Rs 1,522.90 crores for development of the tribals could not be released by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs to various State governments by the end of December 2006 because of the failure of the State government to submit utilisation certificates under the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act of 2004.³

¹. <http://pib.nic.in/release/release.asp?relid=27192>

². Rs 6,500cr for poor unspent, The Asian Age, 30 June 2007

³ . Ministry of Tribal Affairs of the Government of India to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

In comparison, the State governments were quick to implement security programmes. Orissa trained its first batch of anti-Naxal force comprising 53 police personnel of the Orissa Special Armed Police at the Anti-Terrorism Centre in Rourkela.⁴ The government of Jharkhand has reportedly decided to set up a special school in Hazaribag district to train the police in jungle warfare to fight Maoists who are active in 16 of the states' 22 districts.⁵

As the conflict intensifies, reports of violations of international human rights and humanitarian laws continue to pour in. Human rights defenders came under the attack. Since 14 May 2007, Dr Binayak Sen, General Secretary of the Chhattisgarh unit of the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) remained under detention under the provisions of the Chhattisgarh Special Public Security Act, 2006 (CSPSA), and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967) as amended in 2004.

Table 1: Killings in Naxal Conflict, January - June 2007

States	Civilians	Security Forces	Alleged Naxalites	Total
Andhra Pradesh	13	2	24	39
Bihar	4	8	0	12
Chhattisgarh	25	93	23	141
Jharkhand	13	7	9	29
Karnataka	1	0	0	1
Maharashtra	3	0	3	6
Madhya Pradesh	0	0	1	1
Orissa	7	3	6	16
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	1	1
West Bengal	3	0	0	3
Total	69	113	67	249

II. Analysis of the conflict during April-June 2007

During April-June 2007, at least 102 persons including 33 security personnel, 40 civilians, and 29 alleged Maoists were killed in the Naxalite conflict. The highest number of killing was reported from Chattisgahr (38), followed by Jharkhand (24), Andhra

⁴. Cops trained to tackle Naxalites, The Statesman, 24 April 2007

⁵. Cops to get jungle warfare lessons to combat Maoists, The Tribune, 17 April 2007

Pradesh (13), Bihar (11), Orissa (10), Maharashtra (3), and Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh & West Bengal (1 each).

Table 2: Killings in Naxalite conflict, April - June 2007

States	Civilians	Security Forces	Alleged Naxalites	Total
Andhra Pradesh	5	0	8	13
Bihar	4	7	0	11
Chhattisgarh	15	17	6	38
Jharkhand	8	7	9	24
Karnataka	1	0	0	1
Maharashtra	2	0	1	3
Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0	0
Orissa	4	2	4	10
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	1	1
West Bengal	1	0	0	1
Total	40	33	29	102

a. Killings by the security forces

The security forces killed at least 36 persons including 29 alleged Maoists and 7 civilians during April-June 2007.

Table 3: Killing by Security forces - April – June 2007

Sl No.	States	Alleged Naxalites	Civilians	Total
1	Andhra Pradesh	8		8
2	Bihar	0		0
3	Chhattisgarh	6	7	13
4	Jharkhand	9		9
5	Karnataka	0		0
6	Maharashtra	1		1
7	Madhya Pradesh	0		0
8	Orissa	4		4
9	Uttar Pradesh	1		1
10	West Bengal	0		0
Total		29	7	36

There have been credible allegations of extrajudicial killing by the security forces.

On 31 March 2007, seven tribals, including Madiyam Fagu, Madiyam Lakhma, Kudiyan Musa, Markam Sanko and Marvi Mangu from Ponjer village and Kudiuyam Bojha, a

former Special Police Officer (SPO) from Santoshpur village were allegedly picked up by Chhattisgarh Armed Police and Salwa Judum members and then killed at Santoshpur village near Bijapur in Chhattisgarh. The police claimed that they were *Sangham* members (Naxalite sympathizers) and were killed in encounter. But the villagers of Ponjer village claimed that the tribals were picked up and taken to nearby Santoshpur where they were killed. At least four of the victims were allegedly hacked to death using axes and machetes and the rest were shot dead. Two other tribal villagers identified as Kodia Mura and Podia had been missing since the incident and it is feared that they have also been killed. However, no First Information Report was filed in connection with the extrajudicial killings.⁶

On 4 May 2007, then Director General of Police, Mr O P Rathor ordered a departmental probe in the alleged fake encounter.⁷

On 7 May 2007, bodies of four victims - Madiyam Fagu, Madiyam Lakhma, Kudiyan Musa and Markam Sanko were exhumed from Ponjer village by doctors of Dantewara district hospital in the presence of family members of the victims and senior administrative and police officials.⁸

The post-mortem report prepared by doctors from Dantewada District Hospital, R L Gangesh, B R Pujari and Sanjay Baghel reportedly found gunshot wounds and deep gashes caused by sharp-edged weapons like axes or machetes.⁹

On 8 May 2007, the bodies of two other victims were also exhumed and sent for post mortem.¹⁰

However, in an attempt to shield the accused security personnel, the Chhattisgarh police registered a First Information Report with Bijapur police station against some “unidentified men in uniform”. It does not specify whether these uniformed men were security forces or Naxalites.¹¹

b. Killings by the Naxalites

The Naxalites killed at least 66 persons, including 33 civilians and 33 security personnel. Of them, at least 22 persons, most of them security personnel, were killed through the use of explosive devices.

⁶. Why this Chhattisgarh ‘encounter’ that killed seven a month ago is still a secret, The Indian Express, 5 May 2007

⁷. Rathor orders probe into death of 5 tribals in alleged fake encounter, The Hitavada, 6 May 2007

⁸. Bodies of four Chhattisgarh ‘encounter’ victims exhumed, The Indian Express, 9 May 2007

⁹. Chhattisgarh autopsy confirms foul play: shot wounds, gashes, Indian Express, 10 May 2007, <http://www.indianexpress.com/story/30552.html>

¹⁰. Chhattisgarh autopsy confirms foul play: shot wounds, gashes, Indian Express, 10 May 2007, <http://www.indianexpress.com/story/30552.html>

¹¹. Autopsy confirms foul play, cops lodge FIR, The Indian Express, 11 May 2007, <http://www.indianexpress.com/story/30622.html>

Table 4: Killing by the Naxalites - April – June 2007

Sl No.	States	Security forces	Civilians	Total
1	Andhra Pradesh	0	5	5
2	Bihar	7	4	11
3	Chhattisgarh	17	8	25
4	Jharkhand	7	8	15
5	Karnataka	0	1	1
6	Maharashtra	0	2	2
7	Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0
8	Orissa	2	4	6
9	Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0
10	West Bengal	0	1	1
Total		33	33	66

Apart from killing the security forces, the Maoists also continued to target the civilians.

a. Indiscriminate use of improvised explosives

The Maoists extensively used explosive devices to target security forces and civilians. On 5 June 2007, three employees of the Chhattisgarh State Electricity Board were killed in a landmine blasts triggered by the Maoists at a cement-laden truck in Narayanpur district of Bastar region of Chhattisgarh.¹²

Other instances of killing in the use of explosive devices included killing of CISF jawan, Ghuran Ram in Gumla district of Jharkhand on 22 April 2007;¹³ killing of a civilian identified as Kumar Murthy near MV 96 village in Malkangiri district of Orissa on 24 April 2007;¹⁴ killing five police personnel in Michgaon village of Kanker district of Chhattisgarh on 26 April 2007;¹⁵ killing of a truck conductor on Pakhanjore-Bhanupratappur road, 13 kms away from Pakhanjore in Kanker district of Chhattisgarh on 26 May 2007;¹⁶ killing of nine policemen at Kudur village in Bastar district of Chhattisgarh;¹⁷ and killing of two CRPF jawans in Rohtas district of Bihar on 5 June 2007.¹⁸

¹². Blast kills three, The Hindu, 6 June 2007

¹³. Rebels avenge police firing, The Telegraph, 23 April 2007

¹⁴. Landmine blast claims one life, The Hindu, 25 April 2007

¹⁵. Landmine blast kills 5 policemen in C'garh, The Indian Express, 28 April 2007

¹⁶. One killed in Naxal blast, The Telegraph, 28 May 2007

¹⁷. Naxal blasts kills 9, The Deccan Herald, 29 May 2007

¹⁸. CRPF men killed, The Hindu, 6 June 2007

b. Killings of political activists

The Naxalites also continued to target the political activists. Some of the political activists killed by the Maoists were (1) Korra Rama Rao of Congress party and Sarpanch of Balapam panchayat under Chintapalli Agency mandal in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh on the night of 10 April 2007;¹⁹ Samidi Ravi Shankar, Vice-Chairman of Zilla Parishad of Visakhapatnam of Hukumpeta village in Visakhapatnam of Andhra Pradesh on the night of 28 May 2007;²⁰ Ramchandra Yadav, a Janata Dal (U) activist of Satgharwa village in Munger district of Bihar on the night of 29 May 2007;²¹ K. Satyam, a Congress leader, at Chinnamidisaleru village in Khammam district of Andhra Pradesh on 5 June 2007;²² and Bishamber Singh of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of Simdega in Jharkhand on the night of 7 June 2007.²³

c. Killings of alleged “police informers”

The Maoists targeted civilians who were not their supporters. Often, they identified the victims as “police informers”.

The civilians who were killed by the Maoists on the charges of being “police informers” included a tribal woman identified as Samsubai Muraji Uike at Dabri village under Bedgaon Police Station in Raigad district of Maharashtra on 16 May 2007;²⁴ Anil Yadav of Satgharwa village in Munger district of Bihar on the night of 29 May 2007;²⁵ Kesmudi Venkatesh, a shop-keeper, who was tortured to death at Gandagatta village under Sringeri Police Station in Chikmagalur district of Karnataka on 3 June 2007;²⁶ a tribal villager identified as Doge Mura Naroti at Hedri village in Etapalli tehsil in Godchiroli district of Maharashtra on the night 11 June 2007;²⁷ three villagers identified as Harischandra Nayak and Bhubaneswar Nayak of Ranigola village and Mahi Pradhan of Telikusum village in Deogarh district of Orissa on the night of 21 June 2007;²⁸ an alleged Salwa Judum activist identified as Srinivas from Chhattisgarh who was killed at Edugurallapalli in Khammam district of Andhra Pradesh on 22 June 2007.²⁹

¹⁹. Maoists shoot down sarpanch, The Deccan Chronicle, 12 April 2007

²⁰. More Congress leaders on Maoist hit list, The Hindu, 30 May 2007

²¹. Naxals Kill Two in Munger District, The Patnadaily, 1 June 2007

²². Maoists kill MPTC member's husband, The Hindu, 7 June 2007

²³. Maoists kill BJP leader in Jharkhand, The Hindustan Times, 8 June 2007

²⁴. For the first time, Naxals kill woman, The Hitavada, 18 May 2007

²⁵. Naxals Kill Two in Munger District, The Patnadaily, 1 June 2007

²⁶. Naxalites' torture shopkeeper to death, The Hindu, 4 June 2007

²⁷. Naxals trigger mine blast, kill tribal, The Hitavada, 14 June 2007

²⁸. Blood spills in strike, again, The Telegraph, 23 June 2007

²⁹. Naxalites kill Salva Judum activist, The Hindu, 23 June 2007

III. Schools are being turned into security camps

Schools in Naxalite affected areas are increasingly turning into war zones. The security forces occupy schools for military purposes, thereby making the schools targets of the Naxalites.

The government of Jharkhand has reportedly converted 25 schools in the state into police camps so far, affecting over 12,000 students.

A few schools such as Chatrapur Middle school of Daltanganj had been closed since 1990. Many schools have not been totally closed but the security personnel live in the school buildings. Often, children are forced to learn their lessons in the open sky, apart from living under the fear of the attacks by Maoists.³⁰

In the early hours of 10 April 2007, Maoists blew up two schools, which till one month ago housed Central Reserve Police Personnel at Banahara village under Haveli Kharagpur Police Station in Munger district of Bihar. However, there was reportedly no casualty as there was no one in the two school buildings at the time of the incident.³¹

³⁰. Jharkhand schools become police camps, The Hindustan Times, 18 April 2007

³¹. Naxalites blow up two schools in Bihar, <http://www.expressindia.com/fullstory.php?newsid=84579>