

ISSN 2277 - 5730  
AN INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY  
QUARTERLY RESEARCH JOURNAL

# AJANTA

Volume - VIII

Issue - I

January - March - 2019

English Part - XI / XII

Peer Reviewed Refereed  
and UGC Listed Journal

Journal No. 40776



ज्ञान-विज्ञान विमुक्तये

IMPACT FACTOR / INDEXING  
2018 - 5.5

[www.sjifactor.com](http://www.sjifactor.com)

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Aurangabad. (M.S.)

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## CONTENTS OF ENGLISH PART - XII



S.No.	Title & Author	Page No.
1	Food Processing Sector for Make in India Dr. Bhanudas B. Chopade	1-10
2	Contemporary Indian Social Reality is depicted in the White Tiger Dr. N. B. Masal	11-14
3	Naxalism: A Threat to India's Internal Security Dr. Ramesh J. Perkar	15-20
4	Interaction of Tyrosine with 7 Methoxy Coumarin Fluoresces Quenching and Thermodynamics Study Dr. Rajendra Haribhau Satpute	21-31



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### 3. Naxalism: A Threat to India's Internal Security

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A new challenge to our national security is fast emerging on the country's horizon in the shape of Naxalite problem, it's phenomenal growth and spread into 15 of our states. It defies justification. They seem to be drawing their inspiration from the Maoist uprising in Nepal, which has provided them new zeal and motivation to replicate the same in India. They are becoming more and more belligerent in central and south India. The Maoist of Nepal and their ideological brothers PWG and MCC seem determined to carve out what they call "compact revolutionary zone" extending from Nepal through Bihar and then to Dandakarnaya regions extending up to Tamil Nadu to give them access to the bay of Bengal as well as the Indian ocean. This corridor has dangerous potentials and must never be allowed to be established. The recent merger of two biggest and most powerful Maoist rebel organizations, i.e. PWG and MCC into CPI (Maoist), and merger of their guerilla armies into a single entity as people's liberation guerilla army (PLGA) is a sign of things to come. At the time of merger announcement on 15 October 2004, Shri Akkiraju Haragopal alias Ramkrishna (PWG) and Ganpathy (MCC) the two top most leaders stated their objective

A remote village in the state of west Bengal gave birth to a movement which challenged the rule of law and those who ruled in the name of democracy. Naxal, Naxalites and Naxalism symbolism terrorism in a form which has not yet received any concrete definition. They are a group of extremists with no belief in parliamentary democracy. They exploit the grievances of poor people living in remote areas and suffering from social and economic disparities. Tribal and others living in remote areas with minimal access to benefits of progress and developments like health, education and employment are not greatly interested in abstract things like freedom of religion, freedom of press or right to vote. Their basic needs are right to cultivation, freedom from exploitation and access to minimum standard of living. Many of them do not have the opportunity to share the country's conviction in democracy and justice to all. Some of them have not been able to gain the benefits of freedom, democracy, development and governance. Such people, the victims of disparities, inequalities and social tension become ideal breeding ground for movements like Naxalites.





The next hammer on naxal movement and its cadres was the emergency imposed in 1975. Most of the elite members as well as grass root level leaders of the movement were either put in jails; many veterans went underground to escape arrest. For some time, it seemed, naxal movement would die in India. But it entered a new phase with the end of Emergency and a new government came into power at the center after 1977 general elections. The new and first non-congress government released naxal leaders from jails following a nationwide movement organized by various human rights groups in the country and abroad.

However, the series of developments linked to the naxal movement caused fragmentation in the ranks of Naxalism. But almost all the groups committed to the ideology of the movement traced their origin to the common political forum CPI (ML) which was not directly involved in armed rebellion but in propagating the ideology of Naxalbari movement and mobilising people in favour of it. On the other hand, the People's War Group (PWG) in Andhra Pradesh and Maoist Communist Centre (MCC) in Bihar preferred to go on the path of guerilla warfare. During the last two decades since the 1980s, these two different streams of the Naxalite movement have been staging armed resistance and rebellion in their respective zones against police force, administration, landlords and business communities. During the past years, the armed Naxalite groups have emerged as the main challenge to the government of India. These groups have largely expanded their influence zone and naxal movement in India is now recognized as a part of the Maoist activism world over.

Naxalism is not only a law and order problem but a direct result of under- development. More than 150 districts in the country are affected by Maoist violence. These are among the most backward areas of the country where poorest of the poor live. Civil administration appears to have withdrawn from seriously affected areas leaving the people to fend for themselves. There is an urgent need to improve the lot of the people in tribal and backward areas. One of the main reasons for the Naxalite problem is the absence of land reforms. The Maoist depend on the cadres of Tribals and Dalits (considered to be of the lower castes) who have been dispossessed of their lands with the indifferent state machinery adding to alienation. The police and the landlords remain the two biggest targets of the Maoists.

The Naxalite movement in West Bengal was launched from a strategically located territory called "Naxalbari". It is a police station under Siliguri sub-division of Darjeeling district west Bengal in may, 1967. The leader of the Naxalbari were Charu Mazumdar, Kanu Sanyal and Jangal Santhal. (11) This northern portion of the state of west Bengal is situated some 30 to 50 miles from Sikkim, Tibet and Bhutan in the north, from Nepal in the west and from Bangladesh



in the east. Before 1971, Bangladesh was the eastern wing of Pakistan and, obviously, it was governed by Islamabad until it achieved independence.

The strategic significance of this area of about 100 square miles lies in the fact that it is precisely located at the point of India's narrowest corridor, 13 to 14 miles wide which connects the main portion of India's land mass with its north-western states and territories of Assam, North-East frontier (NEFA), Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura.

There is significant evidence to establish the fact that this area has attracted the attention of external powers and adjoining states who wished to create difficulties for India externally as well as internally.

Naxalism is not the problem; rather it is the symptom of a problem'.

To eliminate Naxalism, it is not enough to eliminate their leaders, imprison their rank and file or arrange for mass surrenders of men and weapons. You do all of that and you can still fail; new leaders will rise, the cadres will return and weapons are easy enough to get (sometimes from the same ordnance factories that supply the Indian army, as the recent arms seizure in Bengal indicates).

To truly eliminate Naxalism we must undercut their *raison d'être*, their reason for being. Remember while their methods may be abhorrent, most of their goals (apart from overthrowing the government) are not. Therefore, we must fulfill their goals for them. If they have nothing to fight for, they won't fight. In Nepal, Maoists made headway and paralyzed the government. It succeeded in coming to some terms with the other parties and formed a government. Nepal being a very small country with little resources, Maoists could create havoc in the country. Their terrorist actions were successful although they claim it as a liberation movement from the feudal princely rule. Thus we see that Communism believes in terrorism to achieve its ends although they claim their actions as Guerilla warfare. There is a very thin line between Guerilla war and terrorism and this line in fact has disappeared in the modern days. Thus communists and terrorists can be considered complimentary in many aspects of consideration.

#### State-Wise Left Wing Extremist Violence From 2008 To 2011

State	2008-2009		2009-2010		2010-2011		2011-2012	
	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths	Incidents	Deaths
Andhra Pradesh	92	46	66	18	100	24	54	09
Bihar	164	73	232	72	307	97	314	62
Chhattisgarh	620	242	529	290	625	343	465	204
Jharkhand	484	207	742	208	501	157	517	182



	07	00	01	-	07	01	08	00
Madhya Pradesh								
Maharashtra	68	22	154	93	94	45	109	54
Odisha	103	101	266	67	218	79	192	53
Uttar Pradesh	04	-	08	02	06	01	01	00
West Bengal	35	26	255	158	350	258	90	41
Others	14	04	05	-	05	00	05	01
Total	1591	721	2258	908	2213	1005	1755	606

(Ministry Of Home Affairs, Annual Report-2011-2012)

India's Naxalite problem is rooted in socio-economic disparities, something that will only be compounded as State governments push ahead with SEZs and development projects that threaten to displace semiliterate tribesmen and farmers. Though India has several paramilitary organizations whose sole focus is combating Naxalites, security personnel are in poor condition to tackle the menace. Many junior and midlevel police officers are severely demoralized and frustrated by overly confident senior officials and policymakers who cannot cut through India's bureaucracy and coordinate across state lines against the Naxalites. This lack of coordination also largely results from law-and-order issues falling under exclusive control of the state governments. The central government in New Delhi cannot directly deal with the Naxalite threat in the states, and ideological differences among ruling parties at the federal and state levels result in incoherent policies across the country.

The Naxalite problem, which Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh described as the single biggest INTERNAL SECURITY CHALLENGE ever faced by India, shows no sign of easing. Inevitably, foreign investors looking to expand their operations outside India's urban areas must take it into consideration. (New Delhi, May, 24, 2010)

Despite the need to ease the tribals' poverty and blunt the appeal of the Naxalites, New Delhi still treats the insurgency largely as a law-and-order problem. States like Chhattisgarh, whose ill-trained police force is overwhelmed, have unleashed vigilantes on the Naxalites and the tribals and given the force arms and special protection under the law. The vigilantes, called Salwa Judum ("Peace Mission"), have made homeless an estimated 52,000 tribals, who have fled to poorly run, disease-infested government camps. Allegations of rape and unprovoked killings have dogged the Salwa Judum. Efforts to reach Salwa Judum were unsuccessful, but the state government has vigorously defended the group.

#### Capacity Building by State Governments

The primary responsibility for tackling the Left Wing Extremism situation rests with the State Governments, and they have to take coordinated measures for this purpose. In various



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reviews and discussions mentioned earlier, the State Governments have been advised to take the following measures:-

- (i) Time-bound action for augmenting the police force in the State (with reference to police-population ratio), and for filling up existing vacancies, particularly in the Police Stations/areas affected by Left Wing Extremism violence.
- (ii) Develop suitable incentives for officials posted in these areas and a rotation policy for such officials.
- (iii) Action to ensure that the Police Stations and Police Out-Posts in the areas affected by Left Wing Extremism activities are provided the necessary infrastructure in terms of secure Police Station buildings with perimeter security, barracks, armoury, mess arrangements, etc.
- (iv) Urgently earmark a reasonable component of the State Police for special commando/jungle warfare related training, for which establishment of training facilities within the State and, in the interim, tie up with the Army, Central Armed Police Forces and other States using such facilities as are available.
- (v) Strengthening the capabilities of intelligence gathering in the State with special thrust on strengthening these arrangements in the Left Wing Extremism affected areas.
- (vi) Adherence to the standard operating procedures for various types of police and security force operations so as to pre-empt possible attacks and minimize casualties.
- (vii) Focused measures to ensure that the field and intermediate level functionaries of key departments such as health, education, drinking water, electricity, revenue and other development departments are available and accessible to the people. This would not only include filling up of posts/vacancies, but also arrangements for their stay in the area of their posting.
- (viii) Identify critical infrastructure and development projects in the affected areas, as also critical infrastructure gaps, particularly in the sphere of connectivity, and formulate action plans to ensure the timely implementation of such projects.
- (ix) Create mechanisms for public grievance redressal, mass contact and public awareness, for creating an overall positive environment and confidence of the people in the local administrative machinery.
- (x) Under a well conceived strategy, a publicity and counter propaganda campaign should be mounted.





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### Measures taken by the Central Government

'Police' and 'public order' being State subjects, action with respect to maintenance of law and order lies primarily in the domain of the concerned State Governments, who deal directly with the various issues related to Left Wing Extremism activities in the States. The Central Government closely monitors the situation and coordinates and supplements their efforts in several ways. These include providing Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and Commando Battalions for Resolute Action (CoBRA); sanction of India Reserve (IR) battalions, setting up of Counter Insurgency and Anti Terrorism (CIAT) schools; modernization and upgradation of the State Police and their Intelligence apparatus under the Scheme for Modernization of State Police Forces (MPF scheme); re-imburement of security related expenditure under the Security Related Expenditure (SRE) Scheme; filling up critical infrastructure gaps under the scheme for Special Infrastructure in Leftwing Extremism affected States; assistance in training of State Police through Ministry of Defence, Central Police Organisations and Bureau of Police Research and Development; sharing of intelligence; facilitating inter-State coordination; assisting special intra-State and inter-State coordinated joint operations, assistance in community policing and civic actions and assistance in development works through a range of schemes of different Central Ministries.

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