

Politics of Good Governance and Development in Maoist Affected Scheduled Areas in India: A Critical Engagement

Studies in Indian Politics
7(1) 44–55, 2019
© 2019 Lokniti, Centre for the
Study of Developing Societies
Reprints and permissions:
in.sagepub.com/journals-permissions-india
DOI: 10.1177/2321023019838649
journals.sagepub.com/home/inp



Anshuman Behera¹

Abstract

The scheduled areas (SA) of central and eastern India, many of which are affected by the Maoist violence, have been subjected to systematic deprivation of natural resources, long-standing marginalization, poverty and economic underdevelopment. Various development and governance schemes that are packaged with the brand of 'Good Governance and Development' in these areas have aggravated deprivation in terms of land alienation, lack of autonomy of the local communities and multiple exploitations. The Maoists who claim to represent the local communities are often seen imposing their authoritarian diktats over these communities. On the other hand, the Indian state uses a military approach to fight the Maoist violence along with promotion of development initiatives to address the local discontents. The prolonged conflict between the state and the Maoists exposes the local communities to continued exploitation and deprivation. This article highlights the contradictions between the governance mechanisms and development measures vis-à-vis the constitutional provisions related to the autonomy of local communities in the SA. Subsequently, the article interrogates the politics of control and management of natural resources through governance mechanisms and development initiatives. Second, the article identifies the commonalities between the state and the Maoists in terms of their control over the local communities. The article argues that the state-led initiatives and the Maoist movement are both instruments in sustaining the conflict and alienation of the local communities.

Keywords

Scheduled areas, governance mechanism, development, Maoists, natural resources, local communities

Introduction

The strong relationship among governance, development (in terms of economic growth and modernization) and conflict has been extensively investigated. A dominant narrative on the relationship between development and conflict highlights two opposite directions in a feedback loop: conflict retards

¹ National Institute of Advanced Studies, Indian Institute of Science Campus, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India.

Corresponding author:

Anshuman Behera, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Indian Institute of Science Campus, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560012 India.

E-mail: beheraisanshuman@gmail.com

development and equally important, failures in development substantially increase the proneness to conflict (Collier, 2004). Accordingly, it is suggested that development reduces the risk of conflict, while the lack of development can enhance the susceptibility to conflict. Similarly, the quality of governance and its interactions with the society is found to be a significant determinant of civil conflict (Rus, 2012). In the Indian context, the idea of development encompasses the role of nation-building process, and this influences the state's perspective on conflict (Behera, 2017). Subscribing the aforementioned narratives on the relationship among governance development and conflict, the Indian state, of late, has taken up development and governance initiatives in order to effectively address conflicts. However, overemphasis on development and the state-centric governance mechanism can overlook important aspects of socio-political identities of the marginalized, inducing inequalities at multiple levels (Shah et al., 2018). Despite development and good governance measures, people's discontent and Maoist conflict have not been abated. These initiatives are, ironically, seen as instrumental in furthering alienation and sustaining conflict in many ways. Development and good governance without ensuring the rights and entitlements of the local people can only generate discontent and sustain conflict.

A large part of the Fifth Schedule Areas (SA) is coterminous with the presence of the Maoists². This phenomenon of Maoist presence has been understood mainly through two dominant narratives. Officially seen as a law and order issue, the Indian state hardly mentions the socio-economic and political aspects of the movement. Contrary to this, the Maoists assert that the movement is a representation of long-standing demands of the local communities. The dominance of these two narratives means that either side hardly engages with two important issues of development and governance in the SA. The issue of governance has always been understood as a state prerogative. Nevertheless, conceptualizing governance from a statist point of view overlooks the parallel governance mechanisms of the Maoists. Similarly, the issue of development in tribal majority areas in terms of economic growth and modernization (Majumdar & Madan, 1956; Vidyarthi, 1977) needs to be critically engaged. In this context, the issue of 'tribal development' needs to be understood separately. Scholars have made attempts to understand the responses of the tribals (*adivasis*) towards state-led development and how the statist definition of development has converted the tribals into strangers in their own land (Sundar, 1997). The state-led development model in the tribal areas can be understood through two important perspectives. One, it is a continuation of the modernization project in terms of economic growth and industrialization for which the resource rich 'tribal belt' provides an ideal space. Second, much of the development initiatives in terms of welfare activities by the state can be seen as a reaction in response to the protests by the tribals and other local communities premised on the sense of entitlements.

Despite multiple development and governance interventions, there is sustained discontent among the local people which raises questions about good governance and development. Building on these set of arguments, the article tries to critically engage with the contradictions, commonalities and issues involving both the state and the Maoists relating to the politics of governance and development. Starting with the governance issues in the SA, the article investigates the interactions between governance and land and forest rights of the local communities. Second, the article investigates the process of development

² The Communist Party of India-Maoist, Maoists in short, has presence in 180 districts covering 10 states of India. Guided by the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist (MLM) ideologies, the Maoists wage an armed struggle against the state to capture political power and herald a 'new democratic order'. In the process of their protracted armed movement, the Maoists have been able to garner support from various sources. A main source of their support base has been the popular organizations that have been fighting for their rights in different states. The Kui Lewang Sanstha, the Chasi Mulia Samiti and the Chasi Mulia Adivasi Sangha (CMAS) are some of the examples. The Maoists have also forged alliance with many organizations, depending on local specificities and demands, to widen their support base. In many cases, the Maoists use force to garner local support against the state. While the leadership of the movement is largely with non-tribal outsiders, the tribal youth contribute substantially to the armed cadre list.

in these areas. The article concludes with some observations based on the analysis and offers few suggestions to ameliorate the pains of conflict.

The Governance Conundrum

It took almost 4 decades for the Indian state to acknowledge the lack of governance or/and mis-governance in the tribal areas. In 2006, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Government of India (GoI) stated that the Maoists are taking advantage of the existing vacuum of governance systems at the grassroot levels (MHA, 2006). The integrated approach of security and development to counter the Maoists spells out governance issues that have remained least addressed in the SA. Dispossession of land and forest rights among the tribals, induced by mis-governance, is a major factor in accentuating discontent. Dispossession, especially with regard to land alienation among the tribals and lack of respect for tribal rights, has remained unaddressed (Ambagudia, 2010). With a view to address the tribal rights and entitlement in the Maoist-affected areas, the Minister of State in the MHA said that 'A National Policy and Action Plan to address LWE (Left Wing Extremism) problem has been formulated by the MHA which consists of an integrated multi-pronged strategy comprising Security related measures, Development related measures, ensuring Rights and Entitlements related measures' (Lok Sabha Question No. 86, 2016).

However, the newly formed governance policies that emphasize 'ensuring rights and entitlements' of the local communities have not been able to identify the issues that need to be addressed. So far where the tribal issues are concerned, existing literature covers wide range of issues starting from tribal policy in India (Sen, 1992), self-governance (Mukul, 1997), tribal development (Vidyarthi, 1972) and the administrative aspects of tribal governance and development (Meeta & Rajivlochan, 1997). There also exists literature on the rights and issues of the local communities, including the tribal majorities in relation to Maoist extremism. In this regard, one would find two sets of literature: one linking the issues of tribal rights and issues as main factors of Maoist insurgency, and the other linking the tribals with the Maoists. While the former attributes the failure of the state in addressing the tribal issues as an important factor leading to the Maoist movement (Gomes, 2015; Guha, 2007), the latter identifies the tribals as Maoists and does not hesitate to brand them as 'terrorists' (Shah, 2006). The following section attempts to identify the major issues of governance failure in the Maoist-affected areas in India.

Land Relations, Indian State and the Maoists

The issues relating to land alienation among the local communities in the SA have been an important factor leading to multiple conflicts, including the Maoist movement. A major contradiction that the Maoists have identified in Indian context is the 'contradiction between feudalism and the broad masses of the people' (CPI-Maoist, 2004). The founding document of CPI-Maoists (2004), 'Strategy and tactics of the Indian revolution', clearly defines the importance of land-related deprivation among the poor and calls upon the tribals to join their revolution.

Following is the state response to the land-related issues. Recognition of importance of land to the livelihood of the majority was instrumental for a number of land reform measures in post-independence India. The land reform measures included three major components: abolition of intermediaries such as zamindars, security of tenancy and a ceiling on agricultural holdings, which led to the distribution of the surplus land to the landless and the poor (Planning Commission, 2008). While land reform initiatives in most parts of India were mainly aimed at redistribution of land among the landless and poor, it had hardly any positive impact on the tribals. The tribals systemically lost their land either to non-tribals or

to the state-led development projects. Successive government policies played vital roles in alienating land from the tribals (Sharma, 2001/2002).

Ensuring land rights to the tribals and other local communities living in the SA continues to be an unachieved agenda of governance. Earlier studies have found that the community rights of the tribals over land and forests have been abrogated by the new laws passed by the governments accentuating conflicts in the SA (Upadhy, 2005). For instance, the 'Orissa Scheduled Area Transfer of Immovable Property Act 1956' which was passed to check the transfer of tribal land to the non-tribals empowered the sub-divisional officers (SDOs), without whose permission no tribal land can be transferred. The SDOs, mostly non-tribals, with their nexus with the sahkars, and government servants were instrumental in legally transferring the tribal land to the non-tribals. In places like the undivided district of Koraput, the SDOs transferred the tribal land to non-tribal in exchange of different types of favouritism that they received (Behera, 2016). The purpose of the act was defeated in this process (Mohanty, 1997). According to a report by the Tribal and Harijan Research cum Training Institute, around 145.41 acres of tribal land was purchased by the non-tribals between January 1961 and February 1968 only in Sunabeda areas of Koraput district (Yunus, 1977). Second, as the contractors took control over the forests, the tribals and other forest dependent communities were forced to sell away their property to the sahkars. While land dispossession among the tribals remains as a major issue, the government's effort in ensuring their land right has limited achievement. According to a report published in 2013 by the Ministry of Rural Development(2013, July), about 3.75 lakh cases of tribal land alienation were registered that covered an area of 8.55 lakh acres. Out of these cases, 1.62 lakh cases (43.2%) were disposed of in favour of the tribals covering a total area of 4.47 lakh acres (58.28%) and 1.55 lakh cases (41.1%) covering an area of 3.63 lakh acres were rejected by the courts on various grounds.

Land alienation among the tribals involves different forms and routes. The Xaxa Committee report identifies following routes of land alienation among the tribals: Development-induced alienation, community land of tribal communities versus individually owned registered land, state action of acquiring tribal lands for settling refugees, resulting in land alienation and displacement, creation of national parks, illegal participation of revenue functionaries and officials, incorrect interpretation of laws and manipulation of records and permission (as noted in Centre for Equality Studies, 2016, pp. 4–5). The statist understanding of land relationship with the tribals has always been from economic and livelihood point of view. However, land is not only a major source of livelihood for the tribals and other local communities, it is also connected with their sense of identity and history and is a symbol of social prestige (Elwin, 1963, p. 50). Accordingly, the alienation of land involves an intricate interplay of social, cultural, economic and political forces (Viegas, 1991, p. 77).

Issues around land have been one of the central objectives of the Maoist movement. Starting from 'pre-organizational phase' (Mohanty, 2015) to its present version of organized movement, the Maoists have been fighting against landlords and land alienation and for the land rights of various communities. There seems to be a strong negative correlation between the successful implementation of land reform measures and the presence of the Maoists (Warrier, 2013). In the SA, with limited governance success on land reform measures, there has been active presence of the Maoists. In these areas, the Maoists have successfully mobilized people against acquisition of their land by the non-tribals and the state. The Maoists are seen to have directly intervened or supported the popular movements against the acquisition of land by the state or state-supported private agencies. The movements at Nandigram, West Bengal, Chasi Mulia Adivasi Sangha (CMAS) in Odisha and tribal movement against Kalinga Nagar Project are reported to have Maoists' support in some cases and involvement in others. The Maoists, in this regard, have been extremely successful in cashing in on the popular discontent and bringing these movements under their fold (Denyer, 2007). With limited success of state governance in ensuring the land rights to the tribals, the Maoists offer an alternative governance model in these areas.

The Maoists' governance model in dealing with land alienation among the tribals involves two major drives: reclaiming land from the rich and landlords and community ownership over the land holding. The process of reclaiming land from the rich followed by community ownership over it serves the Maoists' purpose in two ways. First, by reclaiming land, the Maoists provide a sense of empowerment to the tribals and thereby command their support and obligation. Second, community ownership over land and its products is arranged in accordance with the communist ideology in terms of collective ownership over mode of production. Once the community as a whole has control over production, the Maoists, in reality, take complete control over the decision-making process not only over the distribution of the produce but also on the socio-political activities of the communities. The parallel governance mechanism that the Maoists are running in these areas is mostly done through taking complete control over the reclaimed land and its products. So far where reclaiming of land has been concerned, the Maoists have been successful in capturing thousands of acres of land since the Naxalbari days. Land capturing has been one of the major activities of the Indian Maoists even though they are seen to be diverting from other 'revolutionary objectives' (Mitra, 2017). The Maoist model of governance claims to have ensured the rights of the tribals over their resources which the state could not do. While the Maoists claim to have ensured land rights to the tribals, the ground reality offers a different perspective.

In practice, Maoist model of governance has further alienated the tribals from their land. The sangh or the organization (which is fully controlled by the Maoists) has complete control over land which does not allow any individual or household to claim any stake over the ownership. Despite the dominance of the sangh over the reclaimed land, most tribal groups actively participate in the land grabbing activities. Though it sounds paradoxical, two factors explain this process. One, the Maoists and its affiliated sanghs have substantial control over land and other resources in the areas where they have active presence. The use of violence by the Maoists and the sanghs, in most cases, forces the tribals to join the movement. Second, perception of the local communities against the activities of the state brings them closer to the Maoists. The tribals and other local communities believe that the loss of their land and other resources to the sahkars and others takes place in active connivance of the state. The process of reclaiming land from the sahkars gives a sense of empowerment to the tribal. However, the claim of the Maoists in redistribution of captured land among the tribals has not even been partially achieved (Mitra, 2017). As the Maoists take total control over land and other forest resources, any demand by the tribals about ownership over resources meets with coercive actions from the former. Limited state protection from the Maoist violence, let alone ensuring tribal rights and entitlements, has forced the tribals to comply with harsh and coercive measures. Bandhugaon and Narayanpatna Blocks in Koraput district of Odisha are examples where the Maoists and its supported organizations like the CMAS take away the lion's share of the total product from the community farming in the name of revolution (Behera, 2013).

It can be safely argued that the issue of politics of governance relating to land is trapped in the vicious circle of limited success of state mechanism and the Maoists. Though both the governance models of the state and the Maoists look contrarian to each other, there seems to be a commonality between the two. Both the models claim to be working towards ensuring the rights and entitlements of the tribals and other local communities, but in reality both cause deprivation and dispossession.

Forest Rights, Tribals and the Maoists

Another major issue of governance in the SA has been around ensuring forest rights to the tribals and other forest-dependent communities. The British rule in India was engaged with extracting natural

resources from the tribal areas and facilitated the entry of non-tribal moneylenders, traders and businessmen who in turn started exploiting the local people (Burman, 2013). The post-independence Indian legal framework for forest conservation typically carried forward the colonial legacy with little or no recognition of community rights. Post-colonial India has deprived the tribal communities from their forest rights mainly through three activities: bringing development projects to the tribal areas, categorizing forests under the rules to protect forest cover and by providing license to private bodies to extract resources. The rights of the tribals in terms of living freely in the forest and to collect forest products have been scuttled substantially. The tribals have also been deprived of their forest rights due to the introduction of individual land tenureship. Since the lands that the tribals cultivated and lived for generations were not registered in their names individually, it allowed the non-tribal migrants from outside to take over the tribal lands. Caught between the imposition of forest Acts and deprivation of livelihood, the tribals were forced to work as wage labourers for the rich and the moneylenders.

The legal frameworks of the Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972 and Forest Conservation Act 1980 can be seen as major contributing factors to the legacy of exclusion and displacement of tribals. Between 100,000 and 300,000 tribals have been evicted from protected areas at different times (Lasgorceix & Kothari, 2009) and several million were deprived fully or partially of their sources of livelihood and survival. Various policies relating to forests and tribals in terms of sustaining livelihood and people's participation in forest management have often ended up being instruments for extending the bureaucracy interfering in the lives and livelihoods of the tribals. Furthermore, the private sector-led growth strategy in neo-liberal India accelerated the process of resource extraction and land acquisition. Arguably, all these factors offer a basis for the Maoists for their movement. Acknowledging this, the Union Tribal Minister Jual Oram stressed that

[I]n the coming year, we will strive to ensure that states implement the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act effectively so that forest dwellers get the rights to the forest land and resources, where their forefathers settled centuries ago and also to prevent them from getting influenced by Maoists. (Banerjee, 2016)

As a testimony to the governance failure, the Minister also added that the majority of rejections of the tribals' application demanding ownership over lands are based on 'trivial and invalid grounds' (Banerjee, 2016).

As far as the governance aspect of the forest rights of the tribals is concerned, successive governments have taken measures to meaningfully deal with the issue. However, the Scheduled Tribes (ST) and Other Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2016), popularly known as the Forest Rights Act (FRA), is considered to be a more comprehensive one which aims to effectively deal with the forest right issue. Section 4 (5) of the FRA provides specific safeguards against the eviction or removal of a member of forest dwelling ST or any other traditional dwellers from forest land under his/her occupation until the completion of recognition and verification procedure. While in principle the provisions included in the FRA look all-inclusive and give an impression of addressing the concerns of the tribals, little has been implemented on ground. After more than 10 years of the legislation of the Act, the tribals continue to live at the mercy of either the state officials or the Maoists.

The responses from the governments have been rather ritualistic to the extent of constituting 'high level' committees to review the situation. So far, there have been two committees to review the status of FRA since its legislation. A joint committee was constituted under the Ministry of Environment and Forest and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs in April 2010 to study the implementation of the FRA (2006) including the factors that were aiding or impeding its implementation, and recommend necessary policy changes in the future management of the forestry sector in India, which might be necessary as a

consequence of the implementation of the FRA (Lok Sabha Question No. 3673, 2015). Similarly, a high-level committee was constituted in 2013 to prepare a position paper on the present socio-economic, health and educational status of the STs and suggest policy initiatives as well as effective outcome-oriented measures to improve development indicators and strengthen public service delivery (Lok Sabha Question No. 227, 2016). According to government sources, 4,427,613 claims (4,311,233 individual and 116,380 community claims) have been filed and 1,746,338 titles (1,702,846 individual and 43,492 community claims) have been distributed comprising 43.92 lakh hectares of forest land (Lok Sabha Question No. 227, 2016). According to the latest government claims, a total of 139,266 Community Forest Right claims have been received as on 30 January 2018 out of which only 64,328 claims have been recognized and the rest have been rejected (Press Information Bureau, 2018). The rejections of the claim applications by the tribals, in most cases, are either invalid or on the trivial grounds such as lack of evidence.

While the state has done very little in ensuring the rights and entitlements of the tribals, the Maoists have also contributed substantially to the problem. Under the pretext of ensuring greater autonomy to the local people, the Maoists have taken control over land and other forest resources. Interactions with the tribals in Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand revealed that the Maoists or the Maoist-backed groups have been acting as middlemen between the tribals and the businessmen. The Maoists fix certain price over forest products such as tendu leaves, bamboos and flowers and the tribals are asked to sell their collections through the Maoists. In most cases, the Maoists or the sanghas take certain portion of the amount as contributions for the movement. The nexus between the businessmen and the Maoists deprives the tribals. While the mainstream narrative claims the tribals have been caught in the cross-fire and hence displaced, the Maoists unleash violence on some tribal communities who do not subscribe to Maoist ideology.

Governance and Implementation Paradox

Most of the unaddressed issues in the SA with Maoist presence can be attributed to the limited governance or governance failure by the state. By governance failure, I mean the structural paradoxes and implementation paralysis of rules in general and the Fifth Schedule provisions in particular. Meaningful and serious implementation of the Fifth Schedule provisions such as non-application of certain Acts passed by the state and central governments that are perceived to be against the people's interest, prohibition of tribal land transfer to the non-tribals, regulating the practices such as moneylending, bonded labour and implementation of the PESA Act (Panchayats Extension to SA) will effectively address the outstanding issues. Provisions in the Fifth Schedule have been systematically violated (Sharma, 2006) causing protracted discontent and resentment among the tribals and other communities. The tribal issues in the SA continued to remain as a low key issue for the governments until the Maoists arrived at the scene (Chakravarty, 2008). Socio-cultural bias among the government officials against the tribals in terms of lack of seriousness, being ill-informed, unwillingness and unfamiliarity contribute to the problem (Planning Commission, 2008). The commission also highlighted the governance difficulties that are deep rooted in the lack of sensitivity to problems of these in all organizations of governments and deep-seated social bias against these groups. The 'conflict trap' in terms of local communities being trapped between the state atrocities and indifferences and the Maoists, which further victimizes the tribals caught in the conflict between the state and the Maoists, suits both the state and the Maoists.

On the issue of implementation of Fifth Schedule provisions in the SA, the governors' role is critical. The governors are immensely empowered to implement the Fifth Schedule provisions to ensure the

Table I. Status of Governors' Report on Administration of Scheduled Areas (As on 31.12.2016)

S.No	States	Governor's report received for the years						
		2009–2010	2010–2011	2011–2012	2012–2013	2013–2014	2014–2015	2015–2016
1	Andhra Pradesh	Received	Received	Awaited	Awaited	Awaited	Awaited	Awaited
2	Chhattisgarh	Received	Received	Received	Received	Received	Received	Received
3	Jharkhand	Received	Received	Received	Received	Received	Awaited	Awaited
4	Odisha	Received	Received	Received	Received	Awaited	Awaited	Awaited
5	Telangana	State came into existence on June 2, 2014					Awaited	Awaited

Source: Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Gol.

rights and entitlements of the tribals. Ironically, the institution of governor has contributed very little in terms of exercising power in this regard. The governors' unwillingness and failure in ensuring tribal rights and entitlements have been highlighted by many. The Mungerkar Committee Report (2009) of the Planning Commission expressed its concern over the unwillingness and inability of the governors in dealing with tribal issues. Similarly, B. D. Sharma, former Commissioner for the SCs and STs, in his report, implicated the president of India and the governors saying that, 'Despite given immense powers by the Constitution, the President and the Governors did precisely nothing to improve the lot of tribals, particularly in Scheduled Areas' (Sahoo, 2015, p. 12). It has also been observed that the governors of the states with Maoist presence have not been regular in submitting their reports on administration of SA. Table 1 highlights the irregularities. In many cases, such as in Chhattisgarh, the reports that the governor shared with the president, for past couple of years, did not include the protest, violence and the administrative difficulties that the tribals are encountering. The unwillingness of the governors in dealing with the tribal issues can be linked to their affiliation to the political party in power. Hence, it becomes difficult to differentiate between the governments and the governors.

While the governments have achieved very little in addressing socio-economic development of the tribals, they keep on adding new policies in order to respond to the Maoist conflict and, moreover, to assert its political legitimacy (Lipset, 1959). Security and development, twin-track approach, has been the dominant state response against the Maoist conflict. While the security-centric approach has a rather narrow objective of neutralizing the Maoist violence, the development approach has been boasted as all-inclusive to fight underdevelopment and to bring about growth and modernity in and around the tribal areas. In the following section, I attempt to critically engage with the said development measures.

Politics of Development

Development response against the Maoists was largely secondary until 2006 as a military approach dominated the discourse. The 'Status Paper on the Naxal Problem' (Patil, 2006) tabled in parliament stressed on the development aspects in responding to the Maoists. The important development measures suggested in the paper were backward district initiative, tribal and forest related issues, effective implementation of land reforms and creation of employment opportunities in areas with Maoist presence.

The status paper highlighted a minor shift in government's response in terms of development as an answer to deal with the conflict effectively. The government's development approach was also illustrated

in a report titled 'Development Challenge in Extremist Affected Areas' in 2008 (GOI, 2008). The report suggested a number of development initiatives to deal with extreme poverty, underdevelopment and backwardness that are seen to be major factors leading to Maoist presence in the SA. Following the committee report of the evolving situation, the development approach as a response to the Maoists was adopted (Sahoo, 2015).

One important development measure by the government has been the Integrated Action Plan. It has been renamed as the Additional Central Assistance (ACA) since 2010–2011. Begun with 60 districts, this scheme has been implemented in 76 districts in 10 states with Maoist presence. The ACA is being implemented in 4 districts in Andhra Pradesh, 11 districts in Bihar, 14 districts in Chhattisgarh, 17 districts in Jharkhand, 10 districts in Madhya Pradesh, 4 districts in Maharashtra, 18 districts in Odisha, 4 districts in Telangana, 3 districts in Uttar Pradesh and 3 districts in West Bengal. In addition to the ACA, the Road Requirement Plan (RRP-I), Roshini and Skill Development Programmes are implemented in 34 worst affected districts in 8 states in 2009–2010.

The embedded lacuna in this approach of development is the lack of sensitivity to the local issues and demands. Many of the development activities are seen to be unwanted and unnecessary for the local people and to the local environments. The development activities in the SA serve the interest of the state and the private companies than the long-standing issues and concern of the local communities. A top down-approach that does not involve the tribals and other local communities results in their sustained alienation.

The development measures have limited achievements both in terms of containing the Maoists and fighting underdevelopment. Rather, the Maoists are making use of the development projects to their advantage in two major ways. First, the large-scale development projects in the SA are often seen as profit motivated which brings skilled labour from outside and token employment for locals as members of an unskilled low wage labour force (Navalakha, 2006). The Maoists have been successful in mobilizing the local communities against the development initiatives through this narrative. The people's movements against bauxite mining project in Niyamgiri Hills, protest against Kalinga Nagar industries in Jajpur, protest in Singur against the Tata and the movement against Utkal Alumina in Kalahandi are often linked to the Maoists. Both the state and the Maoists have the commonality in linking the people's movements that fight for the rights and entitlements of the local people with the Maoists. Branding tribals with the Maoists only helps the latter.

The large development projects and limited governance success have contributed to massive dispossession of land and displacement. The Maoists, on the other hand, damage the development projects as a part of their fight against Indian state. Destruction of roads, schools, telephone towers and targeting construction workers have been routine affairs of Maoist activities (Nilakantan & Singal, 2011). Such activities serve the Maoists in two ways: (a) attacks on the development projects add to the number of activities to the movement and (b) they help create fear among the local people and the contractors. The ongoing development projects have also sustained the Maoist movement economically. A study (Mahadevan, 2012) suggests that the changing nature of the Maoists has turned them into more of organized criminal groups that are involved in activities such as kidnapping and extortion. There has also been a nexus between the Maoists and the contractors. The contractors, as revealed by the local people (Behera, 2013), offer a certain amount of money to the Maoists for their security and business. Such an 'agreement' between the Maoist and the contractor does not necessarily guarantee smooth functioning of the project; on the contrary, the contractors delay the project conveniently blaming the Maoists. This process only contributes to the Maoist interest defeating the whole purpose of development.

The development initiatives with an objective to enhance capabilities of the conflict-affected people also enhance the capabilities of the Maoists. The roads constructed for better communication by the local

people are also used by the Maoists against the state. Better communication network has also helped the Maoists for effective operations against the state. The state also has largely failed in providing security to the new development projects. Insufficient protection to the development projects serves the Maoists more than the local people.

Conclusion

The development and good governance initiatives of the state in the SA have only contributed to further deprivation and alienation of the local communities. The Maoists presence in these areas has also contributed to the whole problem. The state engagement through development and good governance in the SA has been in the form of reaction in order to contain the Maoists and to have control over the natural resources. The Maoist movement also intends to have political control over the people and their resources. Sustaining violence, both by the state and the Maoists, overshadows genuine socio, political and economic issues of the tribals and other communities. Hence, the development and governance initiatives of the state are more intended to win the people away from the Maoists than ensuring their rights and entitlements. In the vicious cycle of conflict, trap finds the tribals and other communities at the receiving end.

In order to effectively engage with the conflict in and around the SA with Maoist, there is a need to focus on the following areas. First, it is high time the state engages with the Maoists in terms of negotiations. Though the violence level has come down substantially, the Maoists are not completely out of these areas. Neither the military nor the development approach of the state has been able to contain the Maoists. Negotiation initiatives will immensely help in managing the anti-state perception of the local people. A good way to initiate negotiation process is to withdraw the excess deployment of security forces from these areas. Withdrawal of security forces will win the confidence of the Maoists and the local people as well. Second, the development and good governance initiatives must be based on the local needs rather than what is being decided from outside. As per the provisions of the Fifth Schedule, the participation of local people in decision-making process holds key in this regard. This can be done through the active consultation with the village councils that are in place in these areas. At this point, recruitment of the local people to the administrative positions will be of great help. Integrating local people in the decision-making process will reduce conflicts. State-led development projects in the SA needs to be inclusive. Inclusive development will require extensive participation of the local people at the decision-making process, failing which will witness further escalation of conflicts.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author received no financial support for the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

References

- Ambagudia, J. (2010). Tribal rights, dispossession and the state in Orissa. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 45(33), 60–67.
- Banerjee, P. (2016, December 28). Tribal ministry to focus on forest rights law implementation in 2017. *The Outlook*. Retrieved from <https://www.outlookindia.com/newswire/story/tribal-ministry-to-focus-on-forest-rights-law-implementation-in-2017/963248>

- Behera, A. (2013, August 5). *Maoists link in Odisha: Case of the Chasi Mulia Adivasi Sangh*. (IDSA Issue Brief). Retrieved from http://www.idsa.in/issuebrief/MaoistsLinkinOdisha_abehera_060813
- . (2016). *Maoist conflict in Odisha* (NIAS Backgrounder No: B10-2016). Bengaluru: National Institute of Advanced Studies.
- . (2017). Development as a source of conflict: The sahlukars, displaced people and the Maoists in Koraput. *The Round Table: The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*, 106(5), 547–548.
- Burman, J. J. R. (2013, November 23). Factors of Maoist movement among the tribes of Central India. *Mainstream*, LI(49). Retrieved from <https://mainstreamweekly.net/article4598.html>
- Chakravarty, S. (2008). *Red sun-travels in Naxalite country*. New Delhi: Penguin Books.
- Collier, P. (2004). *Development and conflict*. Oxford: Center for the study of African Economies, Department of Economics, Oxford University.
- CPI-Maoist. (2004). *Strategy and tactics of the Indian revolution*. Central Committee (P), CPI-Maoist. Retrieved from <https://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/maoist/documents/papers/strategy.htm>
- Denyer, S. (2007, March 16). Indian Maoists exploit anger over land seizures. *The Reuters*. Retrieved from <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-india-maoists/indian-maoists-exploit-anger-over-land-seizures-idUSSP970520070316>
- Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development, GOI. (2013). *Draft National land reforms policy*. Retrieved from http://www.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/files/file/Draft_National_Land_Reforms_Policy_July_2013.pdf
- Elwin, V. (Ed.). (1963). *New deal for tribal India, commissioner for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes*. New Delhi: Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India (GOI).
- Forest Rights Act (FRA). (2006). *Act, rules and guidelines*. New Delhi: Ministry of Tribal Affairs, GOI. Retrieved from <https://tribal.nic.in/FRA/data/FRARulesBook.pdf>
- Gomes, J. F. (2015). The political economy of the Maoist conflict in India: An empirical analysis. *World Development*, 68, 96–123.
- GOI. (2008). *Development Challenges in Extremist Affected Areas* (Report of an expert group to Planning Commission [p. 23]). New Delhi: Author.
- Guha, R. (2007). Adivasis, Naxalites and Indian democracy. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 42(32), 3305–3312.
- Lasgorceix, A., & Kothari, A. (2009). Displacement and relocation of protected areas: A synthesis and analysis of case studies. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 44(49), 37–47.
- Lipset, S. M. (1959, March). Some social requisites of democracy: Economic development and political legitimacy. *The American Political Science Review*, 53(1), 69–105.
- Lok Sabha Starred Question Number 86. (2016, November 22). Retrieved from <http://164.100.47.194/Loksabha/Questions/QResult15.aspx?qref=41494&lsno=16>
- Lok Sabha Unstarred Question, No. 227. (2016, July 18). Retrieved from <http://164.100.47.194/Loksabha/Questions/QResult15.aspx?qref=35508&lsno=16>
- Lok Sabha Unstarred Question, No. 3673. (2015, December 12). Retrieved from <http://164.100.47.194/Loksabha/Questions/QResult15.aspx?qref=27906&lsno=16>
- Mahadevan, P. (2012). The Maoist insurgency in India: Between crime and revolution. *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, 23(2), 203–220.
- Majumdar, D. N., & Madan, T. N. (1956). *An introduction to social anthropology*. Mumbai: Asia Publishing House.
- Meeta, & Rajivlochan. (1997). Reorienting Tribal Development: Administrative Dilemmas. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 32(33/34), 2092–2095.
- Mitra, D. (2017, April 24). New Maoist Revolts didn't identify enemy, have plan for land capture. *The Outlook*. Retrieved from <https://www.outlookindia.com/magazine/story/new-maoist-revolts-didnt-identify-enemy-have-plan-for-land-capture/298752>
- Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). (2006). *Left Wing Extremism (LWE) Division*. Retrieved from https://mha.gov.in/division_of_mha/left-wing-extremism-division
- Ministry of Tribal Affairs, GOI. (2016). Frequently asked Questions on the Forest Rights Act. New Delhi: Author. Retrieved from <https://tribal.nic.in/FRA/data/FAQ.pdf>
- . (2017). *Annual Report (2016–2017)*. Retrieved from <https://tribal.nic.in/writereaddata/AnnualReport/AnnualReport2016-17.pdf>

- Mohanty, B. B. (1997). State and tribal relationship in Orissa. *Indian Anthropological Association*, 27(1), 9–10.
- . (2015). *Red and green: Five decades of Indian Maoist Movement*. Kolkata: Setu Prakashani.
- Mungerkar, B. (2009). *Third Report of the Standing Committee on Inter-Sectoral Issues Relating to Tribal Development on Standards of Administration and Governance in the Scheduled Areas*. Retrieved from <https://tribal.nic.in/writereaddata/AnnualReport/Mungekar3rdreport2.pdf>
- Mukul. (1997). Tribal areas: Transition to self-governance. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 32(18), 928–929.
- Navalakha, G. (2006). Maoists in India. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 41(22), 2189.
- Nilakantan, R., & Singal, S. (2011). *The economic costs of Naxalite violence and the economic benefits of a unique robust security response*. Retrieved from http://www.aae.wisc.edu/mwiedc/papers/2011/singhal_saurabh.pdf
- Patil, S. (2006, March 13). *Status Paper on the Naxal Problem*. Retrieved from http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/document/papers/06mar13_naxal%20problem%20.htm
- Planning Commission, GOI. (2008). *Standing committee on inter-sectorial issues relating to tribal development on standards of administration and governance in the scheduled areas*. Retrieved from <https://tribal.nic.in/writereaddata/AnnualReport/Mungekar3rdreport2.pdf>
- Press Information Bureau. (2018). *Several steps are being taken by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for speedy implementation of Forest Rights Act-2006 and settlement of community claims*. Retrieved from <http://www.pib.nic.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1522730>
- Rus, H. A. (2012). Environmental depletion, governance, and conflict. *Southern Economic Journal*, 78(4), 1305–1332.
- Sahoo, N. (2015). Dealing with Maoist threats: The development and governance conundrum. *ICSSR Journal of Abstract and Reviews*, 37(2), 1–25.
- Sen, R. (1992). Tribal policy of India. *Indian Anthropologist*, 22(2), 77–89.
- Shah, A. (2006). Markets of protection: The ‘terrorist’ Maoist movement and the State in Jharkhand, India. *Critique of Anthropology*, 26(3), 297–314.
- Shah, A., Lerche, J., Axelby, R., Benbabaali, D., Donegan, B., Raj, J., & Thakur, V. (2018). *Ground down by growth: Tribe, caste, and inequality in twenty-first century India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Sharma B. D. (2006). *Report of the sub-committee appointed by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to draft Model Guidelines to vest Gram Sabhas with powers as envisaged in PESA*. Retrieved from <https://www.panchayat.gov.in/documents/10198/348968/Report%20of%20Shri%20B%20D%20Sharma%20Sub%20Committee.PDF>
- Sharma, C. K. (2001/2002). Tribal land alienation: Government’s role. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 36(52), 4791–4792.
- Sundar, N. (1997). *Subalterns and sovereigns: An anthropological history of Bastar 1854–1996*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Upadhyaya, C. (2005). Community rights in Land in Jharkhand. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 40(41), 4435–4438.
- Vidyarthi, L. P. (1972). Problems and prospects of tribal development in India. *Indian Anthropologist*, 2(2), 80–93.
- . (1977). *Report of the commissioner for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, 1973–1974*. Delhi: The Controller of Publications.
- Viegas, P. (1991). *Encroached and enslaved: Alienation of tribal lands and its dynamics*. New Delhi: Indian Social Institute.
- Warrier, S. (2013, May 27). *Where land reforms have taken place, there are no Maoists*. Retrieved from <http://www.rediff.com/news/interview/an-open-market-with-democracy-is-better-than-communism/20130527.htm>
- Yunus, S. A. (1977). Orissa. In S. N. Dubey and R. Muridia (Eds.), *Land alienation and restoration in tribal communities in India*. Mumbai: Himalaya Publishing House.