

State of the Nation Survey: 2010

Section I: Level of Awareness

- Level of awareness about Naxalites is reasonably high.
- 85 per cent people have heard about the terms Naxalites (Or maoist or other local name) in the districts where survey was conducted.
- The awareness about the terms Naxal is much higher in these Naxal affected districts compared to all India.
- This awareness is not new, as large number of people had heard the word Naxal for quite some time.
- But awareness about other incidence/activities related to Naxal is not very high, especially among those not exposed to media.

Table I.1: Very high level of awareness about Naxalites

	Naxal Affected District 2010	All India (2009)
Heard about Naxalites	85%	54%

Q. Have you heard about the following (Record Yes/No for each. If the respondent have not heard of 'naxalite' or 'maoist' Refer to local name used for Naxalites, /PWG/sathee etc.. Write the term in clear handwriting against option C and use the same term throughout the questionnaire for the ease of respondent)

A. Naxalite/Naxalwadi

B. Maoist/Maowadi

C. -----(Local name for naxalites)

Table 1. 2: Familiarity with the Naxalites is not recent

Knew about Naxal since---	
More than 5 years	44%
Between 1-5 years	34%
--During last 1 year	22%

Note: Figures calculated only amongst those who have heard about Naxalites.

Q. When did you first hear about the naxalites?

Table 1.4: Lower awareness about events highlighted by media

Those who had heard about---	All	In Chhattisgarh
Operation Green Hunt	27%	28%
Salwa Judum	10%	51%
Death of Maoist leader Azad	20%	24%
Killing of CRPF Jawans by Naxals	45%	54%
Articles by Arundhati Roy	6%	9%

Q. Please tell me if you have heard of these? (Record Yes/No for each)

- a. Operation Green Hunt*
- b. Salwa Judum*
- c. Encounter Death of maoist leader Azad*
- d. Killing of CRPF Jawans by Naxalites*
- e. Articles by writer Arundhati Roy*

Table 1. 5: Uneven awareness about political leaders

Those who knew the name of	
Prime Minister	45%
Home Minister	17%
Chief Minister*	63%
Local Member of Parliament	38%
Local M.L.A	53%

Note: * Excludes Jharkhand

Q. Please tell me if you know the name of the following? (Please tick whether R has answered correctly or incorrectly)

- A. Who is the Prime minister of India?*
- B. Who is the Home minister of India?*
- C. Who is the chief minister of your state?*
- D. Who is your MP?*
- E. Who is your MLA?*

Section II: How has it affected the Day-to Day life of the People?

- Though there is some threat perception, but not to the extent as one would imagine; only 10 percent felt the place to be very unsafe for living.
- Naxalite threat is not mentioned spontaneously by many as the major problem in the locality [table needed]
- Level of felt insecurity is close to what people in Nepal indicated (10 percent unsafe) when the CSDS conducted the survey in Nepal at the time when Maoist insurgency was at its peak .
- The impression that the writ of the state does not run in these districts is not confirmed by the people there.
- The official claim that security/safety situation in these locality has improved during last 6 months is not endorsed by the people.
- Activity of security forces has surely increased, but govt. has not been able to gain more ground in these districts in recent times because there is a popular perception that the Naxals have also become more powerful during the last 6 months.
- There is some interaction of the common people with the Naxal (it may have been under-reported in this survey due to fear), but not necessarily negative. People also expressed similar experience with the security forces, more positive, but not always so.

2.1 Perceptions about security are not alarming

Those who feel	
--- Very Unsafe	10%
---somewhat Unsafe	34%
---very Safe	50%
No Opinion	6%

Q. While talking to people in the locality some people said that this locality is unsafe for living. How unsafe do you feel living in this locality– do you feel very unsafe, somewhat unsafe, very little unsafe not at all unsafe?

Table 2.3 Situation has not improved in the last six months

In the last six months, this locality has become---	
More safe	17%
Less safe	18%
No change	58%
No Opinion	7%

Q. If you compare the situation in your village/mohalla/gali six months ago, do you now feel more safe than before, as safe as before or less safe than before?

Table 2.4: Impressions of Naxalite control are exaggerated

—Whose writ runs in your locality?	
Government has full control	49%
Government has Lost some control to Naxal	13%
Naxal rule during night	8%
Naxals in full control	2%

Note: Rest is No Opinion 28%

Q . We often hear that at many places government has effectively lost control and in practice Naxals run the government? Thinking about your own area would you say that the government is fully in control, government has lost some control to naxals, government rules during the day but naxals rule during the night or the naxals are in full control in your area?

Table 2.5 Security Forces are more active...

In the last six months, activity of security forces has..	
--Increased	30%
Decreased	14%
No difference	26%

Note: Rest is No Opinion 30%.

Q. Thinking again of your area, in the last six months have you noticed any change in the activities of security forces against the naxalites? Has their activities increased, decreased or do you notice no difference?

Table 2.6 ... but Naxals have become more powerful

Naxals have become ..	
More powerful	31%
Less powerful	17%
No difference	19%

Note: Rest is No Opinion 33%.

Q. In the last six months, have you noticed any change in the activities of the naxalites in your area? Have they become more powerful, less powerful or do you notice no difference?

Table 2.7: Limited and neutral reporting of interaction with Naxals

Who met the naxals in the last one year	7%
Among those who encountered naxals	
Positive experience	20%
Negative experience	20%
Neutral	44%
No Opinion	16%

Q. In the last one year did you or anyone from your family had a chance meeting with any naxalite worker or leader?

Q. (If Yes) What was the experience like - Was it positive, negative or neutral?

Table 2.8: Limited and more positive reporting of interaction with security forces

Who met the Security forces	9%
Among those who encountered security forces	
Positive experience	36%
Negative	11%
Neural	48%
No Opinion	5%

Q. In the last one year did you or anyone from your family had a chance meeting with any security forces or army?

Q.. (If Yes) What was the experience like - Was it positive, negative or neutral?

Table 2.9: Caught in the conflict

In last one year any family member or person from neighborhood suffered a loss of life, property or harassment at the hands of ...	Yes	No	Did not answer
....Naxals	5%	87%	8%
....Security Forces	1%	92%	7%

Q. Thinking of the last one year did anyone in your family or in your neighborhood suffered a loss of life, property, Physical or sexual Harassment at the hands of Naxals?

Q. Thinking of the last one year did anyone in your family or in your neighborhood suffered a loss of life, property, Physical or sexual Harassment at the hands of Security forces?

Section III: Who are Naxals?

- Most people describe Naxals not as bad or anti social elements, but as those who are poor and deprived or those who work for them. Very few s identity them by their ideological leanings.
- Opinions are divided about where have the Naxals come from.
- Amongst those who had an opinion on the reasons for the rise of naxalism, a majority mentions developmental deficit. Social Inequality and Sense of helplessness are other reasons to which people associate as the cause of the rise of Naxalism.
- Majority of the people could identify the aims and objectives of the Naxalites, but amongst those who responded the opinions are sharply divided. Half of them believe that they want to bring revolution and secure justice for poor while similar proportions of people think they are mercenaries or are just power hungry.
- The proportion of the sympathizers of the naxalites is very low, about 10 percent. [To create an index of sympathy/hostility with Naxals four questions from the survey have been clubbed together). Another 37 per cent are not hostile. The rest are mildly or intensely hostile to them. But their sympathizers are not concentrated among the poorest or the adivasis. The poorest are a shade more sympathetic than the rest but also a shade more hostile. The adivasis are no different than the rest of the population in their sympathy or hostility.

Table 3.1: Naxalites do not enjoy a negative image

Who are Naxals?	
Underprivileged and poor	26%
Revolutionary	5%
Neutral Descriptions	7%
Negative descriptions	7%
Other descriptions	6%
No Opinion	49%

Note: This is an open ended question, where Investigator recorded respondent's answer Verbatim. The code book had around fifty pre-coded categories which have been then collapsed in five broad categories.

Q. Who are "naxalites"? [Record exactly and use codebook for coding]

Table 3.2: Mixed impressions about their origins

Where are Naxals from?	
Young Adivasi from local area	12%
Adivasi from neighboring area	13%
Non Adivasi from outside	19%
Others	5%
No Opinion	51%

Q . People have different views on where Naxals are from. Some say that they are mostly young adivasis from this area; others say they are adivasis from neighbouring areas whereas some others say that they are mostly non-adivasis from outside this area. Thinking of your own area, what is your opinion on this?

Table 3.3: Development deficit held responsible for the rise of naxalites

Reason for the rise of Naxalites	
Lack of development	21%
Social Inequality	7%
Sense of helplessness	6%
Institutional failure	6%
Failure of state/ government	5%
No opinion	55%

Note: This is an open ended question, where Investigator recorded respondent's answer Verbatim. The code book had around fifty pre-coded categories which have been then collapsed in five broad categories.

Q . In your Opinion what is the real reason for the rise of Naxal Activities? [Record exactly and use codebook for coding]

Table 3.4: Very few identify naxalites with their ideology

What do the Naxalites want?	
Secure justice for the poor by using gun	12%
Bring revolution, overthrow the govt.	11%
Capture power by violent means	11%
power and money for themselves	14%
No Opinion	52%

Q. In your opinion what is the main aim/objectives of the naxalites?

Table 3.5: Low proportion of sympathizers

Level of sympathy for Naxals	
Sympathizers	10%
Mild sympathy	37%
Mild hostility	30%
Hostile	23%

Note: Index of sympathy have been created using four questions

*Q. People have different opinions regarding the Naxalites. I will read out some of those. Please tell me, with which one do you agree most? **(Read out answer categories 1 to 3)***

1. The naxalite spread needless violence
2. The naxalites struggle for the rights of the poor
3. Their demands are genuine but their methods are wrong
8. No Opinion

Q . Now I am going to read out some statements about Naxalism and issues related to it. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with them. (Probe further for 'Strongly' or 'Somewhat' Agree/ Disagree.)

- Naxalites are exploiting innocent adivasis
- Government only listens to guns, so the naxalites had to take up guns
- Naxalites are right to raise their issues, but they should not use guns

Table 3.6: Sympathizers not concentrated among the poorest

All	10%
Rural poor	11%
Rural Lower	10%
Rural middle	7%
Rural upper	7%
Urban	7%

Table 3.7: Adivasis sympathize as much as the rest

All	10%
Adivasi	10%
Dalit	9%
OBC	12%
Upper Caste	7%

Section IV: Popular perception about the methods

- The dominant opinion is that while their demands are genuine, their methods are wrong. This opinion is shared even by those otherwise sympathetic to them.
- Ordinary people do not share very strong positive or negative assessment about the naxalites. More people disagree than agree with the rationale that Naxalites are forced to take to arms for the state does not listen to them otherwise. The same is the case with the suggestion that the real intent behind operation Greenhunt is to clear the forests for exploitation by corporate interests.
- Similarly the suggestion that Naxalites are exploiting innocent Adivasis also receives lukewarm support, a few points more agree than disagree with it. The response of the Adivasis themselves is not different from the rest.

Table 4.1: Rejection and reservations outnumber affirmation of the naxalites

Opinion on the methods of the Naxals	Naxal Affected districts 2010	All India 2009
Naxalites spread needless violence	16%	27%
Struggle for the rights of poor	15%	17%
Demands are genuine, but methods wrong	32%	36%
No Opinion	37%	20%

Q. People have different opinions regarding the Naxalites. I will read out some of those. Please tell me, with which one do you agree most? (Read out answer categories 1 to 3)

4. *The naxalite spread needless violence*
5. *The naxalites struggle for the rights of the poor*
6. *Their demands are genuine but their methods are wrong*
9. *No Opinion*

Table 4.2: Pro-Naxalite justifications not endorsed

	Agree	Disagree
Taking up gun by Naxalite justified since govt. only listen to gun	23%	33%
Anti- Naxal operation is a pretext for clearing forests for businessmen and corporations	21%	33%

Q. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with

- *Government only listens to guns, so the naxalites had to take up guns.*
- *Government is using naxals as pretext to clear the forests for businessmen.*

Table 4.3: Emphatic rejection of violent methods

Naxalites are right in raising issues, but they should not use guns	All	Sympathisers
Agree	56 %	91%
Disagree	9 %	9%

Q. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with ..

- *Naxalites are right to raise their issues, but they should not use guns*

Table 4.3: Mild support for anti-Naxalite reading

Naxalites are exploiting poor Adivasi	Agree	Disagree
All	33%	28
Adivasi	32%	28

Q. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with ..

- *Naxalites are exploiting innocent adivasis*

Section V: The way out

- If forced to choose between the government and the Naxals, the people choose the government ten times more than the naxalites. But one-thirds refuses to take sides and one-eighths look for other options.
- When asked for solutions, the public opinion favors focus on development in this region over the government preferred way of repression and the pro-naxalite option of unconditional negotiations.
- The idea of unconditional ceasefire gets popular support. In fact the respondents clearly support the idea that development must take precedence over law and order solutions proposed by the government.
- At the same time, there are few enthusiasts for the naxalite ideology of wrecking the system for its revolutionary transformation. People prefer reforms over status quo or revolution.
- The people inside the 'red corridor' value their vote as much as rests of the Indians do.

Table 5.1: Forced choice favors the Government

In current conflict people stand with--	
Government	49%
Naxals	5%
Neither	34%
Other response	12%

Q. People have different opinions about the current conflict (ladai) between naxalites and the government. Some people are with the government and say that this conflict is necessary to establish peace. Others are with the Naxalite and say that this conflict is a popular rebellion. Some others say that they are with neither and are have got stuck (beeche fans gaye hain) in this conflict between naxalites and government. What about you?

Table 5.2: Preference for development over coercion or negotiation

How should the government handle this issue?	All	Amongst Sympathizers	With High Media Exposure
Coercive measures	19%	11%	26%
Negotiation with Naxal	11%	16%	14%
Development and infrastructure in the area	33%	59%	41%
No Opinion	37%	14%	19%

Q. Some people say that govt should use strong measures to stop Naxal violence; others say that govt should negotiate with the Naxals to stop the violence. There are few others who say that the best way of dealing with this issue is to ensure development/provision of proper facilities for the people of these areas.

Table 5.3: Government should focus on development rather than attacking naxalites

Government should focus on development rather than attacking naxalites	
Agree	67%
Disagree	7%
No Opinion	26%

Q. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with ..

- Instead of fighting against naxalites, the government should focus on development in these areas*

Table 5.4: Support for unconditional ceasefire

Both Government and Naxal should cease hostilities without putting any condition	All	Amongst Sympathizers
Agree	56%	77%
Disagree	12%	21%
No Opinion	32%	2%

Q. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with ..

- Government and naxalite should stop attacking each other without putting any conditions*

Table 5.5: Faith in Democratic process

My vote has---	Naxal Affected districts 2010	All India 2009
--Effect	60%	60%
--No Effect	22%	17%
No opinion	18%	23%

Q . Do you think your vote has effect on how things are run in this country or do you think your vote makes no difference?

Table 5.6: Reform wins over Status quo or revolution

Our Political System Should be....	
Retained	17%
Reformed	76%
Destroyed	6%
No Opinion	1%

Q. People have different opinions about our political system (Raajkaak ki vyavastha). Some people say that by and large things are fine and there is nothing wrong with our system. Others say that our system has serious defects and attempts should be made to reform it. Some others say that our system is so bad that we need to destroy it by violent revolution. What is your own opinion - Should our system be retained, reformed or destroyed?