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LOOKING AT PEOPLE TRAPED IN 'RED CORRIDOR' THROUGH THE LENSE OF 'HUMAN SECURITY APPROACH'

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Short Profile

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ABSTRACT:
This paper is focused on an enquiry of the people's security in the Naxal affected areas popularly known as the 'Red Corridor' through the lens of 'Human Security Approach' and 'Securitization Theory'. Though securitization theory has not been debated here in full length while human security approach find enough space to understand the security and plight of the trapped dwellers. The Naxal movement has been securitize as 'biggest single internal security threat' after its formation as CPI (Maoist) after 2004 by the government authorities, so the security concern of State and its population has valid point to be discussed. It is very clear that this paper does not go in detail to enquire the causes and effects of the Naxal movement but is a little effort to understand the security and its relation and application on the concerning populations via human security approach.

KEYWORDS
'Red Corridor', 'Human Security Approach', 'Securitization Theory'.

INTRODUCTION :

India facing Naxal problem and its challenges since 1967 when it spurred in Naxalbari, now metaphorically known as 'Red Corridor' , in West Bengal due to bunch of reasons. The Indian government has taken host of measures to curb this problem including perceiving it as "one of the biggest internal security threat" . Its journey from, one time social issue based on social and economic variables, to internal security threat, has been full of debates and arguments. But the pragmatic measures taken by the governments time to time to deal with this problem has been always argued and debated by the various sections of the society including intellectuals. In this fray measures like development and counter insurgency were the core of these initiatives. But the 'human security approach' was never find appropriate space in the theatre of 'internal armed conflict' to understand the basic existence and security of the individuals.

India's record in dealing with 'internal armed conflicts' whether in Jammu and Kashmir, North-East or in case of Naxal issue, has not been up to the mark from a humanitarian perspective. However, despite criticism, the government has continued to perform its democratic duty on both levels: that is, it has countered the armed conflicts with an iron fist as well as with development initiatives with a human touch. This 'democratic duty' includes various development programs in social, educational, health and employment front on the one hand, while counterinsurgency measures by security forces, purely on the security plane, and some stringent anti-terror laws on the other hand (Chenoy and Chenoy 2010, p.74). However, the government lacks a 'human security approach' to secure the existing population of Naxal-affected wherein they are facing various kinds of problems in 'militarized atmosphere'.

To understand the government's response in dealing with the Naxal issue, it is quite useful to judge it through the lens of 'human security approach' as well. The governments' responses could be divided broadly in terms of initial phases of Naxalism and later the 'securitization of Naxalism as internal security threat' to India. It contains two types of approaches: developmental and counterinsurgency approach. The pros and cons of these two can be argued somewhere else in full length.

HUMAN SECURITY APPROACH AND NAXALISM

The Human Security way of understanding the Naxal conflict, and the government's response to deal with it combines various approaches; broadens them to include a rights-based approach and looking at the Naxal conflict through the lens of 'internal security' or simply underdevelopment is insufficient. The human security approach of peace and security emphasizes a process that is founded on dignity, justice, rights, inclusion and human development. Commenting on the concept of human security, Kamal Mitra Chenoy (2010) argues that:

It emphasizes that state security be broad so that people are part of security concerns. The human security paradigm of peace and security is possible only if states see their own security as inclusive of the security of individuals and communities, even if these communities are in opposition to the state. The role of the state does not end with the conducting of elections and the creation of a market. It begins from there as the state empowers individuals and decentralizes institutions and is seen to provide semblance of justice. The state delivers equal rights to dissident minorities, negotiates

their demands and allows for creative solutions.

Conceptually, the term 'Human Security' was first used by the United Nations (UN) in its Human Development Report 1994 (UN: 1994). "In reality it was an idea whose time has come as a result of the evolution of the thinking on human security as opposed to international and state security" (McIntosh and Hunter 2010, p.3). McIntosh and Hunter (2010) argue that human security has three primary components: the sanctity of the individual; the relationship of the individual to the community; and the preservation of people and communities in the face of national, international and global interventions. According to a UN Commission report on Human Security in 2003, chaired by Sadako Ogata and Nobel laureate Amartya Sen, the world needs 'a new security framework that centers directly on people.' Human security, the commission argued, 'focuses on shielding people from critical and pervasive threats and empowering them to take charge of their lives' (McIntosh and Hunter 2010).

The commission further suggested the development of a global framework focused on 'survival, dignity and livelihood; freedom from fear; and freedom from want" . The commission also highlights the most vulnerable individuals, who need protection from violent conflict; those people who are on the move; those people who are economically insecure because the global economic system has failed them; or whose lives have been destabilised by forces far beyond their control (Commission on Human Security 2003 cited in McIntosh and Hunter 2010).

United Nations' Human Development Report (UNHDR), published in 1994, reveals some indicators to judge human security. Some precise indicators include food insecurity, job and income insecurity, human right violations, ethnic and religious conflicts, inequity and military expenditure (UNHDR 1994, p.38). These are only some set of indicators and it captures few dimensions of human security.

The traditional approaches to security issues tend to focus on military security and are concerned with territorial issues. However, due to economic globalization, open market system and social networking, the paradigm has shifted from the nation to individual security. As the UNDP Human Development Report 1994 says:

For most people today a feeling of insecurity arises more from worries about daily life than the dread of a cataclysmic world event. Job security, income security, health security, environmental security and security from crime—these are emerging concerns of human security all over the world.

Like the realist mode of thinking, the human security approach also accepts the importance and role of the state in order to provide security to its dwellers. As Andrej Zwitter argues (2011, p.8):

Human security is not an anarchistic concept which denies the importance of the state. Rather it is a system based on the existence of the state. Without states human security will be impossible to achieve. What this approach aims for is the development of state's responsibility for safeguarding the vital core of basic human needs (as the commission on human security refers to it) of every human being in the world, in addition to their 'ordinary' responsibilities towards their own populations.

Broadening the concept of security from nation and territory to individual populations, one can say that human security is more concerned with 'freedom from want' than 'armed threat'. The human security discussion on root causes of armed conflicts, like Naxal conflicts, raises the following issues (Chenoy and Chenoy 2010, p. 23):

1. Development policies: Have they led to inequalities, marginalization and displacement, or helped growth that is inclusive and sustainable?

2. The impact of international system on the local situation: Has it led to unemployment, inequality and a diminishing welfare and social sector? If so, how can these be altered?
3. State policies: Are they discriminatory toward ethnic/religious or any minorities? Do they support corporate interests over local interests? Do state policies have legitimacy and are they acceptable to local people?
4. Identity issue: are the minority and excluded communities, like tribals and dalits, included in all institutions of state, economic decision making and public life or are they alienated from the sate process?
5. Militarization: To what extent is the daily life of people militarized? How many disarmament measures at the macro and micro levels have been institutionalized?
6. Violence: What are the forms of violence, physical, gendered, and structural, that the uses and faces? What are the peace negotiations taking place to resolve such violence?
7. Are the social, economic and political histories of the people and communities reflected in state and party policies? Are local customs and diversities reflected in policy and decision making?

Applying the human security approach to the Naxal-affected areas, we can see the vulnerable picture of the dwellers in the so-called 'red corridor area'. According to a report prepared by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Oxford University (UNDP 2010) on poverty, there are more MPI (Multidimensional Poverty Index) poor people in eight Indian states alone (421 million in Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal) than in the 26 poorest African countries combined (410 million). There is no wonder, therefore, that all these eight states are also a hot-bed of Naxalite activity and they are badly backward with tribal and *adivasis* population being in a majority.

State sponsored *'Salwa Judum'* , which was later banned by honorable Supreme Court on India to curb Naxal violence and social crime against the *adivasis* and tribal people in Naxal-affected areas are vital from a security point of view. The National Crime Record Bureau revealed that from 2001 to 2010, 6075 *adivasi* women were raped, 12730 cases of atrocities and 383 cases of untouchability practices across the country. 5000 *adivasi* women were sexually exploited in the state of Chhattisgarh during the anti-Naxal operations, which grows every day in the 'Red Corridor' across 9 states of India (Dungdund 2013, p.80).

Above mentioned data is enough to expose the ground realities of the Naxal-affected, *adivasis* dominated rich 'mineral corridor' of India. These inhuman activities under democratic laws are very dangerous for the security and existence of the people who are living in the periphery.

After judging the Naxal problem through the lens of various approaches of security such as 'securitization theory' , the 'human security approach' and on the basis of violent casualties, there is no doubt that Indian state has successfully securitized the Naxalite issue as a grave threat to its internal security on the basis of various parameters.

However, the people, who are trapped in between and are trying to survive their daily life in socially and educationally backward but economically rich Naxal-affected areas, are facing an existential threat due to bad economic policies, poor governance and so called Naxal activities who claim to be a liberator poor people.

The highly militarized notion of security has added to the insecurity of *adivasis*, tribal and poor people in Naxal-affected areas. To safeguard peoples' security is a way of ensuring state security and for

this, it is necessary to broaden and humanize the concept of security itself (Chenoy and Chenoy 2010). Military counterinsurgency in Naxalite areas can intensify wars by exacerbating the very violence and attacks upon civilian population (Shah 2012, p.282).

Meanwhile, it will be worthy to conclude here to quoting the essay 'To build a Country, Build a Schoolhouse' of Amartya Sen's, published in *New York Times* (2002) where he cited Isaiah Berlin as saying: 'Men do not live only by fighting evils, they live by positive goals'. In the case of the Naxalite issue, the Indian state too should concentrate on fulfilling the basic human necessities of deprived people than fighting with them as security threat.

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1. The Red Corridor or the Compact Revolutionary Zone (CRZ) refers to joint efforts by the Naxalites of India and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) to create a corridor of influence from Nepal through Bihar and the Dandakaranya region to Andhra Pradesh. This stretch is also addressed as 'Pashupati' from Nepal to 'Tirupati' in Tamil Nadu. The purpose of the CRZ is reportedly to facilitate transportation of arms and quick retreat The Red Corridor or the Compact Revolutionary Zone (CRZ) refers to joint efforts by the Naxalites of India and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) to create a corridor of influence from Nepal through Bihar and the Dandakaranya region to Andhra Pradesh. This stretch is also addressed as 'Pashupati' from Nepal to 'Tirupati' in Tamil Nadu. The purpose of the CRZ is reportedly to facilitate transportation of arms and quick retreat passage. See Jha (2003), cited in Chitralekha (2012).

2. See speech of Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh in Chief Ministers' conference in 2007 where he declared
for the very first time Naxalism as the 'gravest threat to internal security'. See PIB 2007.

3.Former US President Franklin D Roosevelt gave a speech on 6 January 1941 in which he talked about 'four freedoms' including 'freedom from want and fear' (See MacIntosh and Hunter. 2010. p.3).

4.Political Realism is usually seen to emphasise the state as the main object of security, and war as the main threat to its survival and existence. Realist thinker Walter Lippmann argues that 'a nation is secure to the extent to which it is not in danger of having to sacrifice core values... victory in such a war'. See Peoples and Williams. 2010. p.4

5.Barry Buzan broadens the security agenda 'from the military sector into other sectors: political, economic, societal and environmental'. But there are too many questions surrounding the "broadening' of its agenda to include threats beyond the narrow rubric of state and military security, and to confront the claim that this agenda must also be 'deepened' to include the security concerns of actors ranging from individuals and sub-state groups". See Williams 2003, p.513.

6. Supreme Court of India banned Salwa Judum campaign on 5 July 2011. The honourable SC said in its order that the arming of untrained, barely educated tribal youth as Special Police Officer (SPOs) is unconstitutional, irrational, arbitrary, capricious, a degeneration of their dignity as human beings and in violation of Article 14 and 21 of the Indian Constitution that guarantee equality before the law and protection of life and liberty. See Supreme Court of India (Order) 2011.

7.The notion of 'security and securitization' is one of the most significant conceptual innovations to emerge out of debates over the nature and concept of security in recent decades. It is one of the prominent products of a group of scholars associated with 'Copenhagen School' dominated by Barry Buzan and Ole Weaver. See Peoples, C. and CP Williams 2010, pp. 76-78.

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