

Refugee Review Tribunal

AUSTRALIA

RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE

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This response was prepared by the Country Research Section of the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RRT within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum.

Questions

1. Please provide background information on the PWG, the RYL and their relationship with each other and the CPI-ML. What are the objectives of these groups, when were they formed, what is the membership, in which states/areas they operate, etc?
2. What is the relationship of these groups with the authorities? Is there any evidence of the groups being targeted either in Tamil Nadu or in other states? Would group members be arrested for the reason of their membership or political activities?
3. Please provide brief political information (ie parties in power) for Tamil Nadu from 1985 to the present.
4. Please provide anything else that may be useful.
5. Would you be able to include in the response a brief explanation as to what Tamizhga Rahul Gandhi Peravai is?

RESPONSE

1. Please provide background information on the PWG, the RYL and their relationship with each other and the CPI-ML. What are the objectives of these groups, when were they formed, what is the membership, in which states/areas they operate, etc.

The People's War Group (PWG), the Radical Youth League (RYL) and the Communist Party of India (Marxist – Leninist) CPI – (ML) are part of the Naxalite movement in India. The PWG is engaged in an armed struggle for political, social and economic reforms in India and the organisation is active in the Indian states of Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka (Mohanty, M. 2005, 'The course of Naxalism', Himal South Asian website, September

http://www.himalmag.com/2005/september/analysis_1.html – Accessed 8 March 2007 – Attachment 1).

People's War Group (PWG)

The Government of Tamil Nadu banned the PWG on 10 September 2004 to prevent Naxalite fighters and sympathisers from crossing into Tamil Nadu from the neighbouring Naxal stronghold state of Andhra Pradesh ('Tamil Nadu declares People's War unlawful association' 2004, *The Hindu*, September 11

<http://www.hinduonnet.com/2004/09/11/stories/2004091109330100.htm> – Accessed 18 October 2006 – Attachment 2).

The PWG was formed in 1980 by the CPI – (ML). On 14 October 2004, the PWG and the Maoist Communist Centre (MCC) joined to form a new unified party called Communist Party of India (Maoist) CPI – (M). Muppala Laxman Rao was appointed general secretary of the new party and the guerrilla units were amalgamated from 2 December (RRT Country Research 2006, *Research Response IND30585*, 18 October – Attachment 3; Rajamohan, P.J. 2005, 'Left-Wing Extremism in India', *Institute of Foreign Affairs Issue Brief 3*, January <http://www.ifa.org.np/pdf/issuebrief3.pdf> – Accessed 24 November 2006 – Attachment 4).

According to the South Asia Intelligence Review website:

The PWG took birth in the forests of the northernmost coastal district of Srikakulam neighbouring Orissa in 1980, when Kondapalli Seetharamaiah united some 18 Left Wing extremist groupings – survivors of the Naxalite movement of the late 1960s and 1970s. But as the pressure from the police, particularly the anti-extremist commando force – known as Greyhounds – mounted, the Naxalites shifted base to the southern parts of the State, which hitherto had served only as a sanctuary. According to the Andhra Pradesh Police, the PWG has some 7,000 underground cadres trained in the use of weapons, including AK-47 rifles and landmines. Intelligence sources indicate that the PWG has assembled 16 action teams, most of them including women.

While the group has suffered several reverses in the North Telangana region – including Khammam, Warangal, Karimnagar, Nizamabad and Adiliabad – its activities have been on the rise in other parts of the State such as the Palandu region of Guntur district in South Coastal Andhra, the Nalamalla forest areas, and in North Coastal Andhra – including East Godavari, Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram and Srikakulam. There has also been a surge of Naxal activity on the Orissa border with reports indicating considerable militarisation of the PWG in the area. The PWG, which suffered humiliating setbacks in the Telangana districts, has been trying to stage a comeback in the State by targeting public officials.

Left Wing extremism extending across areas in nine Indian States constitutes perhaps the largest single internal security challenge in the country after terrorism in Kashmir, but has only fitfully engaged the attention of policy makers in the affected States or in the Central Government. Significantly, the list of affected States includes three that are among the economically better-off States in the country: Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra. As heightened concerns, both domestic and international, immediately after the October 1 attack on Naidu indicated, Left Wing extremist violence constitutes significant risks in these States, and can have a direct impact on foreign and domestic investment in these States. Areas where Naxalite activity has been strongest over the decades are also those that have suffered the greatest economic stagnation, with quality of life indices among the poor often worsening over time, as indiscriminate violence drives out investment and entrepreneurship.

Last year, the Union Government had set up a committee headed by the Union Home Secretary to coordinate action with various affected States to end the activities of these groups. Directors General of police and Chief Secretaries of these States were members of the Committee. The Committee found that the Left Wing extremist groups were restructuring to establish domination in the North Coastal, South Coastal and Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh; southern parts of Orissa; Jharkhand and north Bihar; and the coastal areas of West Bengal and Orissa.

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs records indicate that, over the past decade, the Central Government has released nearly Rs. 967 million to various States to curb the Naxalite menace, but the sphere of Left Wing extremism appears, instead, to be widening. The Ministry's Annual Report notes, "The Left-wing extremist groups have been making concerted efforts to militarize their cadres through formation of special guerrilla squads and extend their activities over larger areas of the country."

The PWG has linkages with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), and the Communist Party of Nepal – Maoist (CPN-M). PWG cadres have received training in the use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) from the LTTE in the late 1980s. The districts bordering the Indo-Nepal border have now become very vulnerable because of the continuing violence in Nepal. Available evidence suggests that both the Maoist Communist Centre (MCC) and the PWG are establishing close linkages with the CPN-M to further expand, consolidate and unify Maoist movements across South Asia. Both are members of the Coordination Committee of Maoist Parties and Organisations of South Asia (CCOMPOSA), whose formation was announced in July 2001. The growing linkages between the MCC, the PWG, and the Nepali Maoists are part of their larger strategy to create a 'Compact Revolutionary Zone' (CRZ) stretching across Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Bihar, to Nepal...

The state Home Minister, T. Devender Goud, has ruled out further dialogue with the PWG, stating, "There is no scope for repeating the exercise as they are targeting people for outright killing." In a corresponding move, the Union Minister of State for Home, Chinmayananda Swami, on October 2, 2003, mooted the proposal of forming a Unified Commando Force for all the Naxalite infested States to further strengthen security measures in these States (Nayak, N. 2003, 'Andhra Pradesh: Violence Without End', South Asia Intelligence Review, 6 October www.satp.org – Accessed 24 July 2006 – Attachment 5).

Background information on the PWG and on its activities across India can be found in previous RRT Country Research Responses. Question 4 of RRT Country Research Response IND30604 from September 2006 provides background information on the PWG and the main areas where the PWG is most active, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Orissa and West Bengal (RRT Country Research Response 2006, *Research Response IND30604*, 15 September – Attachment 6). The People's War Group has been most active in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Its aims, leaders, and activities in Andhra Pradesh, including treatment by the government and police, are discussed extensively in RRT Country Research Response IND17541 of October 2005 and RRT Country Research Response IND31014 of 6 December 2006 (RRT Country Research Response 2005, *Research Response IND17541*, 28 October – Attachment 7; RRT Country Research 2006, *Research Response IND31014*, 6 December – Attachment 8).

The Radical Youth League

Question 3 of RRT Country Research Response IND31014 looked at the history of the Radical Youth League (RYL).

The RYL was formed in 1977 and it is one of a string of front organisations of the parent body, the *People's War Group* (PWG), according to the leader of the Group, Dr V. Rao. The PWG and RYL form part of the Naxalbari or Naxalite extremist-left wing movement which operates in a number of Indian States. The establishment of the RYL in 1977 followed the formation of the Radical Students Union (RSU) in 1974. The students and the youth adopted a 'Go to Village' campaign, where they visit villages throughout India and form peasant organisations to assist farmers improve their economic status (RRT Country Research 2006, *Research Response IND31014*, 6 December – Attachment 8; Rao, V. V. 1977, 'Parliamentary politics is not suitable for a country like India' 1977, *Rediff on the Net Interviews* – <http://www.fabw.org/india/interview.html> – Accessed 23 January 2003 – Attachment 8).

The RYL is not banned in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu but the organisation is targeted by Tamil Nadu police. Under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) of 2002, a number of RYL activists were detained by the Tamil Nadu security forces. It is alleged that a number of RYL activists were arrested on false charges. POTA was repealed in 2004 and in its place the Government of India promulgated Unlawful Activities Prevention Ordinance of 2004. Nevertheless, a number of cases against the RYL under POTA are still pending in the Tamil Nadu courts (Chanda, A. 2004, 'POTA detainees on fast in Tamil Nadu', *The Tribune* website, 10 September <http://www.tribuneindia.com/2004/20040910/nation.htm#1> – Accessed 8 March 2007 – Attachment 9; 'Demonstration' 2004, *The Hindu* website, 3 September <http://www.hindu.com/2004/09/03/stories/2004090302740300.htm> – Accessed 7 March 2007 – Attachment 10; 'POTA Repackaged' 2004, *The Hindu* website, 24 September <http://www.hindu.com/2004/09/24/stories/2004092403191000.htm> – Accessed 12 March 2007 – Attachment 11).

Communist Party of India (Marxist – Leninist) CPI (ML)

The CPI (ML) is active in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. The CPI (ML) contested the 2006 state elections and according to the CPI (ML) secretary in Tamil Nadu, the party fielded four candidates in the four constituencies, two each in Pondicherry and Karaikal regions ('CPI (ML) to contest elections on its own' 2006, *The Hindu* website, 22 March <http://www.hindu.com/2006/03/22/stories/2006032219230500.htm> – Accessed 7 March 2007 – Attachment 12).

The CPI (ML) failed to win a seat in the state assembly polls in 2006 but the party is part of the governing coalition in Kerala and West Bengal ('Kerala Assembly Election 2006 Results' 2006, Indian Elections website, 11 May <http://www.indian-elections.com/assembly-elections/kerala/election-result-06.html#1> – Accessed 19 January 2007 – Attachment 13; 'Record win for Left in West Bengal' 2006, *The Hindu* website, 12 May <http://www.hinduonnet.com/thehindu/2006/05/12/stories/2006051211710100.htm> – Accessed 12 March 2007 – Attachment 14).

The CPI (ML) has a significant presence in Tamil Nadu. It has a trade union wing, the All India Central Council of Trade Unions (AICCTU), which claims a membership of three lakh workers. According to a *Frontline* report in 2005:

Party sources said that apart from addressing the factors that bred extremism, specific problems faced by the Scheduled Tribes should be attended to. The SOC (CPI-ML) group, also a party with significant influence and a naxalite past, has been involved in struggles against the policies of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation, which it calls "recolonisation", and Hindutva politics, which it terms "Brahminical Hindu fascism".

Condemning the killing of innocent people by Maoist groups, some sources in the party said that such actions would only harm the efforts to mobilise people in favour of changing the social order. It wants the people to be made aware of the “bankruptcy of the present social system”. “The problem should be seen neither as a law and order problem, nor as a socio-economic problem. This has to be seen as a systemic failure. And Maoists do not seem to have understood this fact,” a party leader observed (Viswanathan, S. 2005, ‘Rendered inactive’, *Frontline* website, 8 – 21 October <http://www.flonnet.com/fl2221/stories/20051021005102700.htm> – Accessed 7 March 2007 – Attachment 15).

Origins of the CPI (ML)

The CPI (ML) originated from the struggles of the peasants in West Bengal. The Communist movement in India split into Maoist and the Marxist Leninist factions.

Question 4 of RRT Country Research Response IND31014 looked at the history of the Communist movement in India.

On 25 May 1967, a peasant uprising at Naxalbari in Darjeeling district of West Bengal began under the leadership of revolutionary communists, Charu Majumdar and Kanu Sanyal, of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) CPI(M). The revolutionary movement that started in Naxalbari became a nation wide Naxalite movement, which organised an All India Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries (AICCCR). On 22 April 1969 members of the AICCCR formed the CPI (ML) (<http://www.cpiml.org/>). The revolutionary struggle for the seizure of political power by the Indian proletariat faced problems in 1971 as the movement fragmented into a number of factions. Satyanarayan Singh revolted against the leadership of Charu Majumdar and formed his own CPI (ML) party. In 1972, Majumdar died in police custody and following his death, the party split even further. By 1978 meaningful attempts were initiated to revive the revolutionary struggles and also the party by the CPI (ML) in accordance with the ‘Indianisation’ of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong’s thoughts. In India today there are many Maoist parties and organisations that either predate the CPI-ML or emerged from factions when the CPI-ML split after the death of Charu Majumdar. Three of them, the CPI-ML (People’s War), CPI-ML (Party Unity), and the Maoist Communist Center (MCC), are currently engaged in armed struggle (RRT Country Research 2006, *Research Response IND31014*, 6 December – Attachment 8; ‘Naxalite’ 2006, Wikipedia, 27 June <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naxal> – Accessed 14 July 2006 – Attachment 13[Note: Wikipedia is a Web-based free-content encyclopaedia which is written collaboratively by volunteers. Country Research recommends that users of Wikipedia familiarise themselves with the regulatory practices which Wikipedia employs as a preventative measure against vandalism, bias and inaccuracy]; Also see: ‘Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)’ 2006, Global Security website <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/cpi-ml.htm> – Accessed 24 November 2006 – Attachment 14).

The CPI (ML) Ideology

According to the CPI (ML) Constitution, India is a backward agricultural country where the peasant masses constitute about 70 per cent of the population. The peasants are living in conditions of semi-starvation and extreme pauperisation. In India’s semi-feudal economy about three fourths of the land is concentrated in the hands of nearly 20 per cent of the population, mostly landlords and rich peasants. In its 1992 Annual Conference, the CPI (ML) called for armed revolution in India to create a more egalitarian society, free from race, class and caste oppression. The Conference also adopted the following declarations:

The CPI (ML), based on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong thought, totally rejects the path of parliamentarianism, peddled by the revisionists and neo-revisionists of all hues and colours. Experience of all countries in the world has proved that the ruling classes, having complete grip over the economic, political and cultural levels of the people, will never allow the exploited and oppressed people to come to power through peaceful means. They always use various kinds of fascist repression to suppress the just struggles of the people. They use bourgeois parliamentary democracy as a cover to deceive the people, disrupt and destroy the just struggles of the people through bloody repression. The people are invariably forced to defend themselves against bloody repression, overthrow the dictatorship of the reactionary classes through revolutionary violence. This is the law of world history.

The experience of the Indian people's struggles for emancipation is no exception to this general law of world history. The Indian reactionary ruling classes have always used and are using fascist repression even under the guise of parliamentary democracy. They do not tolerate even the mildest opposition of the people to their anti-national and anti-people policies, particularly when their crisis is acute.

Resort to section 144, banning of public meetings, curfews, arrests, police camps, torture and killing of people, particularly the Communist Revolutionaries, tear gas, lathi charges, shootings, Disturbed Areas Act, detention without trial etc. have become the common methods of repression used by the ruling classes to suppress the just struggles of the people. Deception through false promises and bloody repression are two methods of ruling classes to suppress the rising tide of the people's struggles. The Fundamental Rights trumpeted by the ruling classes are not really enjoyed by the broad masses of the people in actual life.

Utilization of participation in elections by the Communist Revolutionaries, as and when the situation demands, depending on the level of the people's movement and the consciousness of the people, has nothing to do with the path of parliamentarianism. Its aim should always be to dispel the illusions of the people on the parliamentary institutions and prepare them for Armed Struggle ('Path of People's War in India – Our Tasks!' 1992, Communist Party of India (Marxist – Leninist) website, 11-16 April <http://www.cpimlnd.org/content/view/25/86/> – Accessed 28 November 2006 – Attachment 16; 'Party Constitution' 1992, Communist Party of India (Marxist – Leninist) website, 11-16 April <http://www.cpimlnd.org/content/view/27/86/> – Accessed 28 November 2006 – Attachment 17; 'Programme of the Communist Party of India (Marxist – Leninist)' 1992, Communist Party of India (Marxist – Leninist) website, 11-16 April <http://www.cpimlnd.org/content/view/26/86/> – Accessed 28 November 2006 – Attachment 18).

2. What is the relationship of these groups with the authorities? Is there any evidence of the groups being targeted either in Tamil Nadu or in other states? Would group members be arrested for the reason of their membership or political activities?

Relationship between Naxalites and state authorities

The CPI (ML) and the RYL are not banned in Tamil Nadu. However, PWG is outlawed and the police and the security forces target members of both the PWG and the RYL. A major police operation against the PWG and the RYL was carried out in 2002 when Tamil Nadu police arrested twenty seven suspected Naxalite members in the Dharmapuri district. On 24 November 2002, an RYL activist was killed by police in an alleged encounter. According to the *Frontline* website:

THE crackdown by the Tamil Nadu police on the outlawed naxalite groups in the Uthangarai forests of Dharmapuri district has turned controversial following the death of a Radical Youth

League (RYL) functionary, Siva alias Parthiban, in an “encounter” on November 24. The police claimed that five of their men were injured in the operation. During the combing operations that continued for a week after the encounter, they arrested 25 persons, including five women (three of them were sisters).

Human rights activists have raised questions about the police claim that Siva was killed in an “encounter” with the naxalites. The questions stem from the fact that Siva was a key witness in a case relating to the death of K. Ravinder in an “encounter” between the police and the naxalites nearly three years ago at Perungattupallam village in Dharmapuri district.

In a related development, noted Telugu writer Varavara Rao told presspersons at Shimoga that the People’s War (P.W.) had informed the Madras High Court that seven naxalites, who were said to be absconding after the Uthangarai “encounter”, were actually in police custody. The P.W. has requested the High Court to treat its representation as a habeas corpus petition.

The crackdown came hours before a group of about 40 persons drawn from across the State assembled in a mangrove forest between Chinnakanakkampatti and Noothuppatti near Uthangarai for arms training. The police said that when a team led by Naxalites Special Wing Police inspector Eganathan stormed the camp and asked the naxalites to surrender they hurled hand grenades at the police and that Eganathan was wounded in the leg. Siva, they said, was injured in an exchange of fire that followed and was taken to a hospital in Uthangarai where he died. Siva is described as the state secretary of the RYL. According to the police, six persons were injured and many of the naxalites had run away. The police continued their combing operations in the adjoining forests and arrested 19 more persons in the next three days. Duraisingavelu of Chennai, described as the “chief” of the P.W. in Tamil Nadu, was among those arrested. He is said to have been involved in a bank robbery in Madurai in 1988 and absconding. The police also seized weapons and explosives, the P.W.’s pamphlets in Telugu and Rs.58,855 in cash.

The police said the combing operation would continue till the other members of the group were arrested. Reports quoting police sources said that the police action had pre-empted an attack by the extremists on a milk processing unit owned by the relatives of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N.Chandrababu Naidu near Uthangarai.

THE hunt for naxalites has been launched in the context of the sudden spurt in extremist activities in Dharmapuri and Villupuram districts recently. Hardly a week before the Uthangarai incident, a high tension power transmission tower (linking the Neyveli Lignite Corporation to the southern regional grid) at Thoppayankulam village in Villupuram district was damaged in a bomb explosion. A relatively new extremist organisation, the Cauvery Retrieval Force, has claimed responsibility for the blast and the police have launched an investigation. The bomb explosion is believed to be in pursuance of a demand raised by Tamil chauvinist groups for the release of the Cauvery waters from Karnataka (Viswanathan, S. 2002, ‘A crackdown in Tamil Nadu’, *Frontline* website, 7 – 20 December <http://www.hinduonnet.com/fline/fl1925/stories/20021220005003800.htm> – Accessed 7 March 2007 – Attachment 19; Kumar, S. 2002, ‘Indian state cracks down on leftists’, *BBC News*, 29 November http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/2528791.stm – Accessed 7 March 2007 – Attachment 20).

The suspected Naxalites arrested in the police raids were charged under POTA in 2002. Out of the twenty seven arrested, fifteen went on a hunger strike in 2004. According to the *Tribune* website:

At least 15 POTA detainees, including four women, have been on fast in two prisons of Tamil Nadu for the past two weeks, demanding repeal of the Act. These members of the Radical Youth League have been languishing in jail since November, 2002.

Of the six women POTA detainees in the special prison for women in Vellore four began their fast on August 23 while seven men in the Chennai central prison went on an indefinite fast. On September 1, they were joined by four others.

Their demand is that the Tamil Nadu Government should withdraw the POTA cases against them and try them under existing laws.

They have been in jail for 21 months since their bail petitions were dismissed by the POTA court following which they approached the Madras High Court. As the condition of the four women prisoners deteriorated they were shifted to the government general hospital. However, in the case of the seven male detainees, the jail authorities did not shift them to any hospital.

When counsel for the accused, Mr G. Haribabu, moved the Madras High Court it directed the prison medical officer to submit a report on the health condition of the POTA detainees.

The court was informed that the seven detainees — Manivasagam, Vinayagam, Sathish Kumar, Suresh, Muthu, Sakthivel and Thangapandian — were in a critical condition, but the jail authorities refused to provide them adequate medical treatment.

Though the prison hospital was not equipped to provide proper treatment to patients with serious ailments, the prison officials refused to admit them to the Government General Hospital and instead were threatening to file cases of attempt to suicide against them, the court was informed.

The Tamil Nadu police had arrested 27 Naxalites, including these six women, under POTA on November 24, 2002, near Uthangarai in Dharmapuri district. Out of them two were minors and were transferred to the juvenile home (Chanda, A. 2004, 'POTA detainees on fast in Tamil Nadu', *The Tribune* website, 10 September <http://www.tribuneindia.com/2004/20040910/nation.htm#1> – Accessed 8 March 2007 – Attachment 9).

According to a report by the Tamil Nadu police in 2006, “the state was free from Naxalite violence and effective steps were being taken by the police to prevent the spread of Naxalite movement by identifying volatile areas and strengthening police action”. A special branch in the Tamil Nadu Criminal Investigation (CID) was formed in 1971 to address the threat of Naxalite movement in the state ('Home Department Police Policy Note for 2006 – 2007' 2006, Tamil Nadu Government website <http://www.tn.gov.in/police/HomePolice2006.pdf> – Accessed 7 March 2007 – Attachment 21).

The relationship between Naxalites and the state of Tamil Nadu is reflected in the finalisation of a lawsuit that has been going on for the past twenty nine years. A suspected Naxalite named Seeralan was allegedly beaten to death in police custody in 1977. In 1986, the North Arcot District Sessions Court acquitted the police of all charges and a writ filed by the family of the victim was not actioned until 1994. According to the *Hindu* website:

CHENNAI: Twenty nine years after her son Seeralan, a naxalite, died in police custody, 75-year-old Baggiam Duraisamy is set to get Rs. 1.2 lakh towards interest for the compensation paid by the government.

The government, which had rejected her compensation plea twice, deposited Rs. 1 lakh in her name following a court order.

Passing orders on her appeal against the single judge ruling, the First Bench of the Madras High Court asked the government to pay Rs. 1.2 lakh within four weeks. It observed that the

acquittal of police personnel charged with the murder of Seeralan would not disentitle her from claiming interest for the compensation.

The Bench comprising Chief Justice A.P. Shah and Justice K. Chandru observed that the single judge should have ordered the compensation either from Seeralan's date of death or the date of her claim ('Naxal's mother to receive interest on compensation' 2006, *The Hindu* website, 7 September <http://www.hindu.com/2006/09/07/stories/2006090717510600.htm> – Accessed 7 March 2007 – Attachment 22).

Reports of arrests and attacks on Naxalites

Besides arrests and detentions of suspected Naxalites in Tamil Nadu, there are reports of police action against suspected Naxalites in West Bengal, US Nagar and Bihar.

In a special article in *The Statesman* in December 2006, the Chief Minister of West Bengal defended the actions of the police in cracking down on suspected Naxalites and reiterated that "excesses against terrorists should not be viewed as human rights abuses". The CPI (Maoist), the CPI (ML) and the MCC are not banned in West Bengal but suspected Naxalites are arrested and often tortured by West Bengal police. According to the *Statesman*:

One man named Abhijit Sinha was so shattered by his experiences that he committed suicide. An Association for the Protection of Democratic Rights activist was arrested for possessing, among other things, a copy of *From Marx to Mao Tse-tung*, written by George Thomson. This is a book any political science M.A. student might consult. In May 2002, Sheila Roy and Mamata Ray in North Bengal were suspected of being close to the Kamtapur Liberation Organisation, and were made to stand in the courtyard of their own house and brutally beaten up. Mithu Roy and Shampa were two of the urban women arrested in this phase. Shampa, a first year student of Gurudas College, was arrested for being a member of the Peoples' War Group. On 16th August 2002, she was presented before the Beharampur Court, and told the judge that for the past four days she had been kept in the police lock-up without any food. Coming to recent events, like the peasant protest at Singur, we have had a very interesting development. First, a sizeable part of the mass media (not *The Statesman* and *Dainik Statesman*) has been supporting the ruling party and the government to such an extent that even honest reporting of news has been given a go by. Just like the CPI-M, these papers went on repeating that only outsiders were fomenting trouble. An English daily even sought to link up every issue in West Bengal with Singur. A train hijack was associated with Singur. And the responsibility for the violence in Singur was laid on the doors of Maoists coming from outside. As a matter of fact, the Chief Minister was even more explicit. According to him, these were Maoists from Jadavpur University. Yet, eyewitness accounts, police arrest lists, all show that in fact, most of the people were locals, and it was a massive police force that committed violence, entering peoples' houses, often helped by local members or supporters of a particular party, and dragging out and beating up people. One woman, Swapna Banerjee of Nari Nirjatan Pratirodh Mancha, was arrested, and an English daily promptly turned her to be the key Maoist organiser ('Special Article' 2006, *The Statesman*, 13 December – Attachment 23).

In the city of Rourkela in the Indian state of Orissa, police arrested three suspected CPI (Maoist) members on 9 October 2006. The Superintendent of Police, D.S. Kutte, praised the arrest as a significant achievement. One of individuals arrested, Budhni Munda, was alleged to be the wife of Prasad Bose, a leader of Naxalite movement in Jharkhand, West Bengal, Bihar and the western and northern division of Orissa. Budhni is the leader of the Naxal women's wing of three districts in Orissa and is also the member of the All India Central Committee ('Police bask in the glory of Maoist arrest' 2006, *The Statesman*, 10 October – Attachment 24).

In December 2005, three people were arrested in the West Bengal district of Purulia “for collecting money in the name of Maoists”. It is alleged that the police detected “the operations of a few political leaders who had been acting as the members of the Peoples War Group (PWG)” (‘Men Masquerade as Maoists to extort money’ 2005, *The Statesman*, 9 December – Attachment 25).

In November 2005, police launched an operation against Naxalites in the districts of Almora and Udham Singh Nagar, also known as US Nagar. The police alleged that Naxalites were making attempts to establish bases in Kumaon near the Indo – Nepal border. It was also alleged that Naxalites had previously attempted to establish bases in the Saufutia forest but the police intercepted and arrested five suspected Naxalites. According to *The Statesman*, “three more members of the CPI – ML – PW were arrested from Dineshpur, near the district headquarters town of US Nagar. One of these was Anil Chaurakoti, the CPI – ML – PW’s Zonal Commander for Uttaranchal. During interrogation, Chaurakoti confessed that the CPI – ML – PW was again trying to set up its bases in Almora and US Nagar” (‘Massive raid against ultras’ 2005, *Hindustan Times*, 6 November – Attachment 26).

On 24 June 2005, Bihar police arrested two suspected Naxalites with links to the PWG. According to the *Hindustan Times*:

POLICE ARRESTED two Naxals linked to the People’s War Group (PWG) in Bihar from Sonebhadra district on Friday night and recovered two country-made pistols and live cartridges from their possession. They were wanted by Bihar police in several cases, said Superintendent of Police, Sonebhadra, Radhubir Lal on Saturday.

The arrested Naxals, identified as Raj Kumar Singh and Chandrashekhar Singh, gave vital information about the Naxal network in Bihar and east UP.

Reports said after the arrest of top PWG members Kameshwar Baitha and Mewalal, police were carrying out combing operations to nab the remaining members of the group in Sonebhadra district (‘Two Naxals nabbed in Sonebhadra Correspondent’ 2005, *Hindustan Times*, 25 June – Attachment 27).

Naxalite Movement in other states

Naxalites are operating in seventy six districts in the nine states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

The Naxalite movement is strongest in the tribal areas spreading from Bihar to Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. After the formation of the PWG, Naxalite fighters migrated from their bases in Andhra Pradesh to other Indian states to spread Naxal ideas of social justice, land reform and armed revolution. According to the 2007 US Department of State Report for India:

Southern Chhattisgarh was a center of Naxalite violence, with over 300 insurgent-related casualties from January to August [2006]. A counterinsurgency movement among the region’s tribal population called “Salwa Judem” began in June 2005 and was supported by the state government. Naxalite retaliations against the movement resulted in violent civil conflict in Dantewara district and a large number of civilian deaths.

On March 2, an estimated 500 Naxalites raided a small village in Dantewara district, killing four with axes and knives and abducting five. During the year there were several reported

instances of Naxalites using landmines to target government vehicles and police personnel. Also in March Naxalites destroyed a railroad engine in an attempt to disrupt iron-ore shipments from the large government-owned Bailadila mines. On June 20, insurgents killed seven persons and injured two others at Chikuarguda village in the Konta region of Dantewara district after the villagers refused to support the Naxalites' planned attack on a camp of internally displaced persons (IDPs) (see section 2.d.). On July 17, Naxalites attacked an IDP camp in Arrabore, killing an estimated 20 to 30 inhabitants, including several infants. An estimated 75 persons were injured.

After the Naxalites shot and killed Congress legislator Chittam Narsi Reddy in Mahbubnagar District, Andhra Pradesh, in August 2005, the state government imposed a ban on the Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-M) and seven Naxalite front organizations. After the ban, police arrested Vara Vara Rao, who had acted as the CPI-M emissary in earlier peace talks. Rao belonged to the outlawed People's War Group (PWG), which was a sub-group of CPI-M. Human rights activists claimed that the escalation in violence began in January when police shot and killed three Naxalites in Prakasan district. Reports of encounter killings were highest in Nizamabad District in 2005, where police shot and killed nine Naxalites. In September Naxalite guerrillas killed 10 persons in a midnight attack in the Ranchi area of Jharkhand. According to the SATP, in September 2005, cadres of the CPI-M killed 17 civilians at Belwadari village in the Giridih district, Jharkhand. According to SATP, as of December 11, 263 civilians and 121 security forces were killed in Naxalite-related extremist activities during the year.

The killing of civilians by Naxalites in Andhra Pradesh continued. ACHR estimated that Naxalite violence killed at least 460 persons in the first half of the year, including 90 security personnel, 189 suspected Naxalites, and 181 civilians. According to Andhra Pradesh police, the number of civilian killings committed by Maoists decreased to 42 during the year, compared with 211 in 2005. The police combing operations resulted in encounter killings of 110 Maoists during the year, compared with 124 in 2005.

On July 17, armed Naxalites attacked the Errabore Relief Camp in Dantewada district, killing approximately 30 unarmed civilians and injuring hundreds. The attackers abducted more than 45 persons and then reportedly released some hostages and killed six others, including security personnel. According to the police, all six hostages killed were surrendered Naxalites.

In December 2005 the People's Liberation Army (PLA) killed Manipur Inspector General of Police (Intelligence) T. Thangthum, along with a constable, in an ambush in Manipur's Bushnupur District. Heavily armed insurgents in a truck overtook the police officer's vehicle in the Oinam Bazaar area and fired indiscriminately, killing the two on the spot. On August 16, five civilians, including two children, were killed and 50 others injured when suspected terrorists threw a powerful grenade in a temple in Imphal during a Hindu festival. On August 20, the Zomi Revolutionary Army killed two civilians and injured four when the cadres opened fire on a crowded church, targeting a patrol party of Assam Rifles in Churachandpur District (US Department of State 2007, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2006 – India*, 6 March – Attachment 28).

Andhra Pradesh

Between 1990 and 2003, Naxalite-related violence left four thousand five hundred and forty six people dead in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Question 4 of RRT *Research Response IND30366* looked at the prevalence of Naxalites in Andhra Pradesh (RRT Country Research 2006, *Research Response IND30366*, 24 July – Attachment 29).

Due to ongoing violence by militant Naxalites, the Andhra Pradesh Government on 7 April 2006 voted to extend the ban on CPI (ML) and the following Naxalite organisations: “CPI-Maoist, Radical Students Union, Radical Youth League, Rythu Coolie Sangham, Singareni Karmika Samakhya, Viplava Karmika Samakhya and the All India Radical Students Federation” (Jafri, S.A. 2006, ‘Andhra extends ban on Maoists’, *Rediff* website, 11 August <http://www.rediff.com/news/2006/aug/11ap1.htm> – Accessed 24 November 2006 – Attachment 30).

Karnataka

In the southern state of Karnataka, the government on 9 November 2005 banned all Naxalite organisations by invoking the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act 2004 in the Naxal affected areas throughout the state. According to the *Hindu Business Line* website:

The district authorities have been asked to publicise the ‘surrender package’ for Naxalites. Under this package, cases against those who want to join the mainstream society will be withdrawn. The Government will also take steps to solve the problems of those who have surrendered. It is ready for talks with Naxalites if they give up arms, Mr Singh said.

The authorities have been asked to visit the Naxal-affected villages to solve the problems on the spot. The villagers of these areas should be taken into confidence while tackling the Naxalite problem. Mr Singh said that he has directed the Forest officials not to harass people living near the forest areas (‘Karnataka move to tackle Naxal threat’ 2005, the *Hindu Business Line* website, 9 November <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/2005/11/09/stories/2005110901411900.htm> – Accessed 7 March 2007 – Attachment 31).

Chhattisgarh

On 15 March 2007, more than three hundred Naxalite fighters from the CPI (Maoist) launched an offensive on a police camp at Ranipotili village in the Bastar region killing forty four people, including fifteen members of the Chhattisgarh armed forces. According to the *Hindu* website:

Fifty-four persons, including 15 personnel of the Chhattisgarh Armed Force, were killed in an offensive by 300 to 350 CPI (Maoist) cadres on a police base camp in the Bastar region in the early hours of Thursday.

The remaining victims were tribal youths of the Salva Judum, designated as Special Police Officers (SPOs) and roped in to combat the naxalite menace. Eleven persons were injured.

The condition of four persons is said to be serious. The naxalites took away 13 self-loading rifles, three AK-47 rifles, nine .303 rifles and a two-inch mortar.

According to reports, only 11 of the 79 police personnel and SPOs at the camp in a forested area, at Ranipotili village of Bijapur district, managed to escape. The assailants used petrol bombs, detonators and rocket launchers. Half the police personnel were killed in their sleep; others were shot while trying to flee from the smoke-filled premises (Rao, C. B. 2007, ‘Naxalites massacre policemen in Chhattisgarh’, *The Hindu* website, 16 March <http://www.hindu.com/2007/03/16/stories/2007031607360100.htm> – Accessed 16 March 2007 – Attachment 32).

The Asian Centre for Human Rights (ACHR) reported that between July and September 2006, seventy six suspected Naxalites were killed by Indian security forces. Most of the

casualties were in the Indian state of Chhattisgarh where thirty seven Naxalites were killed by state security forces. The AHCR website states that:

Out of them: 37 alleged Naxalites were killed in Chattisgarh, 25 in Andhra Pradesh, 7 in Jharkhand, 4 in Orissa and 3 in Maharashtra. All the killings have been dubbed as “encounter killings”. In the past, many such encounter killings have been found to be outright extrajudicial executions (‘The Naxal conflict in India: Killings down, armament up’ 2006, Asian Centre for Human Rights, 4 October <http://www.achrweb.org/Review/2006/135-06.htm> – Accessed 7 March 2007 – Attachment 33).

In Chhattisgarh, the Naxalites control ten of the sixteen districts and in response to the growing Naxal influence, the Chhattisgarh government started recruiting civilians as part of their counter-Naxal campaign from June 2005. The civilians were mostly victims and relatives of Naxalite violence and were provided training in counter insurgency in special training camps known as *Salwa Judum*. According to the ACHR, both the Chhattisgarh government and the Naxalites recruit child soldiers and both sides engage in gross human rights violations. The ACHR notes that:

Bastar region is the most heavily militarised area in Chhattisgarh with the deployment of National Security Commandos, Indian Reserve Battalion (Nagaland regiment), Central Industrial Security Forces and central Reserve Police Force, in addition to the state police. On 1 March 2006, Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil confirmed that the Centre had already provided 26 battalions (26,000 personnel) of security forces to Chhattisgarh to deal with the Naxals (‘The Adivasis of Chhattisgarh: Victims of the Naxalite and Salwa Judum campaign’ 2006, Asian Centre for Human Rights, 17 March <http://www.achrweb.org/reports/india/Chattis0106.pdf> – Accessed 13 March 2007 – Attachment 34).

In September 2005, the Chhattisgarh government banned all Naxalite organisations in the state. The move came following a bomb blast by the Naxalites that killed twenty three members of the state security forces (‘Chhattisgarh bans Naxal outfits’ 2005, *Rediff* website, 5 September <http://www.rediff.com/news/2005/sep/05ban.htm> – Accessed 13 March 2007 – Attachment 35).

Orissa

On 9 June 2006 the Indian state of Orissa imposed a ban on Naxalite organisations after reports that the group planned further attacks on police and government officials. Under the ban, the security forces in the state has powers to arrest any suspected Naxalite member. According to the *China Post*, seven of the state’s thirty districts are under Naxalite control (‘Eastern Indian state bans communist rebel group’ 2006, *The China Post*, 10 June <http://www.chinapost.com.tw/asiapacific/detail.asp?ID=83866&GRP=C> – Accessed 13 March 2007 – Attachment 36).

Jharkhand

In the Indian state of Jharkhand, Naxalite violence flared up on 4 March 2007 when Sunil Mahto, a *Jharkhand Mukti Morcha* (JMM) Member of Parliament from Jamshedpur, was shot dead by suspected CPI (M) rebels near Ghatsila in East Singhbhum district. According to the *Times of India*:

The incident occurred in the Maoist stronghold of Pakudia around 5.30 pm while the MP was handing out prizes after a football game organised on the occasion of Holi. Two of his

bodyguards were also killed. DGP J B Mahapatra said party worker Prabhakar Mahto, who was injured in the firing, died at a hospital in Jamshedpur, about 40 km away.

A group of 15-20 Maoists descended on the match venue while the prize distribution ceremony was under way. The Jharkhand police bodyguards, who had formed a security ring around the MP, were the first to die. The rebels then pumped at least seven bullets into Mahto. They then reportedly torched his vehicle and fled, dragging away two more of his bodyguards.

JMM called a state wide dawn-to-dusk bandh on Monday to protest the murders. Chief minister Madhu Koda called an emergency meeting with senior officials to discuss the security scenario in the state's Naxalite-affected regions.

The state cabinet then recommended a CBI probe. The Centre assured Jharkhand all assistance in dealing with the situation and home minister Shivraj Patil described it as 'a cowardly act'. President Kalam and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh condemned the murders.

Mahto, 38, who represented Jamshedpur in parliament, was JMM general secretary and serving his second term in parliament. He was one of the party's four Lok Sabha members and was associated with it for over two decades ('Jharkhand MP shot dead by Maoists, CBI to probe killing' 2007, *Times of India* website, 5 March http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Jharkhand_MP_shot_dead_by_Maoists_CBI_to_probe_killing/articleshow/1722846.cms – Accessed 7 March 2007 – Attachment 37).

3. Please provide brief political information (ie parties in power) for Tamil Nadu from 1985 to the present.

There are three major political parties in the state of Tamil Nadu. They are *Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam* (MDMK), *All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam* (AIADMK) and *Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam* (DMK). All three parties are commonly referred to as Dravidian parties, because they are indigenous to the state of Tamil Nadu.

Political parties in Tamil Nadu

Question 5 of RRT Research Response IND30817 of November 2006 provided details on the MDMK, the AIADMK and the DMK political parties in Tamil Nadu.

Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhgam (MDMK)

The MDMK party was established in 1994 by Vaiko Gopalswamy after his group split from the DMK. The party supports moves for a Tamil homeland and has consistently provided support to the Tamil Tigers fighting for a separate homeland in Sri Lanka. Gopalswamy was arrested under POTA in 2002 for speaking in favour of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (LTTE) and was released on bail after eighteen months in detention. The MDMK joined forces with the AIADMK party and lost the May 2006 state elections.

All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)

The AIADMK was founded by Dr. Puratchi Thalaivar in 1972. The AIADMK was voted into power in Tamil Nadu under the leadership of Jayalalitha in 1991 but lost the 1996 elections. Jayalalitha's government was returned to office in 2001. In May 2006, the AIADMK was voted out of office as popular support went to the DMK.

Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK)

The DMK was founded by Arignar Anna in 1949. After the death of Anna in 1969, the party leadership was taken over by Kalaignar Karunanidhi, who continued with the party vision of equality and social justice, protection of Tamil culture, and sustainable economic growth. The DMK won the May 2006 state elections by securing 70 per cent of the popular vote (RRT Country Research Response 2006, *Research Response IND30817*, 3 November – Attachment 38).

Parties in Power in Tamil Nadu since 1985

In 1989, the DMK was elected to office with a two-thirds majority. The DMK won one hundred and seventy seats, the AIADMK won thirty two seats, and the Indian National Congress (INC) won twenty seven. The DMK leader Karunanidhi was sworn as the Chief Minister on 24 January 1989 ('India: Tamil Nadu elections' 1989, Keesing's Record of World Events, January – Attachment 39).

In 1991, the AIADMK was elected to office in the state of Tamil Nadu. The AIADMK won one hundred and sixty three seats, the INC won sixty one and the DMK managed to secure only one seat. AIADMK general secretary Jayalalitha was sworn in as the Chief Minister on 24 June 1991 ('India: Tamil Nadu elections' 1991, Keesing's Record of World Events, June – Attachment 40).

In 1996, the DMK was elected to office with one hundred and seventy two votes. The AIADMK won four seats, Tamil Maanila Congress (TMC), a Tamil breakaway group from INC won thirty nine seats and the Communist Party of India (CPI) won eight seats. According to the Keesing's Record of World Events publication, the defeat of the AIADMK was largely due to accusations of corruption against the party leader Jayaram Jayalalitha ('India: Tamil Nadu elections' 1996, Keesing's Record of World Events, May – Attachment 41).

In 2001, the AIADMK returned to power after securing one hundred and ninety six seats. The DMK was reduced to thirty seven seats ('The Assembly Elections 2001: Tamil Nadu' 2001, *Rediff* website, 13 May <http://www.rediff.com/news/2001/may/13tami.htm> – Accessed 13 March 2007 – Attachment 42; Also see RRT Country Research Response 2003, Research Response IND15962, 30 May – Attachment 43).

In 2006, the DMK won the state elections by securing one hundred and sixty three seats and the AIADMK won sixty nine seats and its coalition partner the MDMK won six seats ('Tamil Nadu Assembly Election 2006 Results' 2006, Indian Elections website, 11 May <http://www.indian-elections.com/assembly-elections/tamil-nadu/election-result-06.html> – Accessed 25 October 2006 – Attachment 44; Also see: Question 5 of RRT Country Research Response 2006, *Research Response IND30817*, 3 November – Attachment 38).

4. Please provide anything else that may be useful.

Tamil Nadu Government Anti-Naxal Programmes

In 2003, the Government of Tamil Nadu implemented Socio-Economic Development Programme (SEDP) to combat Naxalite influence in the border areas of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. Youths from thirty five villages from the border district of Dharampuri were provided with employment, training and development opportunities. According to the *Hindu* website:

Development programme

Dharmapuri Socio-economic Development Programme was one of the first of its kind in the State.

It was created with the principle of a joint partnership initiative of various departments that focused on rural infrastructure development, capacity building and sustainable employment.

The programme is implemented in 35 border villages in the district.

Employment

Since unemployment is stated to be the main reason for youth straying into extremism the district administration segregated the youth into groups for providing wage and self-employment.

Training

“To begin with, line department of Forests, Employment and Training and Rural Development assisted the candidates in getting direct placement in firms, besides vocational and skill training to improve their communication skills”.

“The departmental officials also visited the villages every week. A total of 181 youths from these villages were selected to the uniformed services. Along with this about 75 youths have obtained direct placement in textile mills in Coimbatore and other areas,” said Collector, M. Chandrasekaran.

Classes conducted

Under the programme, 188 youths out of 1,047 were selected from naxal-prone villages.

Intensive skill training was imparted to them in various multi-skilled trade courses.

Besides this physical training sessions, classes on G.K and other allied subjects were also conducted (‘Signs of positive change in naxal-affected villages’ 2006, *The Hindu* website, 17 February <http://www.hinduonnet.com/2006/02/17/stories/2006021707970300.htm> – Accessed 14 March 2007 – Attachment 45).

Naxalite Resurgence

Despite the implementation of the SEDP, Dharmapuri district police in July 2006 arrested six extortionists who claimed to be members of the PWG. The police also arrested three Naxalites including Sidhanand who was on the run from authorities for the past 20 years. According to the Indian Express website:

Whispers wafting across the villages are that the youth have already turned to Andhra-based PWG-backed groups propagating armed struggle in hilly Pennagaram, the terrain where once [notorious bandit] Veerappan roamed (‘Village Voice: Dharmapuri, Tamil Nadu 2006, Indian Express website, 5 November <http://www.indianexpress.com/iep/sunday/story/16005.html> – Accessed 14 March 2007 – Attachment 46).

On 8 September 2006, the Andhra Pradesh Government intercepted a cache of weapons from Tamil Nadu, destined for Naxalite fighters. The weapons find prompted the two states to hold

high level talks on a joint strategy on infiltration of firearms from Tamil Nadu to Andhra Pradesh. According to the *Hindu* website:

The 45-minute meeting at North Block was attended by Tamil Nadu Director-General of Police D. Mukherjee and Inspector-General of Police (Intelligence), Andhra Pradesh, Aravinda Rao.

Mr. Mukherjee told reporters that naxal activity was absent or minimal in Tamil Nadu. Immediately after the arms haul in Andhra Pradesh on September 8, the Tamil Nadu police swung into action. “We have gathered intelligence inputs and are doing our best to curb the activity of arms manufacturing and smuggling.”

Mr. Mukherjee is understood to have informed Mr. Duggal that the focus of the Tamil Nadu police was on increasing vigil on illegal arms manufacturing units.

The State has been demanding special funds for fighting the naxal menace which threatens to spill over from Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

The Centre should reimburse security related expenditure (SRE) incurred to tackle the “spill-over.”

Director-General of the Central Reserve Police Force J.K. Sinha, who was present at the meeting, said Maoists were setting up their own arms production units (‘Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh police officers meet Union Home Secretary’ 2006, *The Hindu* website, 6 October <http://www.hindu.com/2006/10/06/stories/2006100606010800.htm> – Accessed 14 March 2007 – Attachment 47).

In February 2007, the *Hindu* reported that the Government of Tamil Nadu has decided to deploy head constables to nine police stations along the Tamil Nadu – Andhra Pradesh border to track Naxalite activities in the area. The Deputy Inspector-General of Police (DIG), Mohammed Shakeel Akhter, told the *Hindu* that:

Head constables on special duty would also interact with their counterparts in Andhra Pradesh police stations along the border and exchange information. They would be posted in Arambakkam, Pathirivedu, Uthukottai, Kannurpet, K.K.Chatram, Tirutani, Pothatturpet, Pallipattu and R.K.Pet police stations. Mr. Akhter said village vigilance committees would be revamped and deployed on law and order duties, night patrolling and traffic management (‘Head constables set to track naxalite activities’ 2007, *The Hindu* website, 21 February <http://www.hindu.com/2007/02/21/stories/2007022118670900.htm> – Accessed 14 March 2007 – Attachment 48).

5. Would you be able to include in the response a brief explanation as to what Tamizhga Rahul Gandhi Peravai is?

Tamizhaga Rahul Gandhi Peravai

Tamizhaga Rahul Gandhi Peravai (<http://www.rahulgandhiperavai.org/>) is one of the political organisations of the Indian National Congress (INC) in support of the Lok Sabha member for Amethi in Uttar Pradesh, Rahul Gandhi, the son of the INC party chairman, Sonia Gandhi. According to the Tamizhaga Rahul Gandhi website:

Rahul Gandhi (born June 19, 1970) is a rising Indian politician and member of the Parliament from the Indian National Congress.

Rahul Gandhi is a member of the Nehru-Gandhi family, the son of Sonia Gandhi, the President of the Indian National Congress, and Rajiv Gandhi, former Prime Minister of India. He was only 14 when his grand-mother, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, was assassinated by Sikh militants in 1984. His great-grandfather was Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister and a distinguished leader of the national freedom struggle.

Rahul Gandhi attended St. Columba's School in New Delhi. He was later home-schooled for security reasons. He entered St. Stephen's College but left after a year for Harvard. Later he transferred to another university in Massachusetts due to security concerns where he completed a B.A. He also received an MPhil in Development Economics after attending Trinity College, Cambridge University. He worked in London with the strategy consultancy firm Monitor Group, before he returned to India.

Although, his mother had been the Congress President and Leader of the Opposition since 1998, Rahul Gandhi initially showed little interest in politics. In 2003, there was widespread media speculation about his imminent entry into national politics. Appearing with his mother at public events and Congress meetings, Rahul also went to Pakistan on a goodwill visit to watch a historic Cricket Test match between the two nations.

In May 2004, he ran for the Lok Sabha, from his father's constituency of Amethi in Uttar Pradesh and won by a wide margin. His campaign was directed by his younger sister Priyanka Gandhi-Vadra, and his victory generated considerable media excitement and enthusiasm amongst the younger citizens of the country. He leads a new group of young members of parliament. Since then, Rahul Gandhi has sought to cultivate support from young Indians ('Rahul Gandhi Biography' (undated), Tamizhaga Rahul Gandhi website – <http://www.rahulgandhiperavai.org/biography.htm> – Accessed 20 March 2007 – Attachment 49).

Rahul Gandhi is campaigning for the upcoming Uttar Pradesh state assembly elections for the INC to be held in two phases in April and May 2007. In December 2006, a coalition partner of the Congress Lalu Prasad of the *Rashtrya Janata Dal* (RJD) told *IBN Live* news that Rajiv was ready to lead the INC in the state elections. According to the *Hindustan Times* website, on 9 March, "Rahul Gandhi held a two hour meeting with Jan Morcha's Raj Babbar to explore the possibility of seat adjustments for the forthcoming assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh" and on 20 March Rahul, in his address to the students of the Deoband Islamic Seminary, argued that under the leadership of the Gandhi family, the demolition of the Babri Mosque by Hindu nationalists in 1992 would not have taken place ('Lalu is all praises for Rahul Gandhi' 2006, *IBN Live* website, 25 December <http://www.ibnlive.com/news/rahul-gandhi-gets-back-pat-from-lalu/29418-4.html> – Accessed 20 March 2007 – Attachment 50; 'PM, Sonia and Rahul Gandhi expected to campaign in state' 2007, Kangla Online, 30 January source: *Imphal Free Press* (30 January 2007) (<http://www.kanglaonline.com/index.php?template=headline&newsid=36193&typeid=1> – Accessed 20 March 2007 – Attachment 51; Nagi, S. 2007, 'Rahul Gandhi gears up Congress for UP polls', *Hindustan Times* website, 9 March http://www.hindustantimes.in/news/181_1948301,0008.htm – Accessed 20 March 2007 – Attachment 52; Chatterjee M. & George V.K. 2007, 'If a Gandhi was active, Babri wouldn't have fallen: Rahul', *Indian Express* website, 20 March <http://www.indianexpress.com/story/26157.html> – Accessed 20 March 2007 – Accessed 20 March 2007 – Attachment 53).

Relationship between the INC and the Communist parties

The INC won the 2004 general elections in India with the support of the Left Front parties consisting of the Communist Party of India (CPI), the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI – M), the Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP), and the All India Forward Bloc (AIFB). The INC led coalition government known as the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) won two hundred and seventeen seats, which fell far short of a majority in the five hundred and forty five member parliament. As a result, the INC relies on the Left Front whose total of fifty nine seats provides the government with a ten seat majority ('India Country Forecast' 2005, Political Risk Services, 1 December – Attachment 54).

According to *BBC News*, despite supporting the INC at the federal level, the Communist parties oppose the INC at the state level, "leading to an uneasy political equation" (Majumder, S. 2006, 'India's communists upbeat over future', *BBC News*, 11 May http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4761871.stm – Accessed 20 March 2007 – Attachment 55).

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US Department of State website www.state.gov

United Nations (UN)

Non-Government Organisations

Asian centre for Human Rights www.achrweb.org

International News & Politics

Global Security website www.globalsecurity.org

BBC News website www.bbc.co.uk

Region Specific Links

Himal South Asian website www.himalmag.com

Hindu website www.hindu.com

Institute of Foreign Affairs website www.ifa.org.np

South Asian Terrorism Portal www.satp.org

The Tribune website www.tribuneindia.com

Frontline website www.flonnet.com

Hindu Business Line website www.hindubusinessline.com

Rediff website www.rediff.com

The China Post website <http://www.chinapost.com.tw/>

Times of India website www.timesofindia.com

Topic Specific Links

Communist Party of India (Marxist – Leninist) website www.cpiml.org

Search Engines

Google search engine <http://www.google.com.au/>

Online Subscription Services

Library Networks

University Sites

Databases:

FACTIVA (news database)

BACIS (DIMA Country Information database)

REFINFO (IRBDC (Canada) Country Information database)

ISYS (RRT Country Research database, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, US Department of State Reports)

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