



Editor's Note

Readers will find this month's Lokniti Newsletter reporting on a variety of issues. To begin with, this edition carries a synopsis by Rahul Verma on the recently concluded Assembly Elections in Maharashtra, Haryana and Arunachal Pradesh, which threw up a host of interesting findings. This is followed by our "Democracy Update" section, where we decided to focus on elections held in Gabon and Botswana, something which went largely unnoticed and unreported in India. We also looked at elections in Portugal and how the global meltdown and economic uncertainty in Western Europe's poorest country had an impact on the election results. In the present edition of the newsletter, we also attempt to bring out the current debate in media regarding Naxalites and Maoists (a term often used interchangeably). Discussions of Operation Green Hunt are quickly finding prominence in the general discourse. The idea that a crack team of anti-Naxalite commandos had been requisitioned from Naxal hit areas for a day to provide security cover to the Indian and Australian cricket teams at the Vidarbha Cricket Association stadium at Jamtha, where the second One-dayer was held on 28th October is an interesting example of how the government is responding to this situation. We have looked at government's reaction to the whole situation and compared it with people's perception of Naxalites, compiled from CSDS-Lokniti survey data.

Previously, we had carried a report by Praveen Rai of Lokniti, who was a part of a 5 member team sent to Kabul by Asian Network for Free Elections ANFREL to observe and assess the legal framework needed for conducting free and fair elections in Afghanistan. This month we have for you a write up on the upcoming Afghanistan election run-off. Amidst the allegations of electoral fraud and irregularities in Afghanistan, the runoff elections face multiple challenges. Disillusionment, lack of security, general apathy and cynicism towards the electoral process are just a few of the roadblocks that might hinder the process. We also carry a report on the alleged electoral fraud in Russia during the Municipal Elections held in October.

We would like to thank all of you for appreciating last month's newsletter. Any Comments and suggestions towards broadening the scope of this newsletter are highly encouraged and we hope to incorporate them in the next edition. We welcome articles from our readers that can be included in following editions. Before letting you proceed with the newsletter, I would like to thank Mr. Sanjay Kumar and Banasmita Bora for their feedback, ideas and suggestions, Also, I would like to thank Rahul Verma for taking time out and contributing to this month's edition. The newsletter owes a lot to them.

For detailed information on Lokniti and the projects mentioned here, kindly log on to our [website www.lokniti.org/](http://www.lokniti.org/)

Pratiksha Khanduri

—Guest Editor

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

| | |
|--|------------|
| Update/Articles/ Workshops/ Presentations | 2 |
| 2009 Assembly Elections | 3 |
| Democracy Update: Botswana | 4 |
| Democracy Update: Portugal | 5 |
| Democracy Update: Gabon | 6 |
| Democracy Update: Russian Municipal Elections/ Afghanistan Election Run-off | 7 |
| Naxalism: The War Within | 8/9 |

Update:

Professor Suhas Palshikar, Co-Director of Lokniti and Professor in the Department of Politics and Public Administration at University of Pune, was the Principal Investigator of a post poll survey which was conducted in Maharashtra after the Assembly Elections, between Oct 14 and 18. This was done at 144 locations, in 48 assembly constituencies and with the help of over 96 investigators.

The field work was supported by a major research project sanctioned by the UGC to Professor Palshikar and also supported partially by the Center for Advanced Studies of the Dept of Politics and Public Administration, University of Pune. This was a sub-sample of the sample drawn for NES 2009. The coordinating team included Professor Rajeshwari Deshpande, Dr Nitin Birmal, Vivek Ghotale, Abhay Datar, Suresh Ingale, Somnath Gholwe and Kedar Deshmukh.



Articles

"Haryana's in the bag — for now", an article by Rahul Verma of Lokniti, on Haryana assembly elections was published in *The Indian Express* on Oct 12, 2009. The article looked at Haryana's changing caste arithmetic and how political parties are desperately seeking new equations, while keeping the social composition intact.

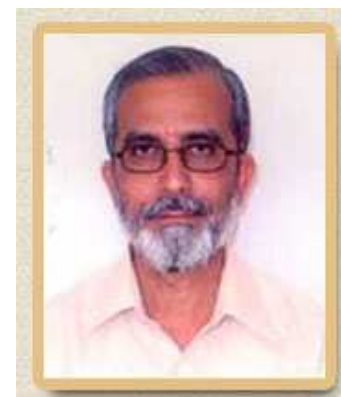
Visit <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/haryanas-in-the-bag-for-now/527949/0> for more details



In September, Professor Suhas Palshikar wrote a weekly column on Maharashtra politics in *DNA* (Mumbai and Pune).

An Urban Legend, an article written by him about the myth regarding domination of urban constituencies and urban impact on elections was published in *The Times of India* on October 9th 2009.

Visit <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/opinion/edit-page/An-Urban-Legend/articleshow/5102705.cms> for more details



Workshops/ Seminars/ Presentations

Dr.G.Gopa Kumar, Professor and Head, Department of Political Science, University of Kerala, attended the curriculum development workshop on Gandhian Studies held on Oct.10-11, 2009 at IGNOU, New Delhi as an expert member. The workshop as part of an effort by IGNOU to build a comprehensive syllabus for the course on M.Phil studies.

In continuation of Dr.G.Gopa Kumar's visit to various Australian universities from June to August 2009, Dr.Paul Brown and John Meadson from the Department of History, University of New South Wales, Sydney visited the Department of Political Science, University of Kerala from October 7-9, 2009, to develop an academic partnership on areas related to environment. They also presented a seminar on 'Environment and Sustainability in Australia'.



October 2009 Assembly Election Results

Results of Assembly election on 22nd October in three states have brought a sigh of relief to the Congress leadership. The congress was the incumbent party in states of Maharashtra (in alliance with NCP), Haryana and Arunachal Pradesh. The Congress won 2/3rd of seats in Arunachal Pradesh and the CM Dorjee Khandu is going to continue his term. In Maharashtra in spite of being in power since 1999, the alliance managed to win the majority, defying incumbency amidst divided opposition. It was anticipated by political analysts that the battle could be close in Maharashtra between the alliances, however Shiv Sena seems to be "trapped in its own past" and the debate of which party is the real 'sena' will echo in coming months.

Maharashtra Results

| | Seats Won 2009 | Gain/Loss since 2004 | 2009 Vote (%) | Gain/Loss since 2004 |
|-----------|----------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Congress | 81 | 12 | 21.01 | -0.09 |
| NCP | 62 | -9 | 16.4 | -2.4 |
| BJP | 46 | -8 | 14 | 0.3 |
| ShivSena | 44 | -18 | 16.3 | -3.7 |
| MNS | 13 | 13 | 5.7 | 5.7 |
| BSP | 0 | 0 | 2.3 | -1.7 |
| SP | 4 | 4 | 0.7 | -0.4 |
| Independ- | 24 | 5 | 15.5 | 1 |
| Others | 14 | 1 | 8.1 | 1.3 |

Note: MNS did not contest in 2004

Arunachal Pradesh Results

| | Seats Won 2009 | Gain/Loss since 2004 | 2009 Vote (%) | Gain/Loss since 2004 |
|----------|----------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Congress | 42 | 8 | 50.4 | 6 |
| BJP | 3 | -6 | 5.2 | -13.8 |
| NCP | 5 | 3 | 19.3 | 15 |
| TRMC | 5 | 5 | 15 | 15 |
| PPA | 4 | 4 | 7.3 | 7.3 |
| Others | 1 | -14 | 2.8 | -29.5 |

Note: TRMC and PPA did not contest in 2004.

After the debacle in Lok Sabha elections, the October 2009 results did not bring much soothing results for the BJP and seems to be in a disarray. Kiren Rijju, the BJP's face in the North East and Arunachal Pradesh deserted the party months ago. Due to the absence of a strong alliance, the party seems to be fast losing ground in Haryana. Arunachal Pradesh seems to be an interesting case. CM Dorjee Khandu has been elected thrice unopposed. This time around 3 MLAs from congress won even without contesting. NCP and TRMC, which are both Congress coalition partners in New Delhi, have won five seats each in the state.

Haryana Results

| | Seats Won 2009 | Gain/Loss since 2005 | 2009 Vote (%) | Gain/Loss since 2005 |
|----------|----------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Congress | 40 | -27 | 35.1 | -7.4 |
| BJP | 4 | 2 | 9 | -1.4 |
| INLD | 31 | 22 | 25.8 | -1 |
| SAD | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| HJC (BL) | 6 | 6 | 7.4 | 7.4 |
| BSP | 1 | 0 | 6.7 | 3.5 |
| Others | 7 | -4 | 15 | -2.1 |

Note : HJC (BL) did not contest in 2005.

The Congress did not do fairly well on expected lines in Haryana . Haryana has a history of never returning an incumbent, nevertheless Bhupinder Singh Hooda has managed to continue as state's CM despite of falling short of a majority. The Hooda government is being supported by seven independents. The BSP's performance in Lok Sabha in Haryana surprised everyone, however the party seems to have lost steam since then. Former Congress Stalwart Bhajan Lal's ambition of playing the role of king maker through his outfit HJC seems to have fallen flat.

Democracy Update:

Botswana General Elections: 2009

Botswana's President Ian Khama, a British-trained army lieutenant general, secured a new five-year term and extended his control over the world's largest diamond producer, after the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) swept to victory in the 2009 Parliamentary elections. The General elections held in Botswana on 16th October 2009 were the 10th general elections held since Botswana's independence in 1966. The BDP has been the ruling party in Botswana for more than four decades. The main parties in the race were Botswana Democratic Party [BDP], the Botswana National Front [BNF] and the Botswana Congress Party [BCP]. 15 independent candidates and various other smaller parties also participated in these elections. Almost all of the polling stations received an increased number of voters compared with the last election. About 725,000 people registered to cast their ballots, compared with about 550,000 in the 2004 vote. In order to decide on a President, the winning party needs to secure 29 out of the total 57 Parliamentary seats. The BDP, which has been in power ever since Botswana's independence won 45 out of the 57 seats. The main opposition Botswana National Front (BNF) won 6 seats, and BCP, founded in 1998 in a split from the BNF, captured 4 seats. In order to make results parliamentary elections accessible, the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) of Botswana published results live on its website at <http://www.iec.gov.bw/elections/results.php>

Apart from the charges of autocracy and fierce infighting within the BDP, the economic-crisis had been a major issue plaguing the elections. Seen as one of Africa's best governed countries with a history of budget surpluses and the region's strongest currency, the crisis has forced Botswana into debt. Diamonds account for almost 40% of its economy and the economic recession has reduced the demand for diamonds. The Gross Domestic Product is estimated to shrink 10% and the country has sunk into debt. However in a sharp contrast to neighbouring Zimbabwe's economic and political turmoil, Botswana (with a history of budget surpluses) is often regarded by investors as one of Africa's prominent gems. Khama is one of the most vocal critics of Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe's policies. Many voters felt that the economic crisis could not be blamed solely on the BDP. Very few expected it to lose the elections for the first time in 40 years, causing a change in power equation within the country. The BDP, as divided and instable as it might be, still managed to win the elections



Democracy Update

Portuguese Legislative Elections 2009:

In the Portuguese Legislative elections held on 27 September 2009, the Socialist Party led by incumbent Prime Minister José Sócrates won the majority, but couldn't repeat the overall majority they gained in 2005. With 230 seats in the Parliament, the results were: Socialist Party: 97, Social Democratic Party (PSD): 81, Democratic and Social Centre - People's Party (CDS-PP): 21, Left Bloc (BE): 16, Democratic Unity Coalition (PCP-PEV): 15

Even though the Portuguese Prime Minister won a second term in office, his share of ballot went down to about 36.56 percent of the vote, as compared to 45 percent in 2005, which had given him an absolute majority in the Parliament during his first term.

Social Democrats under Manuela Ferreira Leite, who had campaigned for vigorous public spending cuts, managed to get 81 seats got around 29 percent of the vote, virtually unchanged from 2005. Smaller parties also managed to secure representation in the parliament. The conservative Democratic and Social Centre - People's Party got 21 seats and polled 10.5 percent of the votes. One of the biggest gainer of this election appeared to be the Left Bloc, improving their percentage of votes from 6.3 percent in 2005 to 10 percent. The communist/ green coalition of CDU secured 15 seats and secured 8 percent of the votes.

Other fringe parties also managed to take some votes, but the votes were too few to get seats in Parliament. Around 60.60 percent of the country's almost 9.4 million registered voters came out to vote. The Socialist Party campaigned on the electoral plank of big-ticket public works projects to help stimulate growth. Blaming Portugal's economic downturn on the global meltdown, Socrates has promised to push through a controversial economic reform program. Despite opposition from unions and opposition parties, he has pledged to go through changes and modernize outdated areas of the economy. This plan of improving the country's social system and cutting excessive spending has irritated many, especially trade unions. According to the main opposition party, the Social Democrats, this program could burden future generations with debt. Social Democrats want emphasis on private enterprise and tax breaks. It is predicted that Portugal's economy will decline by as much as 4 percent this year. The unemployment rate is at 9 percent, highest in over 20 years. In the last four years the Socialist government had imposed a series of measures with the aim of boosting the economy. Portugal has lagged behind in the EU in spite of receiving billions in EU development aid. Socrates initiated many ambitious reforms in his first term of office and victory in these elections has given legitimacy to his policies. The Socialist Party worked on a platform of increasing public works spending to fend off the global financial crisis. It's because of this the voters decided to bring them back to power, in spite of the highest jobless rate in 20 years.



Democracy Update:



Gabon Presidential Elections:

After the death of the serving president Omar Bongo Ondimba on 8 June 2009, presidential elections were held in Gabon on 30 August 2009. After receiving independence from France in 1960, Gabon was a single party state and only recently in 1993 started holding democratic multiparty elections. For much of the second half of the 20th century, Gabon can be associated with President Bongo's grip within the ruling Gabonese Democratic Party (PDG). Though 23 candidates were supposed to stand in the elections, six of them withdrew right before the elections; thereby the field got reduced to 17 candidates. In spite of the wide number of candidates, three were considered to be the front-runners for the Presidency. They were: Omar Bongo's son Ali-Ben Bongo, who was the candidate of the-ruling Gabonese Democratic Party (PDG); Union of Gebonese People (UPG) fielded Pierre Mamboundou, a veteran opposition leader who was backed by a coalition of parties; and André Mba Obame, a former PDG member who stood as an independent with the support of several other candidates. Geographically speaking, Bongo's support was spread throughout the country, while his opponents, Mba Obame and Pierre Mamboudou, mainly got their support from northern and southern parts of the country. At the elections, voter turnout was considered low with official figures placing it at 44.24%. But Ali Ben Bongo, ruling party candidate and son of the oil-producing African country's former leader, won the elections and secured another term for his party. As opposed to Bongo's 41%, the two-main opposing candidates, former interior minister Andre Mba Obame and Pierre Mamboundou, both polled around 25.9 and 25.2 percent.

In spite of the election results being announced by the interim President and French governments acknowledgement of the result, the opposition parties rejected the result on the basis of irregularities, use of intimidation tactics and a lack of transparency. They immediately termed it fraudulent and violent protests briefly flared up. Gabon's top court ordered a recount of the votes cast in the presidential elections held on 30th August. The recount began on 30 September and the Constitutional Court announced the results of the recount on 12 October 2009 suffice. The courts again declared Ali Bongo as the winner. The confirmation of his victory had been largely been predicted by everyone and analysts view Omar Bongo's son replacing him as an indication of continued business-friendly policies. Ben Bongo has already toured all over central Africa to garner the support of leaders from a region where his father's presence dominated. Even though former colonial power France had recognised Ben Bongo's victory, but he comes from the minority Teke tribe and failed to secure a convincing win in the poll, therefore just like his father, he is likely to seek consensus in governing a nation. Bongo was sworn in as President at a ceremony on 16 October. Now formally in office, Bongo will have to balance election promises - which include better schools, healthcare, vocational education and access to new homes - at a time when Gabon's oil reserves are shrinking.

Democracy Update:

Russia: Municipal elections

On 11th of October, 76 of Russia's 83 regions, including Chechnya went to the polls in some 7,000 regional **mayoral, regional and district elections**. The party of Kremlin-United Russia -the party of power and the party of Putin – reasserted its overwhelming dominance. United Russia won with a landslide and got 66 percent of the votes, winning 32 of 35 seats in the legislature. The Communist Party received 13 percent of the total votes and won 3 seats. In the weeks before the elections, the government encouraged and pushed Russians to register for voting. Only 30 million out of 140 million registered. On the day of the elections, even fewer turned up. The turnout was a meager 29 percent. In a country where the power equation is dominated by the Kremlin, it's not a surprise that Russians don't have faith in participatory democracy anymore. Ever since his election last year, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev had promised to encourage multiparty democracy. These elections showed that little progress had been made. The communists have made allegations of electoral violations. The Communists claimed there were mass electoral violations during the voting. Boris Nemtsov, Opposition leader and former deputy prime minister said that Kremlin had made a concentrated effort to get its critics disqualified from the elections.

Nemtsov and other candidates from the Solidarity movement were barred from running in city council elections by the Russian election commission. This was done on the grounds that the 5,000 signatures collected by each of them were forged--including Nemtsov's own signature. Many opposition leaders complained about electoral fraud. Candidates were barred from running for directly elected seats on the council after city officials declared the signatures on their registrations invalid. Others also complained that they had been blocked from advertising on television or in newspapers and even in posters on the street. Outcry against the elections in Russia has started to produce results. Ballot recount was ordered by a Moscow court with regards to Khamovniki District in central Moscow. It was a complaint by Sergei Mitrokhin, leader of the opposition party Yabloko, which led to this investigation. He discovered to his utter amazement, that in a district where he and his family voted, not a single

Afghanistan: Election Run-off

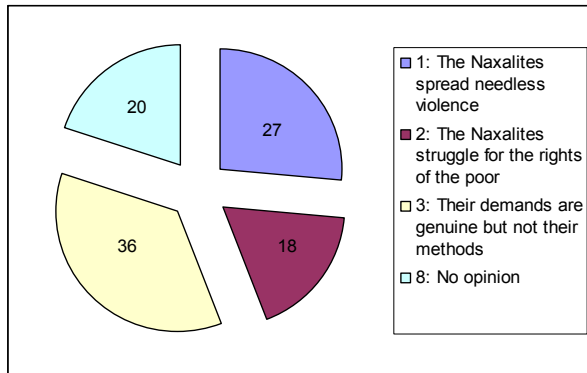
The runoff elections in Afghanistan face multiple challenges. Afghan voters, who are already disillusioned with the lack of peace and security, have been further let down by the wide spread fraud in the initial August 20th elections. This has further fed their skepticism and shaken their faith in the current setup. The runoff Presidential elections, scheduled for November 7 between President Hamid Karzai and his main opponent, former foreign minister Abdullah Abdullah has various problems confronting it, like voter apathy and suspicion, the threat of Taliban, harsh winter's and a preparation time of only few weeks. According to many, a power-sharing deal between the two rivals could be the best option available. There are doubts regarding whether the second round of voting will be cleaner than the first. Hence a power-sharing compromise could avoid a second round of elections which could be costly, divisive and equally flawed. It is still not clear whether the second round of voting will be more credible than the first one. It is an election that has been hastily planned, but because the international community is intently viewing the process, it could lead to fewer irregularities compared to the first time. Harsh weather condition of the region is going to be an important factor in determining voter participation. Snow has already fallen in northern Afghanistan and remote districts will be soon inaccessible due to winter.

Abdullah Abdullah has presented "minimum conditions" for his participation in the elections. This includes the removal of Independent Electoral Commission chairman Azizullah Ludin. Difficulty regarding electoral credibility arises from the prevalent idea that the Afghan Elections Commission isn't truly independent and supports Karzai. The government, while admitting that there may have been "some violations" in the 20 August vote, refused to comply with his demand of Ludin's removal. The international community will have to realize that stabilizing Afghanistan entails a massive overhaul of institutions setup by them. Until the Election Commission is examined, there are apprehensions that the runoff elections will be as deeply defective as the first one. In the first round of elections, the U.N. supported Complaints Commission, invalidated more than a million fraudulent ballots. Most of them were for Karzai and this deprived him of an "outright victory". Only after considerable pressure from the international community, did Karzai unwillingly gave his consent for a runoff between him and his main rival.

Naxalism: The War Within

National Election Survey: 2009 Opinion on Naxalism

Question: People have different opinions regarding the Naxalites. I will read out some of these opinions. Please tell me, out of these opinions, which one do you agree with the most?



Note: Total number of respondents (n)= 3940, NES 2009, All figures are in %

Data regarding people's opinion on Naxalism tells us that quite a few of them, around 20% of them don't have an opinion on this situation. Around 36% believe that Naxalites have genuine demands, but don't agree with their methods and means of achieving those goals. 27% of the respondents felt that Naxalites are unnecessarily spreading violence and around 18% felt that Naxalites are fighting for the rights of the poor.

Branding them as terrorists with no ideological support behind them, the state has responded by highlighting that Naxals have been killing innocent tribals, beheading policemen, indulging in mindless violence and blasting away symbols of development like two schools. This change in position comes at a time when the government has been seriously attacking Naxal sympathizers and human rights activists for supporting their cause.

"Operation Greenhunt" might have lately been grabbing headlines, but the Home Minister has denied the existence of any such anti-naxal operation being launched by the state. "I do not know from where this name came". In a media interview, Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram told journalists that "In terms of the threat to security from Indian sources or internal sources, Naxalism remains the biggest threat. There is, of course, the other threat which is cross border terrorism but that is emanating from across the border".

The government has said in coming months, incidents of violence, landmines, train ambushes and other such retaliations could increase due to the Center's offensive. One of the most important questions which has emerged from this is that Naxalism has been thriving in India for many decades. If truth be told, it has existed for sometime, it's not something new. Then why is it getting scrutinized lately? The past governments never seriously addressed the issue. Now that the issue has intensified, has the present stand been taken to bury the failure of governance? Calling them "anti-poor, anti-people and anti-development", the Home Minister said that their policy of blocking development, roads and electricity cannot be called "pro-common man".

Table 1 : Opinion on Naxalism By Locality and Economic Class*

| | The Naxalites spread needless violence | The Naxalites struggle for the rights of the poor | Their demands are genuine but not their methods | No opinion |
|---------------------------|--|---|---|------------|
| Rural Upper Class | 25 | 21 | 39 | 15 |
| Rural Middle Class | 27 | 17 | 35 | 21 |
| Rural Lower Class | 25 | 19 | 30 | 26 |
| Urban Upper Class | 29 | 12 | 46 | 12 |
| Urban Middle Class | 26 | 16 | 40 | 18 |
| Urban Lower Class | 25 | 26 | 27 | 23 |
| Total | 27 | 18 | 36 | 20 |

Note: * Economic Class index is made with the help of respondents income and assets. All figures are in %. NES 2009. Total number of respondents (n)=3940

Table 1 tells us that when it comes to an opinion on Naxalism, with relation to locality and economic class, around 46% of the Urban Upper Class respondents felt that demands made by Naxalites are genuine, but didn't agree with their methods. The Urban Upper Class also represent the highest percentage of people who feel that Naxalites spread needless violence i.e. 29%. 26% from the Urban Lower Class feel that Naxalites struggle for the rights of the poor, compared to only 19% of the Rural Lower Class. In rural areas, the highest percentage of people who feel that Naxalites struggle for the rights of poor come from the Upper Class, around 21%. That number is 26% amongst the Urban Lower Class, the highest in urban areas. When it comes to the Middle Class, 35% from the rural middle class feel that their demands are genuine, but that number goes up to 40% with the Urban Middle Class. Around 26% from the Rural Lower Class have no opinion on this situation

Table : Opinion on Naxalism By Caste.

| | The Naxalites spread need- less violence | The Naxalites struggle for the rights of the poor | Their demands are genuine but not their methods | No opin- ion |
|--------------------|---|---|---|-----------------|
| Dalit | 25 | 19 | 33 | 23 |
| Adivasi | 21 | 22 | 39 | 18 |
| Other Caste | 27 | 17 | 36 | 20 |
| Total | 27 | 18 | 36 | 20 |

Note: All figures are in %. NES 2009. n= 3940

More and more questions are being raised by the government and their sympathizers regarding the consequences of violence and indiscriminate killing of people by the Naxals. Their strategies are turning counter-productive and turning public opinion against the cause.

After the Indian Air Force sought permission to fight back if the Naxals fired upon its helicopters, the government has made it clear that as long as the Naxals indulged in an armed struggle, the security forces would arrest and apprehend them. The problem is compounded by the fact that unlike cross border terrorism, where the threat is emanating from across the border, the state will be using military offensive against its own citizens.

When we look at the data caste-wise, we find that around 39% of Adivasis feel that demands made by Naxalites are genuine but not their means, the highest number of respondents who feel this way. While 33% of Dalits and 36% of people from Other Castes feel the same. When it comes to the number of people who feel that Naxalites struggle for the rights of the poor, the highest number of respondents who agree with this are again Adivasis i.e. 22%. This number goes down to 19% amongst Dalits and 17% amongst people from Other Castes . 21% of Adivasis feel that Naxalites are needlessly spreading violence, compared to 25% of Dalits and 27% from Other Castes. 23% of Dalits have no opinion on this matter, this number is 18% within the Adivasis and 20% amongst people from other castes.

Table: Opinion on Naxalism in Naxal affected states.

| | The Naxalites spread needless violence | The Naxalites struggle for the rights of the poor | Their demands are genuine but not their methods | No opinion |
|---------------------------------|--|---|---|------------|
| Naxalism affected States | 20 | 20 | 39 | 21 |
| Other States | 30 | 16 | 34 | 20 |
| Total | 26 | 18 | 36 | 20 |

Note: Naxal affected states include, Jharkhand, Orissa, Chhattishgarh, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. All figures are in %. NES 2009. n= 3940

In Naxalism affected states lesser people believe that Naxalites spread needless violence and more number of people feel that Naxalites struggle for the rights of the poor and their demands are genuine but not their methods. (See Table for reference). In Naxalism affected states, 20% of the people feel that Naxalites spread needless violence, compared to 30% in other states. 16% of the people in other states feel that Naxalites struggle for the rights of the poor. This number goes up to 20% in Naxalism affected states.

39% from Naxalism affected states felt that their demands are genuine but not their means, this number goes down to 34% in states that are not affected by Naxalism. 21% of the people from Naxalism affected states had no opinion on this issue, higher than people from other states, where the number was 20%.

As reported by some sections of the media, Chidambaram has said the government would first free the territory under Naxal dominance and then development activities will be carried out. Usually called the "Red Corridor, the vast area affected by insurgency includes states of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Orissa, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. The government has asked Naxalites to must abjure violence and take the path of democracy and dialogue. "

Government doesn't consider the Naxalite confrontation as a war, and the state would never wage a war against its own people", said the Home Minister. The problem is compounded by the fact that unlike cross border terrorism, where the threat is emanating form across the border, the state will be using military offensive against its own citizens.

Images Courtesy:

Botswana Elections: nigeriamasterweb.com , nehandaradio.com
Portuguese Elections: cleveland.com, newsportal.european-left.org,
21stcenturymanifesto.files.wordpress.com, media.sacbee.com
Gabon Presidential Elections: english.china.com, nytimes.com

Telephone: +91-11-23942199
(Extension: 333)
Direct and Telefax: +91-11-23981012,
23831290
Fax: +91-11-3943450
Emal: mail@lokniti.org

Telephone: +91-11-23942199
(Extension: 333)
Direct and Telefax: +91-11-23981012, 23831290
Fax: +91-11-3943450
Emal: mail@lokniti.org

Lokniti
Programme for Comparative Democracy

Visit us at
www.lokniti.org/

लोकनीति