

Threats emanating from the nefarious links of IAS officers with the Maoists and civil society groups.

According to a report in the English daily 'Indian Express' dated July 26, 2015, several Congress MLAs in Chhattisgarh have written to the state home minister complaining about the Maoist links of Balrampur collector Alex Paul Menon and seeking permission to raise the issue in the assembly. In their letter dated July 20, they have alleged a sudden increase in the Naxal incidents in the district, as the local administration is hand-in-gloves with the Maoists. Those who have signed the letter include Ramanujganj MLA Brihaspati Singh Tekam, Dantewada MLA Devti Karma, Dharamjaigarh MLA Laljeet Singh Rathia among others.

This is an important piece of information as I had long back suspected Alex Paul Menon of having Maoist links. The same Alex Paul Menon while he was posted as collector of Sukma was abducted by Maoists on April 21, 2012. He had gone to a remote village on April 21, 2012, accompanied by only two bodyguards, to attend a farmers meeting as part of Gram Suraj Abhiyan at Manjhipara village aimed to improve better coordination between the administration and the people. About 15 Maoists were also there among the villagers who attended the meeting. After the meeting, they took away the collector at gun point, after shooting down the two bodyguards who tried to protect the collector. Later, the Chhattisgarh government had appointed B.D.Sharma, a former IAS officer, and professor G.Hargopal, a pro-Maoist academic, as mediators as desired by the Maoists, to hold negotiations with the Maoists for the release of Alex Paul Menon. The government also appointed Nirmala Buch and S.K.Mishra, former chief secretaries of Madhya Pradesh as interlocutors from the government side. The Maoists had put forward some conditions like suspension of all offensive operations against the Maoists, confinement of all para-military forces to their barracks and the release of all arrested Maoist cadres for the release of the collector. Finally, as per an agreement by both the sides, eight Maoist prisoners, including Santipriya Reddy, wife of Gudsa Usandi, a member of Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee, and Malati Chowdary, were released on bail and in exchange, Alex Paul Menon was handed over to the mediators on May 3, 2012.

Sukma district in Chhattisgarh is one of the highly sensitive Maoist-infested districts and the question arises as to why Alex Paul Menon went to an interior village of such a district without adequate security? In a similar incident in neighbouring Malkangiri district of Orissa, another IAS officer R.Vineel Krishna was abducted by Maoists in February, 2011, who was released later only after conceding to so many demands raised by the Maoists. Despite such a bitter experience by one of his colleagues just an year ago, it is unbelievable that Alex Paul Menon, an IAS officer, will commit the same mistake and offer himself as a passive victim for abduction, unless he has a vested interest in staging such a drama.

In the Malkangiri incident that took place on February 16, 2011, Maoists had kidnapped R.Vineel Krishna, collector of Malkangiri district in Odisha, along with a junior engineer. The Odisha government had appointed professor R.S.Roy, Professor G.Hargopal and Dandapani Mohanti as mediators to negotiate with the Maoists for the release of R.Vineel Krishna. These mediators were nominated by the Maoists and the government was forced to accept them. U.N.Behera, Home Secretary of Orissa and S.N.Tripathy, Panjayat Raj Secretary, represented the government side. The Maoists had raised a number of demands like the release of all arrested Maoist cadres, an end to Operation Green Hunt, scrapping of all accords with MNCs for land transfer for various projects, compensation for the families of Maoists killed in police encounters, etc. for the release of the collector. All the demands were conceded by the government and as per the deal, 12 Maoist leaders, including Padma, wife of state secretary of Andhra Pradesh unit of Maoists, and two other senior leaders, namely Ganti Prasadam and Sriramalu Srinivasalu, were released on bail and in return, collector R.Vineel Krishna and junior engineer Pabitra Majhi were handed over to the mediators in the presence of media people.

However, the abduction and release of R.Vineel Krishna by Maoists has raised some disturbing questions about certain actions of Krishna. Why did R.V.Krishna visit an interior village of his district

known as highly Naxal-infested area, without any security? Maoists are waging a war against India and R.V.Krishna should have known that he, being the principal representative of the state government in the district, should be the prime target of the Maoists operating in the area. As such, he should have taken all necessary security precautions before venturing into such an area. Collector R.V.Krishna also knew very well that Malkangiri, besides being a highly Maoist-infested area, also borders Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh, two other Maoist-infested states. After Krishna's release from Maoist custody, it was revealed that he was actually abducted by groups operating in Chhattisgarh and Orissa. Krishna's explanation that he avoided security only to avoid the attention of the Maoists to his visit to an interior village is not satisfactory as the Maoists are known to have an efficient intelligent network to keep track of such VIP movements.

Under the circumstances, the flouting of all security precautions by Vineel Krishna and his subsequent abduction gives some ground for suspicion that Krishna probably had some links with Maoists and that he was willingly falling into a trap set by the Maoists. Vineel Krishna's posting as private secretary to Union Environment and Forest Minister Jairam Ramesh in June 2011 only helped to create further doubts about his possible Maoist links as Jairam Ramesh is a known sympathizer of Maoist movement and a close loyalist of Sonia Gandhi. It is an open secret that the National Advisory Council led by Sonia Gandhi under the UPA regime was functioning like an apex body of all NGO and human rights organizations in the country, which sympathized with various militant movements in the country like separatist movement in Kashmir and the Maoist movement. Influenced by the NAC, the UPA government treated the Maoist menace as a humanitarian problem and resisted all moves for stern action to contain the Maoist movement. The UPA government had set up an expert committee on "Development Issues to deal with the causes of Discontent, Unrest and Extremism" in May 2006, mainly to study the factors responsible for the growth of Maoist movement in interior and tribal areas and to suggest measures to deal with the problem. Two security experts, namely Ajit Doval, former IB chief, and Prakash Singh, former DGP of UP, were members of this expert committee. All the other 14 members of the committee were either hard core supporters, or sympathizer of the Maoist movement. The expert committee, as expected, submitted a highly biased report in April 2008, distorting all facts and favouring the Maoists. It justified all their misdeeds and violence as part of their fight for honour and justice. The committee concluded the Maoist movement as a humanitarian problem and cautioned the government against suppressing the movement through stern measures instead of addressing the root cause of the problem by redressing the grievances of the rural poor in the interior villages. This report was tailor-made to suit the interests of the NAC which is reported to have nominated the members of the expert committee. There were only two dissenting voices to the findings of the committee, that of Ajit Doval and Prakash Singh, both accomplished security experts. The blind acceptance of the findings of this expert committee and the composition of the committee had thoroughly exposed the UPA government's blatant support and sympathy for the Maoist movement.

Top Congress leaders and a majority of the expert committee members who tried to paint the Maoist movement as a humanitarian problem were totally dishonest in their assessment. The Maoists routinely used to attack and kill security personnel and snatch their arms. They used to extort money from the villagers and forcefully take away their children to train them as new recruits. They used to attack police stations and loot arms and ammunition. They also used to ambush vehicles of security forces with land mines. In one such incident alone that took place on April 6, 2010 at Dantewade in Chhattisgarh, 76 CRPF personnel were massacred on the spot. In a barbaric incident that took place on January 10, 2013, they had surgically implanted an ied device with timer in the stomach of a slain CRPF jawan intended to trigger an explosion to blow up the hospital where the autopsy was to be conducted. Even the IAF helicopters used for evacuating injured jawans had come under heavy fire from the Maoists on several occasions. The Maoists have no qualms of conscience in damaging the railway tracks intended to cause rail accidents. On May 28, 2010, the Maoists derailed the Gyaneswari Express in West Bengal in which 150 innocent people were killed and about 200 people were injured. The Maoists also supported all anti-development agitations in the country to aimed to stall our economic progress. From the documents seized from the Maoists by the police, the Maoists in India are learnt to have established

links with similar revolutionary organizations in 21 countries, including the USA, UK, France and Germany. Can anybody in the right frame of mind call this a humanitarian problem?

Now some Congress legislators have come out openly against the alleged Maoist links of Balrampur collector Alex Paul Menon in Chhattisgarh. Some may find these allegations as atrocious. Because, there was a time, when the IAS/IFS officers enjoyed such a status and reputation that their image was so sacrosanct that it was almost inviolable. But that is not the case now. There are many suspicious and unscrupulous elements among the IAS officers, at both junior and senior levels, in India today. Many IAS officers after their retirement are found to have taken an activist's role aligning themselves with some foreign-funded NGOs with suspected links with Maoists and anti-development lobby. Some IAS officers had even opted for voluntary retirement to become NGO activists or to float their own NGOs. Aruna Roy, former NAC member, was one such IAS officer who opted for voluntary retirement in 1974 to become a social activist in Rajasthan by joining an NGO called 'Social Work and Research Centre' which was founded by her husband Bunkar Roy. She founded her own NGO 'Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sanghatana' in 1990. In the name of activism and empowering the marginalized sections of people, she was actually found promoting militancy among the Adivasis and such other impoverished sections of people in the interior parts of India. She was also found supporting the activities of anti-development lobby led by Medha Patkar, and she had herself campaigned against the Kudankulam nuclear power plant in Tamil Nadu. She is also known to be a supporter of Maoist movement.

Harsh Mander, is another IAS officer who opted for voluntary retirement in 2002. He then became a full time activist of the Centre for Equity Studies, a foreign-funded NGO that he had founded in August 2000. He had also founded an NGO called 'Aman Biradari' to propagate secularism, peace and justice and to run a chain of orphanages. His other campaigns include 'Nyayalaya' movement to provide legal justice and relief to victims of communal violence and 'Dil Se' campaign to give relief to street children.

In 2010, The 'Rainbow Home', an orphanage in Hyderabad run by Harsh Mander's NGO 'Aman Biradari' courted a lot of controversies following the arrest of Maoist leader Padma, wife of Andhra Pradesh Maoist chief Ramakrishna, from Koraput district of Odisha on November 13, 2010. On her interrogation, it was found that she was working as a home manager at the 'Rainbow Home', an orphanage for girls run by former IAS officer Harsh Mander, since 2008 under the assumed name Sarishakka. Harsh Mander had deep sympathy for jihadi terrorists too. He was a signatory to the campaign to save Afzal Guru, a terrorist convicted and later hanged for 2001 attack on Indian Parliament House. He had even applied for mercy to Pakistani terrorist Ajmal Kasab, creating a huge controversy.

Besides Harsh Mander and Aruna Roy, there are many other IAS officers who have taken to activism after retirement. Prominent among them are B.D.Sharma, E.A.S.Sarma, N.C.Saxena and late S.R.Sankaran. Reports of I.A.S. officers developing sympathy for Maoists or their willing cooperation for their own abduction by Maoists is not a new phenomenon. Maoists have successfully adopted such a strategy many times in the past by kidnapping IAS officers or other VIPs as pressure tactics to get their demands, like the release of their jailed colleagues, conceded. In one of such prominent incidents in the past, on December 27, 1987, eleven state government officials of Andhra Pradesh including 7 IAS officers were abducted by the Maoists belonging to People's War Group from Rampachodavaram in East Godavari district, where the officials had gone for an inspection of the tribal welfare hostels. Most prominent among the 7 abducted IAS officers was the then principal secretary of Andhra Pradesh S.R.Sankaran, who himself was later found to be a sympathizer of Maoist movement. The state government had sought the help of a pro-Maoist lawyer and civil society activist K.G.Kannabiran to negotiate with the Maoists for the safe release of the abducted officers. After ten days of negotiations, the state government released 16 Maoists from Rajahmundry central jail and all the abducted officers were also released in exchange. S.R.Sankaran was very popular among certain sections of tribals in Andhra Pradesh because of his support for the Maoist movement. After his retirement from service in 1992, he became a full time activist working for various human rights organizations. In 1997, he became the convener of the Committee of Concerned Citizens, a pro-Maoist human rights organization. In June

2004, when the government of Andhra Pradesh wanted to start a peace dialogue with the Maoists, Sankaran was appointed as the chief negotiator from the government side. The fact that Maoist had also nominated Sankaran as their representative to hold peace talks with the government shows his close links with the Maoists. Sankaran had also served as a member of the 16-member Expert Committee appointed by the UPA government in 2006 to study the Maoist problem, with the committee declaring the Maoist menace as a humanitarian problem. S.R.Sankaran passed away on October 7, 2010.

E.A.S.Sarma of Andhra Pradesh cadre is another IAS officer, who is a staunch supporter of Maoist movement. Because of his rebellious nature, he was transferred 26 times in his 35-year service. He is a staunch supporter of anti-development lobby in India. Even while he was in service, he had tried to stop many development projects in Andhra Pradesh, especially in power and mining sector and had earned the displeasure of the state chief minister. After the retirement, he has become full time anti-development activist and also a strong supporter of the Maoist movement. He has written several letters to the prime minister and the Atomic Regulatory Board demanding scrapping of nuclear power plants at Kudankulam in Tamil Nadu, Jaitapur in Maharashtra and Kowada in Andhra Pradesh raising several safety-related issues. It was E.A.S.Sarma along with professor Nandini Sunder and historian Ramachandra Guha, who had filed a petition in the Supreme Court seeking a ban on Salva Judum, an anti-Maoist resistance force, and successfully got it disbanded. He was also a member of the expert committee appointed by the UPA government, which declared the Maoist movement as a humanitarian problem.

Corruption, political intervention and allurements from foreign intelligence agencies are some of the evils that have mainly contributed to the moral turpitude of the top bureaucrats in the present-day India. This menace is not confined only to the bureaucratic class. Many intellectuals in different fields also suffer from the same malady. Booker Prize winner Author Arundhati Roy is, no doubt, a good writer. What prompted this misguided lady to turn into an antinational? After touring some of the Maoist areas in India, her conclusion is that Maoists are Gandhians with guns! She is also a hard core supporter of Kashmiri separatists. She had criticized the Supreme Court for giving the death sentence to Afzal Guru in the Parliament attack case, allegedly without giving him a fair trial. Ramachandra Guha is an established historian. But he seems to be unduly worried about the ability of India to remain as a united entity despite all ethnic and linguistic differences of the people. He feels that it will only be a natural course correction if India is divided on ethnic and linguistic lines. S.Ramdas, former naval chief, and his wife Lalita Ramdas are actively engaged in opposing various mega development projects, especially nuclear power plants in India. Justice P.B.Sawant, former supreme court judge, and Kolse Patil and Hoabet Suresh, two former judges of Bombay High Court have also become social activists leading agitations against nuclear power plants and other development projects in India. Many retired judges like Justice Rajinder Sachar, A.P.Shah and Ajit Singh Bains and senior advocates like Prashant Bhushan, Collin Golsalves and Nandita Haksar have become human rights activists to protect the rights of only the Maoists, Muslim terrorists and such other militants. Nandita Haksar is the daughter of late P.N.Haksar, who had served as principal secretary under Indira Gandhi. Nandita's love for militant organizations has cast a shadow even on her father's image.

Pakistan and China are the two countries perceived by most Indians as most hostile to India. However, there is also a third enemy that has been trying hard to destabilize India. In fact, this third enemy is the most powerful, dangerous and treacherous one because of its invisible nature, secret mission and clandestine activities. Though this enemy remains invisible, its agenda could easily be detected from the activities of the large network of foreign-funded NGOs, human rights groups, environmental groups, anti-development lobby and the whole lot of pseudo-secularists comprising of many noted historians, academics, anthropologists, sociologists, journalists, lawyers, retired judges and generals. These groups, which were earlier known as voluntary action groups, are now collectively called as the civil society groups. These groups are created, nurtured, funded, supported, guided and used by various western and church agencies to protect their economic and political interests in India. Such civil society groups are created and funded by the western agencies in almost every country in the world to protect their interests which includes regime change operations in certain countries, so as to perpetuate the present

dominant role of the US-led western block in the world affairs. It will be a fatal mistake to misjudge or underestimate the capacity of the civil society groups in influencing the socio-political developments in different countries. It was the silent operations by the western intelligence agencies and the civil society groups that led to the break up of the Soviet Union in 1991 by exploiting the internal contradictions within that country.

The western agencies have built up a very powerful civil society lobby in India. Many retired IAS officers, judges and generals and other intellectuals from different fields who are openly indulging in anti-national activities like supporting Maoist movement, Kashmiri separatists, anti-development lobby and such other militant movements are actually a part of this civil society movement. In India, the ultimate objective of the western agencies is a Soviet Union-type break up of this country. Many people may wonder as to why a friendly country like the US would like to see the break- up of India. But the fact is that it is a grave mistake to believe that the US and India are natural partners. For the US, both India and China are the only two potential super powers who could challenge the present dominant position of the US in the world affairs at some point of time in future. By facilitating the break-up of India, at least the Indian threat could be neutralized. This is the reason for the US patronage for every secessionist and militant outfit in India, like the Kashmiri separatists, Sikh militants and Maoists. The US and its western allies were upset and angry over the defeat of the LTTE and the killing of LTTE leader Prabhakaran in the final phase of the civil war in Sri Lanka, only because it had upset their plan to use Prabhakaran to carve out an independent Greater Tamil Nadu comprising of Tamil Nadu and Tamil-dominated Eastern and Northern provinces of Sri Lanka. The western agencies have also built up well-cultivated assets in major political parties and organizations, including the BJP, RSS and the CPM. The media is also almost totally controlled by the western agencies. The cumulative effect of all these factors has contributed to Modi's failure to live up to the expectations.

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