

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
HOME AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:870

ANSWERED ON:14.08.2012

RECRUITMENT OF CHILDREN INTO NAXALISM

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**Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to an annual report brought by the United Nations in 2011 titled 'Children and Armed Conflict' highlighting the recruitment of young boys and girls by maoist organisations in the country;

(b) if so, the facts brought out in the report;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to check this menace?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI JITENDRA SINGH)

(a) & (b): It is well documented by government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the media that the CPI (Maoist) have resorted to large scale recruitment of children between ages 6-12 into children's associations called 'Bal Sanghams'. Such children are asked to perform multifarious tasks such as acting as informers, fighting with non-lethal weapons like sticks, etc. Subsequently, after attaining the age of 12, they are branched into other children units like 'Chaitanya Natya Manch', 'Sanghams', 'Jan Militia' and 'dalams'. In 'Sanghams', 'Jan Militia' and 'dalams', the CPI (Maoist) provide training to children on weapons handling and on use of different types of Improvised Explosive Devices. The children recruited to 'Jan Militia' and 'dalams' also participate in armed exchanges with the Security Forces where they are tactically pushed to the forefront. This is to derive propaganda mileage by the CPI (Maoist) in case of casualties of minors. It has also been documented that children recruited in 'dalams' are not permitted to leave the 'dalam'. They face severe reprisals including killing of family members, if they surrender to the security forces.

The CPI (Maoist) have systematically destroyed school buildings in their areas of domination to ensure that the children do not enter into the mainstream schooling process and become easy target for recruitment by them. Since the year 2007, the Maoists have destroyed nearly 208 schools. The motives are two-fold; one, to indoctrinate children into maoist ideology and two, to ensure that they have no alternative source of livelihood which education provides.

These facts have now been recognized by the United Nations in the report of the Secretary General dated 26th April, 2012 titled "Children and Armed Conflict". This report documents grave human rights violations committed on children in different parts of the world including India. In this Report, in the portion pertaining to India, there is a description of recruitment and use of children by the Maoists, particularly in Chhattisgarh and the adjoining States. There is a mention of 'Bal Dastas', 'Bal Sanghams' and 'Bal Manch' formed by the Maoists. The Report also refers to the destruction of school buildings in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Bihar by the Maoists.

(c) & (d): The Central Government has adopted an integrated approach to deal with LWE problem in the areas of security, development, ensuring good governance and public perception management. The State Government's specifically deal with various issues related to naxalite activities in the States. The Central Government supplements the efforts of the State Governments over a wide range of schemes. This, inter-alia includes deployment of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA); sanction of India Reserve (IR) battalions; setting up of Counter Insurgency and Anti-Terrorist (CIAT) Schools; reimbursement of security-related expenditure under the Security Related Expenditure (SRE) Scheme; filling up of critical infrastructure gaps under the Special Infrastructure Scheme (SIS) in Left Wing Extremist affected States; and construction / strengthening of fortified police stations under the Scheme for Construction/Strengthening of 400 fortified police stations in LWE affected districts. On the development front apart from the Integrated Action Plan (IAP) for 82 Selected Tribal and Backward Districts, being implemented by the Planning Commission, the Government has also approved a scheme for development of 5477 kms roads in 34 LWE affected focused districts under the Road Requirement Plan (RRP-I).

The Bal Bandhu Scheme, specifically focusing on children in violence affected States, is being implemented in Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar and Chhattisgarh since December, 2010 by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPDR). The Scheme attempts, inter alia, to bring stability in the lives of children and to ensure that all their entitlements to protection, health, nutrition, sanitation, education and safety are fulfilled through Government action.