

Naxals prepare to strike back with area [dalams](#)

December 15, 2009

NAGPUR: After lying low for some time in the state, Naxals have upped their ante even as the Maharashtra government has turned its attention belatedly on this Maoist-affected and backward district of Gadchiroli. They seem all set to launch an offensive.

The Naxals are concentrating at the grassroots level as well as strengthening their military wing for giving an added edge to their already potent striking powers. TOI has learnt through the reliable sources that at least ten area dalams have been formed by the Naxals in Gadchiroli itself. This is to ensure that their mass base remains strong in the face of incisive onslaughts by the security forces.

The area dalams have received training in deep forest camps with the active support of the villagers on the either side of the Maharashtra-Chhatisgarh border. Uncorroborated sources claimed that district cops, which were being informed about the ongoing camps, opted not to react to the input for reasons TOI could not confirm.

Apart from the other routine work of recruitment and intelligence gathering, these area dalam members have been specially trained in planting explosives and triggering blasts. A recent blast at Chichoda near Fulbodi Gatta village, in Dhanora tehsil of Gadchiroli district, that left three cops injured was the successful outcome of the experiment. The patrolling police party was also fired at but there was no casualty.

Sources also claimed that Naxals, which have already proved better tacticians than the cops, have planned to counter the newly-designed counter offensive against them by turning the district into a virtual minefield rather than trying to clash with the 18 central paramilitary forces with their extra firepowers.

Sources revealed that the Naxals were already making their plans even before the paramilitary companies landed in Gadchiroli after the state elections in October.

Naxals, which too has a potent intelligence wing, is learnt to have devoted their energies in building a stronger organizations at village levels. With a view to keep their mass bases intact, the Naxals focused on building as many area dalams as possible in different parts of the district. Their plan was to make Gadchiroli a liberated zone through establishing Janatana sarkars or their forms of peoples' government, like what they claimed to have done at Abujamarh.

According to a local source, the Naxals have been fast forming smaller groups, comprising 10-15 members, for area dalams to conduct meetings in villages. These groups fan anti-government sentiments, appeal villages to join the movement and cultivate hatred against security forces.

"These area dalams are effective in giving shape to bigger sabotage attacks by combing their strengths, laying traps for cops or working as support with their military wings during encounter like removing the bodies of their cadres, distract the cops while fighting and also delaying the reinforcements," said an experienced cop.

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