CHAPTER (IV)

ROLE OF MEDIA IN PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHHATTISGARH

India has a total of 29 states and 7 union territories. One of the states is Chhattisgarh. It is located at the center of India. Chhattisgarh was formed on November 1, 2000. With its formation it became 26th state of India. As the state came into existence, Raipur was declared the capital of Chhattisgarh. Before its formation, Chhattisgarh was a part of Madhya Pradesh. The 16 districts in the southern border of Madhya Pradesh where ‘Chhattisgarhi’ (a dialect of Hindi) speaking people were in majority were separated from the state and Chhattisgarh state was formed (Chhattisgarh Govt. & S. Gajrani, 2004).

There were a total of 16 districts at the time of Chhattisgarh’s inception. Later, two new districts – Narayanpur and Bijapur were formed. In view of the rapid development of the state, the then Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh announced 9 new districts on August 15, 2011. The districts came into existence on January 1, 2012.
Now there are a total of 27 districts in 5 divisions of Chhattisgarh (Edgar Thorpe, Showick Thorpe, 2012). Chhattisgarh is India's 10th largest state in terms of area (UNICEF India). Its area is 135,194 square kilometers. Nearly 44 percent of the total geographical area of the state is full of forests. It is India's 16th most populous state. The state's population is 25.54 million. It is 2.11 percent of India's total population (Census, 2011). One of the fastest growing states in India, Chhattisgarh is known especially for its natural resources. It borders the states of Madhya Pradesh in the north-west, Maharashtra in the south-west, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in the south, Orissa in the east, Jharkhand in the north-east and Uttar Pradesh in the north (State Planning Commission, 2015).

In India, there are two areas which changed names for particular reasons. One is *Magadh*. Due to a plethora of the Buddhist monasteries it became Bihar. The second is *Dakshin Kaushal*. It had thirty six bastions (*Chhattis Garhs*) so it became Chhattisgarh. Both the areas have been making India proud since the ancient time. Chhattisgarh has been the center of development of different cultures since the Vedic and Puranic period. The ancient temples and the work done in them state that Vaishnava, Shaiva, Buddhist as well as many Aryan and non-Aryan cultures had influences here in different periods.

In Chhattisgarh, the population of scheduled tribes (ST) is much higher. People from Scheduled Tribes save their ancient art and culture and through this art they look for employment prospects. There are various government schemes
for the benefit of the schedule tribe people in the state so that there can be all-round development and they could be brought into the mainstream. Most of the people belong to schedule tribe lives in the rural area of Chhattisgarh. They are dependent and want to conserve on their Jal-Jangal-Jameen.

4.1 GEOGRAPHY OF CHHATTISGARH

The state of Chhattisgarh borders seven states as described above. The region is surrounded by high and low mountain ranges and most of the state is heavily forested area. The northern and southern parts of the state are hilly, whereas the central part is a fertile plain. The Mahanadi River and some of its tributaries pass through the state. These rivers create approximately 80 km wide and 322 km long fertile ground.

Within the plain area come the southern parts of Raipur, Durg and Bilaspur districts. Due to the sufficient volume of water there are good yields of rice. That's why this plain area is called the rice bowl (PIB, 2001). To the north of the plain is located the Maikal hill range. In the east of Orissa, there are small and big mountains. Located in south, Bastar is full of forests and hills.

There are three natural parts of Chhattisgarh: Satpura range in the north, Mahanadi and the plains of its tributaries in the center and the plateau of Bastar in the south. The Major rivers of the state are Mahanadi, Shivanath, Kharun, Arpa,
Pairi and Indravati. Sal, Sagon, Saja, Bija and Bamboo are found in majority here. Forests comprise about 44 percent of the total area (59772.389 sq. km, according to govt. data of Chhattisgarh Forest Department) in Chhattisgarh. The state alone accounts for 12 percent of the country’s forests (Department of Forest, Chhattisgarh).

The temperature is usually normal in Chhattisgarh. In the summer it reaches 45 degrees, while in winter the temperature is between 0 to 25 °C. During the monsoon season between June and October the weather remains quite pleasant. If we talk about rain then during the monsoon, up to 1292 millimeters rainfall is registered here. Talking about Rail, bus and air transport, all three are available in the urban areas. However, there are many districts like Sukma, Dantewada which don’t have the air facility but road transport is in its place (State Economic Survey, 2014-15). National Highway 6, 16, 23, 12A, 78, 111, 200, 202, 216, 217 and 221 pass through different urban and rural areas of the state (NHAI).

Their total length is 3037 km. There is long wide spaghetti of state highways and major district roads in the state as well. In terms of the railway in the state, there are very large stations like Raipur, Bilaspur, Durg and hundreds of other small and large railway stations. Railway line network in the state is about 1108 km long. Swami Vivekananda Airport in Raipur is the largest one in the state where many domestic flights are available on a daily basis. Another airport is also proposed in Raigad (State Economic Survey, 2014-15).
4.1.1 GEOGRAPHCAL STRUCTURE REGIONALLY

Since Chhattisgarh has majority of people from tribal and backward communities, so rather than cities most of the people live in rural, mountainous and forested terrain. To protect and preserve their culture and heritage, most people in Chhattisgarh prefer to subsist on their hereditary land. If we try to understand the geography of Chhattisgarh then it can be divided into three parts as follows:

4.1.1.1 Northern Region

Surguja, Koriya, Jashpur, Raigarh and Cobra districts are a part of this area. These districts are surrounded by forests and mountains. Away from the urban culture and glitter, most people live here in the dense forests and mountains. Forests and mountains are more in these districts; hence there is no access to advanced resources and communication technology.

4.1.1.2 Central region

Janjagir- Champa, Mahasamund, Raipur, Dhamtari Durg, Rajnandgaon and Kawardha districts are parts of the state. These districts have plains, forest and mountainous areas. Raipur and some cities have substantial resources but there are many backward areas in this region. There is no adequate communication facility in the backward areas, so there is often a lack of awareness.
4.1.1.3 Southern Region

This area is completely struck by mountains and forests. It consist Dantewada, Bijapur, Narayanpur, Kanker and other districts. Since this area is full of forests and mountains, there is limited access to media and government machinery. That is why people in these areas feel alienated from the mainstream and to make their existence feel they resort to violent and non-violent paths.

4.2 HISTORY

Chhattisgarh is a part of the Ancient Kaushal. The Kaushal Pradesh of mythical period was divided into two parts - Northern Kaushal and Southern Kaushal. That southern part today is called Chhattisgarh. The region's major river Mahanadi (whose name was Chitrotpla in the period) is mentioned in Matsya Purana's 'Bhishma Parva' in Mahabharata and in 'Bharata Varsha Prakaran' of Brahma Purana.

The rugged forests and Mahanadi of Chhattisgarh are clearly described in Valmiki's Ramayana as well. Chhattisgarh was under the Maratha Rule from 1741 to 1845 BC. From 1845 to 1947 the region was ruled by the English. In 1845 English gave importance to Raipur instead of Ratanpur as capital. Chhattisgarh's Sambalpur district was transferred to Orissa in 1905 and Bengal's Sarguja district was included in Chhattisgarh. On November 1, 1956 Madhya Pradesh state was
formed under the States Reorganisation Act. Many parts of Chhattisgarh were included in the state. The state remained under the newly formed Madhya Pradesh for nearly 44 years before becoming independent and full state. Earlier, Chhattisgarh was part of the old Madhya Pradesh, whose capital was Nagpur. During the English rule it was part of the Central Province (S. Gajrani, 2004).

4.2.1 Partition from Madhya Pradesh

The present state of Chhattisgarh was separated from Madhya Pradesh on November 1, 2000 and set as an independent state. On behalf of the people of Chhattisgarh a separate state was sought for the first time in 1920. Some of such demands were risen after different intervals, but never fully organized. A campaign was launched to demand a separate state. With the help of rallies, protests, demonstrations, performance etc, hundreds of ways were used. Chhattisgarh as an independent state was sought, but in between all these efforts died.

Later in 1924, the demand to make Chhattisgarh an independent state was raised by Raipur Congress unit in an organized and formal manner. It was seriously discussed at the national convention of the Congress in Tripuri. It was also discussed that a separate regional unit of Congress may be constituted for Chhattisgarh. In 1954, when the States Reorganisation Commission was established in 1954, the demand for a separate Chhattisgarh was laid, which was not accepted. In 1955, the formation of Chhattisgarh was demanded at the
assembly of Nagpur, the capital of central India then. In 1990, demand for the new state caught on. A political platform was established on regional level for new state in which Chhattisgarh Rajya Nirman Manch was particularly well known (S. Gajrani, 2004). Chandulal Chadrakar led the forum.

Under the banner several strikes and rallies were organized on a large scale in the state. Big political parties like Indian National Congress (INC) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) gave overwhelming support to the forum. Atal Bihari Vajpayee led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government resent a draft bill of Chhattisgarh's partition to the Madhya Pradesh Assembly for approval. The bill had been passed unanimously once again and had been tabled in Parliament. Finally, the bill was passed in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. On October 25, 2000 the President of India gave approval to the Madhya Pradesh Reorganisation Act of 2000. Then the Central Government fixed November 1, 2000 for the division of Chhattisgarh from Madhya Pradesh and on that day with all celebrations Chhattisgarh became the 26th state of India.

4.3 POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION

There were a total of 16 districts of Chhattisgarh at its inception. Later on, two new districts were formed called Narayanpur and Bijapur. In view of the rapid development of the state of Chhattisgarh, the chief minister then on August 15, 2011 announced nine new districts.
These districts came into force on January 1, 2012. Now, there are a total of 27 districts in 5 divisions of Chhattisgarh. Politically, Chhattisgarh is a normal state like other states of India. The state does not have any special status whatsoever under the Indian constitution like Jammu and Kashmir. Anyone from the country can move and settle down in Chhattisgarh. Residents of the state are normal citizens of India who enjoy all the rights provided by the state and the central government.

**Table: 4.1**

**Political and Administrative Divisions of Chhattisgarh**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bastar Division</th>
<th>Durg Division</th>
<th>Raipur Division</th>
<th>Bilaspur Division</th>
<th>Sarguja Division</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bijapur</td>
<td>Kavardha</td>
<td>Dhamtari</td>
<td>Bilaspur</td>
<td>Jashpur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sukma</td>
<td>Rajnandgaon</td>
<td>Gariband</td>
<td>Mungeri</td>
<td>Koriya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dantewada</td>
<td>Balod</td>
<td>Raipur</td>
<td>Janjgir-Chanpa</td>
<td>Surajpur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bastar</td>
<td>Durg</td>
<td>Baloda</td>
<td>Raigadh</td>
<td>Sarguja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kondagaon</td>
<td>Bemetara</td>
<td>Mahasamund</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narayanpur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kanker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Official Website of Chhattisgarh Government. [https://www.cgstate.gov.in/web/guest/districts](https://www.cgstate.gov.in/web/guest/districts))

**4.3.1 Legislative Assembly**

Chhattisgarh assembly is located in Raipur. There are a total of 91 members in the Legislative Assembly. Of these, 90 members are elected directly by the people through the voting process and an Anglo - Indian is nominated as the
member of Assembly. This unicameral assembly has a five-year term, but in special circumstances, it can be dissolved before five years. In 2000, after the formation of Chhattisgarh, in the first elections Congress got the majority of votes. Ajit Jogi of Congress party became the state's first chief minister. Since then, there have been successive BJP governments. The state has 11 Lok Sabha seats and 5 Rajya Sabha seats (Chhattisgarh Vidhansabha Website).

4.3.2 Active political parties and their ideology

In Chhattisgarh three national political parties are mainly active. Since the formation of state, only two political parties (Congress and BJP) have formed governments. Like South Indian states, regional parties do not dominate Chhattisgarh. Only national parties are at the core of politics. Although other than Congress and BJP, political parties like BSP, CPI, CPM, NCP, Janata Dal (U) and Samajvadi Party take part in elections here (Chhattisgarh Vidhansabha Website). A political party named Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha is in the state too. These are the parties, who plays important role in this state politics. Situation and ideology of some of the major political parties in the state:-

4.3.2.1. Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) -

The BJP, which does the politics of right wing and nationalist ideology, is dominating Chhattisgarh for more than 10 years. Since 2003, BJP government is
ruling the state. In 2013 elections, BJP had 49 legislators in the newly elected 90 seats legislative assembly and it is governing with absolute majority.

4.3.2.2. Congress Party

It is called the party of the poor, the downtrodden, the oppressed, the Muslims but in Chhattisgarh the path for Congress is difficult. Both the Congress and the BJP have almost equal mass appeal in the state and the margin of win and defeat between the two is quite low. Despite this the congress party has been away from power for over a decade. Congress won only 39 seats in the 2013 assembly elections.

4.3.2.3. Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP)

The party, which is known for politics of the development of Dalits, has no major base in Chhattisgarh. Yet, the BSP has left a few parties in state behind in terms of base and mass support it got in the assembly. BSP got one seat in the 2013 assembly elections in Chhattisgarh.

4.3.2.4. Chhattisgarh Mukti Morcha (CMM)

Mukti Morcha. This party was established to protect the cultural heritage of the state and for the betterment of workers. CMM has often taken part in the election, but every time it drew on a blank slate. In the assembly election of 2003, CMM fielded a total of 8 candidates who totally got only 37,535 votes. Currently neither the political party is much active nor has big public support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue Division</th>
<th>04</th>
<th>Number of Statutory Towns</th>
<th>168</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Tehsils</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>number of Census Towns</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of blocks</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>The total number of villages in the state</td>
<td>20126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Districts</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Number of Towns</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


4.4 ECONOMY

Chhattisgarh's economy is mainly based on mining, agriculture, energy production and manufacturing. There are rich deposits of coal, iron ore, dolomite and other minerals. The central plains of the region are known for producing huge amount of rice. Farming of tea leaves is also done on a big scale. Tendu leaves that are used to make Bidis are found in Chhattisgarh in highest number. Not only this, Chhattisgarh is also far ahead in power generation and supply to other states. Thermal and Hydro electrical power is produced and supplied in the state. The state's manufacturing focus is centered on the production of metal. More than 80
percent of the state’s population lives in rural and remote areas, so most people depend on farming (State Economic Survey, 2014-15).

4.4.1 Agriculture

About 50 percent of the total area of Chhattisgarh is cultivable, while the other 50 percent is full of mountains, forests, etc or not suitable for farming. Central region of the state is known as the rice bowl. Mahanadi River passes through the area so the running water is available in sufficient quantity, due to this there is full cultivation of rice. This area supplies grains to hundreds of rice mills. The most important commercial crops of the state are cotton and oilseeds. Poultry farming is also done in many areas (State Economic Survey, 2014-15).

4.4.2 Natural resources

Chhattisgarh state is very rich in minerals. The state has large reserves of coal, iron ore, limestone, bauxite, Dolomite, tin, manganese, gold, copper, etc. These minerals are a big source of state income. In fact, Chhattisgarh is the largest supplier of Dolomite in India. Diamond reserves have also been found near Raipur (State Economic Survey, 2014-15). The State has rich resources including land, forests and water. These abundant resources are of high quality and are spread across the State, allowing an exceptional degree of access and availability. There are at least 23 Minor Forest Produce (MFP).
4.4.3 Energy

The state produces more energy than it needs. Most of the energy is produced through the thermal power plants near Korba district. The state also produces large amounts of Hydro electric energy. Hirakud dam built across the Mahanadi River and Bansagar dam (with Bihar and Uttar Pradesh) are among the main hydro electric power projects which have jointly been prepared with other states (State Economic Survey, 2014-15).

4.4.4 Manufacturing Sector

Since the 20th century, slowly but steadily the industries are promoted in Chhattisgarh. Under this planned development the government has established many industrial areas (Industrial estate) like Raipur and Bhilai Nagar. There are currently a dozen or so small and medium-scale steel industries which are producing hot metal, different varieties of iron, rail. Bhilai City is the site particularly for steel and iron plants.

Besides cement, sugar, Pep, textile (cotton, wool, silk and jute) etc are also plentiful in the state. Due to its connectivity by Rail and road, the local production of goods is easily delivered to the destination (State Economic Survey, 2014-15). A wide range of fiscal and policy incentives for businesses have been announced under its Industrial Policy, 2014-19. Additionally, the state has well-drafted policies
for the IT/ITeS, solar energy, agro and food processing, minerals and biotechnology sectors.

4.4.5 Some important facts of the economy of Chhattisgarh

(Source: Mineral Resources Department, Govt. of Chhattisgarh)

- Chhattisgarh has India’s - 23.24 percent iron ore
- Chhattisgarh has India’s - 18.63 percent of coal reserves
- Chhattisgarh has India’s - 13.93 percent Dolomite
- Chhattisgarh has India’s - 12.00 percent iron forest
- Chhattisgarh has India’s - 100 percent tin
- Chhattisgarh has India’s - 16 percent mineral production, 27 percent steel and sponge iron production, 30 percent aluminum production, 15 percent cement production.

4.5 HUMAN RESOURCES

Chhattisgarh has more rural people than urban. The 20 percent live in rural areas, while the remaining 80 percent of the population live in villages. Nearly 42 percent of the urban population has grown during the last decade. The total population of the state is 25,545,198 of which 12,822,895 are men and 12,712,303 women. The sex ratio in the state is 991 females per 1000 males. The child sex ratio is 964 girls on per 1000 boys. The population density is only 189 per square
kilometer, which is much lower than India's overall population density (state economic survey, 2014-15). The literacy rate in the state is growing. In 2001, the literacy rate was 64.66 percent, which according to the 2011 census, increased to 70.03 percent (State Economic Survey 2014-15).

The male literacy rate is 81.45, while the female literacy rate is only 60.59. Difference between the male and female literacy rate is quite disturbing, and it is much higher than other states in the country (Census, 2011). With poor situation of education and health in the state, the Human Development Index is also worrying. The Human Development Index (HDI) is also not good. The main reason is poverty in the state. According to the Tendulkar Committee report in 2009, almost half of the population falls under the below the poverty line. Other than the standards set for the poverty line, about 69 percent of the state population is poor.

Lack of a better health system - Despite many health schemes run by the government, the infant mortality rate in the state is 90.30 percent of children from 0 to 5 years. Malnutrition in women is much higher in the state than anywhere else in the country (Tendulkar Committee, 2009). According to the 2011 census there are 93.25 percent Hindus, 2.02 percent Muslims and 1.92 percent Christians in the state (Census, 2011).

The plains of the state are dominated by Teli, Satnami and Kurmi caste, while in the forest areas there is Gond, Halba, Kamar-Bujia and Oraon caste
domination. Hindi is the official language of Chhattisgarh. This language is spoken primarily in urban areas. While Chhattisgarhi, one of the dialects of Hindi, is spoken by the majority in most areas of the state. In the hilly areas Chhattisgarhi is known as Khaltahi. While in the areas where Sambalpuri and Oriya dialect is spoken, it is known as Laria.

4.6 VIOLENCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Ever since the formation of Chhattisgarh state, there have been violent activities sometimes in the name of Naxalism, sometimes in the name of Salwa Judum, etc. During these activities, human rights violations of people have taken place in a large number. The State today is heavily influenced by Maoism. There is violence against the government or the administration and several times the common people are being targeted. The power hungry Maoists are killing thousands of people and security personnel every year through guerrilla warfare. People are being massacred in large number (Ranjit Bhushan, 2016). On December 1, 2014 Maoists attacked on a convoy of security forces with grenades. More than 14 soldiers were killed in the incident. So the big scale human rights violations are happening in the state. The United Nations and other experts have opined that where there will be violence, there will be large-scale human rights violation. Apart from India, we can take example of some other countries as well like Iraq & others. In Iraq violence is at its peak since 2014 and widespread human rights violations are taking place there (Human Rights Watch, 2016).
4.6.1 Maoist insurgency affected Chhattisgarh

Maoist insurgency is an armed struggle against the Government of India. It is long running between the Maoist groups and the governments. Though the Maoist violence was going on in Chhattisgarh before including many other states, but in present context, this conflict began in 2004 with the formation of CPI (Maoist). It is a rebel group which was formed when Maoist Communist Centre and the People’s War Group became one (Ranjit Bhushan, 2016).

In 2005, when the talks between the Andhra Pradesh government and the Maoists didn’t materialize, Maoists became more active and violent. They started expanding. These militants began to spread violence in states like Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Karnataka. In the name of their rights they started killing innocent people. Prime Minister of India, Manmohan Singh in 2006 described that by far the biggest problem for the country is naxalism. The naxalites or militants are also called the left-wing extremists (Ranjit Bhushan, 2016).

A look at the statistics of the Home Ministry shows that from 2011 to May 31, 2014 there were 2162 incidents of naxal violence in Chhattisgarh. 689 people have died in these (MHA, 2016). A fact to notice here is that not only the police and security forces have died in Maoist violence but innocent people have also been the victims of Maoist bullets. Figures and truth of this is much more serious than the official figures. Many human rights organisations and its figures tell that during
last few years thousands of people have been killed in the conflict between the Maoists and the government. Innocent people have been killed in the violence. These innocents are not only killed by militants, but they were gunned down by the police and the security forces as well.

Figure: 4.1
Left Wing Extremist (Naxalite/Maoist) Affected Districts of Chhattisgarh

(Source: Google)

4.6.2 The biggest problem of the state is Naxalism
I joined the military dalam when I was 13 or 14 years old. I was studying in an ashram school [government-run residential school]—eighth standard—when Naxalites came to my hostel. I didn’t want to go. They said I could study until the 10th, but I should go with them…. We got weapons training, learnt about landmines, and a little karate…. [Finally] I had an opportunity to run away…. One year after I ran away, both my younger brothers (age 8 and 12) were killed [by the Naxalites in retaliation]. They beat my mother and broke her arm. They burned our house and took all our things (Human Rights Watch, 2008).

— Former child dalam member, December 2007.

From India’s perspective, Maoism/Naxalism is the biggest threat to the internal security which the central government and various state governments have been facing for many years. To end this, the government took action such as Operation Green Hunt, but so far it hasn’t been of any help. Naxalism is the biggest problem for Chhattisgarh and violation of human rights lies in its roots.

A report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) surfaced that to increase their strength the Maoists would not hesitate to give weapons in the hands of children, women or elderly. The above mentioned example, from the Human Rights Watch report is a living proof of it. The great thing is that for their rights the naxalites do not care for the rights of others. Children, elder, old, women,
citizens anyone may become the target of their bullets. Maoists rebel against the
government and to achieve their aim they will go to any degree of violence.
Maoists are pursuing their political agenda and for this they are consistently
attacking the state governments.

In 2000, Chhattisgarh was part of Madhya Pradesh in central India. But on
November 1, 2000, the demand by the people of Madhya Pradesh of a separate
state got fulfilled, and then, Madhya Pradesh was divided and a different state
Chhattisgarh was formed. A special thing with Chhattisgarh was that the area it got
was full of forests and tribal population in the state was at its highest. In districts
like Dantewada and Bijapur of southern Chhattisgarh, 89 percent of the people are
tribals.

After the partition of the state, people thought that now the state will grow
steadily. Facing years of backwardness, now people of the state, especially tribals
will have access to basic facilities like employment, health, water, electricity and
water. But these expectations of people could not be fulfilled. As a result,
frustration and anger among the people against the government and the
administration began to flourish.

This anger was especially prevalent in the people of tribal and rural areas.
The disappointment against Government and administration gave an environment
where militants flourished. In result, violence and rebellion was born in the state
which was overwhelmingly supported by the naxalites. Actually, the Naxalites had already started its activities in Bastar region of Madhya Pradesh in 1980. Especially in Bijapur and Dantewada districts which are parts of Chhattisgarh at present. The political, economic and social all three reasons were behind it.

What prepared the ground for Naxalites was the economic exploitation of Adivasi community, poor relationship of the police, lack of public facilities and institutions. Education and health facilities in Bijapur and Dantewada are at its worst. The Naxalites took advantage of it and fulfilled their political agenda. They got the popular support and started pursuing their agenda (Ranjit Bhushan, 2016). They began to work to improve the economic conditions and life of Adivasi communities. In Chhattisgarh, the Naxalites started to rebel against the government and the administration for the so called rights of tribals like water, land, forests, health, education, etc.

But this rebellion took a very radical and violent form. Naxalites, who are also called militants and insurgents, started making their point to the government and administration through weapon irrespective of the human rights. Thousands of innocent people lost their lives as a result. Maoists started training children and tribals to increase their strength. Maoists at first deploy the children in Bal Sangam at the village level where they gave them ideological training and sent them to Sangam from Bal Sangam. In Sangam, they are given the training of weapons, land mines and guerrilla warfare. Subsequently, these children are made to
execute violent actions like mature Maoists so that they can establish a parallel power against the government (Human Rights Watch, 2008).

4.6.3 Naxalism in India is neighboring countries' plot!

Naxalism has engulfed large area of the country. Most of Maoist influence is in rural and forested areas. Naxalites are usually cut from mainstream society and politics. In such a scenario their having sophisticated weapons and adequate firearms raise many questions. Internal security experts believe that Naxalism in India has been created in a planned way by foreign powers, so that India can be weakened and people's faith against democracy can be hurt (Mint, 2010). An important question here arises: who are these forces that are promoting Naxalism in order to weaken India?

It is alleged that during the Maoist violence, Chinese arms and ammunition is recovered which is evidence of the fact that Naxalism in India is planned on Chinese land. The government has itself acknowledged this. In November 2009, Home Secretary G.K. Pillai said that he was confident that China itself is providing arms to Maoists in India.

In case of arms supply, China is the largest neighboring country. It is certain that China is the one supplying weapons to the Maoists (Gurmeet Kanwal, 2013). The Home Minister then P. Chidambaram had said that the Maoists get weapons
via Nepal, Myanmar and Bangladesh. However, he also said that it not sure whether China is directly involved in supplying arms to the Maoists but since so much of Chinese arms, firearms, radio sets etc. are found with them that makes it certain of some link or relation between the Maoists and China (The Hindu, 2009). On April 26, 2012, India Today’ website published a news titled "Maoists building weapon factories in India with help from China."

It was confirmed in the news with the sources from Intelligence Bureau that Chinese intelligence agency is providing weapons and money to the Maoists in India. Some experts also believe that Pakistan's intelligence agency ISI is directly or indirectly helping the Maoists to spread unrest and debilitate democracy in India. Experts believe that ISI is giving all kinds of help to the Maoists, be it money, firearm ammunition or be it weapons (Krishnappa Venkatshamy, 2012).

4.6.4 The purposes of the Naxalites

- **By 2050, the Maoists want to establish their power over the country** - Former Union Home Secretary G. K. Pillai wrote in an article, published in the Institute of Defense Studies and Analyses (IDSA) that the left-wing extremists have become much more powerful in last few years. In 2004, the formation of Communist Party of India (Maoist) by coming together of the People's War Group and the Maoist Communist Centre strengthened the Maoists. Pillai explains that the nature of the Maoists was different before
2004, but now it has completely changed appearance. Now they work to meet their political agenda. He says that Maoists have no faith in Indian democracy and they believe our democracy is very insignificant. The proof can be found in the official documents of Maoists. These are the documents that have been designed to make the strategy against India. Pillai purposes that Maoists not only aim to spread violence but they want to maintain the country’s power by 2050. In the current scenario, the Maoists are not fighting for their rights but they are fighting to the tunes of foreign forces to create an atmosphere against India (G.K. Pillai, 2010).

- **Maoists run parallel government** - Not only in Chhattisgarh but in most of the Naxal affected areas of the country, Maoists run a parallel government. In areas like Bastar and Dantewada of Chhattisgarh, Naxalites dominate and rule in their own way. Naxalites have no sense of any laws of the state government. They hold mass courts and make different sorts of Law & order and implement it themselves. Experts believe that Maoists are thinking far ahead and creating an environment against that state and then the country by violent ways (Niranjan SAhoo, 2011). They take tribals by their side and then run a parallel government as their leader before the state government. The purpose of the Maoists is to maintain their weightage in the mainstream politics through parallel government, so that they get constant coverage in media.
• **They take advantage of ignorance and oppose development** - The Maoists who describe themselves as the Messiah of tribals actually do not want any development in the Naxal affected area. That is why they always oppose development activities. When the government talks about development in areas like Bastar and Dantewada, the Naxalites interfere in the developmental works by using terms such as nature, society, culture and civilization.

That is because in current context it is a part of the strategy of the Maoists. They oppose development by associating it with human emotions, then they gain popular support and for political profits they accuse the government of ignoring the tribals. They not only oppose the geographical development but also the developments that strengthened the Indian Democracy and make it mature. This is a part of their strategy.

• **Naxalites want to reach cities with their movement** - Former Union minister Jagmohan wrote in an article in the Panchjanya that the main objective of the Maoists is to establish a collective revolutionary area at the center of India and then through this spread the Naxal movement to the cities and create a challenge to the strategic capability of the state. Maoists want to get out of the forests and take this violent movement to the state capitals and major cities, even though they may have to kill thousands for it. He says that this Naxalism is not that Naxalism anymore which began in
Naxalbari in West Bengal. Naxalites have taken political colors. Now the Naxalites are trying to rule on the states and then on the country at gunpoint.

4.6.5 Salwa Judum

Salwa Judum started as a people’s movement against the Naxalites in early 2006 in Chhattisgarh. In the local Gondi language Salwa Judum means Peace March or Cleanliness Drive. During this movement there were constant accusations that the Chhattisgarh government and administration used this mass movement against the Naxalites (Ranjit Bhushan, 2016).

Under this movement the local Adivasi children and youth were trained to use weapons and they were provided arms by the Chhattisgarh government so that they can fight the Naxalites. Founder of the Salwa Judum movement against Maoists was Congress leader Mahendra Karma who was ambushed and killed on May 25, 2013 near Darbha valley (ACHR, 2006). Since may mid, 2005 under the Salwa Judum movement the state government has appointed nearly 3800 children and youth as Special Police Officers (SPO). SPO is also called Koya commander. After being appointed as SPO every youth in 2008 was paid 1500 rupees per month (Human Rights watch, 2008). The Home Minister then P Chidambaram praised the SPO who gave firm reply to the Maoists. He said wherever it is needed the state government must appoint SPOs (Economic Times, 2009).
The state's Chief Minister Raman Singh said that Salwa Judum is the only way to get rid of the Maoists. Other than Naxalites, Hundreds of innocent people have lost their lives due to the actions under the Salwa Judum. Many social activists, including Dr. Binayak Sen, member of a social organisation called People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), have raised their voices against Salwa Judum. Human rights activists associate Salwa Judum with Human Rights and they have said that the state government is openly violating human rights through Salwa Judum. It is also accused that the members of Salwa Judum had set nearly 644 homes on fire and rendered people homeless (Human Rights Watch, 2008).

A story published in Tehelka magazine on September 22, 2007 titled, "A cry against the hidden war" told through the victims of Salwa Judum that how Salwa Judum members come to villages and direct the people to vacate the village as soon as possible, or else people will be burned along with the homes. Those who try to speak out against Salwa Judum or go to register the FIR with the police, are tortured there and the complainant and his family are harmed by Salwa Judum members. The story tries to raise question through the victims whether the activities led by Salwa Judum members do not violate human rights? Media directly or indirectly contributes in the development of human rights by publishing and broadcasting such news.

The Hindu newspaper's editorial on September 5, 2007 titled "Stop Salwa Judum campaign" writes quoting the senior Congress leader in Chhattisgarh Ajit
Jogi that members of the Salwa Judum are rendering their own people homeless. People are forced to go to camps without their will. According to Jogi, these camps are out of the reach of media and even the state politicians are unable to go to these people. On September 4, 2007 The Asian Age newspaper published a news with the heading of “Speakers attack Salwa Judum at Delhi meet.” It said that the speakers have discussed Salwa Judum in detail at the Delhi meeting.

During this, Himanshu Kumar of Vanvasi Chetna Manch said that Salwa Judum has become an uncontrolled private militia, which has the license to kill, rape and torture people. This license has been given to them by the state and the central government. Salwa Judum has faced protests not only at the national level but at the international level after the allegations of human rights abuses surfaced. Eventually a PIL against Salwa Judum was filed in the Supreme Court. As the case arrived at the Supreme Court, the much discussion on Salwa Judum increased in media all over the country. At last, on July 5, 2011 the country’s highest court ruled that the Salwa Judum is unlawful and unconstitutional. Court has ordered to ban it and stated that weapons distributed by Chhattisgarh government under Salwa Judum must be withdrawn immediately.

4.6.6 Operation Green Hunt

Operation Green Hunt is the name of a widespread campaign against the Naxalites run by the paramilitary forces of the Indian government and the state
police. Media has named this campaign Operation Green Hunt. It Began in September 2009 in five states that are called the Red Corridor - Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Maharashtra, Jharkhand and Bihar.

At the beginning of the campaign the government decided to send nearly 80,000 paramilitary troops to the Naxal affected areas to strengthen its soldiers. To make this campaign a success, 10 helicopters of the Indian Air Force were made available (NDTV Documentry, 2010). According to Britain's popular newspaper Daily Mail, in view of the Naxalites' much influence in Chhattisgarh, the government had deployed nearly one Lakh Jawans from CRPF, ITBP and Cobra till 2012 under this operation.

4.6.7 Use of children for violence

*The police asked me also to become an SPO [special police officer] but I refused because I did not want to become an SPO and commit heinous crimes. I did not want to shoot and kill people…. They do not ask anyone how old they are. Even 14-year-olds can become SPOs if the police want them to become SPOs (Human Rights Watch, 2008).*

*Poosam Kanya (pseudonym), former resident of Errabore camp, December 2007. (Human Rights Watch Report on children in Chhattisgarh, September 2008)*
According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, any person under the age of 18 cannot be involved in armed activities. If this is done, it will be considered a violation of human rights of children. Yet, in this situation of struggle in Chhattisgarh, not only the Naxalites but also the Government, the police and security forces have heavily used children against each-other. On one hand naxalites prepared the children to fight against the government by giving weapon in their hands. They used children to gather government's intelligence, lay landmines and to take people hostage. On the other hand, the police and security forces under the Salwa Judum movement made children the Special Police Officers (SPO) to gather information about the Naxalites and used them for armed action against them. On April 5, 2011 The Asian Age Newspaper published news titled "Chhattisgarh’s ‘child cop’ skip school for police duty." Interviews of many Child SPOs were printed in the news which revealed that due to Salwa Judum the children are denied the right to education. Through such reports media creates an atmosphere to prevent human rights violation and it tries to play a crucial role in the development of human rights.

4.7 DUE TO COMPETITION THE NEWS OF VIOLENCE STARTED GETTING COVERAGE

The past decade has been a witness to the rapidly increasing Maoist violence in Chhattisgarh. Bloody violence by various Maoist organisations has drawn the attention of media. The insurgency has slowly engulfed the entire state.
As a result, instead of important news now, news related to Naxalites is getting much space in newspapers and TV channels. In the print media, such stories have appeared on front pages while the electronic media has started broadcasting it in prime time. There are two main reasons behind. First, since 1991 due to the neo-liberal policies in the Indian market, private news channels and new media have started showing news of the government and opposition without any restriction.

Second, competition between the regional and the national news channels has increased and due to which the national media groups are bound to give serious and more coverage to the issues of the states so that they can have a reach at the states and maintain it too. In such a situation, the electronic and social media is exploring such subjects or themes that have been ignored for years. The print media used to cover issues like insurgency and Maoism in states like Chhattisgarh before as well but now electronic media has made such issues more political and sensational. So it has become essential for the print media now to focus on the coverage of these issues.

The number of militants walking the path of violence in the state is constantly growing. It is commonly believed that reports of violence are more sensitive and fast attracting the attention of the reader and the viewer. That is why the TV news channels which cover such news much prominently, marks a greater increase in their viewership. In the last few years, number of Hindi newspapers in Hindi speaking areas has risen. To maintain itself in the market and to increase
readership, even the print media is giving prominent space to reports like the Maoist violence in newspapers so that it can keep the readers updated with such sensational news.

4.8 MEDIA IN CHHATTISGARH

In Chhattisgarh, there are three kinds of media - local media, national media and social media. For local media reports of Maoist violence are highly significant and almost part of daily events, whereas such reports only get a place in the national media after becoming huge. For example, the Naxalites ambushed and attacked hundreds of CRPF men of which several soldiers died. This phenomenon may be news to the national media, but if in maoist violence some Jawan or civilian gets injured then it can get coverage in the national media or not. But even such small incidents of human rights violation surely get place in the local media. At local level, even the smallest news of human rights violation gets space in print, electronic and social media, but since the national media has plethora of news and advertisements, it so happens that many times the state level reports of human rights violation get shifted down the priority level of the national media.

However, in today’s era social media has emerged as a powerful media player. Experts believe that barring some anti-social elements who share non-essential information, today social media is the most reliable source in providing information who on the spur of the moment sends the ground reality to all over the
world without and fear or favor. Social media plays a vital role in the development of human rights as well.

At the local level in Chhattisgarh more than 100 newspapers like Nai Dunia, Dainik Bhaskar, The Times of India, Navbharat, Patrika, Haribhoomi, Desbandhu are published. Whereas local news channels such as Sahara Samay, Zee TV, India TV, Sadhna TV, Bansal News, IBC 24 are broadcasted from here. All the national newspapers and TV channels have correspondents in the capital Raipur. They are posted in many other large districts and they report as & when required. For exclusive news coverage, many journalists from different parts of the world visit Chhattisgarh as & when required and collect some investigative news stories to explore the situation of naxalism and human rights violation in the state.

### 4.8.1 Maoist violence, human rights and media reporting

Since its formation, Chhattisgarh is experiencing the Naxal problem. But now the problem has become highly virulent. Violent acts are carried out by the Naxals in the Maoist affected districts on daily basis. Such events are openly violating human rights. These violent acts are ambushing and killing soldiers, attacking the convoys of politicians and social workers, damaging the public infrastructure, burning the homes of those who dare to speak out against Maoists, intimidating people, raping women and luring the children to become Naxalites. Irrespective of these crimes, the Naxalites are constantly trying to get parallel
power against the democratically elected government by violent means. Such incidents have flagrantly violated the human rights. During such events, does media understand its responsibility in preventing human rights violation and work towards its betterment? Following events may be considered in relation to the Maoist violence, the issues of human rights violation and media coverage of these events:

Figure: 4.2

Newspaper Coverage of Maoist attack on a convoy of Congress Leaders in Chhattisgarh

(Source: The Hindu, May 26, 2013)
On May 25, 2013 Naxalites attacked a convoy of Congress leaders at around 4 O'Clock in the evening in Darbha Valley when it was returning from Sukma during the large scale Parivartan Yatra (Change rally) in the state. 27 people including Former state minister Mahendra Karma and Chhattisgarh Congress president Nand Kumar Patel died in the attack.

Congress leader Vidya Charan Shukla died on June 11, 2013 who was Seriously injured in the attack. This attack on Congress party leaders was condemned all over in the country. Chhattisgarh's local newspapers (Desbandhu, Nai Dunia, Dainik Bhaskar), including the National Hindi and English newspapers (Times of India, The Economic Times, Hindustan Times, Dainik Jagran, etc.) published this news prominently on May 26, 2013.

Local newspapers took it as the main news story. Plus they dedicated their page 2 and 3 to other related news stories of human rights violation. While, national newspapers gave as much importance to the news. For the next several days, news related to this incident were printed on the inside pages of newspapers. This deterred the Maoists and gave confidence to the government, administration, citizens and human rights activists.

The Hindu newspaper on May 26, 2013 carried the news on front page titled "Mahendra Karma killed, VC Shukla injured in Maoist attack." The news was given space in detail in the paper. It was attempted to send the news to people from the
perspective of human rights violation. The Naxalites attacked the convoy of Mahendra Karma and Congress leaders on May 25, 2013 at 4 O’clock in the evening. Within one and a half hour of the incident dainikbhaskar.com website prominently published the report and spread it worldwide. At 5:30 in the evening the website published the news with the title "Massive Naxal attack on Congress convoy, Patel narrowly survives" ("कांग्रेस के काफिले पर जबर्दस्त नक्सली हमला, बाल बाल बचे पटेल").

Figure: 4.3

TV News channel Coverage of Maoist attack on a convoy of Congress Leaders in Chhattisgarh. (CNN IBN)

(Source: CNN IBN, May 25, 2013)
The next day, on May 26, 2013 all the big and small newspapers of the country gave it prominent space on the front page. Not only this, on social networking sites (Twitter, Facebook, Whattsapp, blog, YouTube, etc.) as well this occurrence of human rights violation was rapidly disseminated and published. All great leaders including artists and professionals in the country condemned the incident in strong words and prayed for the victims. Gujarat's then Chief Minister and our current Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted this incident, condemned in strong words and prayed for the souls of the dead. The news channels giving it prominence, broadcasted the news live for several hours continuously.

We recall that in the evening around 4 O’clock as soon as the information arrived that Maoists have attacked a convoy of Chhattisgarh Congress leaders, it flashed on all the news channels. And in about an hour or two, live video of the scene where this incident took place were being shown on the channels. Hindi Channels like Aaj Tak, Zee News, Sahara, NDTV India and English channels such as Times Now, CNN, NDTV and others kept track of this news for several hours.

While the social media had the strongest, the fastest, most fair and objective eye on this front. Overall if we see, media understood the sensitivity of the issue and it showed the news from the perspective of human rights violation. On the evening of May 25, 2013 this news was the hot issue in the primetime of news channels. While on May 26, 2013 other than the news, some serious thoughts on various aspects of the news were put in the editorials of newspapers. Due to
massive media coverage against the Naxal violence and human rights violation, an additional 2000 military forces were sent in Chhattisgarh by the Central Government (First Post, 2013).

Figure 4.4
Newspaper Coverage of Naxal Attack against CRPF Personnel (Dainik Bhaskar, 07 April 2010)

(Source: Dainik Bhaskar, April 7, 2010)
The then Union Home Minister Sushil Kumar Shinde announced investigation of the incident by the National Security Agency (NIA). On May 27, 2013 an NIA team was rushed to the attack spot for investigation.

April 6, 2010 was a black day in the history of Chhattisgarh. On this day, the Naxalites ambushed in Tadmetla and targeted 76 CRPF personnel. On that day, 120 CRPF personnel were out on a search. Sitting on their way of return more than 1000 Naxalites made blasts and attacked the soldiers. Before the soldiers could be alert, maoists opened fire from behind the Ambush. The encounter lasted quite long and 8 Maoists and 76 soldiers were killed in it. After the attack, Maoists looted the weapons and shoes of military personnel. This is the country’s largest Maoist attack on the soldiers.

The list of the Maoist attacks on troops in Chhattisgarh is quite long and wide. In the current scenario there is hardly a day when Maoists don’t attack soldiers. However, some incidents of attack get coverage in media and some are left without coverage. But killing of 76 soldiers by Maoists in Dantewada was condemned in media. Dainik Bhaskar newspaper on the next day, on April 7, 2010 published the incident titled "Thousands Naxals besieged and killed Jawans" prominently on its front page. Not only Dainik Bhaskar but all the small-big newspapers of the country published the news prominently on its front pages on April 7, 2010. While, on the electronic and social media the news was broadcast on April 6, 2010 and its information reached worldwide.
After reports in Media, the NHRC, governments, administration and all concerned departments were pressurized to take concrete action. It was the result of this that in addition to spot visits, substantial support was provided to the families of martyred Jawans. However, at the time of such incidents of human rights violation media is accused of being judgmental. Several times without concrete investigation, the newspapers and TV channels hold any person or one organisation responsible for the attack which is widely condemned.

While covering the April 6 April, 2010 attack on CRPF personnel by the Maoists, the Dainik Bhaskar correspondent on the next day on April 7, 2010 published in his report that Andhra Pradesh’s Naxal commander Katkam Sudarshan can be behind the incident. But after a day of incident the primary investigation had not gone ahead and no responsibility was taken on behalf of the naxals. Mohalla Live news website did a story on April 9, 2010 with the heading "Bhaskar said the real story behind the Dantewada attack first." It triggered a big debate on the public stage about the story done by the Dainik Bhaskar correspondent. Questions were raised, whether it is right to blame someone for some incident without a solid investigation.

4.9 CHHATTISGARH: SOME OF MAJOR INCIDENTS OF NAXAL VIOLENCE AGAINST POLICE PERSONNEL AND OTHERS, WHICH MADE NEWS IN MEDIA

- 01- 12- 14: 14 CRPF Jawans killed many injured in Maoist attack in Sukma.
- 28 February 2014: 7 police personnel killed in Maoist attack in Chhattisgarh.
- 9 February 2014: Two CRPF officials killed, 12 injured in Naxal attack in Chhattisgarh.
- 18 May 2013: A jawan, 8 villagers killed in an encounter in Bijapur.
- 12 May 2013: Doordarshan centre attacked, 3 cops killed in Jagdalpur.
- 13 May 2012: Six CISF Jawans killed near NMDC plant at Dantewada
- 21 April 2012: Sukma collector abducted, 2 cops killed
- 14 March 2012: Four BSF personnel killed in landmine blast in Kanker.
- 19 August 2011: Maoists kill eleven personnel in Bijapur district south Bastar.
- 10 June 2011: Maoists kill 10 including eight SPOs.
- 9 June 2011: Maoists kill five cops in the Bastar zone in Narayanpur district.
- 2 June 2011: Naxals kill one policeman at a marketplace in Dantewada.
- 17 May 2011: Seven CRPF Jawans killed in Dantewada.

On April 21, 2012, Maoist guerrillas kidnapped Alex Paul Menon, district collector of Sukma, the most sensitive district of Chhattisgarh. Maoists killed two security guards of Menon and sought from the state government the release of eight of their colleagues jailed in state prison. Not caring about human rights at all, the Maoists threatened to kill Menon if the prisoners were not released by April 25. As soon as the information arrived, the national and local media immediately reported the incident. The news got coverage for several days in media. Other than mediators appointed by the administration, media played the role of a bridge
between the Maoists and the government. After all an agreement was reached between the government and the Maoists and Menon was released several days later. But this incident has shown that even top official of the government are not safe by the naxalites activities.

Figure: 4.5

Coverage of District Collector’s kidnapping news by a national news channel.

(Source: CNN IBN, 2012)
Experts believe that media played a crucial role in this whole episode. In reaching the point of Maoists to the government and vice versa, media became an important medium. So in terms of human rights, working as an important link between the government and the Maoists media maintained pressure on Maoists for the release of the collector. The analysis of the whole event shows that directly or indirectly media has contributed substantially in protecting the rights of the collector. Not only this, it created an environment to spread sensitivity towards human rights in the society. Many questions were raised about media coverage. Experts believe that since most of the government strategies were broadcasted, the Maoists got the opportunity to change their strategy from time to time which had an impact on the government action.

Hospitals, schools, government and railway property, roads are being attacked by Maoists from time to time. Hindustan Times' website on 7 November, 2009 published a news item. It had the heading, "Maoists blast school building." According to the report Naxalites blew up a government building in Dantewada. On June 6, 2014 The Economic Times website informed in its report "Chhattisgarh: Decline in Naxal attacks on the infrastructure and buildings since 2011 observed" that according to documents obtained from IB, between 2001 to 2014 the Maoists in their hold area Bastar district have blown up 113 schools, 75 Panchayat and cultural buildings, 4 hospitals and 119 roads. While railway properties were attached 53 times and buildings of the forest department 77 times. It was also published in the economics times printed edition on June 7, 2014. To damage the
government property which is made of public money is a kind of violation of the human rights too. Media has attempted to seriously publish and broadcast such issues. So as a result, the cases of damage to government property have declined slightly. According to The Economic Times (see above), incidents of damage to government property by the Naxals have come down since 2011. In 2014 only 2, in 2012 and 2013 only 4, and in 2011 a total of 10 government properties were targeted by the Naxals.

On December 11, 2010, a non-signed letter was issued by the Adivasi Swabhiman Manch in Dantewada district, in southern Chhattisgarh, threatening to kill three local journalists. The letter was sent to the Dantewada district police officer who’d just taken charge and it was written in it that the three journalists will not survive in the guise of human rights. It was written that if these journalists do not leave Dantewada then they would die a dog’s death. In this letter, the vice-president then of Chhattisgarh Sramjeevi Patrakar Sangh NRK Pillai, district correspondent of Nai Dunia Anil Mishra and correspondent of Desbandhu newspaper Yashwant Yadav were threatened to kill. Christopher Warren, president of the International Federation of Journalists condemned the incident (Hindustan Times, 2015). Actually, it is common for journalists in Chhattisgarh to be intimidated by the Naxals and as a result of it journalists, the watchdogs of human rights are forced to do their work in the shadows of fear. An important thing is that even the government and the administration is not far behind in putting curbs on journalists. BBC Hindi on December 23, 2010 published a comprehensive report
on its website titled "Journalists upset in Chhattisgarh", in which the constant worsening situation and exploitation was discussed in detail (Human Rights Watch, 2016). Amid the increasing threats to kill journalists, these kinds of reports for the protection of journalists are an effort to play key role in saving the rights of journalists. Some of the major events of Maoist attacks on journalists are following:

- In December 2010, in Bilaspur journalist Sushil Pathak was murdered at the center of the city while he was returning home after work from office. After CBI probe killers are yet unknown.
- In the next year, in January 2011 journalist Umesh Rajput was murdered in Mahasamund.
- In February last year, Maoists killed journalist Nemichand Jain in Sukma. Then in December, journalist Sai Reddy was killed by Maoists in Bijapur. After the killings, journalists boycotted the news about Maoists and launched protest rallies.

According to the news "Maoists in Chhattisgarh jolted, 12 Maoists surrender (Chhattisgarh me maovadi aandolan ko tagda jhatka, 12 naksaliyo ne kiya aatmsamarpan)" published in Prabhat Khabar website on October 31, 2014 and further published in its printed edition next day on November 1, 2014, in Kanker district of Chhattisgarh's Maoist-hit Bastar region 12 Maoists surrendered together before the police and paramilitary officers. They all had reward of thousands of rupees their name. 35 year old Somnath Daro was the most dangerous of those
who surrendered. He was involved in the attack on CRPF personnel in 2003 and in several other events.

Figure: 4.6

News Coverage of Journalist’s harassment in Chhattisgarh.

(Source: BBC HINDI, December 23, 2010)
The incident of Maoist surrender is not the first time. Nor is it that without any thought they decided to take the path of peace instead of gun. In fact, media has played a vital role in getting the Maoists on the path of non-violence from the path of violence.

The district superintendent of police in Kanker, Mr. RN Das accepts the role of media in this and says that the various schemes run by the government for naxalites to surrender reach to them through newspaper, TV, radio and other mediums of media which led the way in the last few years for the Naxalites to accept the path of non-violence and surrender who were fed up of Maoism and its violent ways. According to police, about 315 Maoists in Chhattisgarh surrendered in 2014.

There can be two meanings of the news published on October 31, 2014 by Chhattisgarh’s leading Hindi daily Prabhat Khabar’s website. First, the news tells the Maoists about their deteriorating strength and prodding them to be more violent. Second, the news is telling the Maoists that they are now getting extremely weak and it is good for them to leave the violent ways and walk the path of peace.

Experts believe that due to such reports in media, Maoists are constantly getting directions to walk the path of peace. A direct or indirect result of this would be that Maoist violence and incidents of human rights violation would be reduced gradually. That is why in the recent past the events of surrender by Naxals have
been prominently reported in Hindi, English and local mediums. Some of the main events of the naxalites surrendering were prominently published and broadcasted in media are:-


b) In Chhattisgarh's Dantewada district, a Maoist woman surrendered because of a love affair on October 27, 2014. Actually, the Maoists had refused to marry him and angered by it the women Maoist surrendered to the police and chose the path of peace.

c) Eight wanted Maoists surrendered in Narayanpur district of Chhattisgarh on October 18, 2014.

4.10 CASES OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN CHHATTISGARH

Violation of human rights is common in Chhattisgarh. Being a naxal-affected state, human rights situation is not good anyways. Government has ample evidence that in order to increase their power and influence Maoists don’t hesitate to include children in their team. Small children are put in Maoist organisation 'Bal Sangam' which works at the village level. Naxals, who demand their right by raging, violent, illegal and undemocratic ways, do not hesitate to attack women, children, schools, government structures or anything. There are hundreds of cases of human rights in the state every day and it’s a different story that neither had it reached media nor it is registered in the records of the government and
administration. Human rights are violated not only by naxals but the government, administration, police, security forces and the huge companies that install factories in the state are also regularly accused of human rights violation. Child abuse, negligence in health facilities, prison torture, deaths of prisoners, justice denied, torture by police and security forces, extortion by mafia etc come under the category of human rights violation.

All such cases have been put in the category of human rights violation under the Human Rights Protection Act, 1993 at the national level and United Nations Declaration of Human Rights at the international level. Other than with the local police and administration, hundreds of cases are registered at the National Human Rights Commission in this regard every year.


A focused study of this table shows that mostly the cases of human rights violation have been registered against police, prison administration, security forces and such cases are increasing day by day. Cases of child abuse and exploitation are increasing rapidly and there is lack of health facilities in the state. However, it has to be noted that the actual number of cases is far high than the cases filed at the Human Rights Commission. In fact there are hundreds of cases of human
rights violation that are not registered in any record. Hundreds of such cases of violation of human rights do not reach to human right commissions. That is why there is a big difference in the data of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) and the data from the National Human Rights Commission.

Table: 4.3

Human rights violation cases of Chhattisgarh registered by NHRC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Incident category</th>
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<th>2013</th>
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<th>TOTAL</th>
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<td>41</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>117</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEALTH</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAIL</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>SC/ST/OBC</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>894</td>
<td>721</td>
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(Source: National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), 2014, Data as Per CMS Record)

4.12 CASES OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND ROLE OF MEDIA

4.12.1 Human rights violations by the security forces

On August 4, 2014 the Supreme Court of India criticized the police officers of Chhattisgarh for torturing an Ayurvedic doctor Azam Mahmood Nayyar in
custody in 1992 and directed the state government to pay compensation of Rs 5 Lakh to the doctor for the mental torture from humiliation. The court said that the money should be taken from the guilty police officers and be given to the doctor. After the event appeared in media, the government, administration, police, court and all condemned it and described the incident inhuman in view of the human rights violation.

On November 8, 2012, Hindi newspaper Jansatta featured a full article titled "Yatna ke sipahi" (Soldiers of torture) in this regard. The news got enough space in the other local and national newspapers and in TV channels. Experts believe that media intervention in cases involving human rights violation helps the victims in getting justice and media’s role becomes active in promoting human rights. In Chhattisgarh, hundreds of cases are registered against the police and security forces every year. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) in Chhattisgarh 1918 and 1960 cases were registered respectively in year 2012 and 2013 against the police and security forces.

Asian Centre for Human Rights reported that on 3 January 2007, 79 Maoists surrendered at police headquarters in Raipur. 10 days later during the Maoist surrender program it was revealed that 19 people were arrested without any evidence so that the number of Maoists can be increased. They had to be released later on. Such incidents show the catastrophic face of human rights violation. This is not only incident, such kind of incidents often take place in the state.
4.12.2. Violations of Right to Life

Incidents of people dying and getting injured in police firing frequently come forward in Chhattisgarh. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), 195 such cases were filed in 2012 and 109 cases in 2013 in Chhattisgarh. Hundreds of cases of custodial deaths are filed against the police and security forces in Chhattisgarh every year. Asian Centre for Human Rights have stated in its report that in 2007 the security forces killed 28 alleged Maoists including seven civilians in the Naxal-affected area. The report also revealed that on 13 March 2007, during the Naxal-search operation in Dantewada the Indian Reserve Battalion, deployed from Nagaland to Chhattisgarh and the Salwa Judum members shot dead 12 people, including 11 children.

On July 11, 2009, a story was published in the 27th issue of Tehelka magazine with the heading, "No Place to call their own." It stated how the members of Salwa Judum pour atrocities over the tribal families. They abuse their right to live and several other rights. Such news reports frequently reach to the government and administration through television, newspapers and social media. That is why due to media pressure and strict laws now the police and security forces have become more cautious about the safety of detainees and criminals. Law experts believe that innocent people getting killed in police firing is a complete violation of human rights. Experts say that the role of media is crucial in the development of human rights and to prevent such cases from happening.
Women and Child rights abuses

Women in most districts of Chhattisgarh have to defecate in the open due to absence of toilet facilities. The Times of India newspaper's website on November 3, 2014 ran a story "Tribal Woman raped while defecating in open, attempts suicide." According to the news, in a village of Sitapur area in Sarguja division, in the morning a woman went out of the house for defecation in the open. Some people raped their.

After the incident, the woman was in a lot of mental trauma and she committed suicide. According to a report by UNICEF, more than half of the households in India do not have toilets. In such a situation if a woman is forced to defecate in the open and if a brutal act like rape happens to her then it is a violation of human rights of the woman. By broadcasting and publishing such sensitive news media is playing a crucial role in the development of human rights. If we talk about the latest data, in the year 2013 a total of 7012 cases of crime against women were registered in Chhattisgarh, out of which 15 cases were filed by rape victim women.

In terms of the crimes against children, the Maoists and the police administration have both used minor children from time to time for their self interests. In the age of playing, their childhood was snatched away and weapons were handed to them. While the Naxals have forcefully made thousands of minors into Maoists in the past few years, on the other hand in the fight against the
Maoists, the police and security forces have converted children into Special Police Officers (SPO) and violated their human rights.

Figure: 4.7

A still photo taken from a documentary “Chhattisgarh: A Real Story”. This documentary was shot by video volunteers, An International Non Government Organisation.

(Source: Video Volunteers, 2013, You Tube._https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=40uzlD0RBFO_)

In 2011, the Supreme Court reprimanded the Chhattisgarh government for making 4,000 children SPOs and using them in the fight against Maoists. The court directed the immediate ban on the use of the SPOs. In relation to making children SPOs in Chhattisgarh, both local and national media condemned the state
government and police administration. Media and human rights activists have been raising this issue consistently.

**Child labour:** In Chhattisgarh, several incidents of making children bonded labors and using them, have come into light and which got enough space in media. According to the Planning Commission, in the 2011 Census a total of 364,572 children in Chhattisgarh were victims of child labor in some form or the other. Most children are making tobacco, Bidi or Cigarette. Thousands of other children are working at Dhabas and restaurants. Those who torn the childhood of children and violate their human rights are no less in a better state.

Not only the administration has done the job of being a watchdog in this, but media also played a key role in the efforts to reduce child labor. It was a result of media reports associated with child labor which came out consistently that a pressure was built on the government and administration to pay attention on child labour. On May 22, 2013 the administration had to announce the set up of a separate team. This team will have to monitor child and bonded labor and strictly work to prevent such human rights violation (Business Standard, 2013).

Media continuously publishes and broadcasts reports on child labor in the state, so that there be public awareness and the voice against child labor could be raised with more unity and strength. The Business Standard newspaper's Hindi website on October 24, 2014 published a very poignant and analytical story titled
"Bidi ke bandal me gum hota bachpan" (Childhood missing in the bundle of Bidi).

With continuous publication and broadcast of such news, media is fulfilling its responsibility as well as it is playing a vital role in the development of human rights.

4.12.4 Violations of international human rights laws

Several national and international human rights organisations question the working of Maoists and describe it the violation of international human rights law. To make explosive devices, execute kidnappings and take hostages, to torture and murder - these are the activities that are not permitted by the international human rights law. But, the activities are carried out by Maoists. It is against any democratic system and human rights to hold the so-called Jan Adalats (Public courts) and sentence the people. Several reports indicate that Maoists have killed hundreds of people in the so-called Jan Adalats. Though, these cases of human rights violation have been heavily criticized in media.

4.12.5 Torture on SC, ST and OBC

Still called lower classes, people of these categories are treated like outsiders at hundreds of places. Dalits are still not permitted to fill water from the pond or sometimes their kids are not enrolled in schools. It is common for candidates of these categories to face discrimination even in private companies in
jobs. In Chhattisgarh, from 2012 to August 2014, around 40 cases relating to human rights violation of ST, SC and OBC were recorded at the National Human Rights Commission. However, this figure is much higher on the ground because hundreds of such cases are not filed in any record. Another fact of the matter is that due to the awareness spread by media among these categories, people are now aware of their rights and they are slowly filing reports of torture when required. Various mediums of Media have played a vital role in bringing the awareness among people.

4.12.6 Administrative negligence towards health related rights

Chhattisgarh does not have better health facilities and people here often don't get proper treatment. In the absence of public health facilities in the Maoist areas, people don't have an option than to live on herbs. It is to be noted that even at places with better health facilities people are not treated properly. In such situations, media plays a key role in exposing negligence and flaws in the government health sector. On November 8, 2014 in Pendhari area of Chhattisgarh's Bilaspur district a government camp for sterilization of women was organized. There were only three doctors in the camp, in spite of it, in just six hours 83 women were made and undergo sterilization surgery. They were ignored during the operation. The doctors even made their colleagues conduct the operations. As a result, 11 women were killed. Media published and broadcast the news prominently. On November 13, 2014 Dainik Bhaskar newspaper gave front page
space to the news with the title "So far 15 dead, seven on ventilation, 92 admitted and undergoing vomiting-diarrhea treatment."

Figure: 4.8

*News Coverage of administrative negligence causes of health related human rights violations in Chhattisgarh.*

(Source: Dainik Bhaskar, November 13, 2014)
Under pressure from media and people, administration came into action and within three days four doctors were suspended on November 11, 2014 in the case. Not only this at the central level, the Indian Medical Council (IMA) sent a team of specialist doctors from AIIMS to Chhattisgarh to examine. The news was featured prominently in social media, web portals and TV channels. Since the incident of the deaths of women, media began to put pressure on the administration in the case of human rights violation.

On BBC Hindi's website this news was published at 8.30 O’clock on the night of November 11 titled "Sterilization case: Four doctors suspended." In addition the news got prime focus in the local print media and national print media on November 12. Because media had played a crucial role in the incidents of human rights violation and in putting pressure on the administration, the first step towards justice for the victims was taken. As the issue was raised and got highlighted in Delhi, on November 12, 2014 the National Human Rights Commission sought a report on the case from Chhattisgarh and Bilaspur administration. Interestingly, according to the World Health Organisation, every citizen has the right to take advantage of better health facilities.

4.13 SOME UNTouched HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Amid words like insurgency, Maoism, Naxalism, violence, police, security forces the issues of public concern have become bleak in Chhattisgarh. Or shall
we say the issues have been hidden. Maoism, violence, human rights and things like these are discussed everywhere. They are published in newspapers, broadcast on prime time TV but sensitive issues about the betterment of people don't get much media coverage. Adivasis are protesting for years to protect water, forest and land in Chhattisgarh. They are putting their demands before the government and administration. But no one's listening. Is it not a violation of human rights to snatch land, forest and water from the tribals? But such stories are hidden under the reports as Maoist violence.

Locals expressed rage over the announcement of Janjgir-Champaa being made a power hub by Chief Minister Dr. Raman Singh. Actually, the government made 73 agreements in 2013 for making the area a power hub. Out of which 29 companies chose Janjgir-champa to install their power plants. People displayed their displeasure to the government and administration, they protested, sat on dharna but neither the government or administration nor media gave any importance to the issues of public concern.

In comparison to the news related to Maoist violence, such reports of public concern get less than 10 percent space and if it gets any space after all neither the government or administration nor people find it necessary to read or give importance Chhattisgarh is rich in natural resources such as steel, coal, iron and minerals. To use these resources the Government and administration did many agreements from time to time to give the land of Adivasis to industrialists
irrespective of their rights. In the name of development the government and administration tried to snatch their land, water and forests.

Figure: 4.9

Symbolic picture expressed adivasis concern over ‘Jal, Jungle, Zameen’ in Chhattisgarh.

(Source: Google Image, 2010) http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_3n4vG6cL9NO/TDSkTLhDulI/AAAAAAAAA1s/SRZjg5Pi0o/s1600/staying-put-people-of-kudur-village-protest-the-bodhghat-dam-e28098it-does-not-belong-to-the-capitalists-bastar-is-ours_v.jpg)
Coal mines, steel sites and several sites for mining were given to big companies like Tata, Essar and Jindal in Chhattisgarh. Not only the tribals but also human right activists and media opposed the acquisition of tribal lands for industry and business. Without better rehabilitation system taking anyone’s land away is a violation of human rights.

An important thing is that even governments were involved in the game of giving the rights of natural resources to the industrialists, both legally and illegally. Thanks to the efforts of human rights activists and the role of media, the issues of public concern got both sympathy and support. As a result, in a recent decision the Supreme Court has cancelled the allocation of coal blocks in Chhattisgarh.

4.14 HELPLESSNESS OF LOCAL JOURNALISTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

In many cases involving human rights violation in Chhattisgarh, the local journalists work in utmost fair and honest manner. But sometimes it happens that despite the violation of human rights, rather than writing or broadcasting news fairly, local journalists present the news in favor of someone or to fulfill someone’s interest. The biggest reason behind this is media has gone into the hands of corporate who aim mostly to make profits and less to serve news. That is why practice of government paid news has grown very fast in the state. The second and main reason is the death threats that journalists receive from the police
administration from Maoists. So the local press had to do their work in the shadows of fear. In a report of the international organisation ‘Reporters Without Borders’, India is ranked 140 in terms of press freedom in the year 2014. The ranking has been done by World Press Freedom. The report particularly referring to Jammu and Kashmir and Chhattisgarh said that journalist there are target for both the government and non-government organisations.

More than 100 newspapers like Nai Dunia, Dainik Bhaskar, The Times of India, Navbharat, Patrika, Haribhoomi and Desbandhu are published in Chhattisgarh. While local news channels such as Sahara Samay, Zee TV, India TV, Sadhna TV, Bansal News, IBC 24 are broadcast here. One of the reasons for the helplessness of local journalists from various mediums is that they work here at the Tehsil level, but for these reporters there is no organized system of pay scale and security.

For most reporters a way to income is the commission they get on advertisements. Actually, other than news the big media houses demand from the reporters to bring advertisements. So in the absence of a definitive source of income, the local journalists indulge in allegedly blackmailing and taking bribes from politicians, officers, police, builders, Naxals and others. Due to such activities, sometimes the journalists are rewarded and some other time if something wrong gets published or broadcast then they are put to death. On few places, this is happening with the journalists of Chhattisgarh.
4.15 HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS ACTIVE IN CHHATTISGARH

4.15.1 Local and National Organisations

There are many organisations working towards protection of human rights of the citizen of Chhattisgarh. Some of the organisations are being run by local social activists, and some other are being run by some other people from different state/region on national level. Brief information about some of the local and national organisations are as follow.

4.15.1.1 People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL)

Late Jayaprakash Narayan formed PUCL in October 1976 at the time of emergency. Acharya JB Kripalani inaugurated it in Delhi. At first it was not based on members. From 22 to 23 November 1980 in Delhi, in a Pan India conference it was transformed into a membership-based organisation. The main objectives of the institution are public freedom, protection of human rights, cancellation of laws that take away freedom of thoughts and try to get the freedom of thoughts back. The organisation works basically in different regions of India. Currently Dr. Binayak Sen and other well-known social workers are part of it.

4.15.1.2 People's Union for Democratic Rights (PUDR)

People's Union for Democratic Rights is a Delhi-based organisation which works to ensure civil liberties and democratic rights of people. PUDR came into
existence in 1976-77 but it started working on national level comprehensively from February 1, 1981. PUDR is now working in various districts of India. The organisation has prepared many reports of human rights violation in Chhattisgarh. Organisation is continuously working towards the welfare of the citizens.

4.15.2 International Organisations

4.15.2.1 Asian Centre for Human Rights

ACHR works to protect the fundamental rights and human rights in the entire Asian subcontinent. This organisation does research as on various issues related to human rights and fundamental rights in India, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Pakistan and other Asian nations. Then it shares the research results and its facts with national human rights organisations and the United Nations Human Rights Council. So an improved strategy can be made on such sensitive issues. The organisation helps in increasing the capacity of civil society groups and human rights activists in various Asian nations.

4.15.2.2 Human Rights Watch

It's headquarter is in New York, America. Human rights watch was made with the goal of protecting the rights of people and speaking out against the breach of fundamental human rights. The institution was founded in 1978 at the global
level. This institution does research in support of human rights. The organisation has offices in different countries. It combined the Asia Watch organisation in 1985, the Africa Watch in 1988 and the Middle East Watch in 1989 with itself. These three are known as watch committees. These three committees work under the Human Rights Watch.

4.15.2.3 Amnesty International

Amnesty International is an international NGO. The purpose is to strive to protect human values and human freedom. It also has various research institutions in the field of human rights. The institution was founded in 1961 in the UK. Amnesty International does research work on the issues related to human rights violation and tries to draw attention of the whole world. Its purpose is to put pressure on governments, institutions and others for the protection of human rights. In 1977, the organisation received the Nobel Peace Prize for carrying out a campaign against exploitation. It also got UN Human Rights Award in 1978. Organisation has conducted many researches on human rights in Chhattisgarh.

4.15.2.4 Association for India’s Development (AID)

Association of India's development is a voluntary organisation which works to promote long-term and fair development works in India. AID is a US based non-
profit organisation. It receives tax exemption on donations in India. AID helps social organisations which are working in India on the ground level and it tries to better the education, health, livelihood in India. Not only this, AID does conservation efforts of agriculture, energy and water resources. It also works for women empowerment and social justice.

4.16 CHHATTISGARH HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Under the Human Rights Act, 1993, at central level the National Human Rights Commission and at the state level Chhattisgarh Human Rights Commission has been established. Chhattisgarh Human Rights Commission was established on April 16, 2001. Sikkim High Court’s former Chief Justice, Mr. Justice K. M. Agarwal was appointed chairman of the commission and former DGP of Bihar Shri. K. A. Jacob was appointed a member.

The commission has the power to take Suo-Moto cognizance of any matter related to human rights violation and send notice to the institution concerned. After the approval of court the commission has the right to intervene in any ongoing litigation related to human rights in any court. The commission can visit and examine schools, colleges, hospitals, prisons, police stations, etc. anywhere and if any human rights violation is found then it can send recommendations for the government to take action. Its other works are to do research activity in the state on various issues related to human rights and bring them before the public and to
organize different programs from time to time to increase awareness about human rights.

4.17 SOCIAL WORKERS WHO WORK TO PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE STATE

4.17.1 Dr. Binayak Sen

A doctor by profession Dr. Binayak Sen has been interested in social service since his student life. He started social work in Chhattisgarh with labor leader Shankar Guha Niyogi. He then began to serve at the Shaheed Hospital made for workers. Dr. Binayak Sen was a member of an advisory committee of Chhattisgarh government which was formed to prepare social health workers. Experts say that on Dr. Sen's suggestions the government began a program called 'Mitanin' under which Women health workers are prepared in Chhattisgarh.

His contributions to the health sector have been lauded by his college in Vellore, Christian Medical College. He was given the Paul Harrison Award by the college. For his contribution in the field of health and human rights at the international level he was given the Jonathan Man award. Dr. Binayak Sen has been a vice president of the Chhattisgarh branch of PUCL, the human rights group. While working with it, he raised the issues of death from hunger and malnutrition in Chhattisgarh. He has often posed uncomfortable questions for the government and
raised serious questions regarding anomalies in the Salwa Judum movement which is running against Naxalites. Due to Salwa Judum tribals are allegedly facing problems and Dr. Sen has played a crucial role in taking the matter up to the local and national media. The human rights activists have raised their voice against Salwa Judum and the Supreme Court has voiced questions on the movement. Eventually, it was closed in 2010. When the BJP government in Chhattisgarh decided to impose Chhattisgarh Special Public Safety Act in 2005, Dr. Binayak Sen was among the opponents. He feared that under the guise of this law, social workers and journalists could face trouble. His fear was proved correct when under the same law he was arrested on 14 May 2007. According to the Chhattisgarh police, Binayak Sen has been accused of working as an associate to the Naxals and having a nexus with them. Dr. Sen has called the allegations baseless. Dr. Binayak Sen was granted bail by the Supreme Court in May 2009. When he was in jail for two years, intellectuals and social activists of the country kept on pleading for his release. Among them were 22 Nobel prize winners from all over the world. The Nobel laureates wanted that Dr. Sen be allowed to go to America so that he could receive the Jonathan Man award.

4.17.2. Soni Sori

Soni is a tribal school teacher in Jabeli village of Chhattisgarh's Dantewada district. On October 5, 2011 she was arrested from Delhi in a joint operation by the Crime Branch and the Chhattisgarh police. Soni Sori was accused by the
Chhattisgarh government of being involved in Naxal activities. Eight separate cases were filed against her.

Amnesty International’s India unit wrote a letter to the Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Raman Singh and demanded an investigation in the allegations of sexual exploitation and violence with her in custody. According to Amnesty on 8 and 9 October 2011, Soni Sori was beaten in police custody, sexually violated and was given electric shocks. Despite that, soni has been continuously fighting to protect human rights of the people of Chhattisgarh and some other states of India.

4.17.3 Ramesh Agarwal

Living in Raigarh, Chhattisgarh Ramesh Agarwal raised his voice against coal mines in the state being illegally given to the industrialists. Despite the limited resources for the job he brought hundreds of villagers together. For this incomparable contribution he has been given the greatest prize in the field of environment, the Goldman Prize. With the help of people, Ramesh Agrawal has been successful to close a major coal mining proposed in Chhattisgarh. San Francisco-based Goldman Environment Foundation had said on the achievement of Ramesh Agarwal that Ramesh had a small internet cafe and he made people aware with the help of it and gathered information about development projects. As a result of the cafe he was successful in stopping the big coal mining project in Chhattisgarh.
4.17.4 Gautam Bandopadhyay

Gautam Bandopadhyay has worked to improve relations between police and the public in Chhattisgarh. He has been active as a social worker in Raipur and the surrounding areas for a long time. He has participated in several mass movements. Gautam has been an effective social activist in the state for long time.

4.18 MEDIA, HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

We all know the role of media in the development of human rights. But it is often accused that media is not fulfilling its role with complete honesty and integrity. Though, appreciation and criticism of any job is natural. But this is the power of media that National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has taken suo-moto cognizance of various reports published and broadcast in various media mediums in the past few years.

Not only this, NHRC took cognizance on the basis of media reports and filed cases against the people concerned and ordered the government concerned and administration to take action. This fact shows that media plays a crucial role in the development of human rights. Here are some of the important cases in which the NHRC took suo-moto cognizance on media reports of human rights violation and actions were taken:-
Case Number : 739/33/4/2012 (NHRC)

SUO-MOTU "KHABAR NDTV.COM" DATED. 20/12/2012,
"15 PATIENTS LOST THEIR EYE SIGHT DUE TO NEGLIGENCE OF DOCTORS"

The National Human Rights Commission vide its proceedings dated 12th May, 2014, made a recommendation to the Government of Chhattisgarh that in addition to Rs.50,000/- already paid a sum of Rs.50,000/- more shall be paid to each of the 16 patients who lost their vision. The Chief Secretary, Government of Chhattisgarh was required to submit compliance report along with proof of payment within eight weeks. However, the compliance report along with proof of payment has not been received till now. Chief Secretary, Government of Chhattisgarh may be reminded to comply with the Commission's recommendation to pay additional compensation of Rs.50,000/- each to the 16 patients who lost their vision and submit the compliance report along with proof of payment within six weeks failing which the Commission may invoke the provisions of Section 13 of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993. The Chief Secretary may also be reminded to send within six weeks the status report regarding the disciplinary proceedings initiated against the three doctors who conducted the cataract surgery on the patients.

Case no: 21/33/8/2013 (NHRC)

The National Human Rights Commission while considering the matter in its Camp Sitting at Raipur, Chhattisgarh on 11.4.2013 inter alia observed and directed
as under:- "It is a case where eleven tribal minor girls staying in a Government Tribal Hostel in Narharpur in District Kanker were sexually exploited by their teacher and some other. The Chief Secretary, Govt. of Chhattisgarh, who is present today, had stated that after the incident the government had taken series of steps to prevent such incidents and taken steps to see that all these victims are properly rehabilitated. They were shifted to another tribal hostel where the entire expenses for their studies will be met by the State.

The National Human Rights Commission was also informed that entry of men in these girls' hostel has been restricted. The Commission urges the Chief Secretary that the various steps taken by the Government with regard to rehabilitation of the tribal girls be submitted in the form of a detailed report so that it can be considered by the Commission in similar such incidents in various States."

In response, Deputy Secretary, Chhattisgarh Administration, SC/ST Development Department, Raipur vide communication dated 27.5.2013 has forwarded a copy of order of the Commissioner, SC & ST Department, Chhattisgarh, Raipur. The Joint Secretary, Chhattisgarh Administration, SC & ST Development, Raipur vide communication dated 10.6.2013 has submitted a report on the rehabilitation of the affected girls.

In the light of the reports received from the Commissioner SC/ST Development Department, Raipur, Chhattisgarh and Joint Secretary, Chhattisgarh Administration, SC & ST Development, Raipur, no further action is required on the
complaint of Shri R.H. Bansal, General Secretary, Antarrashtriya Manavadhikar Nigrani Parishad, New Delhi. However, the Commission feels that the Scheme formulated by the Government of Chhattisgarh for the safety and security of the inmates of hostels for Women/Girls belonging to the SC/ST community along with a forwarding letter should be circulated to all the State Governments/Union Territories for information and guidance. Hence, Registry is directed to forward the said Scheme to all the Chief Secretaries of the State Governments and the Administrators of all the Union Territories along with an appropriate covering letter.

- **Case No: 887/33/8/2013 (NHRC)**

SUO-MOTU, NAI DUNIYA, NEW DELHI, DATED. 24/12/2013

The National Human Rights Commission has come across a distressing news report captioned "Nasbandi kar Mahilaon ko zameen par sulaya" published in the 24th December, 2013 edition of Nai Dunia, New Delhi. It is reported that one Women Sterilization Camp was organized at a place called Dhaneli Kanhar in Kanker District, Chhattisgarh. The women who came in the Camp had to wait for hours together as the doctors reported late. It is further alleged in the news report that some women were asked to sleep on the floor after the sterilization operation. It is only when some media persons reached the place that officers arranged for beds for the women. The report, if true, raises a serious issue of violation of Right to Health and Right to Dignity of the women who underwent the sterilization operation. A notice was issued to Chief Secretary, Govt. of Chhattisgarh and DM
Kanker (Chhattisgarh) calling for a report in the matter within two weeks. Enclose was a copy of the press clipping with the Notice.

- **Case No: 886/33/3/2013 (NHRC)**

SUO-MOTU, NAI DUNIYA, DATED. 24/12/2013

The National Human Rights Commission has come across a distressing press report, which appeared in Nai Duniya, New Delhi dated 24th December, 2013, captioned, “Shikshako ne naxli batakar chhatron ko chaplon se peeta”. The press report inter-alia stated that Himanshu Souri, and other students of class X of the Kendriya Jawhar Navodya Vidyaliya, Barsoor of Dantewada District in Chhattisgarh, who belongs to Adivasi community, had some quarrel with the senior students of the school.

It is further alleged in the report that the teachers of the school become furious. They beat up the students with chappals, called them Naxalites and rusticated the students from the school for ten days. If the contents of the press reports are true, they raise serious issue of the human right violation of the victim students. Let the copy of the press report be transmitted to the District Magistrate, Dantewada, Chhattisgarh. He is directed to look into the allegations made in the press report and submit a report in the matter within 3 weeks for perusal of the Commission. Commission is continuously working in the field of human rights to promote and protect human rights violations of its citizen.
The National Human Rights Commission has come across a distressing report published in Hindi newspaper 'Rajasthan Patrika' dated 15/02/2014 captioned "Ghar Torr Marne Kae Liya Chhora Adivasion Ko". The press report alleges that in Parsahidadar Village in Mahasamund District of Chhattisgarh, 70 Adivasi families had been rendered homeless in violation of their human rights. The Forest Department officials and policemen were subjecting the adivasis to beatings and had made them to run to escape the beating. 63 villagers have been arrested so far and sent to jail.

250 persons were allegedly wandering in the jungle to escape beating and arrest. The Forest Department claimed that the land as their property and the administration had leveled allegations on the villagers about encroachment of the forest land. However, the adivasis claimed that they were settled in the area developed by former MLA Shri Pritam Diwan. The report also mentions that 23 women had been detained in Raipur and 26 men were detained in jail in Mahasamund. 14 children who got separated from their parents were detained in Children Observation Home in Raipur. The contents of the newspaper report, if true, raise a serious issue of violation of human rights of tribal. Issue notice to the Chief Secretary, Government of Chhattisgarh, calling for a factual report within two
weeks. He is also requested to inform the Commission about the steps taken for relief and rehabilitation of the 70 adivasi families rendered homeless.

- **Case No: 114/33/10/2014-WC (NHRC)**

SUO-MOTU, NAI DUNIA, DATED. 15/02/2014

The National Human Rights Commission has come across a distressing report published in Hindi newspaper 'Nai Dunia' dated 15/02/2014 captioned "Tohi Bataker Sir Mundwaya". The press report alleges that on suspicion of witch hunting, an old woman, Jhirambai, aged 65 years, was subjected to brutal beating in Korba District in Chhattisgarh and her head was also shaved. The contents of the newspaper report, if true, raise a serious issue of violation of human rights of women. Issue notice to the District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police, Korba Chhattisgarh, calling for a report within two weeks. Superintendent of Police, Korba is also directed to inform as to whether any case has been registered u/s 354 (b) of IPC.