

Police were asked not to watch cinema during naxal heydays

NAXAL-POLICE (NATIONAL,DEFENCE)
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New Delhi, Jul 8 (PTI) Tell your family members not to disclose your profession. Avoid going to cinemas or theatre. Always treat your revolver as if it is loaded.

These are among a series of instructions given to the Calcutta Police personnel during the heydays of the Naxalite movement in the late sixties and the early seventies.

Security experts, police forces and researchers on the movement can draw lessons from the rich and voluminous records of the Calcutta Police Gazette (CPG) between 1967 and 1975.

These records have been painstakingly dug out and compiled in a book "The Naxalites -- Through the Eyes of the Police," edited by noted author on militant nationalist and political movements, Ashoke Kumar Mukhopadhyay.

In his 24-page introduction to the book, he recalls those days when the walls of Kolkata buildings were full of grafitti like "Amar Bari, Tomar Bari, Naxalbari" (Our home is Naxalbari), "Chiner Chairman, Amader Chairman" (Chairman of Chinese Communist Party Mao Tse Tung is our Chairman) and "Pulish Maro, Austro Karo" (kill the police and snatch their weapons).

The entire metropolis was affected by violent clashes, demonstrations and killings of police and CPI(M) cadres and "fake encounter" killings of a large number of youth.

"Scanning the notifications appearing in the CPG of the 1970s is like the interception of signals by the military intelligence at the times of war," writes Mukhopadhyay.

Besides providing the reader with invaluable information about the everyday tactics adopted by the police to fight the "urban guerrilla war" that had rocked the eastern metropolis, the CPG lends another dimension to the history of the Naxalite movement by "offering an alternative version from the viewpoint of its antagonist," he says. (more) PTI
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NAXAL-POLICE 2 LAST

NAXAL-POLICE 2 LAST (NATIONAL)

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The book, published by Dey's Publishing of Kolkata, contains rare photographs of the top leaders of the Naxalite movement like Charu Mazumdar, Saroj Dutta and Sushital Roychowdhury. The pictures include those of veteran CPI leader Sripad Amrit Dange and noted actor-director Utpal Dutt with Mazumdar before the Naxal leader was expelled from CPI(M) and launched the CPI(ML).

The appendix carries an unsigned statement of Mazumdar to the police after his arrest on July 16, 1972. He was reported dead in police custody on July 28, 1972. The statement is contradicted by another Naxal leader Suniti Kumar Ghosh, who claims 'Charu Babu' could not have made this statement. "Fact is wedded with fiction. But fiction is its dominant element," Ghosh says in an article which is also appended.

The CPG compilation ranges from detailed instructions to the police men and officers on issues like "Do's and Don'ts" of possessing a revolver to maintaining proper custody of prisoners which came after some major jail-breaks which occurred during those years.

Through official orders, policemen were asked to read up books on tackling communist insurgency, besides instructions aiming at taking advantage of the clashes between CPI(M) and CPI(ML) cadres. Orders banning books, pamphlets and even the CPI(M)'s 'Ganashakti' newspaper, which was an evening paper in those days are contained in the book.

Interestingly, the instructions issued to policemen included reading up books on "communist insurgency" as well as award-winning essays on what to and what not to expect of the police, written by students in competitions organised by the force itself.
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