Myth of Urban Naxalism

What is the issue?

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- History is replete with examples of people who were convicted for having had a questioning spirit and nurturing even peaceful non-conformist thoughts.
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- The recent spree of arrests by the Indian government is a stark reminded that such prosecutions are still very prevalent.
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What is wrong with the government’s approach?

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- Anybody raising strong questions against the government is being perceived as an urban naxal, which is a very serious malice.
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- This kind of approach might help the government curtail some dissenting voices, but will further the cause of the real naxals.
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- Notably, violent dissent and insurgents also thrive on the psycological front, which will be greatly aided by governemnt’s stringent actions.
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- In this context, many Left-leaning activists have been wrongly linked with Naxals, while most of them are an anathema to the insurgents.
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- Even our PM Modi equated Arvind Kejriwal with Naxals in 2015, which even though just a rhetoric, was a jarring error in political terms.
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- Naxals also opposed CPI leaders in Bastar — which eventually helped the BJP candidates win in the region.
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How could insurgents gain from the government’s approach?

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- **First -** It perpetuates a myth about their spread and might, something that is essential for an underground warrior.
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- Notably, an insurgency is as much a reality as it is the product of myths that society weaves around the insurgent.
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- **Second -** If students, politicians and writers across the spectrum are hounded as Urban Naxals, one need not be a psychoanalyst to gauge its consequences.
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- The definitions a state invents for its political harvest come to ring true in unintended ways, and even drive people into the rebel ranks.
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What is the way ahead?

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- To paint overt and peaceful political rebellions as Naxalism is bad tactic, a political and moral blunder, which the government should avoid.
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- Rather, the government should focus on curtailing the propaganda of the real Maoists in rural pockets of central Indian.
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- Take up genuine counter campaigns and outreach programs are the best way to ideologically defeat the leftist insurgency.
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- Currently, there is a lacklustre attitude to act against programs organised by banned outfits in remote areas, which is self defeating.
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Source: Indian Express

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