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Supporting Maoists will invite 10 year jail

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NEW DELHI: Those who speak in favour of Maoist guerrillas will face legal action and 10 years imprisonment, the government announced Thursday in a warning to civil society groups who raise voices in favour of Leftwing extremism.

"Any person who commits the offence of supporting such a terrorist organisation (like Communist Party of India (CPI)-Maoist) with inter alia intention to further the activities of such terrorist organisations would be liable to be punished with imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years or with fine or with both," a home ministry statement said.

It said such action would be taken under Section 39 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

The home ministry said the government has noticed that some Maoist leaders were directly contacting certain NGOs and intellectuals to propagate their ideology and "persuade them to take steps (and) support the CPI-Maoist ideology".

"General public are informed to be extremely vigilant of the propaganda of CPI-Maoist and not unwittingly become a victim of such propaganda," the statement warned.

The Leftwing extremist group and all its front organizations have been designated as terrorist organisations by the government.

According to the ministry, the "sole aim" of the CPI-Maoist is to overthrow the Indian state.

It "continues to kill innocent civilians including tribals in cold blood and destroy crucial infrastructure like roads, culverts, school buildings, gram panchayat buildings so as to prevent development from reaching these under-developed areas", the statement added.

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