



Mains Practice Question

Q. Analyze the major factors behind the persistence of Left-Wing Extremism in certain regions of India. Suggest strategic measures required to combat this threat effectively. (150 words)

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Approach

- Start with the status of Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) in India.
- Mention factors behind its persistence.
- Touch current strategies addressing left-wing extremism.
- Propose strategic measures to combat LWE.
- Conclude with SAMADHAN Doctrine.

Introduction

Left-Wing Extremism, commonly known as the **Naxalite movement**, continues to be a significant internal security challenge for India. While there is a **53% decline in districts** reporting Left-wing extremist violence From 2010 to 2022, it still persists in economically disadvantaged and tribal regions of central and eastern India.

Body

Factors Behind Persistence of Left-Wing Extremism:

- **Socio-Economic Disparity:** Endemic poverty and lack of basic amenities like healthcare and education create fertile ground for Maoist recruitment.
 - Also, social injustices and discrimination are often overlooked by development policies, as noted by the **D Bandyopadhyay Committee**.
 - These inequalities lead to movements that align Dalit and tribal grievances with leftist ideologies.
- **Resource Dispossession and Unfulfilled Promises:** Land alienation due to **mining projects** and infrastructure development often fuels LWE activities.
 - A recent example is the mining project in the ecologically sensitive **Niyamgiri Hills** of Odisha.
- **Governance Gap and Weak Grievance Redressal Mechanisms:** Weak state presence in remote areas allows Maoists to establish a **parallel administration** and exploit the lack of trust in government institutions.
 - For instance, in the recent incident of a Maoist attack on a **CRPF patrol** in Chhattisgarh, the remoteness of the area and limited security presence were cited as contributing factors.
- **Cross-Border Infiltration and Support Networks:** LWE groups operating in India sometimes receive support and safe havens across porous borders with neighbouring countries.
 - The arrest of a top Maoist leader in Nepal, allegedly involved in activities in India, highlights this issue.

Current Strategies Addressing Left-Wing Extremism:

- **Inclusive Growth and Empowerment:** Schemes like **Forest Rights, PESA, and MNREGA** empower marginalized communities, addressing root causes and reducing susceptibility to LWE.
- **Infrastructure and Connectivity:** **Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana** is improving access to markets and services, reducing isolation in remote regions and undermining extremism.
- **Education and Skilling:** Programs like **Eklavya Model Schools and Skill India Mission** offer alternatives, reducing support for extremist ideologies.
- **Tribal and Rural Development Models:** Initiatives like **Jharkhand Alternative Development Initiative, Kerala Kudumbashree Programme, and Andhra Pradesh Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty** demonstrate effective strategies to counter LWE through development.

Strategic Measures to Combat LWE:

- **Tech-Powered Intelligence:** Employing advanced technologies and data analytics to monitor and track Naxalite movements, gather intelligence, and plan targeted operations.
 - Additionally, leveraging social media and digital platforms for **counter-narrative campaigns** can help counter Naxalite propaganda and ideological indoctrination.
- **Fast-Track Development Corporations:** Establish dedicated development corporations or authorities for LWE-affected regions, with a mandate to **fast-track infrastructure projects, promote entrepreneurship**, and create employment opportunities.
 - These corporations could have special powers and resources to ensure rapid and effective implementation of development initiatives.
- **Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Hubs:** Establish skill development and entrepreneurship hubs in Naxal-affected areas, providing vocational training, business incubation support, and access to markets.
 - This can empower the youth, create alternative livelihood opportunities, and reduce the appeal of Naxalite ideology.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Encourage public-private partnerships (PPPs) in affected regions, leveraging the resources and expertise of the private sector to drive development, infrastructure projects, and job creation.
 - This can also promote **corporate social responsibility** initiatives in these areas.
- **Psychological Operations:** Integrate **psychological operations (PsyOps)** into counterinsurgency strategies, using targeted messaging, propaganda, and influencing tactics to undermine Naxalite ideology, disrupt recruitment efforts, and encourage surrenders.
- **Regional Cooperation:** Enhancing regional cooperation with neighboring countries like **Nepal, Bhutan, and Myanmar**, where Naxalites may seek safe havens or transit routes. Coordinated intelligence sharing, joint operations, and border management can help disrupt their activities.

Conclusion

SAMADHAN doctrine aligned with the **National Policy and Action Plan to address LWE** holds the key to effectively countering the persistent threat of LWE and fostering lasting peace and development in vulnerable regions.