



Left Wing Extremism

For Prelims: :LWE, Maoism, [SAMADHAN Initiative](#), Tribal Issues.

For Mains: Issues Associated with [Left Wing Extremism](#) in India, Challenges to Internal Security of India, LWE, Maoism, [Socialism](#), Measures to ensure Peace and Security in India.

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Why in News?

Recently, two different incidents of naxalites attack were reported from Chhattisgarh and Assam.

- **29 Naxalites** were killed in the Kanker area of Chhattisgarh in one of the largest operations by security forces in Chhattisgarh.
- In another incident, **three vehicles of the paramilitary Assam Rifles were ambushed** in eastern Assam's Tinsukia district.

What is Naxalism?

- **Origin:**
 - The term **Naxalism** derives its name from the village Naxalbari of West Bengal.
 - It originated as rebellion against local landlords who bashed a peasant over a land dispute.
 - The movement soon spread across Eastern India in less developed areas of states such as Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh.
 - [Left-wing extremists \(LWE\)](#) are popularly known as Maoists worldwide and as **Naxalites** in India.
- **Objective:**
 - They advocate for the overthrow of the Indian government through **armed revolution** and the establishment of a **communist state** based on **Maoist principles**.
 - They view the state as **oppressive, exploitative**, and serving the interests of the ruling elite, and seek to address socio-economic grievances through armed struggle and people's war.
- **Modus Operandi:**
 - Naxalite groups engage in a range of activities, including guerrilla warfare, attacks on security forces, extortion, intimidation, and propaganda.
 - They try to **capture State power** through a combination of armed insurgency, mass mobilisation and strategic alliances.
 - They **target government institutions, infrastructure**, and economic interests, as well as perceived collaborators and informants.
 - Naxalites also **operate parallel governance structures** in certain areas under their control, providing basic services and dispensing justice.
- **Status of LWE in India:**
 - The year 2022 witnessed the **lowest number of incidents** of violence and deaths in

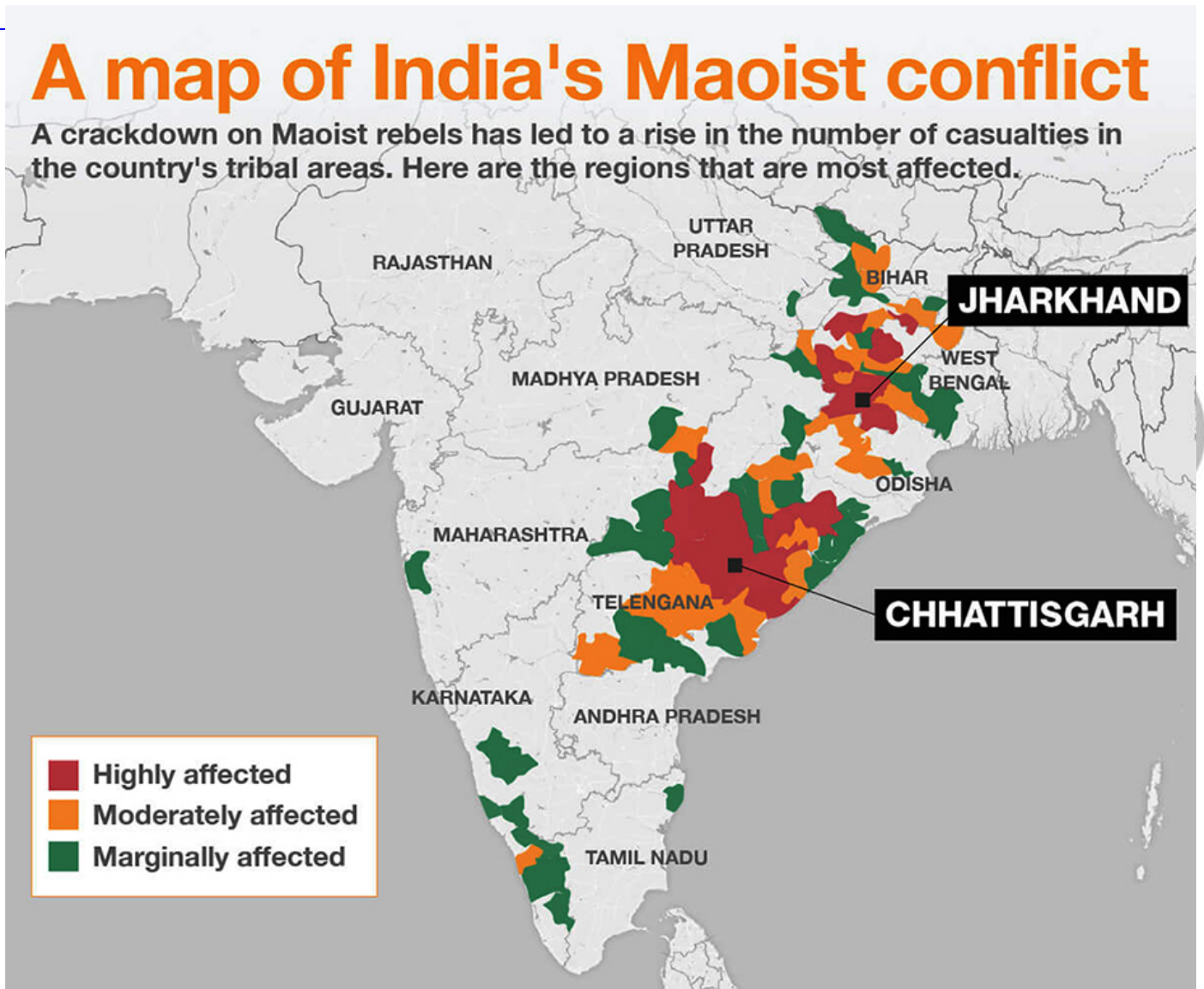
Naxal-hit areas in the last four decades.

- Violent incidents in Naxalism-affected States have come down by **77%** in 2022 compared to the high of 2010.
 - The number of districts affected dropped from 90 to 45.
- The number of **deaths of security forces and civilians** in LWE violence has also **reduced by 90% in 2022** compared to the high of 2010 (98 in 2022 from 1005 in 2010).

▪ **States Affected by LWE:**

- The States of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Bihar, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Kerala are considered LWE affected.
- The **Red Corridor is the region** in the central, eastern and southern parts of India that **experience severe Naxalism-Maoist insurgency**.

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What are the Causes for Naxalism?

▪ **Socio-Economic Factors:**

- **Poverty and Lack of Development:** [Naxalism](#) thrives in **underdeveloped regions** with high poverty rates.
 - Adivasi (indigenous) and Dalit (lower caste) communities often face social exclusion and lack access to basic necessities like healthcare and education.
 - This fuels resentment and makes them receptive to Naxalite ideology.
- **Land Rights Disputes:**
 - Adivasis have been displaced from their traditional lands due to mining and

development projects, creating anger and a sense of injustice.

- **Naxalites** exploit these disputes to project themselves as champions of the marginalised.
- **Exploitation by Powerful Entities:**
 - Tribal communities are particularly vulnerable to exploitation by landlords, moneylenders, and mining companies.
 - **Naxalites position themselves as protectors against such exploitation.**
- **Caste Discrimination:** Dalits, who face social and economic marginalisation, may find Naxalism appealing as it challenges the existing caste hierarchy.
- **Political Factors:**
 - **Weak Governance and Lack of Infrastructure:** **Naxalism** flourishes in areas with a weak government presence.
 - **Poor infrastructure** like roads and communication networks allows Naxalites to operate with less interference.
 - **No Follow-Up from Administration:** It is seen that even after police take hold of a region, administration fails to provide essential services to the people of that region.
 - **Lack of Coordination between Centre and State Government:** State governments consider **naxalism** as the central government's issue and thus are not taking any initiatives to fight it.
 - **Disillusionment with Democracy:** Naxalites feel that the democratic system has failed to address their needs and grievances.
 - Naxalites offer an alternative, albeit violent, path to change.
- **Additional factors:**
 - **Globalization:** Discontent with the impact of globalisation, particularly **displacement due to land acquisition for corporations**, can contribute to Naxalite support.
 - **Confusion** over tackling naxalism as a social issue or as a security threat.
 - **Wide Geographic Spread:** **LWE** groups operate in remote and inaccessible areas; dense forests, hilly terrains, and where there is lack of proper infrastructure making it challenging for security forces to track them down.

What are Initiative of Government Against Naxalism?

- **National Policy and Action Plan to address Left Wing Extremism 2015**
- **SAMADHAN**
- **Aspirational Districts Programme**
- **Security Related Expenditure (SRE) Scheme:** Scheme implemented in 10 LWE affected States for Security Related Expenditure.
 - It relates to training and operational needs of security forces, ex-gratia payment to the family of civilians/security forces killed/injured in LWE violence, rehabilitation of surrendered LWE cadres, community policing, village defence committees and publicity materials.
- **Special Central Assistance (SCA) for most LWE Affected Districts:** It aims to fill the critical gaps in **Public Infrastructure and Services**, which are of emergent nature.
- **Scheme of Fortified Police stations:** Under the scheme, 604 fortified police stations have been constructed in LWE affected areas.
- **Road Connectivity Project for LWE Affected Areas (RCPLWE):** It aims at improving road connectivity in LWE affected States.

Way Forward

- **Targeted Security Operations:** The security forces need to conduct targeted operations against LWE groups, using intelligence-based approaches and avoiding collateral damage.
- **Rehabilitation and Reintegration:** The government needs to provide rehabilitation and reintegration support to former extremists who have renounced violence by providing them with education, training, employment as well as psychosocial support.
 - States should **rationalise their surrender policy** in order to bring innocent individuals caught in the trap of **LWE** into the mainstream.
- **Empowering Local Peace Ambassadors:** Identify and empower influential individuals within

communities who are committed to promoting peace and countering extremist narratives.

- There is a need to foster open channels of communication between the government, security forces, and affected communities.
- Also, there is a need to encourage community leaders, **NGOs**, and religious institutions to play a role in mediating conflicts and addressing local issues.

- **Socio-Economic Development:** The government needs to focus on improving socio-economic conditions in areas affected by left wing extremism such as investing in infrastructure, creating employment opportunities, and providing better access to education and healthcare.
- **Ecological and Sustainable Development Initiatives:** Introduce projects that focus on sustainable development and conservation of natural resources in areas affected by extremism.
 - By involving local communities in environmental protection efforts, a sense of ownership and responsibility can be fostered, leading to reduced extremism.

Drishhti Mains Question:

Frequent death of armed personnel in anti-insurgency operations highlights the setback to India's internal security capability at many levels and the challenge that left-wing extremism (LWE) continues to pose. Discuss.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Mains:

Q. The persisting drives of the government for development of large industries in backward areas have resulted in isolating the tribal population and the farmers who face multiple displacements. With Malkangiri and Naxalbari foci, discuss the corrective strategies needed to win the Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) doctrine that affected citizens back into the mainstream of social and economic growth. **(2015)**

Q. Article 244 of the Indian Constitution relates to administration of scheduled areas and tribal areas. Analyze the impact of non-implementation of the provisions of the Fifth schedule on the growth of Left-wing extremism. **(2018)**

Q. What are the determinants of left-wing extremism in the Eastern part of India? What strategy should the Government of India, civil administration and security forces adopt to counter the threat in the affected areas? **(2020)**