

## 5. Naxalism/Left- Wing Extremism – A war upon state

The Government of India has set a firm deadline of **March 31, 2026**, to completely eliminate Naxalism from the country.

Left-Wing Extremism (LWE), often referred to as **Naxalism**, is one of India's most serious internal security threats. It represents an armed rebellion against the Indian state, primarily led by Maoist groups claiming to fight for the rights of the poor, tribal communities, and landless laborers. However, over time, this movement has transformed into a **violent insurgency** that targets state institutions, infrastructure, and civilians, thus becoming a **direct war upon the state and its democratic institutions**.

### Historical Background

The origins of Left-Wing Extremism in India can be traced to the **Naxalbari uprising of 1967** in West Bengal. Inspired by Maoist ideology, a section of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) broke away and launched a violent struggle for agrarian revolution. The movement gradually spread to parts of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Bihar, and Maharashtra, eventually forming the **Communist Party of India (Maoist)** in 2004.

The extremists claim to represent the “voice of the oppressed” and aim to overthrow the Indian state through **people's war**, creating a “liberated zone” through armed struggle. However, their methods—ambushes, bombings, assassinations, and extortion—have severely disrupted governance and development in affected regions

### Causes of Left-Wing Extremism

1. **Socio-economic Inequality:** Poverty, landlessness, and exploitation of tribal communities form the core grievances exploited by extremists. These communities often face displacement due to mining and industrial projects without adequate rehabilitation.
2. **Lack of Development:** LWE-affected areas, often referred to as the "Red Corridor", are among the most underdeveloped regions in India with poor access to education, healthcare, roads, and employment opportunities.
3. **Weak Governance and Corruption:** The absence of effective governance and rampant corruption has created a vacuum that extremists fill by offering a parallel system of justice and administration.
4. **Alienation of Tribals:** A large portion of the affected population belongs to Scheduled Tribes who feel culturally and politically alienated from mainstream society.

### Impact on the Nation

Left-Wing Extremism has had **far-reaching consequences**:

- **Security Threat:** Maoist attacks have led to the deaths of thousands of civilians and security personnel. They target police stations, railways, schools, and government offices, undermining the state's authority.
- **Economic Hindrance:** The insurgency discourages investment and delays infrastructure projects like roads, railways, and power plants, hampering growth in mineral-rich areas.
- **Human Rights Violations:** Both extremists and sometimes state forces have been accused of human rights abuses, with civilians often caught in the crossfire.

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## Government Response

The Indian government has adopted a **two-pronged strategy**: security measures and development initiatives.

- **Security Operations:** Deployment of central and state armed forces, use of modern surveillance, and special anti-Naxal task forces have significantly weakened insurgent networks in many areas.
- **Development Programs:** Schemes like the **Aspirational Districts Programme**, **Integrated Action Plan**, and **Eklavya Schools** aim to bring education, livelihood, and governance to affected areas.
- **Surrender and Rehabilitation Policies:** Several states have implemented policies encouraging Maoists to surrender in exchange for monetary support, education, and employment.

## Challenges Ahead

- **Terrain and Geography:** The dense forests and hilly terrains of LWE-affected regions provide strategic advantages to insurgents.
- **Ideological Indoctrination:** The Maoist ideology continues to appeal to some sections, particularly in the absence of visible governance.
- **Balancing Force and Welfare:** Excessive reliance on military solutions without parallel development and trust-building may alienate locals further.

The Government of India has set a firm deadline of **March 31, 2026**, to **completely eliminate Naxalism from the country**. This goal is part of the "**Naxalmukt Bharat Abhiyan**" (Naxal-Free India Campaign), which employs a multi-pronged strategy focusing on security, development, and community engagement.

## Key Strategic Measures

The government's "**ruthless and unified**" approach includes several pillars:

**Security Operations:** Filling the "security vacuum" by establishing over 300 new camps and deploying specialized units like the CRPF and Cobra. Major operations like Operation Black Forest have targeted core strongholds on the Telangana-Chhattisgarh border.

**Infrastructure & Development:** Focusing on the "3-C" model—Road, Mobile, and Financial connectivity—to ensure government welfare reaches remote tribal villages.

**Financial Choking:** Utilizing the NIA and Enforcement Directorate to block nearly 90% of Naxalite supply chains and seize assets.

**Surrender & Rehabilitation:** Offering an attractive rehabilitation policy that encourages cadres to join the mainstream with guaranteed employment

## Current Progress/Status of LWE in India:

**Reduction in Affected Areas:** Left Wing Extremism (LWE) in India is concentrated in **11 total districts**, with the **most severe affected district** limited to **only three districts: Bijapur, Sukma, and Narayanpur**, all in Chhattisgarh.

**The broader "Red Corridor"** has shrunk significantly, with overall affected districts reduced to 11. Key operational focus areas include parts of:

**Chhattisgarh:** Bastar, Kanker, Dantewada.

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**Jharkhand:** West Singhbhum, Latehar.

**Maharashtra:** Gadchiroli.

**Odisha:** Malkangiri, Kandhamal, Kalahandi.

**Telangana:** Bhadradi Kothagudem.

**Andhra Pradesh:** Alluri Sitarama Raju.

**Cadre Neutralization:** In 2025 alone, 317 Naxalites were neutralized, and nearly 2,000 surrendered. Top leaders, including a General Secretary of the CPI-Maoist, have been eliminated in recent months.

**Security Success:** Deaths of security personnel have decreased by 73% over the last decade, and the "Red Corridor" has shrunk from 18,000 sq km to approximately 4,200 sq km.

## The SAMADHAN strategy:

It is a **comprehensive, multi-pronged framework** launched by **Ministry of Home Affairs** to **combat Left Wing Extremism (LWE/Naxalism) holistically**. It combines **smart leadership, aggressive policing, technology adoption, and targeted development** to shrink Naxal influence, successfully reducing violence to historically low levels and confining activities to a few districts.

It stands for **Smart Leadership, Aggressive Strategy, Motivation and Training, Actionable Intelligence, Dashboard-based KPIs/KRAs, Harnessing Technology, Action Plan for Each Theatre, and No Access to Financing**.

## **Key Components & Measures under SAMADHAN strategy:**

**Security Measures:** Strengthening intelligence-led operations by central and state forces, setting up hundreds of fortified police stations, and using drones for surveillance.

**Financial Control:** The NIA and Enforcement Directorate (ED) act to break the financial, logistical, and arms supply chains of Naxalites.

**Development Initiatives:** Accelerated development in affected areas including building roads (Road Connectivity Project), mobile towers, schools (Eklavya Model), and implementing the Forest Rights Act to improve public trust.

**Rehabilitation:** A focused Surrender and Rehabilitation Policy to help militants join the mainstream

## **Conclusion**

Left-Wing Extremism is more than a law-and-order issue—it reflects deep-rooted structural inequalities and governance failures. While significant progress has been made in curbing the insurgency, the **ultimate solution lies in inclusive development, social justice, and restoring faith in the democratic process**. Winning over the hearts and minds of the people, not just territory, is key to defeating this internal war upon the state.

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