

# Left Wing Extremism or Naxalism

India has been coping with three internal security challenges for years, each of which is difficult in its own way: terrorism and a proxy war in Kashmir, subnational separatist movements in the Northeast, and the Naxal-Maoist insurgency (Left Wing Extremism) in the Red Corridor. The Communist Party of India launched a revolt in 1967 in Naxalbari, West Bengal, which is where the left wing extremism (LWE full form) or Naxalism in India first began. The Naxals are adamant that eliminating the current political order is the only way to end social and economic injustice.

## What is Naxalism in India?

Left wing extremism (Naxalism) is an armed rebellion against the State driven by leftist ideology. It is also known by several other names, including Naxalism and Maoism. The left wing extremists are known as Maoists and Naxalites in India. Naxalism is the term used to refer to violent acts committed by tribal people and landless labourers against landlords and other people, certain individuals and groups.

Naxalism is a general designation given to several Maoist-oriented and militant insurgent groups that have operated in India since the mid-1960s. The Naxalism or Left wing extremism started under the direction of Kanu Sanyal and Jagan Santhal. The goal of the movement was to give working peasants their due share of the land. Since then, Naxalism has been the greatest threat to law and order in India. The Guevarist armed cadres of the Communist Party of India make up the majority of the Naxalite group (Maoist). These regions include parts of the states of West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, and Telangana.

## History of Naxalism or Left Wing Extremism

Left wing extremism began to appear in 1967 in the three communities of Khoribari, Phansidewa, and Naxalbari in West Bengal's Darjeeling District. Members of the Communist Party of India Charu Majumdar, Kanu Sanyal, and Jagan Santhal headed the initial revolution (Marxist). Peasant revolt was the primary form of the initial revolution.

The Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of India was established in 1969, two years later. Despite having its roots in West Bengal, the movement has since moved to India's less-developed rural areas in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh. Nearly all Naxal organisations today can be traced back to the CPI (M-L).

## Objectives of Left Wing Extremism

Left Wing Extremism (LWE) organisations are the ones that attempt to enact change through violent insurgency. They oppose democratic institutions and employ force to obstruct democratic procedures on the ground.

Marxism is just one of the many communists and socialist currents that have encouraged Naxalism. The objectives of left wing extremism are mentioned below.

- All of the groups have an anti-government ideology and a desire for a violent conflict in common.
- By promoting their cause and expressing their genuine and imagined concerns, they attempt to win the support of the marginalised people in rural areas.
- The Communist Party of India (Maoist)/CPI-M is the most significant and violent of the groups.
- The ideology of the Maoists is derived from Maoism, a type of communism advocated by Chinese leader Mao Zedong.
- They oppose the parliamentary system and seek to overthrow the government through an armed revolt.
- They practise severe violence and frequently cause harm to innocent people.

## Causes of Naxal Terrorism in India

Naxalite refers to a variety of Maoist-inspired, militant insurgent and separatist groups that have been in India since the middle of the 1960s. The term was historically used to represent left wing extremists. While the Telangana peasant insurrection in 1946–1951 is largely responsible for the creation of left wing extremism (LWE) in the nation, the movement really took hold among the emerging public in 1967.

The following are the main causes of Naxalism in India:

- **Inadequately managed forests:** Poor forest management is a significant contributor to the growth of Naxalism. The British government was the first to do it. With the implementation of numerous Forest regulations, the monopolization of the woods began. A new class of moneylenders enters society due to engagement with the outside world. Not at a functional level, the administrative apparatus became more exorbitant and exploitative.
- **Poorly implemented tribal policies:** Even after independence, the government was powerless to halt the process of tribal alienation and the direction brought on by significant projects. Even the problems with food security were not entirely resolved. As a result, Naxalism spread to places like Orissa.
- **Widening inter-regional and intra-regional disparities:** Naxalization draws individuals with meagre means of substance, such as farmers, fishers, daily wage labourers, and bamboo cutters. The increasing regional and intra-regional gaps have not been in stock by the government policies. The underprivileged and poor believe that Naxalism can solve their problems.
- **Lack of adequate industrialization and lack of land reform:** The government's haphazard implementation of land reforms has had an M negative impact. Due to the lack of competent survey and proper settlement implementation, the agronomic system has not been well-defined. This further harmed the rural economy and agricultural output. Rural residents' inability to find a job due to improper industrialization has caused them to feel unsatisfied with the functioning of the government. Additionally, this contributes to Naxalism.
- **Geographical terrain:** Forest places are favourable for Naxalism. Engaging in guerrilla warfare, it eats them in their struggle against the police and the army. The landscape and demographic of the Naxal-affected areas, in addition to the politics, add to the complexity of the internal security situation.
- **Working class youth:** Most of the young people active in the Naxal list movement are all graduates of the medical and engineering fields, have educated youth, and have



been the movement's devious supporters. Universities have emerged as a breeding ground for extreme beliefs and radical ideologies.

- **Tribal resentment:** The Forest conservation act of 1984 bars tribal people from even harvesting apart, even though their livelihood depends on forest products. Massive tribal population relocation as a result of mining activities, development projects, and other factors in the states devastated.
- **Easy targets:** It always recruits anyone without a means of substance into Naxalism. These individuals receive money, weapons, and ammo from Maoists.
- **Gaps in the nation's social-economic system:** Instead of focusing on the progress made in the Naxal-affected areas, the government measures its accomplishment by the number of violent strikes.
- **Lack of solid technical intelligence:** When combating Naxalism, there is weak technological intelligence. Infrastructure issues, such as the fact that some villages are still not wired up to any communication network, make it challenging to take action against Naxalites.
- **No follow-up by the administration members:** It has been seen that even when the police had control over the region, the administration failed to offer the local population necessary assistance.
- **Lack of Understanding of Naxalism:** Uncertainty on whether to address Naxalism as a social problem or a security threat. State governments view Naxalism as a problem of the federal government and/or not making any efforts to combat it.

## Efforts to Tackle Naxalism in India

The government has laid down a clear plan to tackle the Naxalism problem in India. It has formulated a three-pronged strategy to solve the problem of left wing extremism. The strategy adopted by the government is given below.

- **Grey Hound Police:** To confront left wing extremists, Andhra Pradesh's elite commando squad known as the Greyhounds was established. It is regarded as the nation's top anti-Naxalite force. The best of the best are recruited by Greyhound, a straightforward but effective organization, from the Andhra Pradesh Police.
- **Salwa Judum:** The so-called People's Movement was given the Arabic name Salwa Judum, which in the Gondi language means "Peace hunt." A few villagers annoyed by Naxal interference in the business of tendu leaf commerce started the initiative.
- **Operation Green Hunt:** The "all-out campaign" against the Naxalites by the government of paramilitary and state forces of India was referred to by this term in the Indian media. Along with five states along the Red Corridor, the operation is thought to have started in November 2009. According to reports, the attack on the CRPF unit was launched in retribution for this operation.
- **Surrender Policy:** States impacted by the Naxal have also declared surrender procedures. The Jharkhand government provided one acre of agricultural land, a monthly income of Rs. 2000, and educational and medical advantages for the children of surrendered Naxalites. The Orissa government provided cash rewards of Rs. 10,000 for surrender, Rs. 20,000 for the return of weapons, and Rs. 2 lakh in interest-free bank loans good for two years. However, there is no reliable information system for locating Naxal cadres.

## Naxalbari Movement in India: Way Forward

India has tried to abstain from Naxalism, but the root causes have not been addressed yet. The central and the state governments should continue to follow the strategy and take initiatives to combat Naxalism in the red corridor areas. Some of the steps that can take are:

- Remove economic disparity between the rich and poor, which is one of the main problems contributing to Naxalism's growth.
- The Naxal-affected states should be equipped with modern artillery to combat any adverse situation.
- The government should initiate sincere dialogue with Naxalites. A common ground should be sought.
- The Central Government should incorporate a coherent national strategy to end Naxalism.
- The state and the Central Government should find ways to generate more employment and increase wages in the Naxal-affected areas. One of the main reasons why youth is diverging to Naxalism is unemployment.

