



## Fighting Naxalism

Naxal affected Bastar Lok Sabha constituency is all set to go for polls in the first phase on 11th April, 2019. Security forces are making all efforts to ensure any threat of Naxal attack is kept at bay during the polls. Approximately 60,000 security personnel will be on duty in the state of Chhattisgarh during the polling.

### Naxalism in India

- 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 rebellion was initiated in 1967, with an objective of rightful redistribution of the land to working peasants under the leadership of **Kanu Sanyal** and **Jagan Santhal**.
- Started in West Bengal, the movement has spread across the Eastern India; in less developed areas of states such as Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh.
- It is considered that Naxals support **Maoist political sentiments** and ideology.
  - Maoism is a form of communism developed by Mao Tse Tung. It is a doctrine to capture State power through a combination of armed insurgency, mass mobilization and strategic alliances.

### Causes

- **Tribal discontent:**
  - The **Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980** deprives tribals, who depend on forest produce for their living, from even cutting a bark.
  - **Massive displacement** of tribal population in the naxalism-affected states due to development projects, mining operations and other reasons.
- Easy Target for Maoists: Such people who do not have any source of living are taken into naxalism by Maoists.
  - Maoists provide arms and ammunitions and money to such people.
- **Gaps in the socio-economic system of the country.**
  - Government measuring its success on the basis of number of violent attacks rather than the development done in the naxal-affected areas.
  - Absence of strong technical intelligence to fight with naxalites.
  - Infrastructural problems, for instance, some villages are not yet connected properly with any communication network.
- **No Follow-Up from administration:** It is seen that even after police takes hold of a region, administration fails to provide essential services to the people of that region.
- **Confusion over tackling naxalism** as a social issue or as a security threat.
- **State governments** considering naxalism as the central government's issue and thus are not taking any initiatives to fight it.

### Steps taken by the Government

- **Operation Green Hunt:** It was started in 2010 and massive deployment of security forces was done in the naxal-affected areas.
  - From 223 districts that were affected due to naxalism in the year 2010, the number has come down to 90 in nine years.

- The government even started '**Relief and Rehabilitation Policy**' for bringing naxalites into mainstream.
- Members of Central Committee Politburo of communist parties have either been killed or arrested.
- **Aspirational Districts Programme:** Launched in 2018, it aims to rapidly transform the districts that have shown relatively lesser progress in key social areas.
- Continuous efforts of government have reduced the frequency of violent attacks in the naxalism-affected regions.

## Suggestions

- Government needs innovative solutions for locating armed groups in the thick forests of the naxalism-affected regions.
- Local Police knows the language and topography of a region; it can fight naxalism better than the armed forces.
  - Andhra Police rose '**Greyhounds**'; special forces to deal with naxalism in the state.
- Government needs to ensure two things; security of the peace-loving people and the development of the naxalism-affected regions.
- State governments need to understand that naxalism is their problem also and only they can tackle it effectively. They can take help from central government if required.

*India has made some success in containing naxalism but the root causes have not been addressed yet. The central and the state governments should continue to follow the two pronged strategy i.e. ensuring safety of the people in the naxal-affected regions as well as taking initiatives for the development of such regions.*

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