

## Maoist influence down from 96 to 41 districts: Home Ministry

According to data provided by the (MHA), the geographical influence of Maoists has contracted to only 41 districts in the country.

- Earlier, in 2010, 96 such districts in 10 States accounted for Left Wing Extremism .
- The LWE-affected districts in the State can avail ₹33 crore under the Special Central Assistance (SCA) and Security Related Expenditure (SRA) scheme for infrastructure-related projects.
- SRA is under implementation since 1996. The objective of the scheme is to supplement the efforts of the States to deal with the Naxalite problem effectively.
- As per norms, State governments have to reimburse the amount incurred on the deployment of (CAPF) in a State.

## Tackling the Maoists

The home minister noted that the geographical influence of the Maoists had reduced from 96 districts in 10 States in 2010 to 41 at present.

- Naxalites are active in select pockets untouched by development or linkages with the welfare state.
- The Communist Party of India (Maoist) is limited to the remote and densely forested terrains of central and east-central India.

### Issues:

- The Maoist strategy has led to some of India's poorest people, particularly the tribals in Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand, being caught up in endless violence.

- This has also caused severe losses to the Maoists as well as anti-insurgent security forces.

- Frequent attacks have not only affected the security forces but also left many tribal civilians caught in the crossfire.

- A purely security-driven approach fraught with human rights violations has only added to the alienation among the poor in these areas.

- This has followed the predictable path of most Maoist revolts that retained armed struggle to achieve their aims rather than enabling genuine uplift of the poor.

- The Maoists fail to accept their flawed understanding of the nature of the Indian state and democracy.

- They are unwilling to accept that the poor people, whom they claim to represent, seek

greater engagement with the electoral and welfare system.

Way Forward:

- The Maoist insurgency still has potency in South Bastar in Chhattisgarh, the Andhra-Odisha border and in some districts in Jharkhand.
- These States must focus on expansive welfare and infrastructure building even as security forces try to weaken the Maoists.
- The Maoists must be compelled to give up their armed struggle and this can only happen if the tribal people and civil society activists promoting peace are also empowered.
- The Indian government should not be satisfied with the mere weakening of the Maoist insurgency and reduce commitments

made for the developmental needs of some districts of concern.

- The Union government and the States must continue to build on the successes such as the expansion of welfare and rights paradigms in limiting the movement and also learn from failures that have led to the continuing violence in some districts.

## A lost cause

26 Maoists were killed in a fierce encounter with security forces in a dense forest in Gadchiroli district, Maharashtra

## Gadchiroli



- Gadchiroli has dense forests, rivers and sparse population, and has long been a difficult terrain for security personnel to control and operate
- It is difficult to operate in this region due to Gadchiroli's location at the trijunction of Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, and Telanagana.

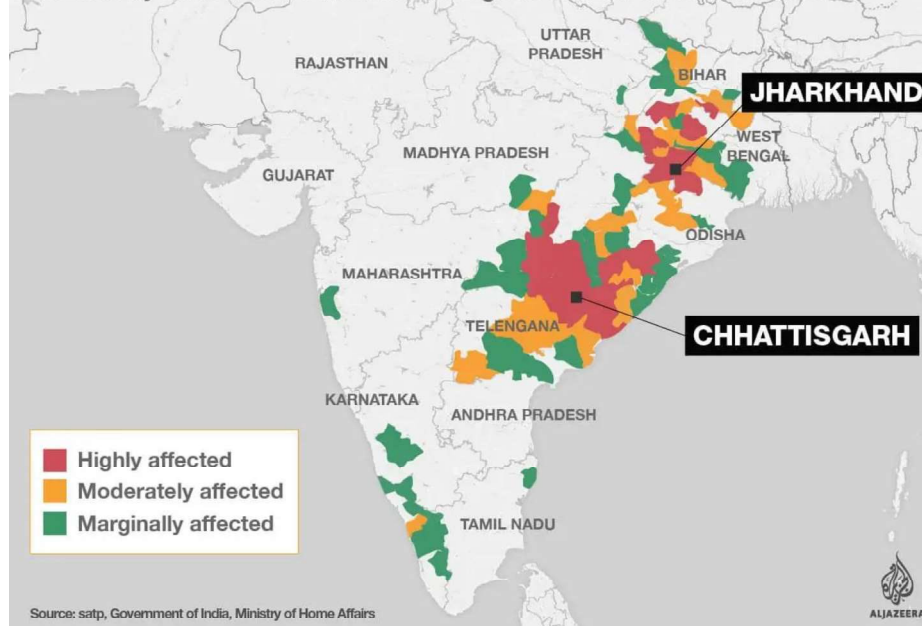
- The Maoists would be able to shift bases easily.
- It is among Maharashtra's poorest and the Maoists have sought to expand their presence extending from neighbouring Chhattisgarh.

### Concerns

- Despite suffering significant losses to its leadership the Maoists have refused to withdraw from their pursuit of armed struggle.

## A map of India's Maoist conflict

A crackdown on Maoist rebels has led to a rise in the number of casualties in the country's tribal areas. Here are the regions that are most affected.



- Andhra–Odisha Border Special Zonal Committee (AOBSZC) of the banned CPI (Maoist) released a letter
  - Urging tribals to join and revive the movement.

### Left Wing Extremism (LWE) in the AOB region

- LWE, also known by various other names such as Naxalism and Maoism
  - Is a form of armed insurgency against the State motivated by leftist ideologies.
- LW extremists are also known as
  - Maoists globally and as Naxalites in India.
- Maoists belonging to the CPI (M-L) People's War or People's War Group (PWG),



- Entered AOB region in the mid-1980s.
- 2004: CPI (M-L) People's War and the Maoist Communist Centre of India (MCCI) merged to form CPI (Maoist).
- Cadre also grew in strength and expertise in manufacturing and using improvised explosive devices

### Achievements of Anti-Naxal Forces:

- Many top leaders have either died in encounters or surrendered or have been arrested in major operations:
  - By CRPF, BSF battalions and elite anti-naxal forces of Andhra Pradesh and Odisha (Greyhounds).
- Increased police surveillance of the Maoists communication network has made VHF equipment and cell phones redundant to Maoists.
- Security personnel are conducting frequent outreach programmes to earn the trust and confidence of the tribals.
  - This has made fresh recruitment of cadres and training them a Herculean task.
- Generous surrender and rehabilitation policy, which includes financial assistance, providing skill development training and houses to the Maoists