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Q19

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

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2020 · GS III · 15 marks · Security Forces and Agencies

Various Security forces and agencies and their mandate.

Core demand of the question

- What are the determinants of left-wing extremism in Eastern part of India? What strategy should Government of India, civil administration and security forces adopt to counter the threat in the affected areas?
- Keep the explanation within a 15-mark length

Revision summary

Eastern LWE grows from forest-land dispossession, missing services, and **Maoist** organisation.

Tri-junction terrain and mineral rents add operational and financial ease.

The Union's job is fused intelligence, choking extortion, and aligned development spends.

Civil administration must deliver FRA, PESA, roads, and honest grievance.

Security forces should be intelligence-led and police-owned, then leave a civilian hold.

Introduction

Left-wing extremism in eastern and central India - the **Dandakaranya-Jharkhand-Odisha-Bihar** arc - is not only a police file. Its determinants are land, forest, dignity, and a State that arrived as a thana and a contractor. The response therefore cannot be only a CRPF camp. Government, civil administration, and security forces need one strategy with three trades.

Body

Determinants in eastern India

- **Agrarian and forest dispossession:** tenancy insecurity, delayed **FRA, 2006** titles, mining and dam displacement without consent, and contractors on jal-jungle-zameen.
- **Governance vacuum:** absent schools, health, roads, and a revenue officer who is not extractive. The **Maoist** filled the dispute-resolution gap.
- **Adivasi and Dalit exclusion:** social humiliation and unaccountable police, which made a radical class war story locally believable.
- **Terrain and borders of States:** tri-junction forests (Chhattisgarh-Odisha-Jharkhand, etc.) that let cadres slip across jurisdictions.

- **Resource curse politics:** minerals of Jharkhand, Odisha, and Bastar attract rents; some of that rent historically leaked to protection economies.
- **Ideology and organisation:** CPI (Maoist) cadre structure, extortion, and propaganda; youth without jobs as the recruitment pool.
- **External and criminal overlay:** arms, explosives, and occasional urban sympathiser networks - secondary to the rural political economy, not imaginary.

Strategy for the Government of India

- **Hold the SAMADHAN frame as operations-plus:** smart leadership, intelligence, and development, not a slogan-only acronym.
- **Financial choking** of extortion, and a political refusal to treat LWE as a permitted 'social movement' once it uses mines and IEDs.
- **Centres of excellence** for intelligence fusion; avoid purely kinetic body-count incentives.
- Coordinate **MHA, rural development, tribal affairs, and mines** so a road is not only a CRPF logistics spur but a clinic and a mandi.

Strategy for civil administration

- **Deliver FRA, PESA, and basic services** faster than the pamphlet. A title deed and a teacher beat a midnight speech.
- **Road, telecom, banking, and PDS** in vacated areas immediately, or the cadre returns as the only employer.
- **Grievance and prosecution of official abuse;** fake encounters and sexual violence are strategic defeats.
- **Surrender-cum-rehabilitation** that is real: skills, safety from revenge, and a place in the village.
- Local **panchayats and traditional councils** as the political centre, not a parallel Maoist janatana sarkar.

Strategy for security forces

- **CRPF, CoBRA, State armed police, and district police** as a grid: police must own the thana; CAPF should not be a permanent substitute government.
- **Small-team, intelligence-led** operations over large, predictable road-opening routines that invite IEDs.
- **IEDs and mine warfare** specialisation; protect locals from being used as human shields or forced porters.
- **Civic action** that is not a substitute for the collector, but is coordinated with him.
- Human-rights **SOPs**, women in units for search, and prosecution of force crime - legitimacy is a weapon.

Sequence

- Clear, hold, and then **civil hold**. Security without administration recreates the vacuum that was the original determinant.

Flow diagram

Land forest dignity vacuum -> LWE eastern belt eastern belt
MHA SAMADHAN fusion -> Clear
FRA PESA services -> Hold
Police CoBRA intel -> Clear
Clear -> Hold
Hold -> Cadre shrinks

Conclusion

Eastern LWE is determined by dispossession, absent government, and an organised Maoist military-political machine. The Centre should fuse intelligence, money-trail, and development. Collectors must deliver FRA, services, and clean grievance. Forces should be intelligence-led, police-first, and rights-bound. The gun opens space; only the civil State closes the war.

Facts & figures

FRA 2006

Forest Rights Act: recording community and individual forest rights - a core unmet governance demand in LWE tracts.

PESA 1996

Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act: gram sabha consent in Scheduled Areas, often weakly implemented.

SAMADHAN

MHA's operational-and-development mnemonic for the LWE policy mix.

CoBRA

CRPF jungle-warfare units used in LWE theatres.

CPI (Maoist)

Principal LWE organisation in the eastern-central Indian guerrilla zone.

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