Naxal-Free India

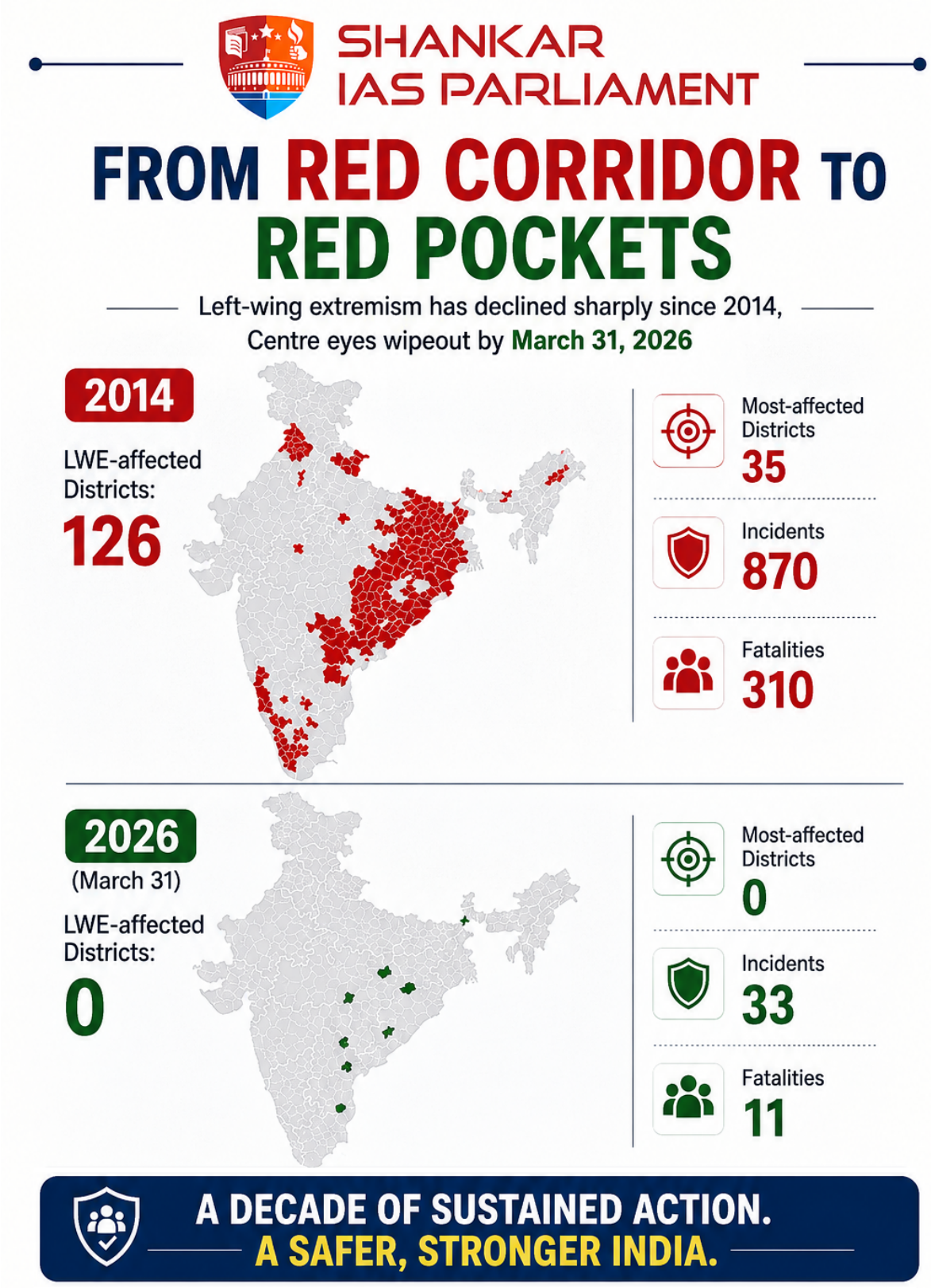
Mains: *GS III – Internal Security*

Why in News?

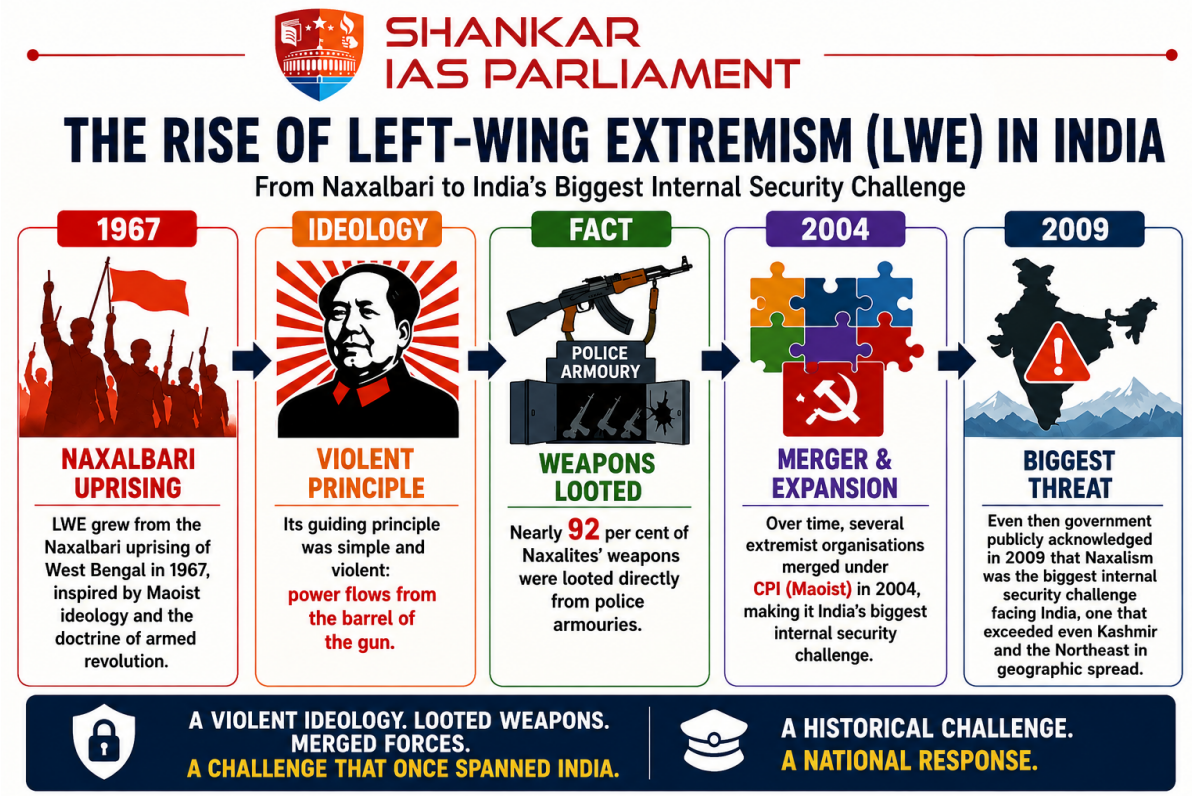
On 31 March 2026, India declared itself effectively free from Left-Wing Extremism (LWE).

What is Left-Wing Extremism?

- **Left-Wing Extremism –** In India, it mainly refers to Maoist/Naxalite armed insurgency (not just left ideology), led primarily by CPI (Maoist), using violence to create a governance vacuum and challenge the constitutional state.
- **Extent of LWE in 2014 –** A total of 126 districts across 10 states were affected.
- **States Severely Affected**
  - **Chhattisgarh –** It contains major Maoist strongholds, with particularly intense violence reported in the Bastar region.
  - **Jharkhand –** Extensive forested areas facilitate operations by the Communist Party of India (Maoist).
  - **Odisha –** Violence is concentrated in the southern border districts of the state.
  - **Bihar –** Maoist groups maintain an operational presence, with frequent clashes occurring in rural and hilly areas.
- **States Partially Affected –** Maharashtra, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.
- **States Slightly Affected –** Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh



What are the historical context of LWE?



How has India strategically approached LWE over time?

What the key strategy taken by government?

- **National Policy and Action Plan –** The Unified Framework (2015) replaced ad hoc responses with a comprehensive, whole-of-government strategy.
- Central Armed Police Forces were deployed and received specialized training.
- Key funding schemes include the following:
    - Security Related Expenditure,
    - Special Infrastructure Scheme, and
    - Special Central Assistance (SCA) schemes.

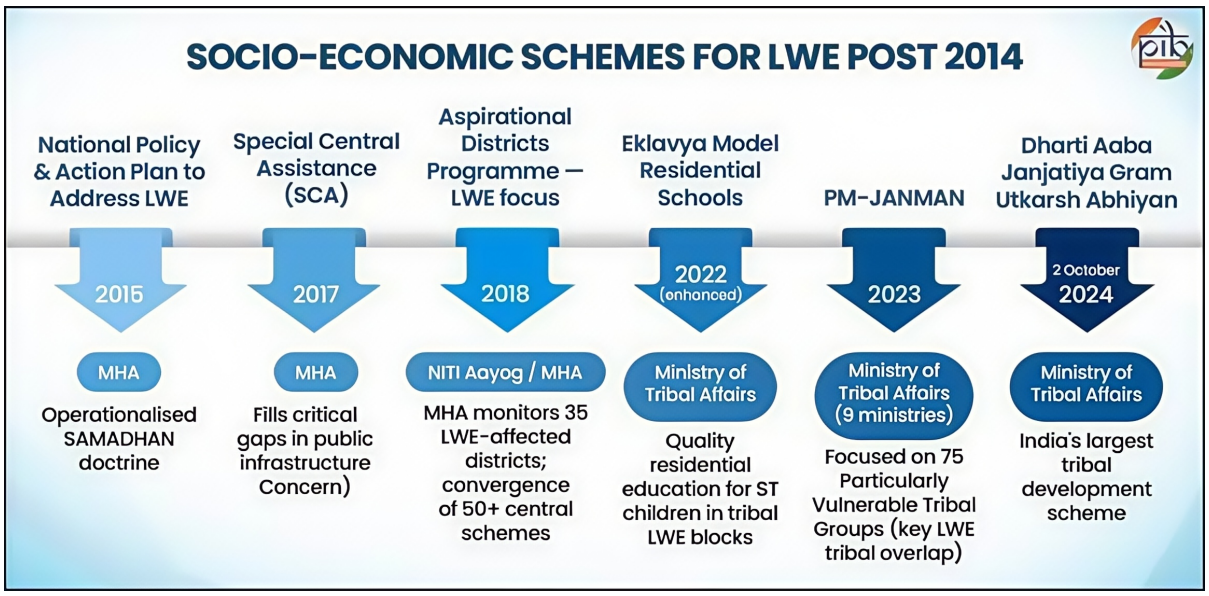
- **Three-Pronged Strategy –** The Ministry of Home Affairs leads the overall framework.
  - This approach ensures coherent policy implementation and bridges gaps between agencies.
  - The strategy shifts from fragmented, ad hoc responses to an integrated national approach.

- **Security Grid Expansion –** Strengthened state presence, improved mobility, better intelligence sharing, and increased counter-insurgency capacity.
  - **Key Measures**
    - Fortified Police Stations
    - CAPF Camps
    - Helipads
    - Vehicles and Hospitals.
- **Integration of Elite Forces –** The merging of CoBRA, DRG, STF, and Greyhounds through joint training exercises.
- This exercises established an interoperable, multi-layered force with a defined command structure, enhancing coordination and operational effectiveness.
- **Technology as a Transformative Factor -** The government deployed unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), drones, satellite imagery, and artificial intelligence (AI) analytics to enable real-time surveillance and enhance operational precision.
- Data systems incorporate advanced tools for location tracking, call-log and mobile data analysis, and social media monitoring.
- These systems enable the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to track movements and communications, thereby increasing operational efficiency.
- **Operations to Trace, Target, Neutralise –** It included *Black Forest, Octopus, Double Bull, Thunderstorm, Bhimbarg, and Chakrabandha.*
- Key breakthroughs
  - **Black Forest –** Security forces dismantled a major stronghold, eliminated over 30 Maoists, and achieved a significant increase in arrests and surrenders.
  - **Double Bull –** The districts of Gumla, Lohardaga, and Latehar were declared

Naxal-free.

- **Financial Disruption –** A dedicated NIA unit was established to disrupt Maoist funding.
- **Red Carpet for Surrender –** The government enhanced security efforts by prioritizing rehabilitation, introducing the "Red Carpet for Surrender" initiative.
- Civil society and local leaders played a key role in building confidence in the rehabilitation measures.
- **Infrastructure and Connectivity –** Extend city-level facilities to tribal regions and integrate remote areas with mainstream governance.
- The government promoted the development of *roads, digital connectivity, financial inclusion, education and skills training, and youth outreach*, thereby strengthening socio-economic integration in the affected regions.
- It strengthens last-mile service delivery for marginalized communities and ensures equitable access to essential public services.
- **Tribal Welfare & Rehabilitation –** To reduce LWE influence by expanding access to education, healthcare, housing, and livelihood support in tribal regions.
- **Rehabilitation efforts –** It include providing surrendered cadres with skill training, livelihood assistance, PMAY housing, and self-employment grants.
- Their children receive free education up to Class XII.
- Village grants offer incentives to democratically elected panchayats in Naxal-free

areas.



Reference

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