Naxal-Free India

Integrated Strategies Defeated Left-Wing Extremism

PIB analysis

- India achieved a historic milestone on **31 March 2026**, becoming effectively free from Left-Wing Extremism (LWE), with no district remaining LWE-affected.
- The achievement resulted from an integrated strategy combining security operations, infrastructure development, rehabilitation of surrendered cadres, tribal welfare and responsive governance.

Background: Left-Wing Extremism in India

- LWE originated from the **Naxalbari uprising (West Bengal, 1967)**, inspired by Maoist ideology and armed revolution.
- Several extremist organisations merged under the **Communist Party of India (Maoist) in 2004**, making it a major internal security challenge.
- Nearly 92% of Naxalites' weapons were reportedly looted from police armouries.

Violence before 2014:

- Between 2004 and 2014, India recorded 17,542 violent incidents, 1,913 security personnel deaths and 5,019 civilian deaths.
- Violence peaked in 2010, with 1,936 incidents and 720 civilian deaths.
- In 2014, LWE affected 126 districts, including 35 most-affected districts.



Integrated Strategy: From Fragmented Response to Unified Action



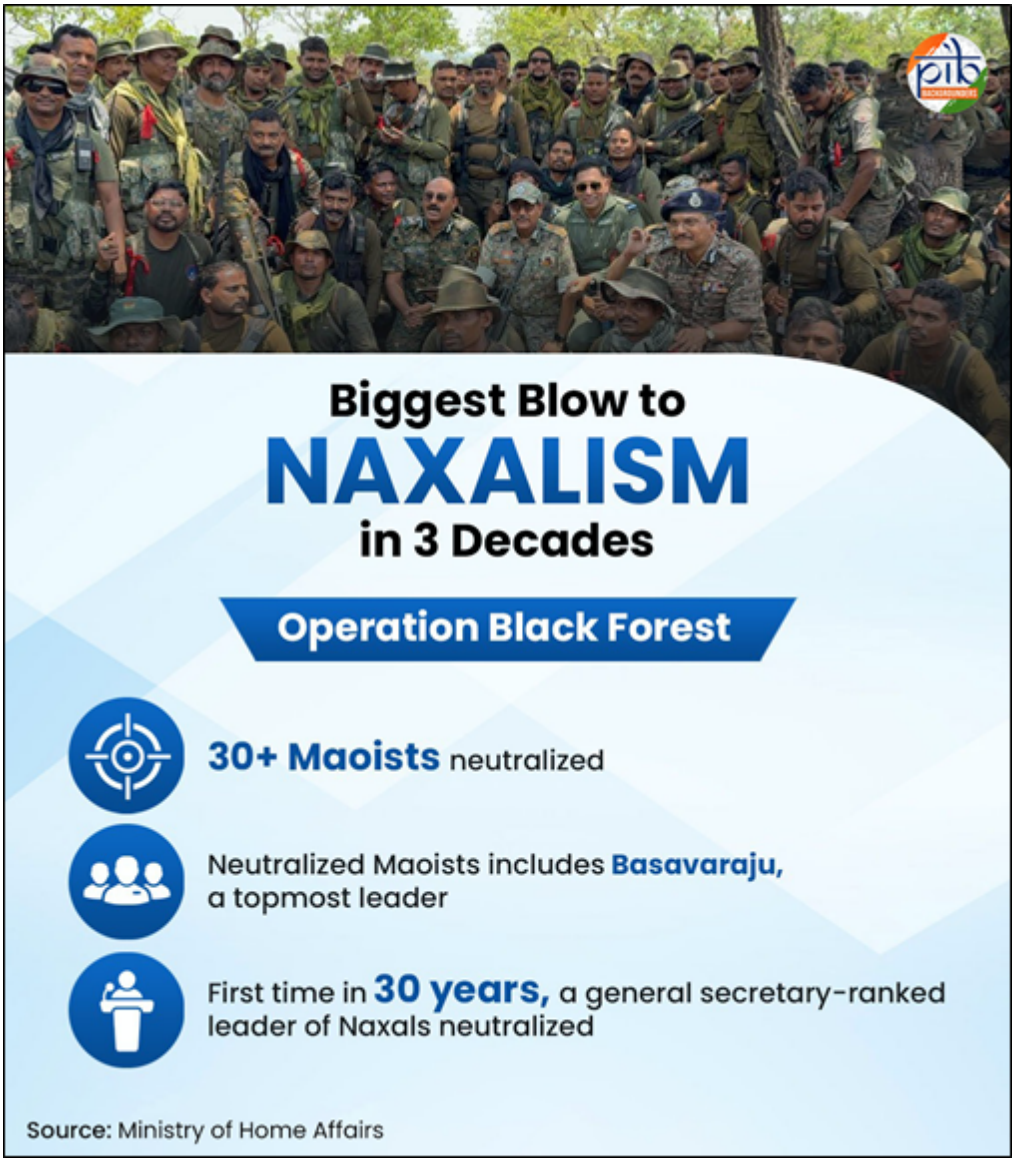
The Government adopted a comprehensive approach based on three mutually reinforcing pillars:

1. **Restoring faith in the State:** Strengthening security operations, inter-agency coordination, community outreach and rehabilitation.
2. **Expanding infrastructure:** Improving road, rail and digital connectivity and extending governance to remote regions.

Delivering welfare: Ensuring inclusive service delivery, tribal rights, livelihood opportunities and cultural integration.

Strengthening Security and State Presence

- The **National Policy and Action Plan (2015)** replaced fragmented responses with a coordinated, whole-of-government strategy.
- Security operations were strengthened through Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), specialised training, intelligence coordination and fortified police stations.
- Financial support was provided through:
    - **Special Central Assistance (SCA):** Approximately ₹4,318.52 crore released since 2017.
    - **Special Infrastructure Scheme (SIS):** Projects worth ₹1,761 crore sanctioned for strengthening Special Forces, intelligence branches and district police.
    - **Security Related Expenditure (SRE):** ₹3,877.98 crore released since 2014–15 for operational requirements and capacity building.
- The National Investigation Agency (NIA) strengthened investigations against Maoist networks, including financial and organisational structures.



Surrender and Rehabilitation

- The rehabilitation policy encourages cadres to surrender and reintegrate into mainstream society.
- Surrendered cadres receive:
  - ₹5 lakh for higher-ranked cadres and ₹2.5 lakh for others.
  - Monthly stipend of ₹10,000 for 36 months.
  - Additional incentives for surrendering and depositing weapons.
- Approximately **8,526 Naxalites surrendered till November 2026**.
- Rehabilitation includes skill development, livelihood assistance, housing, self-employment support and education for children of surrendered cadres.

Infrastructure and Connectivity Development

Infrastructure expansion helped integrate previously isolated tribal regions with mainstream economic and administrative systems.

Road Connectivity

- A total of **15,189 km of roads** were constructed under the Road Requirement Plan

(RRP) and Road Connectivity Project for LWE Affected Areas (RCPLWEA).
- The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) was tasked with constructing critical roads and bridges in areas where Maoist threats discouraged contractors.

Digital Connectivity

- A total of **9,561 mobile towers** were commissioned.
- Around 96% of villages (44,728 out of 46,592) in the most affected areas now have mobile connectivity.

Rail Connectivity

- The 95-km Dalli Rajhara–Rowghat railway line has been completed, while the 140-km Rowghat–Jagdalpur line has been approved.
- The Dantewada–Manuguru railway line (153 km) was sanctioned, and 130 km of the Kirandul–Jagdalpur doubling project has been commissioned.

Financial Inclusion

- Between April 2015 and March 2026:

- 1,804 bank branches opened.
- 1,321 ATMs installed.
- 74,720 banking correspondents appointed.
- 6,025 post offices established.

Responsive and Inclusive Governance

- Special campaigns with UIDAI and the postal department improved Aadhaar coverage in remote tribal areas.
- In Bastar, 294 post offices were established after considering geographical and terrain constraints.
- Flexible governance measures included cash wage payments, offline attendance systems, offline Ayushman Bharat card applications and routing sanitation funds through Village Sanitation Committees.
- These adaptations strengthened last-mile delivery of welfare schemes.

Healthcare

- A 240-bed Super Specialty Hospital was established at Government Medical College, Jagdalpur, under PMSSY and inaugurated on 18 May 2026.
- Eleven CAPF field hospitals were also opened to local tribal communities.

Education and Skill Development

- 259 Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) were sanctioned, of which 179 became functional.
- 47 ITIs and 49 Skill Development Centres were established with nearly ₹800 crore investment.
- More than 90,000 tribal youth and women received skill training.

- The Tribal Youth Exchange Programme (TYEP) enabled 37,655 tribal youth to participate in national exposure visits since 2014.

Civic Action Programme

- ₹221.88 crore has been released since 2014 to CAPFs for medical camps, sports activities and distribution of essential items, strengthening community trust.

Tribal Welfare and Livelihood Development

- **Forest Rights Act:** 21,26,273 title deeds were distributed, strengthening tribal land and forest rights.
- **PM-JANMAN:** Focuses on Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) through housing, drinking water, education, healthcare and connectivity.
- **Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan:** Addresses infrastructure gaps in tribal villages and improves their living standards.
- **Aspirational Districts Programme:** Converges welfare schemes to improve health, education, financial inclusion and connectivity.
- Surrendered cadres receive livelihood assistance, housing support and self-employment opportunities, while their children receive free education up to Class XII.
- Development grants are provided to villages that eliminate Naxal influence and establish democratically elected panchayats.

Case Study: Bastar's Transformation

- The **Bastariya Battalion (2017)** recruited 1,143 personnel, including around 400 local youth, strengthening intelligence networks and community trust.
- More than 3,240 km of roads and 889 mobile towers improved connectivity across Bastar.
- A rehabilitation plan for approximately 3,000 surrendered cadres was supported by an initial allocation of ₹20 crore.
- The **Shaheed Veer Gunda Dhur Seva Dera initiative (May 2026)** aims to convert CAPF camps into Integrated Development Centres.
- Initiatives such as Bastar Pandum and Bastar Olympics promoted tribal culture, youth participation and social integration.

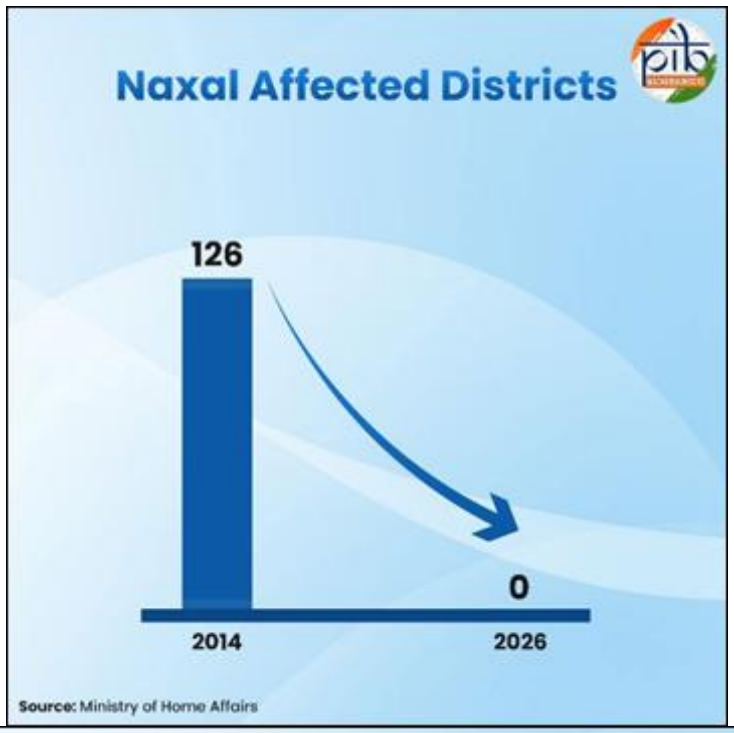
Outcomes of the Integrated Strategy

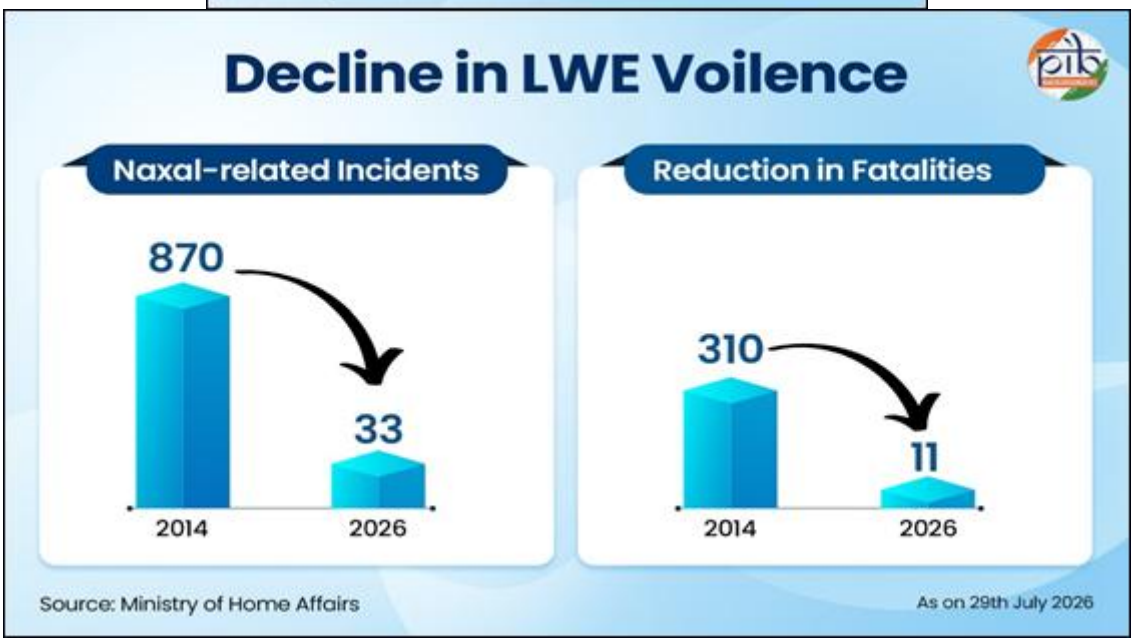
Indicator	Earlier position	Achievement
LWE-affected districts	126 (2014)	Zero (March–April 2026)
Most-affected districts	35	Zero
Violent incidents	870 (2014)	33 (2026, as on 29 July)
Fatalities	310 (2014)	12 (2026, as on 29 July)

The decline in violence reflects the weakening of Maoist networks and restoration of public confidence and security.

Consolidating Gains after June 2026

- **Seva Dera Kendras:** One-third of security camps in LWE-free areas are being converted into Integrated Development Centres providing healthcare, banking, skill development, government services and livelihood support.
- **NID Collaboration:** An MoU was signed with the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, to transform five security camps in Bastar into Shaheed Veer Gundadhur Seva Dera Kendras.
- **Welfare Saturation Survey:** Seven former LWE-affected districts of south Chhattisgarh were surveyed to identify gaps in education, healthcare, basic services and livelihood opportunities.
- **Victim Rehabilitation:** Assistive devices were distributed to persons with disabilities, including victims of Naxal violence, under the Seva Sankalp Abhiyan.
- **First Naxal-Free Diwali:** On 8 November 2026, the Prime Minister celebrated Diwali with security forces in Bastar, marking the achievement of a Naxal-free India.





Way Forward

- Consolidate security gains through continued intelligence coordination and effective policing.
- Prevent the resurgence of extremism by addressing socio-economic inequalities and governance deficits.
- Complete the rehabilitation and reintegration of surrendered cadres.
- Ensure effective implementation of tribal rights, welfare schemes and livelihood programmes.
- Strengthen local participation, democratic institutions and community-led development.

Conclusion

- India's achievement of becoming effectively Naxal-free demonstrates that internal security challenges require an integrated approach combining security, development, rehabilitation and inclusive governance.
- Sustaining this achievement requires converting security gains into lasting peace, tribal empowerment and equitable development.

Reference

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