The Anti-Maoist Greyhound Force

Why in news?

Despite contributing to the shrinking red zone, the elite anti-Maoist Greyhounds force has no base and training centre in its own home – Andhra Pradesh.

How did the armed struggle begin in Andhra?

- **Telangana Rebellion**- The seed of the armed struggle was sown by the Telangana Rebellion of 1946 in the undivided Andhra Pradesh.
- The peasant movement led by communist leaders rebelled against the feudal lords of the Telangana region in the princely State of Hyderabad.
- The armed struggle ended in 1951, when the last of the guerilla squads was subdued by police force.
- **Srikakulam movement**- The Srikakulam movement that began in 1967 inspired leaders such as Kondapalli Seetharamaiah and K.G. Satyamurthi in the early 1980s.
- The movement grew in parts of Telangana due to oppression by feudal landlords and attempts by zamindars to take over lands from tribals.
- Andhra Pradesh is one of the red corridor states that is under the influence of Left Wing Extremists (LWE) or Maoists.

Who are Greyhounds?

> *Octopus (Organisation for Counter Terrorist Operations) is another elite counter terrorism unit of the Andhra Pradesh police.*

- The Greyhounds is an elite anti-Maoist force raised in 1989 by IPS officer K.S. Vyas to combat the growing Maoist threat in Andhra Pradesh.
- The members are well-trained in guerilla and jungle warfare.
- Members of the force cannot be over 35 years.
- Once they cross 35, they are drafted into the civil police until retirement.
- This special police force became the root cause for the downfall of Left Wing Extremism in Andhra Pradesh.
- It also inspired to create other similar forces to fight the Maoists.

> ***Other Anti- Maoist Forces***
>
> *Odisha- Special Operations Group*

Maharashtra - C-60

West Bengal - Counter Insurgency Force.

Chhattisgarh - CoBRA battalion of the Central Reserve Police Force

What is the issue now?

- The issue started after the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh in 2014.
- As per the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, the men and material of Greyhounds were to be shared by Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.
- Since the training centres of the Greyhounds were located in Hyderabad, the Act specified that Andhra Pradesh would have to set up its own base and training centre.
- The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet gave its nod for the establishment of a full-fledged training centre-cum-residential facility but there is no progress due t0 rehabilitation and resettlement issues.

What are the effects of Left wing extremism (LWE)?

- Frequent skirmishes have affected the security forces.
- It has left many tribal civilians caught in the crossfire.
- Human rights' violations were reported in naxal prone areas.
- It has added to the alienation among the poor in these areas.
- It also has its effect on the government exchequer.
- LWE widened the backwardness in terms of social and economic development.
- It affected the democratic setup by hindering the elections.

How can the issue be tackled?

- **Tribal empowerment**- Empowerment of tribal people and civil society activists to promote peace in these areas.
- **Utilizing the surrendered**- Surrendered LWE cadre should be used for intelligence collection to the maximum possible.
- **Extension of welfare measures**- The country's best weapon against ultras is extending the welfare state to areas it hasn't quite reached.
- **Retaining the faith in democracy**- The government must act continually in winning over the support of tribals and retain their faith in the liberal democratic institutions of the state.

References

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