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Government Policies and the Problem of Naxalism in Chhattisgarh - An Empirical Study

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Abstract

Naxalism has been an important internal security challenge in Chhattisgarh. The Government of India has adopted a policy that combines security measures, development programmes and the protection of the rights of local communities. The National Policy and Action Plan to address Left Wing Extremism was approved in 2015. It includes measures related to police capacity, road connectivity, telecommunications, skill development and access to welfare schemes. This paper examines the government's policy approach to Naxalism in Chhattisgarh, with particular attention to security and development initiatives. It draws on official government reports and published information to understand the policy framework and its implementation. The paper also considers the importance of evaluating development outcomes alongside changes in violence. Since official reports mainly describe government measures and reported progress, their claims must be distinguished from independent evidence about the experiences of people living in affected areas.

Keywords: *Naxalism, Chhattisgarh, Government Policies, Development Initiatives, Left Wing Extremism, Internal Security.*

1. Introduction

Naxalism, officially referred to as Left Wing Extremism (LWE) in government documents, has been an important internal security issue in India. Chhattisgarh has been among the states affected by this problem. It is necessary to examine Naxalism not only as a security issue but also in relation to development and the delivery of public services.

The Government of India approved the National Policy and Action Plan to Address Left Wing Extremism in 2015. The policy follows a multi-pronged approach that includes security measures, development initiatives, and the protection of the rights and entitlements of local communities [1].

According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, the number of districts affected by Left Wing Extremism across India declined from 126 in 2013 to 38 in 2024. The government also reported a reduction in violence-related deaths [2]. These figures indicate a change in the overall security

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situation. However, national-level figures alone do not establish the specific impact of individual government policies in Chhattisgarh.

Government policies address the problem through security and development measures. These include support for state police forces, road construction, telecommunications, skill development and financial inclusion [1]. Examining these measures can help explain the government's approach to Naxalism and identify areas where further evaluation is required.

This paper examines government policies and development initiatives related to Naxalism in Chhattisgarh. It uses official government publications and published information to discuss the policy framework and the available evidence. It also distinguishes between government-reported progress and independently established evidence about the effects of policies on local communities.

2. Review of Literature

The review of literature examines existing government documents and published studies to understand how Naxalism has been addressed through security policies and development programmes. For this paper, the focus is on reliable sources that explain the policy framework and the situation in Chhattisgarh.

Existing research shows that the problem of Naxalism cannot be understood through security measures alone. Dhruv Gupta examined government assistance to states affected by Naxalite insurgency and discussed the relationship between security spending and development grants. The study suggests that public expenditure should be planned in a way that supports both security and development [3].

Research on education in rural Chhattisgarh also highlights the importance of understanding local social conditions and people's aspirations. Such studies provide a useful background for examining how development policies are experienced by communities in affected regions [4].

The Ministry of Home Affairs describes its approach to Left Wing Extremism as a combination of security-related measures and development programmes. Its responsibilities include supporting state capacity and coordinating development schemes in affected states [5]. These official documents help explain the policy framework, although they do not independently establish the impact of every programme.

The existing literature therefore provides useful information about security policy, development and local conditions. However, the specific implementation and outcomes of government initiatives in Chhattisgarh need to be examined carefully using reliable data. This paper builds on the available literature and official records without assuming that reported policy measures have produced the same results in every affected area.

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3. Government Policies and Development Initiatives

The Government of India follows a combined approach to address Naxalism through security measures, development programmes and improved governance. The National Policy and Action Plan to Address Left Wing Extremism was approved in 2015 [1].

The main policy measures are discussed below.

3.1 Security Measures

The Ministry of Home Affairs supports affected state governments through Central Armed Police Forces, police modernisation, intelligence sharing and security-related funding. The Security Related Expenditure Scheme also covers specified operational expenses, compensation and rehabilitation measures [1], [2].

These measures are intended to strengthen the capacity of state governments to respond to Left Wing Extremism. However, the existence of a policy or scheme does not, by itself, establish its effectiveness in every affected district.

3.2 Development Initiatives

Development is another important part of the government's approach. Official policy documents identify road connectivity, telecommunications, education, skill development and financial inclusion as important areas of intervention [1].

The Ministry of Home Affairs reported that, by February 2024, 4,903 new post offices had opened in affected districts and 46 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) and 49 Skill Development Centres had become functional in LWE-affected areas [1]. These are national-level figures and should not be treated as figures specific to Chhattisgarh.

3.3 Major Policy Areas

Table 1. Major Government Policy Areas to Address Naxalism in India

Policy area	Main purpose	Source
Security and police modernisation	Strengthen state security capacity	[1], [2]
Road connectivity	Improve access to remote areas	[1]
Telecommunications	Expand communication facilities	[1]
Education and skill development	Improve access to education and training	[1]
Financial inclusion	Improve access to banking and postal services	[1]

Source: Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India [1], [2].

The policies show that the government recognises the need to address Naxalism through more than security operations alone. However, assessing their actual impact in Chhattisgarh requires state-specific data on implementation, public service delivery and outcomes for local communities.

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4. Naxalism in Chhattisgarh – An Overview

Naxalism, officially known as Left Wing Extremism (LWE) in government documents, has been a major internal security concern in India. Chhattisgarh has been one of the important states affected by this problem. The issue has implications for public security, administration, development and the delivery of basic services in affected areas. Therefore, understanding Naxalism in Chhattisgarh requires attention to both security conditions and the socio-economic situation of local communities.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has adopted a multi-pronged approach to address Left Wing Extremism. This approach combines security operations with development initiatives and measures to improve governance in affected areas [1]. The policy recognises that maintaining security and improving access to public services are both important parts of the government's response.

4.1 Geographical Distribution of Naxalism

The impact of Naxalism has not been uniform across all districts of Chhattisgarh. The level of affectedness has varied across locations and over time. The Ministry of Home Affairs periodically identifies districts affected by Left Wing Extremism and revises these classifications in response to the security situation [1], [3].

In its press release dated 15 October 2025, the Ministry of Home Affairs reported that the number of districts classified as most affected by Naxalism had been reduced to three nationally. Bijapur, Sukma and Narayanpur in Chhattisgarh were among the districts identified in this category [3]. This classification indicates that these districts continued to require particular attention under the government's security framework at that time.

However, the classification of a district as affected does not mean that all its villages or communities experience the same level of violence. Conditions can differ between locations and across periods. District-level classifications should therefore be interpreted carefully and should not be treated as a complete measure of the experiences of local people.

4.2 Security Situation and Government Response

Security measures form an important part of the government's response to Naxalism. The Ministry of Home Affairs supports state governments through measures that include assistance to police forces, security-related expenditure, intelligence coordination and police modernisation [1].

These measures are intended to improve the capacity of state authorities to address violence and maintain public order. The effectiveness of such measures, however, needs to be assessed using reliable evidence, including official records of violent incidents, security-related deaths,

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arrests and surrenders. Changes in these indicators can help describe the security situation, but they do not independently explain the reasons behind those changes.

For this reason, the assessment of security policy should distinguish between the measures adopted by the government and their demonstrated outcomes. A policy may have clear objectives, but its actual performance must be evaluated using appropriate data over a defined period.

4.3 Development and Public Services in Affected Areas

Development is another important element of the government's approach to Left Wing Extremism. Official policy documents identify road connectivity, telecommunications, education, skill development and financial inclusion as important areas of intervention in affected regions [1].

Access to these services is relevant to the study of Naxalism because public administration and development programmes operate within the same areas in which security challenges arise. Road connectivity, for example, is one of the development priorities identified by the government. Telecommunications infrastructure can also support communication and access to services. Education and skill development programmes are intended to expand opportunities for local residents.

Nevertheless, the existence of a development scheme does not automatically establish that all intended beneficiaries have received its benefits. An accurate assessment requires information about implementation, geographical coverage, service availability and actual outcomes. Such evidence should ideally distinguish between different districts and communities rather than treating Chhattisgarh as a single uniform region.

4.4 Challenges in Policy Implementation

Although government policies cover security and development, their implementation needs to be examined separately. The main questions are whether the intended services reach the affected communities, whether the facilities remain functional and whether people can use them without difficulty.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has identified improvement in governance, the protection of local communities' rights and the delivery of development benefits as important elements of its approach [1]. These priorities make it necessary to examine the implementation of government schemes alongside security-related outcomes.

A useful assessment would consider the availability of schools, healthcare facilities, roads, communication networks and livelihood opportunities. It would also examine whether official programme records are consistent with actual service delivery. Such an assessment requires reliable district-level information and, where possible, evidence from local communities.

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The available national figures should not be used to claim that all development challenges in Chhattisgarh have been resolved. A decline in the number of affected districts is an important administrative indicator, but it is not a direct measure of improvements in education, healthcare, employment or public trust.

4.5 Need for Further Assessment

The government has reported a substantial reduction in the geographical spread of Left Wing Extremism. In October 2025, the Ministry of Home Affairs identified Bijapur, Sukma and Narayanpur as the three most affected districts in India [6]. This information provides a useful reference point for understanding the security situation at that time.

However, a complete assessment of government policy requires more than a review of district classifications. It should also consider the implementation of development schemes, the availability of public services and the experiences of affected communities. Comparing official targets with verified implementation data would help identify areas of progress and remaining gaps.

In conclusion, Naxalism in Chhattisgarh needs to be studied through both security and development perspectives. Official documents provide an important foundation for understanding the government's approach. Further conclusions about policy effectiveness should be based on verified evidence rather than assumptions.

5. Conclusion

Naxalism remains an important subject of public policy in Chhattisgarh. The Government of India has adopted a multi-pronged approach that combines security measures, development initiatives and improved governance to address Left Wing Extremism [1]. This approach recognises that the issue requires attention to both public security and the needs of communities living in affected areas.

The Ministry of Home Affairs reported in October 2025 that Bijapur, Sukma and Narayanpur were among the three districts classified as most affected by Naxalism in India [6]. This information reflects the government's assessment at that time and highlights the continuing importance of these districts in its policy response.

The review also indicates the need to distinguish between policy objectives and their actual outcomes. The adoption of government schemes and the reduction in affected districts do not, by themselves, establish the extent to which individual programmes have improved people's lives. Assessing policy effectiveness requires reliable data on implementation, public service delivery and conditions in affected communities.

Therefore, government policies should be examined through both security-related indicators and evidence of development outcomes. Greater availability of district-level data, transparent

reporting and systematic evaluation can help researchers understand the achievements and limitations of existing policies. Such an approach can support a more evidence-based understanding of Naxalism in Chhattisgarh.

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