



Clarification on media reports on the recent Sukma incident

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There have been reports in a section of media on the recent Sukma incident which need clarification. The Ministry of Home Affairs has clarified these reports as below:

It is factually not correct to observe that lack of financial resources are a reason for casualty of valuable lives of police and CRPF personnel which are being lost in the battle against Left Wing Extremism. The funds released for Security Related Expenditure Scheme have increased from Rs. 575 crores in 2011-12, 2012-2013, 2013-2014 to Rs. 675 crores in 2014-15, 2015-2016, 2016-2017. The above increase is in spite of the fact that States now get a greater share (42%) of the Centre's tax resources. Earlier this used to be only 32%.

It is incorrect to say that Chhattisgarh Police is in shambles. In addition to 45,000 Central Forces, over 20,000 State Police personnel are posted in Bastar region. Recruitment is ongoing and continuous process. For a force of 70,000, about 3,000 policemen retire every year and there is always a pipeline of 6,000 people under recruitment.

The Chhattisgarh police forces are well equipped and a Bastar package for police was introduced in end 2015. There is complete coordination between Centre and State forces. In fact 2016 has been the most successful year in anti-LWE operation. As compared to an average of 30 Naxals killed every year, 135 Naxals were neutralized in 2016 which is three times the number of police personnel killed. Even in 2017, 32 Naxals have been killed so far which is more than the average annual killings of Naxals before 2015. It is wrong to say that 72 CRPF personnel have sacrificed their lives in 2017. As a matter of fact 38 CRPF personnel have been martyred in Chhattisgarh in 2017. These figures clearly indicate that anti-Naxal operations are achieving success.

The Government of India policy has been very helpful and has substantially brought down the violence figures in the State. There has been 7% decline in overall violence incidents since 2013. The LWE Cadres are infact in retreat and resorting to desperate attacks.

A Bastaria Battalion has been sanctioned recently with a strength of around 750 to be recruited from the local tribals. Similarly 10 Special India Reserve Battalions (SIRB) and 56 India Reserve Battalions are being raised in the LWE areas. 58 Mine Protected Vehicles (MPVs) are available in Chhattisgarh to the CAPFs and 30 are under process for procurement through the Ordnance Factories Board (OFB). 42 Bullet Proof vehicles are also available and 210 Bullet Protected Vehicles (BPVs) are under process for procurement.

On the development front various initiatives have been taken recently such as sanction of a 5,412 kms road project at a cost of Rs. 11,725 crores, inclusion of all 35 worst affected LWE districts in the skill development programme, providing Navodaya and Kendriya Vidyalayas, banks, ATMs and post offices in these districts. On the health front, the flagship NHRM programme is followed up by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on a constant basis and a super speciality hospital has been approved recently at Jagdalpur by way of upgradation of Jagdalpur Medical College.

The next of kin of the martyred currently get around Rs. 84 lakhs as assistance.

There were no directions by MHA regarding not showing grieving widows on TV channels. It was a suggestion verbally made keeping in mind the sensitivities of the bereaved families and the fundamental decency of not intruding to the privacy of the grieving families.

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