

Top Maoist among 27 killed in Abujhmad encounter, takes toll this year to 200

This comes days after anti-Naxal operations in Karregutta hills on Chhattisgarh-Telangana border left 31 Maoists dead

Twenty-seven members of the banned Communist Party of India (Maoist), including its general secretary Nambala Keshava Rao alias Basavaraju (70), were killed in an encounter with security forces in Abujhmad area of Chhattisgarh's Narayanpur district on Wednesday morning. A jawan from the District Reserve Guard (DRG) was also killed in the faceoff.

The encounter is the latest in a series of anti-Naxal operations undertaken by security forces in Chhattisgarh, and comes against the backdrop of a deadline Home Minister Amit Shah has set to eradicate Left Wing Extremism from the country – March 31, 2026.

With Tuesday's encounter, the number of Maoists killed in Chhattisgarh this year has touched 200, including 183 in the Bastar region. Last year, 219 Maoists were killed, including 217 in Bastar.

"Based on intelligence inputs regarding the presence of CPI Maoist general secretary Basavaraju and other senior cadres of the Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee (DKSZC) and People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA), a joint DRG team of Chhattisgarh police from Narayanpur, Dantewada, Bijapur and Kondagaon launched this decisive operation in the jungles of Abujhmad along the border region of Narayanpur, Bijapur, and Dantewada on Monday," said Inspector General of Police for Bastar Range, Sundarraaj P.

Proud of our forces for this remarkable success. Our Government is committed to eliminating the menace of Maoism and ensuring a life of peace and progress for our people.
<https://t.co/XIPku5dtnZ>

— Narendra Modi (@narendramodi) May 21, 2025

"During the search operation on Wednesday forenoon, Maoists opened indiscriminate fire on security forces. Security forces fought back bravely and tactfully against the illegal and banned CPI Maoist outfit," said Bijapur Superintendent of police Jitendra Yadav.

"Several automatic weapons like AK-47, self-loading rifle (SLR), INSAS, Carbine and other arms and ammunitions were recovered," said Superintendent of Police, Dantewada district, Gaurav Rai.

Narayanpur Superintendent of Police, Prabhat Kumar, said that "a preliminary inspection of the encounter spot reveals that several other senior-level Maoist cadres have either been killed or seriously injured in this operation."

Abujhmad is an unsurveyed land larger than the state of Goa. While a large part is in Narayanpur, it also extends to Bijapur, Dantewada, Kanker and Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district. Talking about the challenges faced during the operation, Additional Director General (Naxal operations) Vivekanand Sinha told The Indian Express, "Abujhmad has been the stronghold of Maoists, and a major challenge for us was covering a large area where there is no security presence. Even the nearest security camp is around 25 to 30 kilometres away. Conducting the massive operation in the hilly and undulating terrain of Maad amid the scorching heat was challenging."

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai said that "the operations are mainly carried out by DRG". "From the beginning, we have been appealing to them (Maoists) to surrender... there is no need to keep repeating it."

Tuesday's encounter comes less than a month after security forces undertook a major anti-Naxal operation codenamed Black Forest in and around Kareguttalu hills on the Chhattisgarh-Telangana border. Although the encounter was called off after 21 days, top officials said that key Maoist leadership and the dreaded Battalion 1 of their armed wing, the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army, took a heavy hit.

That operation began on April 21, after security forces and multiple agencies received inputs that top Maoist leaders and commanders, including Hidma Madvi, were spotted on the Karregutta hills. A total of 31 Maoists were killed in the encounter.

The Home Minister shared on X that "after completion of Operation Black Forest, 54 Naxalites have been arrested and 84 Naxalites have surrendered in Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Maharashtra."

Referring to Shah's post, Prime Minister Narendra Modi wrote, "Our government is committed to eliminating the menace of Maoism and ensuring a life of peace and progress for our people."