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Naxal ambush planned by local cadres camping in Bastar: Police

PTI | Updated: Dec 02, 2014, 02.40 PM IST

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The Maoist ambush, claiming lives of 14 CRPF personnel in Chhattisgarh, was planned and supervised by local Naxal leaders, a police official said.

RAIPUR: The deadly Maoist ambush, claiming lives of 14 CRPF personnel in Chhattisgarh's Sukma district, was planned and supervised by local Naxal leaders who were reportedly camping in south Bastar for past few days, a senior police official said today.

"We received several inputs that dreaded Maoist leaders of Dandakaranya region were holding meeting in forests of south Bastar-Sukma, Bijpaur and Narayanpur, worried over large number of surrenders and arrest of their

cadres during the past few months," a senior police official involved in anti-Naxal operations told PTI on condition of anonymity.

"We suspect that the attack was planned and carried out by the same group of leaders by taking the support of local lower rung supporters," he said.

The official, however, did not rule out involvement of Maoist's Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee secretary Ramanna, the top Maoist leader of the region.

Preliminary information indicates that nearly 150 armed guerrilla military cadres were positioned on three sides in the forests of Kasalpada and Elmaguda and were assisted by a supporting group of around 100 militia and sangham supporters of local villages, he said.

The Maoists certainly got a tip-off about the route of security forces during their return to camp on December 1 after a three-day-long search and area domination operation and may have set up the ambush in just a short span of time, he said.

Prima facie it appears that LMG (light machine guns) used by the cadres caused much damage to the security personnel, he said.

After the encounter, Naxals looted three UBGL (under barrel grenade launcher) armoured AK-47, 7 AK-47, one Insas-LMG, one Insas, a bullet-proof jacket, a GPS, one binoculars, a monopack and several magazines of AK-47, Insas and Insas-LMG of CRPF men and fled to

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anti-Naxal operations were already intensified in their strongholds, Inspector General of Police Bastar Range SRP Kalluri said.

The Naxals yesterday ambushed a security squad killing 14 CRPF personnel, including two officials, and injuring 15 others in insurgency-hit Sukma district.

A joint squad of CRPF 223 battalion, its elite CoBRA ([Commando Battalion for Resolute Action](#)) 206 battalion and district police was attacked by a large group of armed rebels in Kasalpada village forests under Chintagufa police station when the security forces were returning to their camp after operation in the Chintagufa region, about 450 kms from here.

The incident took place in the same base region of outlawed CPI(Maoist) where 76 troopers were massacred in 2010.

Chief Minister [Raman Singh](#) returned from his Delhi tour late last night to Raipur and chaired a meeting of senior state officials, including of Home and Health department.

He asked to provide better medical treatment to the injured jawans and gave necessary instructions to the officials in view of the visit of Home Minister [Rajnath Singh](#), who arrived here today to review the situation.

The injured jawans are being airlifted to Raipur for treatment while the bodies of martyred security personnel are also being brought here in choppers.



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Manvendra Singh all set to join Congress on Wednesday

IANS | Oct 16, 2018, 12:35 PM IST

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Singh's relationship with the BJP turned sour in 2014 when the party refused to give a ticket to his father and former Defence Minister Jaswant Singh.

Former Union Minister and senior BJP leader Jaswant Singh's son Manvendra Singh, who quit the Bharatiya Janata Party in September, is likely to join the Congress on Wednesday, Rajasthan Pradesh Congress Committee chief Sachin Pilot said on Tuesday.

Manvendra Singh had exited BJP on September 22.

He will join Congress on the auspicious day of Maha Durgaashtami on October 17 in New Delhi at 10 a.m., Pilot told IANS.

Speculation regarding his joining the Congress party was doing the rounds soon after he quit the ruling party during a mammoth Swabhiman Rally organised at Pachpadra in Rajasthan's Barmer.

However, he did not open his cards during or after the rally.

Singh is a sitting legislator from Sheo and should join the Congress along with his wife. A few other BJP members might also join the Congress, informed sources said.

Singh's relationship with the BJP turned sour in 2014 when the party refused to give a ticket to his father and former Defence Minister Jaswant Singh.

The latter contested the elections as an independent candidate but lost to the BJP candidate Sonaram Chaudhary.

Other BJP leaders who left the saffron party over allegations of being neglected were seniors like Ghanshayam Tiwari and Usha Punia among others.

Earlier, when Manvendra Singh announced his departure, Pilot had said that BJP needs to do an introspection as to why so many senior leaders were the saffron fold.

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Piyush Goyal to receive University of Pennsylvania's top energy policy prize

PTI | Oct 16, 2018, 11:37 AM IST

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Piyush Goyal is being recognised for directing a fast-track effort to electrify 18,000 villages in remote parts of India, "helping bridge the country's vast energy divide."

Minister of Railways and Coal [Piyush Goyal](#) will receive the [University of Pennsylvania's](#) top prize in [energy policy](#) for his leadership in reforming India's power sector, spearheading efforts to fast-track electrification of thousands of remote villages and expanding [renewable energy](#) in the country.

The Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University of Pennsylvania School of Design will award its fourth annual Carnot Prize to Goyal, the former minister of power and renewable energy, on October 19.

According to a press release from The Kleinman Center, Goyal is being recognised for directing a fast-track effort to electrify 18,000 villages in remote parts of India, "helping bridge the country's vast energy divide."

It said Goyal has also been instrumental in reforming India's power markets and expanding renewable energy, in an effort to meet the country's [Paris Agreement](#) targets.

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solid footing to reach a

said Goyal's efforts
age amidst complexity.

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nots."

While at Penn, Goyal will also meet with Penn students with interests in energy and India.

The Consulate General of India in New York said in a press release that during his visit to the US from October 19 to 22, Goyal will interact with members of Indian diaspora during an event in New Jersey and speak on growth and economic reforms in India at Columbia University.

The Carnot Prize is named in memory of French scientist Sadi Carnot, who in 1824 published Reflections on the Motive Power of Fire, which is recognised as the first statement of what is now known as the second law of thermodynamics.

Carnot recognised that the power of the steam engine would produce a great revolution in human development. The Carnot Prize is intended to honour those leading revolutions in energy policy to further progress and prosperity.

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Driving licences to be uniform across India

TNN | Oct 16, 2018, 11.33 AM IST

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The 'smart' DLs and RCs embedded with microchips will have QR codes.

NEW DELHI: From next July, new driving licences (DLs) and vehicle registration certificates (RCs) issued by all states and Union Territories will be uniform in look, colour, design and will have the same security features.

The 'smart' DLs and RCs embedded with microchips will have QR codes. They will also be enabled with the near-field communication (NFC) feature, just like that of Metro Rail and ATM cards, so that traffic enforcers with hand-held devices can easily access details stored

in the cards.

The new DL will have details of a driver's declaration to donate organs and mention if he/she is driving a specially designed vehicle meant for the physically challenged.

"The feature of emission norm for the vehicle will be specified on the RC to help carry out the pollution under control test objectively," said an official.

(This article was originally published in The Times of India)

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Kohinoor was neither forcibly taken nor stolen by the British: ASI

By [Nidhi Bhardwaj](#), ET Bureau | Oct 16, 2018, 11:02 AM IST

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In April 2016, the government had told the Supreme Court that the [Kohinoor diamond](#) was neither “forcibly taken nor stolen” by the British. The government had stated that it was gifted to the [East India Company](#) by the successors of Maharaja [Ranjit Singh](#), who ruled Punjab at the time.

The [Archeological Survey of India](#) (ASI), however, has contradicted the government’s

stand by stating in a recent RTI reply that the diamond was in fact “surrendered” by the Maharaja of Lahore to Queen Victoria of England. In its response to a PIL, the government had said that Maharaja Ranjit Singh’s kin had given the Kohinoor to the British as “voluntary compensation” to cover the expenses of the Anglo-Sikh War.

Activist Rohit Sabharwal had filed a RTI query seeking information showing the grounds on which the Kohinoor was transferred to the UK. “I had no clue who to approach with my RTI application, so I forward it to the Prime Minister’s office (PMO). It was the PMO that sent it to ASI. The RTI Act allows a public authority to transfer an application to another another authority which has the information sought,” said Sabharwal.

In the RTI query, he also asked if it was a gift to the UK by the Indian authorities or if there was any other reason for the transfer. The ASI replied, “As per the records, the Lahore Treaty held between Lord Dalhousie and Maharaja Duleep Singh in 1849, the Kohinoor diamond was surrendered by the Maharaja of Lahore to the Queen of England.”

The reply gives an extract of the treaty which reads, “The gem called Kohinoor which was taken from the Shah-Suja-ul-Mulk by Maharaja Ranjeet Singh shall be surrendered by the Maharaja of Lahore to the Queen of England.” According to the reply, the treaty indicates that “the Kohinoor was not handed over to the British on the wishes of Duleep Singh. Moreover, Duleep Singh was a minor at the time of the treaty”.

“I recently met a British national who claimed that the Kohinoor was gifted to the queen. Since that day, I decided to go deep into the subject.” The chairman of the Maharaja Duleep Singh Memorial Trust, Kothi Bassian and poet Gurbhajan Singh Gill said this is exactly what they had been saying for many years – that the diamond was taken away by the British from Maharaja Duleep Singh when he was only nine.

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