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Chhattisgarh: Naxals kill 13 CRPF jawans in Sukma district

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According to reports, 13 CRPF personnel, including an assistant commandant and a deputy commandant, were killed in a Naxal attack in Sukma district in Chhattisgarh on Monday.



The 223 Battalion was conducting an area-domination exercise in Kasanpara village of the district in the south Bastar region when they entered into an encounter with the Naxals at around 10.30 am.

The engagement, a senior officer said, continued till 2 pm with casualties occurring on both sides.

The officer said that the Naxals fired at the CRPF patrol party taking the aid of locals and villagers and hence the force had to fire with restraint. The Naxals also surrounded the CRPF jawans and fired at them from an elevated ground.

Most of the troops suffered bullet injuries and have been air-lifted to Jagdalpur and Raipur for treatment.

"Two officers, one in the rank of Deputy Commandant and an Assistant Commandant, have been killed while over a dozen personnel have been injured," the officer said.

CRPF managed to get the dead bodies back. Post-mortem will be conducted on Tuesday, reports added.

Around 26 to 30 jawans were part of the CRPF exercise, which had been going on for the last ten days. 13 people have been injured in the attack, according to *PTI*. The injured are being treated at a nearby hospital.

Home Minister Rajnath Singh condemned the attack and called it an 'act of cowardice'.

Deeply saddened and disturbed to know of 13 CRPF men being killed by the Naxals during an ongoing encounter in Chhattisgarh.

— Rajnath Singh (@BJPRajnathSingh) December 1, 2014
(<https://twitter.com/BJPRajnathSingh/status/539400182861791232>)

It is an act of cowardice. I strongly condemn this dastardly act of violence.

— Rajnath Singh (@BJPRajnathSingh) December 1, 2014
(<https://twitter.com/BJPRajnathSingh/status/539400921621360640>)

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Singh also said that he had spoken to the Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Raman Singh and the state DGP and asked them to monitor the situation. The Home Minister is expected to arrive in Chhattisgarh on Tuesday.

Spoke to CM Chhattisgarh Dr Raman Singh and the DGP of the state and asked them to monitor the situation in the area.

— Rajnath Singh (@BJPRajnathSingh) December 1, 2014
(<https://twitter.com/BJPRajnathSingh/status/539402208878407681>)

I express my condolences to the families of our brave CRPF men who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty.

— Rajnath Singh (@BJPRajnathSingh) December 1, 2014
(<https://twitter.com/BJPRajnathSingh/status/539401294595637248>)

Minister of State Home Affairs Kiren Rijiju told *Times Now*, "It is unfortunate this incident has happened. Currently, an operation is going on at that place. We're going to reinforce and finish this operation. But we also have to ensure that casualties are minimum."

Rijiju also said, "It seems that these left-wing extremists are gaining ground in certain parts. But the Prime Minister and Home Minister have made it clear that action will be taken over this issue. We need to take the matter very seriously."

The district police rushed to the spot and the CRPF is expected to give an official statement on the incident soon. CRPF teams have also been sent to the area for assistance, led by CRPF Inspector General (Chhattisgarh), HS Sidhu. The CRPF Special DG has called for an emergency meeting at the headquarters after the incident.

Earlier on 21 November, Maoists had ambushed a patrol party and shot down an air force helicopter which was evacuating security personnel after a gunbattle in the same area, injuring one personnel.

(With inputs from PTI)

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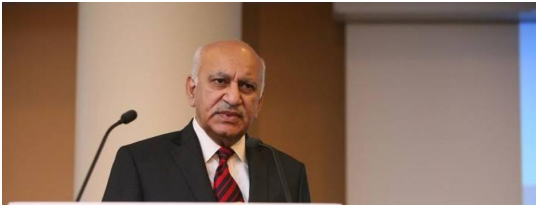


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