

16 killed in Naxal attack on security personnel in Chhattisgarh

The team of security personnel came under attack during an area domination exercise on Sukma-Bastar border, close to the spot where many Congress leaders were massacred by the Maoists last year.



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Maoist ambush in Chhattisgarh kills 16

Maoists ambushed a security patrol killing 16 people including 11 of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), a Central paramilitary force, in a daring daytime attack in the worst-hit Sukma district of Chhattisgarh, a gory reminder of the 2010 Dantewada massacre in which 76 CRPF personnel were gunned down in the same area.

The Naxals, who were 200 in number, walked away with the arms and ammunition of the slain policemen after the encounter that lasted nearly three hours. The attack at a road construction site came exactly a month before the Lok Sabha (the lower house of Indian Parliament) elections in Chhattisgarh.

They struck at 'Jeerum Nullah', 400 km from here, at around 1015 am when a contingent of 48 joint security forces personnel was trapped and struck by heavy fire and landmine blasts while it was out for an operational task in the jungles of Tongapal, close to the Dantewada and 'Jeerum Ghati' axis, notorious for Naxal violence.

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Terming it as an act of cowardice, state Chief Minister Raman Singh said that around 200 naxals had carried out the attack in which 11 CRPF, four from district police and one civilian, who was driving the vehicle were killed.

"The injured have been shifted to hospital via helicopter to Raipur, medical assistance is being provided to them....the incident took place where roads are under construction, especially in Sukma district," he said.

An assistant commandant rank officer of CRPF is also believed to among the victims, official sources said.

The attack, which is believed to have been carried out by the trio of Ramanna-Surinder-Deva of Dharbaghati wing of Dhandkaryana Zonal Committee, was carried out barely five km from the area where virtually the top Congress leadership of the state was wiped out by Maoists in May last year.

The same trio was blamed by security agencies for the May attack in which 25 people were killed. Congress leaders Mahendra Karma and Nand Kumar Patel, who was Chhattisgarh Pradesh Congress Chief, were among the victims. Patel's son was also killed.

The attack comes despite warnings sent by Intelligence Bureau on February 17 asking the naxal-hit states to be extra-cautious as banned Communist Party of India-Maoists had announced "Chunao Bashiskar" (Poll boycott) programme and may intensify attacks on security personnel.

Here are the names of those killed in the Maoist attack

Chhattisgarh Police- Head Constable Nakul Dhruv, Constable R Gaikwad, Constable Ishu Kumar Pisda, Constable Aditya Kumar Sahu

CRPF - 80 battalion : Inspector Subhash Chandra, Inspector TR Singh, ASI Manmohan Singh, HC Pradeep Kumar, HC Lakhinder, HC Faujlahak, Constable Manoj Barekh, Constable Neraj Kumar, Constable Naher Singh, Constable Kaushal Kishore, Constable Somnath Rathore

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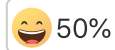


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