

# Maoists massacre 13 CRPF troopers in Chhattisgarh

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**Raipur, Dec 1** Maoist guerrillas Monday gunned down 13 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) troopers returning after a search operation in Chhattisgarh, officials said.

Additional Director General of Police R.K. Vij told IANS that the dead included two senior officers.



**Narendra Modi**

@narendramodi

Words are not enough to condemn the brutal & inhuman attack by anti-national elements in Sukma, Chhattisgarh.

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A CRPF source told IANS in New Delhi that the troopers were returning to their base after conducting a search for Maoists in Sukma district when they were attacked.



The incident took place near Chintagufa area, the source said. "Suddenly there was heavy firing from almost everywhere."

A police officer told IANS in Raipur: "We have suffered a major casualty in a forested stretch of Errabore area in Sukma.

"Heavily armed Maoists opened indiscriminate fire from all around on a contingent of the CRPF and the district police," the source said.

The deadly attack, the worst in months, also killed two officers – a deputy commandant and an assistant commandant of the Central Reserve Police Force. More than a dozen troopers were injured in the attack and were being treated at Sukma camp.

The incident took place near Chintagufa area in Sukma district, Additional Director General of Police, Anti-Naxal (Maoist) Operations R.K. Vij told IANS, adding they had suffered "major" casualties.

The Maoists fired indiscriminately from all sides at a joint contingent of the CRPF and Chhattisgarh Police. "Suddenly there was heavy firing from almost everywhere," Vij told IANS. The firing continued for more than three hours.

He said the security forces were engaged in a major combing operation when the Maoists sprayed bullets.

The attack site is about 500 km south of capital Raipur. The area is cut off from all communication networks.

Meanwhile, state police sources said three parties of the CRPF, Cobra Battalion and state police were still out in the jungles till late Monday night. According to the information, the 60 personnel were yet to return to camp.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi condemned "the brutal and inhuman attack by anti-national elements".

"Words are not enough to condemn the brutal and inhuman attack by anti-national elements in Sukma, Chhattisgarh. I salute the courageous CRPF personnel who have been martyred today. Our thoughts are with the families of those who lost their loved ones," he said in a statement.

Modi said he had discussed the issue with Home Minister Rajnath Singh and Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Raman Singh, and the government "was monitoring the situation closely".

Congress president Sonia Gandhi also expressed shock and deep anguish at the killings and demanded that the government look at all aspects of the incident. She extended her condolences to the family of the "martyrs" and hoped that the injured would get all the required treatment.

Police sources said the bodies of the killed troopers will be brought by helicopter to Jagdalpur from where they will be taken to Raipur where a memorial ceremony will be held at the Police Training School grounds.

Officials at the Chhattisgarh police headquarters said Chintagufa was a den of Maoists where they have had several major hideouts since the 1990s.

One officer said the security forces were often scared to carry out anti-Maoist operations in the area.

"The casualties are basically due to lack of solid intelligence," said a CRPF officer posted at Sukma's Dornapal base camp.

"We failed to know that Maoists had assembled in hundreds in the area with sophisticated weapons to take on the CRPF.

"But we have to admit that getting specific intelligence in the insurgent-commanded jungle war zone has always been a difficult task," the officer told IANS.

The attack site is part of Bastar region that is spread out over 40,000 square km. In almost the entire forested interiors, the rebels run a parallel government.

In the past six months the insurgents had come under heavy pressure from both the paramilitary troopers and the state police.

**(IANS)**

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