

Maoists blow up three Forest Range offices

Sun, 29 March 2009 at 10:53 IST

In their first major attack on a tourist spot in Orissa, Maoists blew up three forest range offices and set ablaze two vehicles in Similipal Tiger Project (STP) area in Mayurbhanj district early today, official sources said.

Using powerful explosives, the ultras virtually razed to the ground the range offices at Barahakamuda, Chahala and Dhuduruchampa located in different core areas of the forest reserve in a synchronized attack at around 1 am, Field Director of STP, N Nagaraj Reddy said. The Maoists also tied up some tourists at Chahala and Forest personnel at Barahakamuda and Dhuduruchampa besides setting ablaze two government vehicles, he said adding that no loss of life has been reported and security force have rushed to the sites. Chahala happens to be an important tourist place in Similipal hills with accommodation facilities for VVIPs and other visitors, while the other two places are located in areas where tourists cannot enter , sources said. Police personnel in strength have been sent to the area where security was tightened following the attack. Police said this was the first attack by Maoists on a tourist spot like Similipal. They use a hilly route through Jhadpokhria for shuttling between areas in Jharkhand and Orissa, police added.

Source : Sammay, Live, Breaking News Online





Maoists blow up Forest Range Offices in Similipal, Orissa

Sunday, March 29, 2009.

In a shocking development in Orissa, armed Maoists blew up three forest range offices in Similipal Tiger Project (STP). The Maoists attacked the offices late in Saturday night, causing maximum damage. They also set two vehicles on fire. The range offices at Barhakamuda, Chahala, Dhuduruchampa were attacked by the Maoists. The Chahala Guest House was set ablaze. This is the first ever Maoist attack on a tourist spot. According to the police, some of the Maoists even robbed the tourists of money and cell phones. Security forces have been rushed to the area. Similipal has been sealed with immediate effect. The Maoist group comprised of some women, said the police. The Maoist attack in Similipal, triggered a panic situation in the area. The police have launched a massive combing operation to nab the culprits.

Source : Breaking News Online , 24/7 News Network.

Source : Maoists blow up Forest Range offices in Orissa, Sun, 29 Mar 2009, ANI,

Source : Maoists blow up Forest Range offices in Orissa, Sun, 29 Mar 2009, AndhraNews .net.

Source : Maoists blow up Forest Range offices in Orissa , Sun, 29 Mar 2009, Daily India .com.

Source : Maoists blow up Forest Range offices in Orissa, March 29th, 2009, Thaindian News.

Source : Maoists blow up three Forest Range offices in Similipal, March 30, 2009, Hindustan Times.

Source : March 29, 2009, <http://blog.taragana.com/n/maoists-blow-up-forest-range-offices-in-orissa-23138/>

Naxals Burnt Down A Tourist Lodge, Wireless Centre, Looted Tourists at Similipal

Date : 29th March, 2009.

Saturday late night more than 100 armed naxals burnt down a tourist lodge and a wireless centre inside the Shimilipal reserve forest area. They also looted several tourists who resides in the lodge.

According to the police sources on Saturday night around 1 am naxal including women Maoists striked Barahakamuda, chahala and dhuduruchampa area of Similipal. One group attacked the tourist lodge and evacuated the tourists and looted them, after they set ablaze the whole building. Another group burnt down the wireless centre of a police camp and beaten the police personals and looted the arms and ammunitions.

Source : Thaindian News.

Maoists blow up beat houses in Simlipal

Monday, March 30, 2009.

Maoists blew up two forest beat houses and attacked a range office in the Similipal reserve forests area of Mayurbhang district early this morning.

This is the first such attack on a tourist destination in Orissa, though no casualty has been reported.

According to a police source, more than a dozen rebels swooped on the Barahakamuda beat house around 1am. They used explosives, possibly crude bombs and landmines, to blow up the building. The group's second target was the Dhudruchampa beat house, some 10km from Barahakamuda.

After the twin blasts, the rebels gheraoed the Chahala range office, another few kilometers away. They ransacked the building and torched three forest department vehicles, including a jeep. The entire operation, police said, was completed in three hours.

Talking to **The Telegraph**, Mayurbhang superintendent of police P.K. Ranpise said that while Barahakamuda and Dhudruchampa beat houses remained inaccessible for tourists because of their remote locations, Chahala was frequented by adventure – seekers and often doubled up as a guesthouse. “ Though there has been no casualty, we cannot overlook the fact that a tourist destination has been attacked. It is an issue of serious concern,” he said.

Since the beat offices are located in remote pockets of Similipal, police could not confirm whether anyone was injured in the attacks. “We do not know whether any forest official – or for that mater tourist – has suffered any injury. A police team has left for the blast sites and we are awaiting details,” the SP said.

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Police said it would take some time to reach spot. "Our team is finding it hard to negotiate the hilly terrain, particularly when they know that Maoists may have planted landmines everywhere," said Jashipur inspector-in-charge Ranjit Sahu.

Similipal is a nature-lover's paradise and is known for its sprawling sanctuary and reserve forest for tigers. Adrenaline junkies swamp the forest between November and June. Police said the Maoist attack, particularly in Chahala, was likely to dampen tourist in the place.

In another incident last night, suspected Maoists shot the zilla parishad president of Malkangiri, Nanda Kumar Kartami, near Sikhpalli village and set his motorcycle on fire. Bullets were pumped into Kartami's head from close range. Police are yet to confirm whether the leader, who recently resigned from the BJP, was a victim of political rivalry or Maoist attack.

Source : The Telegraph, Calcutta India.

Source : Maoists blow up beat houses, Monday, March 30, 2009, Blog- Naxal Terror Watch.

Maoists torch forest beat office in Orissa

Tuesday, March 31, 2009

A day after unleashing terror inside Similipal Tiger Project (STP) area, Maoists set afire a forest office in the reserved forest on Monday, official sources said.

The forest office at Patabil under Barahkamuda range inside the tiger reserve was set ablaze by the ultras in the early hours, STP field director R Nagaraj Reddy said.

No harm to anybody was reported in the attack as there was no one in the office, he said.

Meanwhile, four STP staff, who were missing since the attack by Maoists on three range office buildings and guest house yesterday, have returned and all employees of the tiger Project are safe, Mr. Reddy said.

Jawans of CRPF and Special Operation Group have reached Barahkamuda, Chahala and Dhudurichampa where the armed ultras had blown up the range offices, police said.

They said the security personnel were cautiously moving inside the forests on motorcycles as some Maoists were suspected to be hiding inside dense forests.

Steps were also taken to restore the communication system thrown out of gear in the attack by Maoists on the wireless control centre on Meghasoni hill.

Source : The Hindu, News Update Service.

High –alert sounded in three Orissa districts

Tuesday, March 31, 2009

High alert has been sounded in Maoist- affected areas of Sundergarh, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj districts in Orissa in view of Wednesday's Jharkhand bandh.

Round – the – clock patrolling is on at the Orissa – Jharkhand border and other precautionary measures have been taken to ensure peace during the bandh, police said.

The bandh call has been given by the CPI (Maoist) to protest the re- arrest of their leader Bharat Mundari and his wife Premalata by Jharkhand police from their residence at Panchapoya village on Saturday night after their release from Bonai jail in Sundergarh.

Mundari, who was commander of platoon number 22 of the CPI (Maoist) group, was in Bonai jail along with his wife after their arrest on September 25, 2007.

Source : The Hindu, News Update Service.

Terrified tourists head home from Similipal

Date : 31 Mar 2009.

They had never expected Maoists to raid them during a picnic. But after there spine-chilling experience on Saturday night, around 50 tourists who had come, mostly from neighbouring West Bengal, to enjoy the weekend inside the dense jungles of Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR) on Monday went back to their homes, some beaten and bruised. Wary of the negative fallout on eco-tourism in Similipal, the authorities ordered immediate indefinite closure of the national park.

The monsoon closure of the tourism zone of STR was still two-and-half months away, but it was declared closed for visitors. "The decision to advance the closure of the tourism zone was taken following the Maoists' mayhem inside the reserve," STR's field director R Nagaraja Reddy said.

Normally, with the advent of the rainy season, the reserve remains shut for visitors from June 15 to October 31 every year.

"The tourism zone would be reopened only after normalcy is restored," an official remarked.

Official sources said thousands of tourists flock to Similipal every year to experience its rice wildlife and deep jungles. "But following the Maoist attack, the footfalls will surely drop sharply," an officer said.

While 19,848 visitors had come to Similipal in 2004-05, their number had fallen to 14,253 in 2005-06 and 13,496 in 2006-07. it had risen to 14,182 in 2007-08 and had touched 11,803 till December –end of the 2008-09 season. "We are expecting it to cross the 15,000-mark this season. But next year, tourists would be apprehensive to come," the officer added.

On Saturday evening, the ultras struck at Chahala, Upper Barahkamuda and Dhudruchampa forest establishments. At Chahala, they blasted the forest office and staff quarters and ransacked the forest rest houses. They also beat up around 25 tourists lodged there and looted their valuables. At Upper Barahkamuda and Dhudruchampa the Red rebels set afire to the forest offices.

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“Things are quiet now and investigations are on. It will take some time to ascertain the details,” Mayurbhan SP P S Ranpise told TOI. Though police officers claimed that it was very difficult to man the 2750 sq km Similipal biosphere reserve, forest staff, preferring anonymity, said Maoists had been spotted in places like Thakurmunda, Mohulidih and Kendumundi areas several times but the cops had not undertaken any activity to ward off the guerillas.

“ The extremists used to frequent the buffer area. But what is disturbing is that they have now invaded the 1150 sq km core area,” a source said. While there are 57 villages with 12,500 people in the buffer zone, the core area has four villages with over 400 residents. “The Maoists were speaking Oriya as well as the local tribal dialect.”

Source : The Times of India, Bhubaneswar.

Prized tusker of Simlipal reserve injured in Maoist attack

Date : 1 Apr, 2009.

Maoist ultras, who went on the rampage inside the Simlipal Tiger Reserve (STR) on March 28 setting afire the forest range offices and guest houses, have shot a eight-foot tall bull pachyderm ‘Mahendra’, a prized asset of the reserve.

STR field Director R Nagaraja Reddy today said Mahendra was grievously injured after it was ruthlessly shot by the Maoist activists at the Gudgudia elephant camp about 120 Km from here on last Tuesday.

The STR had purchased three pet elephants – Mahendra the majestic bull elephant, - Bhawani and Sova – female elephant from the karnatak Wildlife Division to combat poaching and smuggling.

“The Maoist showered bullets on Mahendra in a determined bid to eliminate it,” so that the poachers can make a heyday in Simlipal, sources further said.

The condition of Mahendra was yet not known due to disruption in the communication system but chances of its survival was remote an unconfirmed report said.

Mr. Reddy said, “ The disturbing news reached us when we were planning to shift the three pet elephants and their two offspring’s from the tusker camp to some other place of safety at Jashipur.” The trained bull pachyderm “Mahendra” was often being deployed at

vulnerable places of the reserve to combat poaching and timber smuggling while Bhawan’s offspring- young “Rajkumar” was used to accompany Mahendra at the time of patrolling the forest floor in Similipal. Mahendra, STR sources said, was also being deployed to contain elephant depredations when ‘problem’ elephants from the neighboring Jharkhand used to migrate to human habitations in Jashipur block of Mayurbhanj district.

Trained Mahendra used to push back its wild kins from Jharkhand to their own abode STR sources added.

Yet another unconfirmed report said that the Maoists had set ablaze the Joranda forest rest house and ransacked the Gudgudia rest house on Tuesday night.

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A shocked wildlife enthusiast Bhabagrahi Mohanty deplored the Maoists' rampage in Simlipal, one of the finest genetic treasury of the wild in the country, and urged the state government to take urgent steps to end the threats posed to Simlipal wild park. "The situation currently prevailing in Simlipal will only help the poachers and timber smugglers to reap the benefits and led to extinction of many endangered species of plants and animals in the Simlipal Biosphere Reserve (SBR)," he said.

Source : -UNI.

Source : newkerala.com

Maoists injure elephant in Similipal Tiger Reserve of Orissa

Wednesday, April 01, 2009

Maoists in another offensive opened fire on a pet elephant of Similipal Tiger Reserve injuring it critically. The elephant, Mahendra, sustained bullet injures when the Red rebels allegedly shot at him during their attack on two bungalows inside the biosphere reserve in Mayurbhanj district. The injured pachyderm was rushed to a hospital.

Properties of the bungalows were heavily damaged in the attack, sources said. Police started investigation into the incident. Security was beefed up in the area following this third consecutive attack.

It may be mentioned here that armed Maoists had blown up three forest beat houses, assaulted tourists, destroyed staff quarters, torched vehicles and wireless control rooms on Saturday night. It was said to be the first ever red strike in the Similipal Tiger Reserve. Maoists had allegedly struck against the next day by setting ablaze two forest beat houses inside Similipal.

Source : Orissadiary.com.

Orissa police seized Maoist posters houses in Similipal

Wednesday, April 01, 2009

Close on the heels of the recent attack by the Maoist ultras on the forest offices Similipal reserve forest areas, the Mayurbhanj police on Tuesday seized posters on the walls of the three forest beat houses in Similipal. According to police, the posters, written in Hindi, Oriya and English, warned the police and forest department staffs not to harass the poor and innocent tribals. They also urged the tribals to boycott the ensuing general elections. Maintaining that the police has been arresting a number of innocent tribals suspecting them to be Maoists, the posters alleged that poaching, deforestation , illegal supply of tuskers, tiger skin, timber logs and valuable forest items are taking place in collusion with some unscrupulous forest and district officials and smugglers.

We are ready to fight the government to ensure the social and economical right for the poor people and destroy the monopoly system of the government, the posters reportedly mentioned.

Source : <http://www.orissadiary.com/shownews.asp?id=11769>.

Maoists again attack Similipal

Date : 04/5/2009 6:43:32 PM

Taking advantage of the security lapse inside the Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR), the Maoists continue to strike at different locations to terrorise the tourist as well as skeletal forest staff. In the recent incident, the Red rebels struck on the two forest beat houses at Jamunia and Pithagola under Manada range late on Saturday night.

This is for the sixth time the red rebels had launched attack upon the Simlipal Tiger Reserve within the past one week. On March 28, the Maoists torched the beat houses at Barhakamuda and Dhuduruchampa. Later the ultras assaulted some tourists at Chahala guest house and on Tuesday rebels ransacked Gudugudia and Joranda beat houses. Notably, pet elephant Mahendra was injured after it was shot at by the Maoists.

They looted important documents and set afire the beat houses after ransacking it. They had had attacked the kalika Prasad gate under Jashipur range on Friday.

Due to lack of surveillance of the forest and police officials the Maoist attacks have been increasing in the area. "A massive combing operation has been launched in the protected reserve by CRPF, special operation group and Orissa police to trace the ultras. SOG Jawans along with forest employees are engaged in combing operation," B.K. Pattnaik, chief wildlife conservator said.

Keeping in view the rise in the Maoist attack in Simlipal which shares its border with West Bengal, entry of tourists into the tiger reserve has been banned for indefinite period. "Only after a prior assessment of the damage caused to the beat houses we will take a final decision regarding the entry of tourists to Simlipal," Pattnaik added.

Source : Press Trust of India.