

Ministry of Home Affairs, GOI
(CENTRAL RESERVE POLICE FORCE)

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First Ever PoP of Bastariya Battalion held in Chhattisgarh
Union Home Minister Sh Rajnath Singh Took Salute

There has been a sharp drop in the incidences of maoism and militancy in the country. While incident-wise the fall has been to the tune of about 55 percent, area-wise also naxalism and terrorism have shrunk by about 45 percent. This was revealed by Union Home Minister Sh Rajnath Singh in Ambikapur in Chhattisgarh at the historic first-ever Passing Out Parade (PoP) function of the newly raised 241 battalion of CRPF today. Taking salute of the parade of this innovative battalion, fondly called the 'Bastariya Battalion', the Minister said that the credit for such an improved situation of internal security goes to CRPF and their co-ordination with the state police. He said, it is CRPF again, which, in coordination with the Army and police, is actively engaged in battling out terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. He said that CRPF, by dint of its trade-mark valour has already earned a niche for itself in the entire country. Reminiscing the days gone by when CRPF was confined only to a few pockets in the country, Sh Singh observed that of late this Force has increased its penetration in and praise of the vast rural landmass of the country. Underlining the immense confidence that the masses repose in CRPF, Sh Singh said that people get rest assured of peace and harmony whenever CRPF intervenes.

Wishing success to the 'Bastariya' jawans, the Home Minister said that the honest youngsters of the Bastar division of Chhattisgarh do have the talent and capability to overcome challenges, whenever and wherever they arise. He said that by being fully sensitive to the innate honesty and courage of the tribal brethren of Bastar, the Government of India came out with the idea of raising this Bastariya Battalion from among the youths of Bastar area and to facilitate its creation, even relaxed some of the criteria of selection.

This historic occasion was attended among others by Dr Raman Singh, Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh, Sh Ram Sewak Paikra, Home minister of the government of Chhattisgarh, Sh Ram Bechar Netam, MP and Sh Kamal Nath, MP. Sh Rajeev Rai Bhartnagar, D.G, CRPF, Sh A.N .Upadhyaya, D.G, Chhattisgarh Police and other top officials were also present on this occasion.

Numbered 241, this new battalion of CRPF carries the moniker 'Bastariya Battalion' for the special reason that it comprises of youths, exclusively scouted from the four highly naxal infested Bijapur, Dantewada, Narayanpur and Sukma districts of Chhattisgarh. Another remarkable feature of the battalion is its adequate female representation which is in sync with the Government's policy of 33 % reservation for women.

Though the sanctioned strength of this innovative battalion is 743, in the first phase a total of 534 candidates including 189 female recruits underwent specialized training at ATC Bilaspur and ATC Ambikapur spanning over 44 long weeks. The training included guerilla warfare, camouflage, living off the land and all those tricks of the trade that involve jungle operations. These jawans now will be deployed in the SOZ of Chhattisgarh to fight the naxals alongside the normal GD Bns and CoBRA Bns of CRPF.

The 'Bastariya Battalion' that came into existence on the first of April last year, has been created to enhance local representation in CRPF's combat lay-out in the Bastar area besides providing the 'Bastariya' youths a full-proof platform for employment. CRPF walked an extra mile to provide pre-educational and physical training to the local youths through Civic Action Programmes so as to maximize their ability and eligibility for induction into the special formation.

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PRO DTE CRPF.