

Maoist strike call evokes mixed response in Bihar

A strike call by Maoists evoked mixed response in Bihar Thursday. While normal life was hit in some rural areas, urban areas were largely unaffected.

Till Thursday evening, no major incident except for a rail line being blown up was reported from across the state during the state-wide 24-hour strike that started late Wednesday night, a police official said.

The police said the strike call given by the Maoists has so far passed off peacefully except for stray incidents.

Maoists blasted a railway line near Jaimurtinagar railway station on the Sitamarhi-Raxaul section Thursday. Railway sources said the blast disrupted rail traffic on the section for several hours and traffic resumed after repairs were carried out.

State police spokesperson Anil K. Sinha told newsmen here that a red alert has been sounded and police officers were asked to keep extra vigil.

Maoists had given the strike call to protest against the arrest of senior Maoist leader Ramparvesh Baitha, who is wanted in 34 cases of violence. He was arrested from Golghar here May 9.

Official sources in the home department said the Maoist strike call evoked no response in urban areas but normal life in some rural areas, regarded as Maoist strongholds, was affected.

East Central Railway announced the cancellation or diversion of several train services passing through north Bihar including 1448 Howrah-Jabalpur Mail, and 8611/8612 Varanasi-Ranchi-Varanasi Express.

Railway stations across the state have been alerted and the railway police told to increase patrolling and deploy additional forces.

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