

Beat: Miscellaneous

Heavily-armed militants kill 8 soldiers in Indian Kashmir

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USPA News - Eight soldiers were killed Monday and several others were injured after suspected rebels attacked security forces in India-administered Kashmir, military officials said. It comes on the eve of a visit by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to the region.

The incident occurred at around 4:30 p.m. local time on Monday when rebels ambushed a convoy in Srinagar, the capital of the northern state of Jammu and Kashmir. The attackers were reported to be on board a vehicle and a motorcycle, using automatic weapons to fire at the convoy. Eight soldiers were killed in the attack, which targeted a convoy that was coming from Sonmarg and was heading towards Hyderpora in southern Kashmir. Several other people were injured in subsequent attacks that are believed to have involved the same rebels who carried out the ambush. According to military officials, two attackers on the motorcycle went on to attack a police post at Bardala Bridge with firearms and a grenade, injuring two people. The assailants then attacked a security camp at Karanagar and were finally stopped by Indian security forces at a Barzulla check post, where the rebels abandoned their motorcycle and were able to flee the area. In total, as a result of Monday's attacks, eight soldiers were killed and thirteen people were injured. A spokesperson for Hizbul Mujahideen, one of the biggest rebel groups in the region, called an Indian news agency to claim responsibility for the ambush and subsequent shootings, but the claim could not be independently verified. A guerrilla war has been going on in India-administered Kashmir between militants, who have been blamed for attacks, and the Indian troops, who have been accused of rights abuses. The Indian government says more than 45,000 people - including civilians, militants and troops - have died in the region over the past two decades.

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