

16 killed in Somalia hotel attack

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At least 16 people, including a police officer, were killed and dozens others injured after the Somali security forces ended a five-hour siege by the al-Shabab terror group at a beachside hotel in the capital city of Mogadishu, a government official said on Monday.

A member of the security forces walks past a wrecked vehicle outside the Elite Hotel in Mogadishu, Somalia.

Mogadishu: At least 16 people, including a police officer, were killed and dozens others injured after the Somali security forces ended a five-hour siege by the al-Shabab terror group at a beachside hotel in the capital city of Mogadishu, a government official said on Monday. Government spokesman Ismael Mukhtar Omar said five al-Shabab fighters were also killed by security forces after the attackers stormed the Elite Hotel in Lido Beach, reports Xinhua news agency.

"The total number of casualties at the Elite Hotel attack is 16. Five of the 16 people killed were the attackers, while one police officer was killed in the rescue operation," Omar said in a statement.

The attack also killed two senior officials from the Information and Defence Ministries.

Omar said 18 people had been injured, dismissing a report by medical charity, Aamin Ambulance which earlier said that 28 were hurt.

The government official said the Somali special forces had rescued 205 people inside the hotel including the owner, who is a lawmaker.

He said an investigation has been launched to establish how al-Shabab fighters managed to enter the fortified Elite Hotel, a recently launched upscale facility frequented by senior government officials.

The attack started on Sunday afternoon after the militants detonated a car bomb that ripped off the hotel's gates before storming inside the facility.

The Special Forces immediately arrived at the scene and undertook rescue operations.

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