

!! Continuations from Page 1 !!

Army intensifies ops...

fierce gunfight during the start of the counter-insurgency operation in Surankote forest of Poonch on October 11 and four other soldiers including another JCO lost their lives in another encounter in Nar Khas forest in Mendhar on Thursday evening after the security forces extended the cordon and search operation.

Drones and helicopters were pressed into service to assist the marching troops, which included para-commandos, in the jungle spread over nearly 8 km X 2 km area at a distance of four km from the Line of Control, the officials said.

The entire forest belt is still under tight security cordon to neutralise the terrorists, the officials said, adding the area is mountainous and the forest is dense, making the operation difficult and dangerous.

Eight suspected persons including a mother-son duo were detained for questioning from Bhatta Durrian in connection with providing logistic support to the terrorists. However, it is to be seen whether the support was given voluntarily or under duress, the officials said.

Earlier on Saturday, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Rajouri-Poonch range, Vivek Gupta said the presence of terrorists in the forest area connecting Poonch and Rajouri was observed two and a half months ago and accordingly tactical operations were launched to track them down.

"The joint security grid was tracking different groups of terrorists but sometimes operations take time, depending on the topography of the area.

"The contact with the terrorists was established on three occasions during the start of the operation, based on the intelligence inputs," the officer had said, adding the terrorists are holed up and the joint forces are on the job to take the operation to the logical conclusion.

The traffic between Mendhar and Thanamandi along the Jammu-Rajouri highway remained suspended as a precautionary measure for the fifth day on Tuesday in the wake of the ongoing operation.

Rajouri and Poonch in Jammu region have witnessed a rise in infiltration attempts since June this year, resulting in the killing of nine terrorists in separate encounters.

Works on Tawi...

Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor attended the meeting. The proposed gated barrage on river Tawi is one of the three sub-projects of the prestigious Artificial lake Project - which was conceptualized to give a boost to regional tourism in Jammu by creating recreational activities like boating and water sports, besides enhancing the overall aesthetic look of the city. The other two sub-projects, viz Tawi River Development Project and Beautification and creation of tourist facilities are to executed by Housing & Urban Development Department (H&UDD) and Tourism Department respectively.

The project was originally sanctioned in the financial year 2010-11 at a cost of Rs.70.00 crore by dovetailing funds from various sources with an aim to create pondage for creation of artificial lake. However, the project was stalled on account of contractor's inactivity for 7 years leading to cancellation of awarded tender and related cost escalation.

The Administrative Council has sanctioned the revised project which will be completed within 10 months of allotment through e-tendering at an estimated cost of Rs. 131.53 crore which includes the additional grant of Rs. 73.34 crore and already incurred expenditure of Rs. 58.19 crore.

On completion, the project will promote water recreation and sporting facilities besides boosting commercial activities around the artificial lake which in turn create employment opportunities for locals and attract tourists to Jammu city.

Govt opens up...

land under J&K Land Alienation Act Svt.1995. The decision thus fulfils the long pending demands from the civil society seeking rights for sale-purchase of the agriculture land for investment in agriculture and allied activities.

It is expected to assist in the revamping of the agriculture sector and aid economic growth to create employment in the primary sector of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir has a substantial potential for agriculture and allied sectors which usually require land upto 80 kanal. The decision allows the Deputy Commissioners to permit sale of land upto 20 kanals for agriculture and allied activities, and upto 80 kanal in case of horticulture orchards. The entire process will be completed within 30 days of making an application to this effect.

The step will provide people from non-agriculturist class with the opportunity to acquire

land for agriculture and allied activities and take up such activities as profession to systematically bring new investments in agriculture, horticulture and animal husbandry sectors.

Govt sanctions ad...

ceiling whichever is lower," the Department of Expenditure said. To calculate ad hoc bonus for one day, the average emoluments in a year will be divided by 30.4 (average number of days in a month).

This will, thereafter, be multiplied by the number of days of bonus granted. Giving an illustration, the memorandum said given the calculation ceiling of monthly emoluments of Rs 7,000 (where actual average emoluments exceed Rs 7,000), the non-productivity linked bonus or ad-hoc bonus for 30 days would work out to be Rs 6,908.

It also clarified that in case of employees who resigned, retired from service or expired before March 31, 2021, the ad hoc bonus would be paid only to those who superannuated or retired on medical grounds or died before March 31, 2021, but after completing at least six months regular service during the year:

Migrant workers fleeing...

a cricket bat. Like him, scores of migrant labourers and their families have fled the Valley, saying they have experienced "hell" in the last couple of weeks after terrorists carried out targeted killings of 11 non-locals.

Many said they may not ever come back to Kashmir after the ordeal. Ajay Kumar of Besangoan, Bihar, who fled along with his wife Sarita and two kids from a brick kiln at Pulwama in South Kashmir and reached Jammu railway station, wept bitterly saying his employer refused to pay Rs 27,000 of pending wages.

Several others had the same complaint and appealed to authorities to intervene. "I am very unhappy leaving the valley. This has become hell. We come here to earn for our families not to get killed on streets," said Chintu Singh, who had been working for four-five months every year in the Valley for over a decade now.

"I brought this gift (cricket bat) from Kashmir for a friend's children. It is the last gift from Kashmir: I will not come to Kashmir again to earn livelihood. The situation is very bad due to fear and terror there (as result of killings)", said Singh, who fled along with a group of 20 Hindu labourers working in a brick kiln in Pulwama district.

While some labourers said that their wages were paid, there were others who complained that they were driven out by employers in the valley forcibly without their wages.

"We had no money. I along with my wife and two children got some money from others and left the valley. The owner forced us out without paying us the remaining wages", said Ajay Kumar and showed a diary with his wage bill.

Like him, Ram Sharan and Santosh Kumar of Bihar, and Rakesh Dass and Alok Chand Darna (Chattisgarh) also complained about non-payment of wages and urged authorities to facilitate the transfer of their wages from their employers in Kashmir valley.

Chunni Devi from Jharkhand, who reached Jammu railway station in a Tata Sumo vehicle from Kashmir along with her husband and children, said, "We came to Kashmir after getting to know it is paradise of earth. But it is not paradise. It is hell.

"They have shown us pictures of hell. They killed innocent Hindu labourers. We will never come to Kashmir to work again".

She said that they were living in constant fear after the killings. "Our parents and family in Jharkhand were also anxious for our safety. Now we are in Jammu. There is no fear. We will go to Punjab, Haryana or Delhi to earn our livelihood, but not Kashmir," she said.

The labourers complained they received little help from the administration and the police.

"Our employer told us (30 labourers) to leave for our home. He told us to go to the police. We spent these days in trauma due to the fear of killings. No one helped us", Mohammad Jabaar of Bihar said.

J&K on path...

bearing fruit and investors from rest of the country and abroad are eager to invest in the UT.

Concluding his two day visit to Pahalgal, as part of the public outreach programme of the Central government, the Union minister thanked the people of Kashmir for their participation in the development process and appreciated their dedication towards promotion of tourist activity.

The Union minister inaugurated tourist hut of Pahalgal Development Authority at Golf Course Pahalgal.

Goyal also inaugurated Forest Departments Deodar sapling plantation drive being conducted under the banner of Green JK Drive. A total of 1 lakh saplings will be planted as part of the drive. Enquiring about post plantation care for the saplings, the minister was apprised that fencing and other appropriate watch and ward measures are taken.

The minister discussed developments in the tourism landscape and was happy to observe that there is brisk tourist activity in Pahalgal. He highlighted the need to up the tourist infrastructure to attract more foreign tourists.

The union minister inaugurated 250mm Seer Water supply scheme. The project will benefit around 10000 people and will be completed under the ambit of Jal Jeevan Mission within three months. He appreciated the rapid pace of developmental works and commended the frontline workers for working towards realizing the Prime Minister's dream of tap water for all households.

Goyal also visited Rahi Shawl Unit located at Akad Park. He interacted with the local artisans and examined various handicrafts like Zari, Sozni, tapestry, etc. The minister appreciated the intricate work being put up by the artisans.

He said that handicrafts of Kashmir tell a symbolic story and the govt is committed to ensure this story reaches all parts of the world.

The Union Minister also visited the Sun temple at Martand. Located atop a hillock, the temple is one of the earliest known sun temples much older than Konark and Modhera.

While appreciating the historical significance of the place, the minister passed directions to the district administration to give wide publicity to the temple and bring it on the tourist map. He also underlined the need to bring other such lesser known historical places on the tourist map.

Principal Secretary, Commerce and Industries, DC Anantnag and other officials of the district administration were present on the occasion.

Prominent NC leader...

the cause of Jammu, I support his cause unequivocally.

"Now that Rana has dissociated himself from the National Conference for the sake of Jammu, I cannot continue in the party and extend my support to Rana," he said in a statement here.

Rana, the younger brother of Union minister Jitendra Singh, quit the NC on October 10, along with senior party colleague and former minister S S Slatia. Both of them joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Delhi the next day.

Rana was the provincial president of the NC.

Aziz said he will "stand like a rock behind Rana" as his contribution to the cause of Jammu has been an inspiration for him to work for people. Rana had taken over as the NC's provincial president in 2011 after relinquishing his office as the political advisor to the then Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Omar Abdullah.

CS chairs meeting...

directed DMRRR to formulate the guidelines, in this regard in consultation with the Health & Medical Education Department.

It was informed that so far 4,176 people have died due to COVID-19 and the relief will be disbursed in favour of the families through a transparent verification process via aadhar linked direct benefit transfer (DBT). Further, the Committee reviewed the status of utilization of funds that were earlier released to Divisional and District Commissioners for COVID management as well as SIDCO for establishing a COVID helpline. The Disaster Management Department was asked to obtain utilization certificates for the same and conduct audit of the concerned accounts. The State Executive Committee authorized DMRRR to assess the division-wise requirements of snow clearance machinery including snow ploughs and cutters for their subsequent procurement. DMRRR was also asked to technically vet the specifications of snow clearance machinery as per the latest technological sophistication and efficiency.

Govt failed on...

is aware of what is happening in Kashmir and is scared. The situation in Kashmir is getting worse, but the government seems oblivious of it," the party said. "The situation in Jammu and Kashmir is getting worse with every passing day and both Kashmir and Kashmiriyat are in danger. No one knows where the BJP, which has been doing politics in the name of Kashmir for years, is missing nowadays," it said on its Twitter handle. Thousands of migrant workers have fled Kashmir along with their families, while more were leaving the Valley following targeted killing of non-locals by militants in recent weeks.

Question of survival stares at migrant workers' families

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR/SAHARANPUR: How to make both ends meet? That is the question haunting Jehangir Ansari, a small-time carpenter in Saharanpur whose father was shot dead by terrorists in Kashmir, leaving him grappling with grief and also an uncertain, bleak future with few work prospects.

Sageer Ansari was gunned down on Saturday in south Kashmir's Litter village where he had been working as a carpenter for the last couple of years, one in the spate of targeted civilian killings in the Valley that has triggered an exodus of migrant labourers who are queuing up outside bus and train stations to return home.

"Together with Abba (father), we used to run the household. Now I am wondering what to do as there is not much work over here and I can't think of taking up his job over there (Kashmir)," Jehangir told PTI over the phone from Saharanpur.

Naseem, Sageer Ansari's younger brother, said they received a call asking them to collect the body.

"We received a call that Sageer bhai is no more, and we were asked to collect his body from Jammu. We left that very moment and did the needful, and brought his body home," he said.

He made it clear that the body was brought from Jammu to Saharanpur in Uttar Pradesh by the family as the Jammu and Kashmir administration had not made any arrangements to send it.

"Together with my father, we used to manage an income of around Rs 15,000 per month, but now after his death, I have no idea how to pull the family together," said Jehangir, who himself is married and has a small daughter.

Recalling his conversation with his father, he said Sageer was very happy working in Kashmir and often praised his employer who used his services for manufacturing bats and other wooden items.

However, the death of Sageer in Pulwama on October 16 and then two more non-locals -- Raja Reshi Dev and Joginder Rishi Dev -- in adjacent Kulgam on October 17 triggered a panic reaction among labourers from other states working in the volatile south Kashmir region.

The non-locals, engaged in apple orchards, and cardboard and bat factories, used to spend around six months in the Valley before returning home, an official said.

Another official from the security establishment claimed that around 600 people from south Kashmir have already moved towards safer places.

"Killing an unknown person creates more fear psychosis than killing a known individual, and I am afraid that the terrorists may have achieved that," the official, who chose to remain anonymous, said.

Sooraj, a resident of Bihar working at a garment shop here, has already packed his bags and is leaving the Valley soon. "I have no idea as I used to earn my livelihood from the shop and my owner was also nice. However, now I am stepping into a bleak future ahead of me," he said.

Javed, who is from Hapur in Ghaziabad and works at a salon here, is also planning to leave. "Fear is in the air. My owner takes care of me but he can't be with me 24 hours. My other friends working elsewhere have already moved out of the Valley. Unfortunately, I have to start something afresh," he added.

India, EU discuss steps to operationalise decision to resume negotiations for trade pact

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: India and the European Union on Tuesday discussed steps to operationalise the decision of their leaders to resume negotiations for a trade agreement and also launch talks for a stand-alone investment protection pact.

At a meeting of the third India-EU Strategic Partnership Review in Brussels, the two sides also discussed the launching of negotiations on a separate agreement on geographical indications, the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement.

India and the EU also exchanged views concerning best ways to join forces in

tackling the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on economies, societies as well as individuals.

Following the India-EU Leaders' Meeting of May 8, 2021, which set a clear path for further deepening ties between India and the EU, the meeting allowed for a comprehensive review of the strategic India-EU partnership, guided by the 'India-EU Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025', the MEA said.

The discussions focused notably on cooperation in addressing the challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, and contributing to the success of the upcoming Climate

COP26, it said.

India and the EU also discussed next steps to operationalise the decision of Indian and EU Leaders to resume negotiations for a "balanced, ambitious, comprehensive and mutually beneficial trade agreement", the MEA said.

They discussed launching negotiations on a stand-alone investment protection agreement and on a separate agreement on geographical indications, it said.

The two sides also discussed the next steps on the implementation of the India-EU Connectivity Partnership which was agreed at the May 2021 Leaders' Meeting.

CRIMEREPORT

Drug peddler nabbed with contraband

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

GANDERBAL: Continuing its efforts to eradicate menace of drugs from the society, Police has arrested a drug peddler in Ganderbal area and recovered psychotropic substance from his possession.

As per details, a party from Police Station Ganderbal at a checkpoint established at Beehama Ganderbal intercepted a person, who tried to escape from the spot but alert police party apprehended him tactfully. Identified as Irshad Ahmad Mir, son of Ali Mohd Mir, resident of Saloor, 96 tablets of banned drugs were recovered from his possession by Police. He was arrested and shifted to police station where he remained in custody. Accordingly, FIR No. 203/2021 under relevant sections of law was registered at Police Station Ganderbal and investigation started.

Woman among 3 of family arrested with heroin, cash

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Three members of a family, including a woman, were arrested for smuggling drugs in Jammu and cash amounting to Rs 1.6 lakh was recovered from them. As per details, a police team stopped a man, his father and mother at a checkpoint near Chorli Kothey in Bishnah belt. They were signaled to stop for checking but on seeing Police, they tried to flee, which created suspicion among police party, prompting them to chase and overpower them swiftly, a police official said.

On their search, 30 gm heroin and cash amounting to Rs 1.6 lakh was recovered, he said, adding that accused were identified as Sunny Kumar, his father, Baldev Raj, son of Kalu Ram and mother, Bholi Devi, residents of Kothey Chorli village. FIR No. 155/2021 under sections 8/21/22/27 of NDPS Act was registered against them at Police Station Bishnah. According to police, Kumar is already involved in 16 FIRs regarding various crimes and was evading arrest in FIR No.97/2021 under sections 341/323/34 of IPC registered at Police Station Bishnah. Both son-father are notorious criminals and were earlier detained under Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act (PSA). The overall recoveries and arrests were made by Joginder Singh Chib, SHO Bishnah and assisted by PSI Harish Chander under supervision of Shabir Khan SDPO R S Pura and Ramnish Gupta SP Hqrs, Jammu.

Two thieves nabbed; stolen goods worth Rs 4 lakh, cash recovered

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Police has solved two theft cases by arresting two thieves in Gangyal area on Tuesday and recovered stolen goods worth Rs 4 lakh and Rs 30,000 cash from their possession.

As per details, a written complaint was lodged at Police Station Gangyal by one Uttam Dass, resident of Baba Fareed Nagar, Sehora regarding theft of gold ornaments from his house. Another complaint was lodged by Surinder Singh, son of Gurmukh Singh, resident of Sehora, Kunjwani who also reported theft of some valuable items from his house. On this two FIRs vide No 147/2021 under sections 454/380 of IPC and 154/2021 under sections 457/380 of IPC were registered and investigation started. Special police teams under supervision of SDPO South P K Mengi were constituted and a team led by SHO Police Station Gangyal Insp Pardeep Kumar Sharma assisted by PSI Amit Roshan, PSI Sanjeev Sharma and PSI Iahtashm-ul-Haq after strenuous efforts and with help of CCTV footages of the area, rounded up two suspects, namely Tushar Sharma, son of Kamal Sharma, resident of Shanti Nagar, Kunjwani and Iqvinder Singh, son of Manjeet Singh, resident of Shiv Nagar Jogi Mohalla, Bandhurakh. On sustained questioning, both accused confessed their involvement in the crime and on their disclosure stolen items were recovered from their possession, which included cash amounting to Rs 30,000, gold items

worth Rs 2,00,000 and other valuable items worth Rs 2,00,000 approximately. The overall operation was done under supervision of SP South Deepak Digra. Further investigation of the case is going on.

PCPG meeting held at PS Kanachak

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: SDPO Domana Sunil Singh conducted a police public meeting at Police Station Kanachak Jammu, which was attended by a number of locals including Numberdars, Sarpanchs, BDCs and Chowkidars.

During the meeting, a threadbare discussion took place about eradication of drug-menace and other social crimes. SDPO Domana Sunil Singh asked participants to maintain social distancing and wear facemasks during travelling besides following other COVID SoPs.

On the occasion, locals also highlighted a number of issues seeking immediate redressal. SDPO Domana Sunil Singh flanked by SHO Kanachak Insp Vishav Pratap Singh gave a patient hearing to participants and assured for fulfilling all genuine demands in the shortest possible time. They further encouraged to people to share information related to anti-social activities with Police for making the area crime free. The meeting culminated with formal vote of thanks by SHO Kanachak Insp Vishav Pratap Singh.

Missing minor recovered from Amritsar, reunited with family

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SAMBA: Police recovered a missing minor from Amritsar and reunited him with family members on Tuesday.

As per details, on October 18, one Gurvinder Singh, wife of Mukhtiar Singh, resident of Chak Bana village lodged a complaint with Police regarding missing of his 14-yr old son Sahibpreet Singh under suspicious circumstances. On this, a special team of Police Station Ramgarh was constituted to trace out the missing boy. After strenuous efforts and detailed scrutiny of the CCTV footages taken from various places, it came to fore that the minor boy has crossed Lakhnapur and entered Punjab. Subsequently, the information was shared with Punjab Police, which informed regarding the presence of minor boy at Harmandir Sahib Gurdwara in Amritsar. Accordingly, a special team from Ramgarh Police Station was deputed to bring the minor boy back, who was reunited with the family after completion of all legal formalities.

Youth killed, another injured in mishap

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

POONCH: A youth died while his brother got seriously injured in a road accident in Poonch on Tuesday.

As per details, Sukhwinder Singh, son of Charan Singh, resident of Dara Dulia was going on a motorcycle with his brother, Manjit Singh. On reaching near Idgah, the rider lost his balance resulting in an accident. Both the brothers were immediately taken to hospital for treatment, but Sukhwinder failed to respond and died during treatment while his younger brother is presently under treatment. A case has been registered in this regard.

Purse snatched from woman

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

DOMANA: Some unidentified youth snatched a purse from a woman in Domana area on Tuesday. As per details, some bike-borne unidentified youth snatched a purse from a woman, who was out for a walk in evening. After the incident, the woman raised an alarm for help but by then the snatchers had ran away. Later, the matter was reported to the Police, which has registered a case and started investigation.

Two arrested with firecrackers

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Police arrested two persons in Jammu who were trying to smuggle firecrackers in their car without any permission.

As per details, during checking of vehicles at a Naka, a car was intercepted. On search, a large quantity of firecrackers was found from the car, without any valid permission or permit. Both the accused, identified as Sanjay Singh and Saurab Dubey, were arrested and further legal action in the matter has been initiated.