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4 soldiers martyred...

neutralised. He said "three army men were also martyred in the gun fight". Giving details, Defence spokesman at Jammu Lt Col Devender Anand said alert sentries of the Army post at Parghal in Rajouri district in the Jammu region, about 185 km from Jammu city, detected suspicious persons approaching their post taking advantage of the inclement weather and dense foliage.

He said the sentries challenged the two terrorists who lobbed grenades while attempting to gain entry inside the post. However, alert troops cordoned the area and engaged them in a firefight, he added.

Anand said in the ensuing gunfight, the two terrorists were neutralised.

Six soldiers of the Army were injured in the operation and of them, three succumbed to injuries while repulsing the suicide attack, he added.

The martyred Army personnel were identified as Subedar Rajendra Prasad (of Maligoven village in Rajasthan's Jhunjhunu district), Rifleman Lakshmanan D (of T Pudupatti village in Madurai district of Tamil Nadu) and Rifleman Manoj Kumar (of Shahjahanpur village in Haryana's Faridabad), Anand said. Later, Rifleman Nishant Malik who was injured while bravely fighting and eliminating terrorists succumbed to injuries.

"The Indian Army salutes the bravehearts for their supreme sacrifice in the line of duty, upholding the highest tradition of the force. The nation will always remain indebted to them for their supreme sacrifice and devotion to duty," he added.

According to eyewitnesses, the first gunshot was heard around 2 am when the terrorists attempted to breach the external fence of the army camp.

The attack marks the return of 'fidayeen' to the Union territory of J and K after more than three years. The last such strike took place on February 14, 2019 at Lethpora in Pulwama district of south Kashmir, in which 40 CRPF personnel were martyred.

There was an intelligence input about the presence of terrorists from the JeM in the region and police and other security agencies were carrying out operations in various parts of the district, police said.

Security forces and the police had been put on alert following intelligence inputs on suspected movement of terrorists in the Rajouri belt, prompting them to launch a combing operation in Darhal and Nowshera belt on Wednesday.

"Terrorists came close to 7-feet high fencing wall of the 11 Raj Rifles camp and hurled a grenade on a sentry post," Senior Superintendent of Police (Rajouri) Mohammad Aslam said. Due to the grenade blast, one sentry personnel died on the spot, he said.

He said the police had inputs about the movement of terrorists and a cordon and search operation was going on since yesterday. There were also inputs regarding such movements in Thanamandi, Kandi Bhudal and border areas too.

Asked whether the pattern of terrorists to engineer a 'fidayeen' attack was similar to the Uri strike, Aslam said 'fidayeen' are meant to cause major casualties. In 2016, 4 JeM terrorists attacked a brigade headquarters of the Army near the Line of Control (LoC) in Uri martyring 19 soldiers.

"They wanted to do it here too. But troops bravely fought and neutralised and did not allow them to reach the barracks. They were neutralised before reaching these places."

Aslam said the intruders appear to be foreign terrorists but investigations will give further leads.

"After investigations, we can also say whether the attack was carried out by a recently infiltrated group of terrorists."

"We cannot rule out the presence of other terrorists in Rajouri. We are exercising alertness. Cordon and search operations are going on in the areas," he said.

JeM terrorists had earlier unsuccessfully attempted to carry out a 'fidayeen' attack on April 22 in Jammu when Prime Minister Narendra Modi was scheduled to be in town. However, the two terrorists were killed in a chance encounter with the CISF near the Sunjawan Army camp. An officer of the paramilitary force was also killed.

An Army spokesperson tweeted that Army chief General Manoj Pande and all ranks "salute the supreme sacrifice" of three soldiers who laid down their lives in the line of duty in Rajouri and offer deepest condolences to the bereaved families.

J and K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha condemned the attack and vowed to deal with terrorists and their supporters in a befitting manner.

"We shall deal with evil designs of terrorists and their backers in a befitting manner," he said in a tweet.

Former J and K chief minister Omar Abdullah offered his condolences and said "very sorry to hear about the death in the line of duty of three soldiers following a terror attack in Rajouri."

Senior BJP leader Davinder Singh Rana expressed his anguish and tweeted, "I salute the bravehearts the martyred soldiers who laid their lives for the Nation. Pakistan a crumbling nation is desperate and is using regulars to create disharmony in J&K but will never succeed".

On May 8, a terrorist was killed as the Army foiled an infiltration bid along the LoC in the Laam area of Rajouri district. There were several blasts in Rajouri district in April and May.

Police had busted two modules of the LeT instrumental in carrying out terror acts

and ferrying drone-dropped weapons from Pakistan to the Kashmir valley. They arrested five members of two terror modules.

Jagdeep Dhankhar takes...

president M Hamid Ansari, and Union ministers Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, Nirmala Sitharaman and Nitin Gadkari were among the dignitaries present on the occasion.

In the morning, Dhankhar paid tributes at Raj Ghat, the memorial of Mahatma Gandhi. "Felt blessed, inspired and motivated to be ever in service of Bharat in serene sublimity of Raj Ghat while paying respects to pujya Bapu," he tweeted then.

Once a "reluctant politician", Dhankhar's reemergence in the political scene in 2019 as West Bengal governor surprised many, so has his rise to the office of the Vice President of India.

Dhankhar was declared elected as the Vice President on Saturday after he bagged 528 votes against his rival candidate Margaret Alva's 182.

A man of many interests, his long legal career at the Rajasthan High Court and the Supreme Court and a brief stint as the junior parliamentary affairs minister at the Centre will come in handy as he presides over Rajya Sabha as its chairman.

Dhankhar, who had been associated with the Janata Dal and the Congress, joined the BJP only in 2008 after a hiatus of nearly a decade.

He has championed issues related to Other Backward Classes, including the grant of OBC status to the Jat community in Rajasthan.

While his surprise appointment as the West Bengal governor in 2019 brought him back to the political limelight, he did not shy away from the hurly-burly of politics and was caught in frequent run-ins with the state's ruling Trinamool Congress.

The BJP described Dhankhar as a "kisan putra" while announcing his candidature for the vice presidential election, a move seen in political circles as aimed at reaching out to the politically significant Jat community which had participated in huge numbers in the year-long farmers' protests on the borders of the national capital against agriculture reform measures unveiled in June 2020.

Dhankhar, who took to cricket in his school days and also had keen interest in spirituality and meditation, began his political journey with the Janata Dal and won the Lok Sabha elections in 1989, held under the shadow of the Bofors scandal, from Jhunjhunu in Rajasthan. He had a brief stint as the minister of state for parliamentary affairs under Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar.

In his initial journey as a politician, Dhankhar was influenced by Devi Lal and later, shifted to the Congress during the tenure of Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao.

After hanging his boots as an MLA, Dhankhar focused on his legal career, practising as a lawyer in the Supreme Court. He also had a three-year stint as a member of the International Court of Arbitration in Paris.

BJP president J P Nadda described Dhankhar as a first-generation lawyer fully equipped in administrative capacity. Dhankhar is also known to have warm ties with leaders across party lines, a quality that would come handy as he presides over Rajya Sabha.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said Dhankhar had excellent knowledge of the Constitution and was well-versed with legislative affairs.

"I am sure that he will be an outstanding Chair in Rajya Sabha and guide the proceedings of the House with the aim of furthering national progress," the prime minister said on July 16.

Now, the presiding officers of both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha are from Rajasthan, among the only two states currently ruled by Congress governments. Both would go to polls next year.

Dhankhar was born on May 18, 1951 in Kithana village of Jhunjhunu district, Rajasthan. He did his primary schooling in the village and later, joined the Sainik School, Chittorgarh, on a full scholarship.

After graduating from Sainik School, he joined the Maharaja's College, Jaipur, in the B.Sc (Honours) Physics course, according to his biography on the West Bengal Raj Bhavan website.

He is also known as an avid reader and a sports aficionado and has been the president of the Rajasthan Olympic Association, and the Rajasthan Tennis Association.

He is married to Sudesh Dhankhar and they have a daughter.

Naidu, meanwhile, will be leaving for Hyderabad on Thursday as the 1, Thyagraj Marg residence allotted to him as a former vice president is not yet ready, officials said.

Govt abolishes oral...

basis of Written Test only. The decision shall ensure that selections are objectively fair and merit based, and it paves the way for advertisement of more than 1000 posts including 855 posts of Junior Engineer (Civil) which shall be filled up on a fast-track basis through the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board.

Further, the Lieutenant Governor has also directed the identification of posts of similar nature which can be considered for exclusion from the requirement of Oral Test/Interview, for which the process has also been initiated by the General Administration Department.

New era ushered...

development, ushered in a new era for young men and women to realise their

dreams and aspirations," the Lt Governor said.

The participation in the national anthem singing competition across J-K and 8,000 school children displaying the national flag under 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign in the Tral area of Pulwama is the true reflection of the new J-K, he said.

With the determined efforts of the administration and the active contribution of the common people, we will make J-K the most developed and top performer UT in the country, Sinha said.

Paying tributes to Mookerjee, the LG said sacrificed his life for a united and modern India. Let us strive to become his worthy heirs, he added.

The Lt Governor termed Dr. Mookerjee's political life guided by spirituality and determination to uplift the downtrodden of society. His slogan of 'Ek Vidhan, Ek Nishan, Ek Pradhan' gave a new vision, a new awakening, a new inspiration to the people for a united and modern India, added the Lt Governor.

A towering man of ideas and ideals, Dr. Mookerjee laid the foundation for the industrial development of the country by setting up three most significant Industrial undertakings, and formulated policies which prepared the ground for future, observed the Lt Governor.

In order to make the country self-sufficient in essential goods including defence, Dr. Mookerjee encouraged private investment, supported private enterprises with suitable administrative regulations for speedy industrialization, he added.

The Lt Governor recalled the indispensable contributions of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee for the complete integration of Jammu and Kashmir with India.

On the occasion, the Lt Governor paid floral tributes to freedom fighters and honored the family members of the bravehearts of J-K Police and security forces who have made supreme sacrifices in the service of the nation.

The Lt Governor also hoisted a 100 feet high Tricolour and appealed the people to participate in 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign, bring home the national flag with honour and pride.

Col Mahan Singh, DDC Chairman, Kathua; Ragunandan Singh, Vice Chairman DDC Kathua and Naresh Sharma, President Municipal Council Kathua paid homage to the martyrs of the security forces.

Kathua is the land of bravehearts and martyrs, and our Youth is steadfast for the service of the nation, said Chairman DDC Kathua.

Rahul Pandey, Deputy Commissioner Kathua delivered the welcome address.

Mukesh Singh, ADGP Jammu; Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Vivek Gupta DIG, besides senior officials were present on the occasion.

Rajiv Jasrotia, former Minister; former Legislators; PRI & ULB members, and people from all walks of life were also present.

J&K Govt constitutes...

Health Agency, J&K shall provide the necessary service, as required by the committee," it added.

Meanwhile five doctors accused of referring patients from public hospitals to private hospitals for availing benefits under AB-PMJAY and SEHAT schemes have been banned from doing any private practice in the UT of J&K with immediate effect.

"Pending enquiry into the allegations, regarding the issue related to the referral of patients from Public Hospitals to Private Hospitals for availing treatment /benefits under AB-PMJAY & SEHAT Schemes, by the Committee constituted vide Government order No 610-JK(HME) of 2022 dated August 11, 2022, five doctors are banned from doing any private practice in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, with immediate effect," reads a separate order issued by Manoj Kumar Dwivedi.

As per order the doctors who have been banned from any private practice include Dr. Tufail Ahmad Lone posted at SDH Patti, Dr. Noorudin Shah PCR Srinagar; Dr. Mudasir Shahdar SDH Magam, Dr. Farooq Ahmad SDH Tangmarg and Dr. Ishfaq Ahmad Parrah PHC Hajin.

Four AAOs, three...

Pandita, I/C AAO (PM Package) under orders of posting to ARI, Trainings and Grievances Department as I/C AAO, Tribal Affairs Department in Civil Secretariat Srinagar; Imtiyaz Ahmad Sheikh, AAO, J&K Service Selection Board as AAO, Assistant Commissioner Development Pulwama; and Vagish Kumar, AAO, Local Fund Audit & Pensions, Jammu as AAO, J&K Service Selection Board.

As per another order issued by Vivek Bharadwaj, Financial Commissioner, (Additional Chief Secretary), Finance Department, Rahul Mahajan, AO, Directorate of Tourism Jammu has been posted as AO, Service Selection Board, J&K.

Mehak Gupta, AO, Relief Organization (Migrant) Jammu shall hold the charge of AO, Directorate of Tourism Jammu in addition to her own duties till further orders.

Sanjay Gupta, I/C AO, Service Selection Board, J&K with additional charge of Directorate of Tribal Affairs J&K has been posted as I/C AO, Directorate General of Funds Organization, J&K. He shall continue to hold the charge of AO Directorate of Tribal Affairs, J&K in addition to his own duties till further orders.

Trauma Care Center Hospital

Ghagwal gets Jan Aushadhi Kendra



DDC Suresh Kumar (Falli) and BDC Chairman Vijay Tagotra inaugurating the centre.

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Police on Thursday nabbed a shopkeeper and recovered 10 rolls of banned synthetic thread (Manja) from his possession.

As per details, information was received at Police Station Pacca Danga regarding sale of banned synthetic thread.

On this, a team of Police Station Pacca Danga under supervision of SDPO North Sharad Kallu

led by SHO Pacca Danga

Insp. Raghubir Singh

assisted by Incharge Police Post Rehari

SI Ahmed Din

raided at a suspected

location and during

search, recovered 10

bundles of Chinese Manja (Gattu)

from possession of one

Ashish Nair, son of Battu Nair,

resident of R S Pura, at

present Resham Ghar Colony, Jammu. He was arrested and

FIR No. 96/2022 under section 188 of IPC was registered at Police Station Pacca Danga.

Shopkeeper nabbed with 10 rolls of banned synthetic thread

STATE TIMES NEWS

SAMBAL: DDC Suresh Kumar (Falli) and BDC Chairman Vijay Tagotra

on Thursday inaugurated Jan Aushadhi Kendra at Trauma Care Hospital, Ghagwal in Samba district. Speaking on the occasion DDC Suresh Kumar Falli said he would ensure that the doctors posted in the hospital would recommend same medicines available in the Jan Aushadhi Kendra for the patient which would benefit the patients financially.

J&K records 637 new COVID cases, Ladakh 12

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir recorded 637 fresh Covid cases on Thursday that pushed its tally to 4,72,011, officials said.

The Union territory also reported one fresh death due to coronavirus, they said.

Of the new cases, 112 were reported from the Jammu division and 525 cases from the Kashmir Valley, the officials said.

The death toll due to the viral disease has reached 4,777, they said. There are 4,893 active cases in the union territory, while the number of recoveries has reached 4,62,341, the officials said.

Meanwhile, Ladakh has reported 12 fresh coronavirus cases, raising the tally to 29,038, officials said.

All the positive cases were detected in Leh district.

So far, 228 people