

## 20 men in Pak uniform intrude about half km inside Indian territory

# 5 Army jawans killed, one injured in BAT attack on LoC in Poonch

**Army chief to visit Poonch, DGMOs to speak today**

Sanjeev Pargal

JAMMU, Aug 6: In second major attack on Army this year, a Border Action Team (BAT) reportedly comprising members of different militant outfits mainly Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) and Pakistan Army jawans, ambushed an Indian Army patrol in Sarla battalion area at Chakan-Da-Bagh sub sector, about 10 kilometers from Poonch at 1 am today killing five soldiers and injuring another.

The BAT, which carried out the attack in Pakistan Army uniform after intruding about half a kilometer inside the Indian territory, returned to their camp at Gurand in Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) from where they had set in for the attack with active connivance of 801 Mujahid Regiment of Pakistan. In all,



Coffins carrying bodies of five Army jawans at Poonch Brigade Headquarters on Tuesday. (Another pic on page 6)

about 20 members of the BAT were involved in the attack. Army chief Gen Bikram Singh, who monitored the situa-

**Cross-LoC trade/travel suspended for 2 weeks**

Line of Control (LoC) and devise a strategy to give effective response to Pakistan following outrage over the attack all across the country including

**Such incidents won't improve relations: Omar**

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Aug 6: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today said the killing of five Indian soldiers along the LoC in Poonch sector puts a question mark on Pakistan government's overtures to India for improving ties.

"(I) was briefed early this (Contd on page 6 Col 2)

Jammu and Kashmir.

Cross-LoC trade and travel on Poonch-Rawalakote and Uri-Muzaffarabad road between (Contd on page 6 Col 1)

## Wide spread condemnation of killings

# LoC attack by terrorists: Antony

**\* DM giving escape route to Pak: MPs**

NEW DELHI, Aug 6:

Government today said the killing of five Indian soldiers on the Line of Control was carried out by "terrorists along with persons dressed in Pakistan Army uniform", triggering strong reactions from political parties which said it amounted to giving "escape route" to Pakistan.

Members cutting across party lines expressed anger in Parliament over this morning's incident, prompting Defence Minister A K Antony to assert that India will take "necessary steps" to uphold the sanctity of the LoC and give a response which will be based on "signals" and "actions" by Pakistan.

Most of the political parties, including BJP, Left, SP, JD(U), Shiv Sena and BSP in both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha demanded a "befitting reply" to Pakistan over the provocative act in Poonch sector of Jammu and Kashmir.

There were also demands that Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh should not meet his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif in New York next month on the sidelines of UN

General Assembly as is planned. Making suo motu statement in both the Houses, Antony said the attack was carried out on the Indian side of the LoC.

An Indian Army patrol, comprising one Non-Commissioned Officer and five other ranks, was "ambushed on our side" of the LoC in Poonch sector of Jammu and Kashmir, he said.

"The ambush was carried out by approximately 20 heavily-armed terrorists along with persons dressed in Pakistan Army uniform," he said.

"In the ensuing firefight, five Indian soldiers were martyred and one soldier was injured," he said.

Strongly condemning the "unprovoked incident", Antony said, "I assure the House that our Army is fully ready to take all necessary steps to uphold the sanctity of LoC."

He said the "morale of armed forces is very high" and they are capable of handling the situation.

His remarks about involvement of terrorists in the attack triggered angry reactions by political parties, which said it amounted to giving an "escape

route" to Pakistan which already claims that its Army is not responsible.

However, Antony stuck to his version, saying "my statement is based on confirmed reports received till the time I made the statement...At this stage we don't want to jump to any conclusion."

India has lodged a strong protest with the Pakistan Government through diplomatic channels, Antony said, adding Government conveys its condolences to the families of the martyrs who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty.

Replying to demands for retaliation, he said, "India is a responsible country" and a unity among political parties would be the "strongest answer to our enemies".

He said the capabilities of the armed forces are being strengthened and their morale is very high.

His statement came after anger being expressed by parties with some like BJP and Samajwadi Party questioning as to why the Government was feeling "completely helpless" in the face of repeated aggression (Contd on page 6 Col 5)

## Feedback taken from Army, ITBP, Hill Council, admn

# NSAB team in Ladakh to assess situation in view of Chinese skirmishes

Mohinder Verma

JAMMU, Aug 6: In the backdrop of ever-increasing Chinese skirmishes on the Line of Actual Control (LAC), a team of National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) headed by its Chairman and former Foreign Secretary, Shyam Saran, is in Ladakh to ascertain the ground situation. On return, the team will give detailed feedback to the Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh and National Security Council for working out a strategy to check the incursions in future.

Reliable sources told

EXCELSIOR that taking serious note of frequent Chinese skirmishes along the Line of Actual Control in Leh district during the past few months, Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh has deputed National Security Advisory Board team to visit the border areas of the Ladakh region and personally take stock of the ground situation.

The team, which arrived at Leh on August 2, has so far visited the Daulat Beg Oldi sector, Demchok in south of Aksai Chin, Chumur and Pangong areas to personally assess the situation. These areas have seen major inci-

dents of the Chinese incursions during the past few months. In Daulat Beg Oldi sector, the Chinese Army had adopted aggressive posture in the month of May and even pitched tents while as in Demchok area the Chinese troops got work on link-road stopped in the past. In Chumur area, the Chinese Army ingressed 200 meters in the recent past and even stopped Indian Army from patrolling the area.

"Besides assessing the situation vis-a-vis presence of Indian forces in these areas and getting (Contd on page 6 Col 1)

## Flood water enters villages in Kathua

# 2 killed, 7 injured as houses collapse; bridge washed away

Gopal Sharma

JAMMU, Aug 6: At least two persons were killed in flash flood and house-collapse incidents and seven others injured in Billawar and Poonch areas while flood water washed away a vital bridge in Mendhar and a long protection bund got breached as floods created devastation in at least four villages in border area of district Kathua today.

Reports said that constant rain in many areas of the region created havoc and paralysed normal life today. The flooded nallah and rivers also disrupted movement of traffic and caused damage to the public property and standing crops. It also caused land erosion.

The flood water in Sherpur nallah on old Samba-Kathua road caused extensive damage to the road as its nearly 70 meter portion got washed away after the main protection bund near a long culvert was broken due to flood waters. The road communication to many villages in this entire border belt up to Marheen in Hiranagar has been snapped.

The flood water entered

Sherpur-I and Sherpur-II Panchayats, Prithi Chak and Nanke Chak near the border. It caused extensive damage to the crops and public property leading to several protests. Later, some officers from the district

in the flood water. In some houses, the water level was 3 to 4 feet. It was alleged by the village Panchayat members that due to sub-standard work on the bund and wrong alignment for providing benefits to influential per-



A bridge that washed away on Harni-Nad road in Mendhar on Tuesday. (Another pic on page 6)

administration including those from R&B and Flood Control Department visited the area. Many vehicles had been trapped on this road due to flood even up to 6 pm.

The grains of the farmers worth lakhs were also damaged

## 1251 pilgrims perform darshan

# 'Chhari Poojan' held at Shankaracharya

Avtar Bhat

JAMMU, Aug 6: Amid chanting of Vedic mantras and Bam Bam Bhole, the Chhari Mubarak, the holy silver



Mahant Deependra Giri performing pooja at Shankaracharya temple in Srinagar on Tuesday.

mace of Lord Shiva, was taken to historic Shankaracharya temple by Mahant Deependra Giri custodian of Chhari Mubarak from Dashnami Akhara where Puja was held on the occasion of Amavasya

in Srinagar, today.

Mahant Ji was joined by a large number of devotees, including Sadhus, when the Chhari Mubarak was taken out from the Dashnami Akhara at

A sizable number of Sadhus and pilgrims participated in the prayers that lasted for more than one hour. Collective prayers were also offered for peace and prosperity of the State.

The holy mace later returned to its abode-the Dashnami Akhara.

The Chhari-Mubarak will tomorrow be taken to Sharika Bhawani Temple on the hill of Hari Parbhat. After puja on the occasion of Pratipada, the holy mace will return to Dashnami Akhara.

On August 9, Chhari Sthapana and Dhvajardhan will be held in Dashnami Akhara. On the occasion of Nagpanchami, which falls on August 11, Chhari Pujan will be held at Dashnami Akhara at 1700 hrs.

On August 16, on the occasion of Dashmi, the Chhari will start journey from Dashnami Akhara to Holy Cave shrine in South Kashmir, where the final darshan will be held on August 21 on the occasion of Shraavan-Purnima the coinciding with Rakshabandhan.

(Contd on page 4 Col 1)

## Hospital infrastructure upgraded, staff increased

# Mortality at GB Pant Hospital increases, admissions fall

Fayaz Bukhari

SRINAGAR, Aug 6: The mortality rate of the children admitted to Srinagar's G B Pant Paediatric Hospital has increased this year even after Government intervened last year by upgrading the infrastructure and increasing the staff of the hospital for better healthcare.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah is personally monitoring the functioning of the hospital since last year following

furore over the increased mortality rate among children admitted to the hospital.

Chief Minister even last week reviewed the functioning and facilities added to the Hospital since the last year during inauguration of State of Art Medical Testing Gadget, Bact Alert.

Bact Alert, is a comprehensive machine that undertakes culturing of blood sample within 24 to 36 hours isolating the bacteria and its specie. The gadget has the capacity of handling as

many as 240 samples at a time.

Sources said that the Medical Superintendent of the Hospital, Dr. Muner Masoodi gave status of treatment being provided to the infants in the Hospital and upgrading of the infra-structure to the Chief Minister since last year during his visit but he didn't mention the increase in the mortality rate.

The Government since last year has increased the infrastructure of the Hospital and increased its staff for better patient care. "The number of ventilators has gone up to 11 from 5 and baby warmers from 30 to 60. Around Rs 3 crore has been spent on upgrading the infrastructure including purchase of latest equipment for blood bank and laboratory", the hospital records reveal.

The Hospital records further suggest that strength of doctors has been increased from 58 to 70, Nurses from 90 to 120, Nursing Orderlies from 80 to 110 and security staff from 18 to 30.

The 15 bedded Paediatric Intensive Care Unit was also made functional in the Hospital for specialised treatment and medicare in the Hospital.

According to records of the Hospital despite strengthening the para-medical and medical staff and upgrading infrastructure, the death rate among children admitted to G B Pant Hospital for three-month period from April to June this year has risen to 5.44 per cent compared to 3.5 per cent for the same period last year.

The number of children admitted to G B Pant Hospital for three-month period from April to June this year is 4937 while it was 7645 for the same (Contd on page 6 Col 5)

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