

Aggressive approach by China

PLA stops Army from patrolling

LEH/NEW DELHI, Aug 4: Amid a spate of incursions by China in Ladakh, its troops are also resorting to tactics like preventing Indian Army from patrolling posts in this sector along the border which was well within India's territory.

In what is being described as an aggressive approach by China, the tactics have come to the fore in the wake of yet another incident last week when Indian troops launched its patrol "Tiranga" from Trade Junction area in North of Ladakh for two posts located 14 km up in the higher reaches along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

The Indian Army personnel were stopped by Chinese troops who came mounted on heavy and light vehicles, official sources said today.

The patrol party was shown a banner that it was Chinese territory and that they cannot proceed to the posts, they said.

The sources said the Chinese troops were aggressive in their approach while stopping the

Indian patrol who were at their posts. These posts are well inside Indian territory, the sources said, adding that from April this year, the patrol for these forward bases were launched 21 times and only twice it could complete its mission.

Chinese have erected an observation post which kept a vigil on movement of Indian troops and as soon as an Indian patrol party is ready to leave, they are intercepted midway and sent back, the sources said, adding the matter would be taken up during the next Border Personnel Meeting (BPM) at Chushul.

In the same North Ladakh sector, there were instances when Chinese military vehicles were spotted in Depsang Bulge and Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO) sector where the two armies had seen a 21-day standoff from April 15 this year.

Indian troops comprising mainly Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) immediately swung into action and prevented

the 'free-run' of Chinese military vehicles in the Indian territory.

In the last BPM meeting held on July 27, India also raised objections to a tower being constructed in the Chinese side on the LAC in Demchok-Fukche sector.

During the meeting with the Chinese side which was led by Colonel Wang Jun Xian, the Indian side said the construction was in violation of Peace and Tranquility Agreement signed between the two countries in 1993.

According to the agreement, no construction work has to be undertaken at the LAC by either country.

The Chinese side claimed that the tower was actually a weather station for the benefit of the people of the area and instead informed the Indian delegation that its Army was engaged in military activities in Fukche.

The Indian side led by Brigadier Sanjeev Rai told the Chinese team that PLA troops were regularly entering into the

Omar blames vote bank politics for Budgam clashes

***Attempt to polarise society, create conflicts**

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Aug 4: Re-echoing his silence on the fortnight-old sectarian clashes in Budgam district, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today said people who fuel these incidents do it for vote bank politics.

"Elements behind these (sectarian) tensions expand their activities as soon as elections draw nearer. They want to polarise the society, create conflicts between various sections, sects, faiths, regions and castes keeping eye on votes," Omar told a civil society group.

Majlis-e-Tahfuz-e-Itihaad (MTI) is a group constituted by the civil society recently to pacify the tension in some villages of Budgam hit by sectarian clashes on July 19 and nurture brotherhood between Shia and Sunni communities.

The Chief Minister condemned such acts which divide the society on sectarian and communal lines.

While cautioning about the nefarious designs of the elements behind the sectarian clashes, Omar announced one

month's free ration for the families affected in the incident.

The Chief Minister told the delegation led by MTI Chief Coordinator Agha Syed Mujtaba that Divisional Commissioner Kashmir will be Nodal Officer for assessing the damages caused to various families in the clashes so that a comprehensive programme is launched for their rehabilitation.

He said the Divisional Commissioner will be given directions to complete the damage assessment report within the shortest possible time so that rehabilitation of the affected families will start at the earliest.

Assuring all possible help of the Government for rehabilitation of the affected families, the Chief Minister said that timber and other construction material for them will be made available for reconstruction of the damaged houses.

He said Horticulture, Agriculture, Rural Development and Revenue Departments would be asked to dovetail their schemes to help rehabilitation of the affected families and restoration of their agriculture and horticulture activities.

Expressing deep grief over the loss of a life and damage to the property during the clashes, Omar asked the delegation to play their role in nurturing brotherhood, love and affection between various sections of the society.

He also asked them to remain vigilant against the elements who propagate trifle incidents into conflicts between two groups just for their personal benefits.

The Chief Minister told the delegation that he would ask the Police Department to review the cases and release those people who are not involved in any serious crimes after obtaining assurance from their families that they would not be part of any activity that can disturb peace.

The delegation demanded comprehensive rehabilitation for the affected families and help from various departments through their specialised schemes.

They also raised the issue of releasing those who have been arrested while dealing with situation created in these villages due to sectarian tension and are not involved in any serious act or crime.

IGP constitutes team to nab killers Migrant murdered in Jagti

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Aug 4: An elderly Kashmiri migrant was murdered by three to four miscreants at Jagti township under the jurisdiction of Nagrota police station tonight. Though all the accused have escaped from the spot, IGP Jammu Zone, Rajesh Kumar has directed police to ensure immediate arrest of the killers.

The victim has been identified as Tej Krishan Talashi, 65, son of Prem Nath Talashi, a resident of Jagti township.

Mr Kumar said SSP Jammu Atul Goel has been asked to camp

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People block NH over 'killing'

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Aug 4: People today held protests and blocked Jammu-Srinagar National Highway at Ramban demanding an inquiry and action into the "killing" of an 18 years old youth at village Karol near Ramban.

Body of the youth identified as Dara Singh, 18, son of Raghubir Singh R/o Kanthi Ramban was found hanging from a tree at Karol this morning. He had left his Kanthi house at 5 pm for another house at Karol but didn't reach there.

People observed body of Dara Singh hanging with the tree this morning and raised an alarm. Police parties from Ramban rushed to the spot and shifted the body to hospital.

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Licenses of 3 drug firms suspended

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Aug 4: State Licensing Authority has issued necessary orders for indefinite suspension of the licenses of three firms involved in supplying sub-standard drugs while as licenses of two firms have been withdrawn.

A spokesman of the Drug and Food Control Organization said that Central Drugs Standards Control Organization had lifted 156 statutory drug samples from various parts of the State. Out of which 97 were lifted from Government institutions and 59 from open market. The reports of 147 samples have been received till date out of which 27 have been declared as Not of Standard Quality (NSQ).

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Ansari in US for treatment

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Aug 4: Former Minister and PDP MLA Moulvi Ifrikhar Hussain Ansari has been undergoing treatment in the United States.

He is reportedly suffering from liver related problems. Mr Ansari had been under treatment in New Delhi for over a month before proceeding to the United States along with his close family members.

A prominent Shia leader, Mr Ansari was a Minister in Farooq Abdullah regime in 1996.

CBI probing Kashmir angle in Ishrat

Fayaz Bukhari

SRINAGAR, Aug 4: A Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) team, which is in Srinagar to ascertain the identity of the two militants who were killed in Ishrat Jahan alleged fake encounter case in Ahmedabad Gujarat in 2004 have not found the two among the missing persons list in Jammu and Kashmir, sources said.

They said that the team is in Srinagar to ascertain the identity of Zeeshan Johar and Amjad Ali alias Salim alias Babar who were killed with Ishrat Jahan and Javed Sheikh in an alleged fake encounter in Ahmedabad, Gujarat on June 15, 2004.

The CBI team is conducting verifications of the missing

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Irregularities in yatra tent allotments Raj Bhavan seeks report, police seizes documents

Nishikant Khajuria

JAMMU, Aug 4: Large scale irregularities in the arrangements for annual Amarnath pilgrimage, by compromising security of the pilgrims, has come into light. Police authorities are investigating brazen irregularities in permissions for erecting tents at the Yatra Base Camp in Sheshnaag, Pahalgam.

Police have seized relevant record pertaining to the permissions while Governor N N Vohra, who is also Chairman of Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board, is learnt to have taken serious note of the matter in this regard and sought details of the case, highly placed sources informed the Excelsior.

The preliminary investigations on the basis of seized records and statement hinted at the involvement of officers of district administration Anantnag, who allegedly issued permissions on forged documents, without verifications and necessary formalities after accepting bribe money from the applicants, sources disclosed.

Despite well known fact of militants' threat to the annual Hindu pilgrimage, sources disclosed that permissions were granted without police verification. Antecedents of the applicants were not confirmed before issuing permissions thus inviting a high risk to security of hundreds of pilgrims who stay in these tents at the base camp, sources explained.

Further, there were discrepancies in the documents submitted for the permissions, a number of which have been issued without counter sign of the Deputy Chief Executive Officer of SASB. A few permissions even carry forged signatures of Additional CEO, sources said.

As per the statements recorded by the police, Rs 1500 to 5000 were allegedly taken as bribe by the concerned officers

for each permission and total 2095 permissions have been granted for erecting tents at the Sheshnaag Base Camp. An approximate amount of more than Rs one crore was collected as bribe money for issuance of permissions for tents only by the concerned officers, sources explained.

Interestingly, all the permissions have been granted on a single day that too prior to date of issuance of General Receipt of Rs one hundred for the same. The permissions were issued on May 29 whereas the General Receipts carry the date of June month, which makes it clear that even GRs were not attached with the documents while applying for the permission, sources explained.

The scrutiny of seized records prime facie also established tempering of documents by changing the permission for a shop or other purpose to erect a tent for providing paid accommodation to the pilgrim at the base camp.

According to the statements recorded by police in presence of Camp Magistrate, permissions were issued by concerned officers not in their respective offices but at other place like private schools and other such complexes for the apparent reason of avoiding any risk of being caught while accepting bribe money.

Sources said that the preliminary investigations in the case have been completed by the Zonal Officer Sheshnaag Base Camp, Dy SP Ajay Sharma, who has submitted a detailed report to the concerned Superintendent of Police for further action.

Meanwhile, taking cognizance of the reports of alleged irregularities in issuance of permissions by the officers of the District Administration by accepting bribe and compromising security of the pilgrims, the office of Governor N N Vohra

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India launches major projects to improve infrastructure along LAC

Sanjeev Pargal

JAMMU, Aug 4: Faced by serious threat from China, whose People's Liberation Army (PLA) has been frequently intruding inside the Indian territory in Leh along the Line of Actual Control and other frontiers in the North East, the Union Government has formulated a major plan to lay down vast road network right up to the LAC to facilitate easy movement of Army in case of any eventuality.

India has been lacking in infrastructure development as compared to China, which has metalled roads in most of the areas bordering India, which has given the PLA advantage over the Indian troops, who had to trek several kilometers on foot

in the absence of roads.

Official sources told the Excelsior that the Government of India had chalked out an ambitious project to construct 27 roads along the LAC bordering China on top priority basis to match infrastructure strength of the PLA, which has been increasing its activities day-by-day in Ladakh and North East.

Total length of the roads being constructed on priority basis along Indo-China border is 805 kilometers.

"The construction of 805 kilometers metalled road along the China border is one among various steps initiated by the Indian Government to improve infrastructure along the LAC with China. After 27 major roads, more projects would be launched to ensure

that almost entire LAC with China was metalled and the Army troops were in a position to take vehicles right up to the Zero Line," sources said.

They added that the project authorities engaged in construction of roads have been asked to complete the work expeditiously. The authorities have been briefed that the funds would be no bar for them.

Apart from Leh, the construction of roads along with China borders was also being given priority in North Eastern States

"Though presently, trouble from the Chinese side was confined to Leh, the PLA quite often had been creating problems in Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim also," sources pointed out and said the Centre was acting tak-

ing into account the long term action plan to strengthen its road network and other infrastructure facilities.

Sources added that the Government of India has also initiated various other measures to strengthen its infrastructure to match strength of the Chinese Army.

"Some of the measures being taken by the Government and the Army can't be disclosed due to their strategic nature. But definitely, a number of measures are in the pipeline to match the PLA," they said.

Admitting that presently China was better placed along the LAC with India as far as infrastructure facilities were

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Cable cranes installed across Chenab to facilitate erection of arch

Top scientists on job to make upcoming world's highest Rly bridge quake resistant

***Seismic data of last over 100 yrs being analyzed**

Mohinder Verma

JAMMU, Aug 4: As Jammu and Kashmir falls in Seismic Zone 4 and 5, the top scientists of Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore and Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee, are on job to make the upcoming world's highest railway bridge in Reasi district earthquake resistant.

In the meanwhile, cable cranes manufactured in Italy have been installed across the mighty river to facilitate the erection of arch of the bridge.

Official sources told EXCELSIOR that AFCONS, which has been entrusted with the task of constructing Railway bridge across river Chenab between Kouri and Bakkal villages, is being guided by the top scientists of Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore—Dr T Sitaram and Dr Malethi Latha.

"The Indian Institute of Science has also installed necessary equipment to record the data relating to geological changes in the area due to tremors and it is only on the basis of these scientists' advice that AFCONS is carrying out excavations for the foundation of arch of the bridge and doing slopes' stabilization works", sources said.

Besides regularly analyzing the geological changes and rock strata in these villages,

the Indian Institute of Science's scientists have also been deeply examining the seismic data of last over 100 year so that all the required measures are taken during the construction of bridge to make it quake resistant, they said.

"The seismic data of such a huge period is available with the Earthquake Engineering Department of the Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee, whose faculty has also been extending help to the IIS scientists", sources added.

Responding to a question, sources said, "the study by Indian Institute of Science,

Bangalore and IIM Roorkee's Earthquake Engineering Department will continue till the completion of work on foundation of bridge's arch so that at each and every step proper guidance is extended to the AFCONS engineers".

The continuous study of geological changes becomes imperative in view of recent moderate intensity earthquakes in the adjoining belts, whose impact was also felt in Kouri and Bakkal villages, sources further said.

In response to another query, they said, "besides getting data of the specially installed

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