

2 civilians injured in shelling at Poonch 3 Pak Army jawans killed, 5 injured; 5 posts destroyed

JAMMU, Aug 22: In a strong reply to Pakistan Army, which had continuously been firing on forward Indian Army posts and civilians areas in entire Poonch sector including Mendhar, Balakote, Hamirpur etc, three Pakistani troopers were killed at Tatta Pani and Rawlakote opposite Mendhar and Poonch sectors today while two civilians including a woman and a girl were injured in Pakistan shelling at Shahpur Kerni in Poonch this afternoon. Five Pakistani troopers were injured.



An Army jawan takes position atop a large stone in Mendhar sector on Thursday.

Official sources confirmed to the Excelsior that two Pakistan Army jawans were killed and two others were injured at Tatta Pani opposite Balnoi in Mendhar sector in Poonch district this evening as

Indian troops gave an effective response at 17 days long continued firing and shelling from across the Line of Control (LoC).

Five Pakistani posts, which had continuously been raining bullets and mortar shells on Indian posts and civilian areas were destroyed in retaliatory firing.

Pakistan has also confirmed two fatal and two non-fatal casualties of its Army in Tatta Pani sector falling opposite Balnoi in Mendhar sector this evening. Another Pakistan Army man was killed at forward area of Rakhehri in Rawlakote Mendhar sector this evening.

Pak should live within limits of friendship: Farooq Omar asks Pak to stop ceasefire violations

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Aug 22: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today asked Pakistan to immediately stop ceasefire violations along the Line of Control (LoC) and maintain sanctity of the LoC as people on both sides were suffering in view of continued firing.

In a brief chat with reporters in Kathua while taking assessment of the situation arising out of recent floods, Omar said India and Pakistan should accept and respect the sanctity of the LoC and ceasefire agreement of 2003 so that the peace prevailed on the borders and people live their normal life.

"In the firing between the two countries, the common man on both sides was suffering. It was in the interest of the two countries that ceasefire violations were put to a halt along the LoC and peace restored," he said and hoped that normalcy would soon prevail along the Line of Control.

"The people on both sides of the border were bearing the brunt of the firing. Such incidents will not improve bilateral relations between the two countries, which was need of the hour," the Chief Minister said and added: "The best thing is that India and Pakistan should accept and respect the ceasefire and ensure safety of people living on two sides of the border."

The statement comes at a time when Pakistan Army was resorting to heavy firing and shelling on forward Indian positions in entire Poonch sector forcing India to retaliate. Today only, two civilians were injured in Pakistan shelling at Shahpur Kerni in Poonch sector while five civilians were wounded few days back in Mendhar and Balakote sectors.

"People living close to LoC have to suffer... Whether it is from this side or the other... They have to bear the brunt of ceasefire violations," Omar said. "This (ceasefire violation) is nothing new... We have been repeatedly saying that leaders of India and Pakistan... Accept ceasefire... For people's benefit (living close to the LoC on both sides)," Omar said.

He said he cannot understand what Pakistan achieves by breaking ceasefire... Wherever they violate ceasefire, we strongly retaliate and they (Pakistan) suffer losses," the

Chief Minister said.

Replying to another question on India's hope in the Nawaz Sharif Government for improvement of Indo-Pak relations, Omar said: "how much hope will we keep in the Nawaz Sharif Government depends on several factors, as Pakistan is not controlled by the civilian Government alone... There are others too... the ISI, Army and other factors."

PTI adds from Jaipur:

National Conference patron and former Chief Minister of J&K, Farooq Abdullah, said that if a neighbouring country like Pakistan wanted to be on cordial terms with India, it would have to live within the limits of friendship.

"They (Pakistan) have to stop it (violating ceasefire) if they want friendship... Our effort should be that we live within the limits of friendship," Abdullah, the Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy, told a farmers' workshop on solar power in Jaipur.

"India is not weak on the border... We are not wearing 'churiyan' (bangles)... We will give a fitting reply at the appropriate time," he said, taking a dig at Pakistan.

Uphold LoC sanctity: India to Pak

NEW DELHI, Aug 22:

India today asked Pakistan to uphold the sanctity of the Line of Control and abide by the ceasefire commitment of 2003, asserting that unprovoked incidents on the Line of Control by the Pakistan Army have consequences for bilateral ties.

"India is committed to resolve all outstanding issues with Pakistan, through a peaceful bilateral dialogue in an environment free from violence and terror which has been conveyed to Pakistan. "Continued terrorism emanating from Pakistan and territories under its control remains a core concern for us. Unprovoked incidents on the Line of Control by the Pakistan Army, also have consequences for our bilateral ties," Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs E Ahmed said in reply to a question in Rajya Sabha.

HC's directive on GMC Principal post

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Aug 22: In a petition filed by Dr Indu Koul seeking direction to the State respondents not to promote Dr Shashi Gupta, presently Incharge Principal Government Medical College Jammu, Justice Ali Mohd Magray today granted last opportunity of one week to the respondents to file reply failing which Dr Shashi Gupta will cease to function as Principal Medical College Jammu.

When the petition came up for hearing, Senior Advocate U K Jalali appearing for the petitioner submitted that respondents have not implemented the order passed on June 3, 2013 whereby Court had directed respondents to file objections within six weeks with liberty to counsel for the petitioner to file rejoinder within two weeks.

Over 60% turnout in Kargil polls

Excelsior Correspondent

KARGIL, Aug 22: Over 60% turnout was recorded in the 3rd general election to the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC).

According to the Election Authority/Deputy Commissioner, Fida Hussain, 60 to 70% voting was recorded in the elections, which passed off peacefully. He said that counting would take place on August 28 and by September 2 new Council will be in place.

Govt bows to Oppn demands, PM may speak on coal issue today

NEW DELHI, Aug 22:

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kamal Nath asserted in the Lok Sabha that "the Government has nothing to hide and nothing to conceal" in the missing files matter and that the Prime Minister "can intervene" in a debate on a statement by Coal Minister Sriprakash Jaiswal.

"The Coal Minister will make a statement. Thereafter a discussion can be held in the House in which the Prime Minister can intervene," Nath said after a strong demand by opposition parties.

Opposition has been stalling Parliament over the issue of files related to coal block allocations going missing and has been pressing for a statement by the Prime Minister to end the stand-off. Prior to Nath's assurance, the Lok Sabha saw unanimous demand by Opposition members seeking clarification from the Prime Minister on the missing files.

Leader of the Opposition Sushma Swaraj said the files belonged to the period when "the Prime Minister was in charge" of the Coal Ministry from 2006 to 2009.

"From the very beginning, we wanted the House to function. But that does not mean we will allow the Government to do whatever it likes... We request you (Speaker) to ask the Government to urge the Prime Minister to clarify on the issue to make the House run," Swaraj said.

Army jawan injured in grenade attack

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Aug 22: Militants today hurled a grenade on an Army vehicle in South Kashmir Shopian area injuring an Army jawan. Police said that militants hurled a grenade on a patrol party of Rashtriya Rifles at Imam Sahib in Shopian town this afternoon. The grenade exploded causing splinter injuries to a jawan who was evacuated to hospital.

Govt nod to scrap collegium system

NEW DELHI, Aug 22:

Overcoming resistance from the judiciary, the Government today took a significant decision to scrap the collegium system of appointing judges to the Supreme Court and High Courts.

The Cabinet today approved the bill which entails replacing the collegium system with a Judicial Appointments Commission wherein it will have a say in appointment of judges of the Supreme Court and the 24 high courts.

Arrest warrant against 2 cops

SRINAGAR, Aug 22:

A local court today issued non-bailable arrest warrants against two police personnel in a case related to the death of a teenager during protests in the 2010 summer unrest in Kashmir Valley.

Chief Judicial Magistrate Sringer Rajeev Gupta today issued non-bailable arrest warrants against Sub-Inspector Abdul Khaliq and SPO Mohammad Akram in connection with the killing of Wamiq Farooq, a class VII student, at Rajouri Kadal in 2010. The arrest warrant was issued under Section 304 RPC (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) as the court held that there was sufficient evidence against the two policemen as reflected in the reports of the Judicial inquiry and the special investigation team.

'Some weapons may fall in hands of ultras' 31 looted guns still untraced, Intl agencies sound alert

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Aug 22: What has disturbed police, security and intelligence agencies more during the trouble in Kishtwar is the missing of 31 weapons, which were still untraced despite massive raids conducted by the police personnel all across Kishtwar town, outskirts and other areas during past 13 days.

Security agencies were not ruling out some of the weapons falling into the hands of anti-national elements, who had all along been trying to take advantage of the situation though their number was very low.

"Yes, 31 weapons (all 12 bore guns) that had been looted from a gun shop in the heart of Kishtwar town by the miscreants during rioting on August 9 on the occasion of Eid festival have been missing. In fact, the miscreants had looted 41 weapons but we managed to recover 10 of them during the raids conducted in Kishtwar town and outskirts.

"Definitely, this is a disturbing trend. Despite our all appeals to representatives of the majori-

ty community to ensure return of the weapon, the people have not come forward to deposit them with police. We have also conducted raids at various places but 31 weapons and some ammunition remained untraced," official sources told the Excelsior.

They said police have arrested six persons from whose possession 10 looted weapons were recovered.

Sources said special teams constituted by the police were conducting raids at various places in Kishtwar town and outskirts besides some villages to recover the weapons as there were reports that they could fall into the hands of militants.

"The possibility that some of these weapons might have already gone to the militants can't be ruled out as 13 days have passed since the weapons were looted from a shop in Kishtwar town during the rioting," sources said and added that "this was the most disturbing aspect of the rioting as the weapons could be used by the anti-national elements during the trouble".

However, they expressed

confidence that once the things settled down, police will intensify raids and exert pressure to restore the weapons.

Worthwhile to mention here that a group of Hizbul Mujahideen outfit was still active in Kishtwar district though neighbouring Doda district has been declared free of militancy. There had been very specific inputs with the Intelligence agencies that the anti-national elements had tried to exploit the situation in Kishtwar but didn't succeed. However, the missing of 31 weapons along with a large quantity of ammunition was the only factor that the militants might have been able to use to their perfection.

As reported by the Excelsior on the day the trouble erupted in Kishtwar on August 9, the miscreants from

Law Deptt in peculiar situation, extends validity of selection list by 6 months

Mohinder Verma

JAMMU, Aug 22: With the State High Court and Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission continue to be at loggerheads over the appointment of Court Managers, the Law Department has extended the validity of the selection list by six months beyond current month with the hope to break the ice between the judiciary and the Commission in near future.

The process of making selection of 24 Court Managers as recommended by the 13th Finance Commission was set in motion in February last year when the Public Service Commission vide Notification

No.03-PSC of 2012 dated February 24, 2012 advertised 24 posts of Court Managers. Thereafter, the interviews of the short listed candidates were conducted and on the basis of performance in the interviews coupled with the weight-age in respect of academic merit and other related parameters, the selection was made. Accordingly, the list was forwarded to the High Court for issuance of appointment orders.

However, the High Court observed that the selection of the Court Managers was not made strictly in accordance with the laid down norms and sent the list back to the Public Service Commission. The PSC while responding to the decision of the High Court mentioned that since these are the managerial posts no expert from the High Court was required. The PSC even mentioned that experts from different parts of the country were invited to conduct interview as such there was no illegality.

After going through the reply of the PSC, Chief Justice of State High Court constituted two judges committee to have detailed appraisal of the entire exercise conducted by PSC and the committee rejected the selection list for being made in violation of Clause-II of Rule 10 of Jammu and Kashmir Civil Services (Judicial) Rules, 1967. The committee even asked the Law Department to get fresh interviews conducted from the

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