

'Ready for talks to anyone who shuns violence'

NATION UNITED AGAINST TERRORISM: PM

Sanjeev Pargal/
Fayaz Bukhari

***Manmohan announces Rs 710 cr package for rural road network**

KISHTWAR/SRINAGAR, June 25: A day after the terrorists struck in Srinagar killing eight Army soldiers and wounding 11 others in an ambush, Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh declared today that the entire nation stands united against terrorism and wouldn't tolerate it but expressed Government's readiness to talk to anyone who shuns violence and made it clear that it would not succumb to terrorists efforts to destabilize the State.

Addressing a huge public gathering at Chougan Ground in Kishtwar town this morning after laying foundation stone for 850 mw Rattle Hydro Electric Power Project through remote control and later speaking to select reporters in Srinagar this evening, Dr Singh announced Rs 1629 crore worth Srinagar-Leh power transmission line, which would help provide power supply to Ladakh throughout the year and Rs 710 crore worth package for rural road network in the State under Prime Minister's Gramteen Sadak Yojana (PMGSY). Accompanied by UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi, Union Minister for Health and

Family Welfare Ghulam Nabi Azad, Governor NN Vohra and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Dr Singh also announced additional supply of 150 mw power to Jammu and Kashmir from Northern Grid to overcome the electricity shortage.

"I want to pay my tributes to the soldiers who laid down their lives while fighting the terrorists. I would like to make it clear that the entire nation stands united against terrorism and will not allow their nefarious designs to succeed," the Prime Minister said in his brief speech, read in Hindi with the use of a number of Urdu words.

Noting that security was a pre-requisite for growth, Dr Singh said the Centre and Jammu and Kashmir Governments would work together towards improving the situation in the State for fast and uniform development.

"Our analysis is that, security situation in Jammu and Kashmir has shown considerable improvement. Terrorist-related violence in 2012 had shown a sharp decline and was the lowest in last two decades," he said.

Dr Singh said: "the Centre and the State Government have vowed to improve the security situation in the State



Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, Sonia Gandhi, Ghulam Nabi Azad, N N Vohra and Omar Abdullah at a public meeting in Kishtwar on Tuesday.

to ensure fast, sustainable and uniform development in the State.

"After several "difficult" years, collective efforts have resulted in putting Jammu and Kashmir on a faster pace of development," he said but added that constant vigil was required to prevent attacks like the one that took place yesterday at Hyderpora killing eight Army soldiers and injuring 11

others.

"I am proud of what Army is doing for the service of nation," he said.

Dr Singh expressed Government's readiness to talk to anyone who shuns violence but made it clear that it would not succumb to terrorists efforts to destabilise the state.

"I have always said that those who shun violence, we

are ready to talk to them," he said in a brief interaction with select journalists.

The Prime Minister was replying to a question whether the Government was willing to consider holding talks with separatists.

Dr Singh said yesterday's terror attack in Srinagar that had claimed the lives of eight soldiers was "most unfortunate".

However, he hastened to add that "this should not frighten leaders or our opponents to conclude that we will succumb to terrorists efforts to destabilise Jammu and Kashmir and our economy."

"I can only say that this is most reprehensible and cowardly act on the part of the terrorists."

The Centre has often made clear its intentions for holding a dialogue with the separatists and other organisations, who have not taken to arms.

Moderate factions of Hurriyat Conference have always maintained that they would be ready to participate in any dialogue with the Centre but before that they would prefer some Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) like withdrawal of the controversial Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) and repatriation of all Kashmiri prisoners lodged in various jails.

The Prime Minister virtually ruled out any plans for announcing a development package for the State now.

Asked about a package, Singh said whenever the Chief Minister comes to meet him about the problems of the State and if there was any change to be made or something new to be started, it was discussed.

"This visit was only for laying the foundation stone of 850 MW power project and to inaugurate the railway tunnel between Qazigund and Banihal and let the work continue further," he said.

In view of the Uttarakhand tragedy, the Prime Minister stressed on the need for a national consensus on regulating religious tourism in the country with all stakeholders on board.

"These are long term things which should be looked at how we can regulate religious tourism, if at all it is possible considering the sentiments of the people, we should do that," he said.

Replying to a question on regulating the pilgrimage to Amarnath shrine in south Kashmir in view of the Uttarakhand tragedy, Dr Singh said he did not have answers to these difficult questions as it required a broader national consensus.

"I cannot say today that I have the answers to these difficult problems. We must have a pattern of development, which is sustainable which respects the imperatives of the ecological consideration. It required a broad national consensus in which all stakeholders must take part," he said.

The Prime Minister said the priority of the Government at the moment is the relief and rehabilitation work in the affected State.

"We have to deal first and foremost with rehabilitation of victims," he added.

On the chopper crash in flood-hit Uttarakhand and its resultant loss of life, Dr Singh said it was a "very sad tragedy".

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20 killed as rescue chopper crashes Mass cremation delayed, 8,000 still stranded

GAUCHAR/SONPRAYAG,
June 25:

An IAF chopper carrying 20 personnel and crew on a rescue mission in flood-ravaged Uttarakhand crashed today and all on board are feared killed, as fresh rains hampered efforts to evacuate thousands still stranded.

Vice Chairman of National Disaster Management Authority



An IAF helicopter that crashed near Gaurikund in Uttarakhand on Tuesday.

(NDMA) M Sashidhar Reddy said eight bodies have been recovered and chances of any survivor onboard were remote. Five IAF personnel were among the dead, an IAF spokesperson said.

"Eight bodies have been recovered," he told reporters in Delhi.

As the crash in bad weather compounded the tragedy of the rain fury, mass cremation of bodies of hundreds of people killed in the devastation by floods and landslides since rains pounded the hill state on June 15 was delayed raising fears of

disease outbreak.

Rescuers evacuated 2,403 stranded pilgrims even as nearly 8,000 persons waited to be evacuated—most of them at Harsil and Badrinath, officials said, as the death toll rose to 822 with 142 bodies being found, including 127 in Kedarnath, the epicentre of destruction.

According to late night reports, the Russian-built chop-

per procured just last year was completely charred.

A Wing Commander, two Flight Lieutenants, a Junior Warrant Officer and a Sergeant were the dead IAF personnel but their names were not released.

ITBP Director General Ajay Chadha said six personnel from the para-military force were on board the ill-fated chopper while Inspector General of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) Sandeep Rai Rathore said there were nine of its personnel. Both said the fate

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CM reiterates demand for Rs 600 cr package to quake victims Omar seeks transfer of Dulhasti to J&K

Excelsior Correspondent

KISHTWAR, June 25: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today demanded Rs 600-crore package from the Centre for the earthquake affected Doda-Kishtwar belt of the State.

"We seek Rs 600 crore package for earthquake-hit families of erstwhile Doda district. The State Government has already submitted the proposal for this package to the Union Government," Omar said

addressing a gathering after Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh and UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi laid the foundation stone of 850 MW Rattle Project here.

Two persons were killed and 69 others, including 26 students and three teachers, injured when scores of buildings were damaged in a massive earthquake in Doda and Kishtwar districts on May 1, affecting over 80,000 families.

The Chief Minister also sought special component for land compensation under Prime Minister's Reconstruction Plan (PMRP), Phase two.

Omar said large number of houses have been damaged in erstwhile Doda district in the devastating earthquake besides severe damage to public infrastructure.

"We hope that the Centre would come forward and help the affected families to reconstruct their houses," he said.

"Under the PMRP, the State was given special component for acquisition of land to construct roads under PMGSY. We request same component under PMRP-2," he said.

Underlying the need for linking Doda and Kishtwar districts with the Valley for economic welfare and round the year accessibility, Omar sought Central funding for construction of Singhpora-Violo Tunnel.

"Construction of this tunnel is a cherished desire of the people of the area and they are looking forward to the Union Government for financial support for the construction of this tunnel," he said.

Advocating transfer of Dulhasti Hydro Electric Power Project to Jammu and Kashmir to enable it to address the increasing power supply demand and strengthen economy, Omar said bulk production of hydro power in the State is the only way forward to ensure socio-economic welfare of the State.

"Optimum utilisation of two great resources of water and natural beauty possessed by Jammu and Kashmir could transform the economic and development scenario of the State," Omar said.

The Chief Minister said that the State Government, with the help of the Centre is endeavouring to harness the rich hydro

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Minister takes serious note, issues explicit directions to CEOs UCs of over Rs 4300 lakh pending against Tourism Development Authorities in J&K

Mohinder Verma

JAMMU, June 25: In what could be termed as scant regard to the repeated instructions and directives from various quarters, Utilization Certificates (UCs) of over Rs 4300 lakh financial assistance provided under the Prime Minister's Reconstruction Plan (PMRP) have been pending against the Tourism Development Authorities of Jammu and Kashmir.

The dismal picture in this regard has been painted in the latest report of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, which is monitoring the implementation of the PMRP. In case of some of the Development Authorities, the Utilization Certificates have been pending for the funds released during the 2009-10 financial year while as in case of others the UCs have been pending for the past more than two years despite the fact that non-submission of certificates blocks release of next instalments.

The Development Authorities of Kishtwar and Leh top the list with Utilization Certificates of Rs 654.34 lakh and Rs 550.65 lakh respectively have been pending against them till ending May 2013.

In case of Kishtwar Development Authority, the UCs of Rs 345.2 lakh have been

pending since 2009-10 financial year. This amount was part of funds released for infrastructure and destination development scheme and construction of TRC complex at Sarthaldevi Kishtwar.

Similarly, UCs of Rs 212.14 lakh and Rs 96.80 lakh have been pending for the total funds released during the 2010-11 and 2011-12 financial years for development of WFR at Chhatru and construction of budget accommodation and allied works at Kishtwar.

According to the data, Leh Development Authority has not submitted UCs for the Rs 111.95 lakh released for construction of various tourist infrastructure facilities, for development of Leh as a circuit under PIDDC Scheme, Rs 149.91 lakh released for construction of integrated tourist facilities, Rs 149.82 lakh for development of wayside amenities under Budgeted Accommodation at Leh-Maan Merak, Charasa and Rs 138.97 lakh released for development of lake circuit including the lakes of Pangong, Tsomoriri and Tokar during the 2011-12 financial year.

The Utilization Certificates of Rs 488.33 lakh—Rs 348.36 lakh for the 2010-11 financial year and Rs 139.97 lakh for the 2011-12 have been pending against the Baderwah Development Authority. These funds were

released for erection of various structure and allied facilities for Yatra Base Camp at Baderwah and en-route to Kailash and creation of facilities for day camping, ecotourism and pilgrim tourism at Gatha, Kanitop Seoj, Padri and pilgrim destinations at Baderwah.

Sonamarg Development Authority has not submitted the UCs for the amount of Rs

266.35 lakh released during 2011-12 financial year and Rs 121.91 lakh released during 2012-13 financial year for the development of Sonamarg bowl and wayside amenities enroute Shri Amarnathji shrine up to Baltal base camp under Destination Development Scheme.

Likewise, the Utilization Certificates of Rs 72.97 lakh

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Omar hosts dinner for PM, Sonia

SRINAGAR, June 25:

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah tonight hosted a dinner for Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh and UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi.

Omar hosted the dinner for the visiting dignitaries and their entourage at the Hari Niwas Guest House on the banks of Dal Lake, official sources said.

They said 145 guests were invited to the dinner. (PTI)

Sino-Indian talks on June 28

BEIJING, June 25:

The 16th round of India-China border talks will be held here on June 28 followed by the visit of Defence Minister A K Antony a week later as the two countries set to resume top level contacts to build on the recent visit of Chinese Premier Li Keqiang to New

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Heavy Pak firing on LoC

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, June 25: Pakistan Army today twice resorted to heavy firing on the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch sector in the day-light with a plot to push a group of four to five militants into this side. However, troops foiled the intrusion bid after giving affective retali-

(Contd on page 6 Col 8)

Women CRPF commands for yatra

NEW DELHI, June 25:

CRPF will deploy a squad of its women commands for rendering security duties during the upcoming Amarnath Yatra in Jammu and Kashmir.

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