

Indian troops hunt, kill militants 'in Myanmar'

The Newspaper's Correspondent | June 10, 2015

NEW DELHI: The Indian Army conducted on Tuesday a cross-border revenge attack in Myanmar in which it killed nearly a dozen militants thought to be involved in the massacre of 18 soldiers last week in Manipur, reports said.

The troubled northeastern Indian state borders Myanmar. While Indian officials say separatist rebels seek refuge in the heavily forested border region of Myanmar, there has been no official comment on the raid reported by the Mail Today.

There were reports earlier this week, according to the paper, saying India had given Myanmar phone intercepts and location details of at least two officials from the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA), who were allegedly in touch with the top leadership of the insurgent group, NSCN-Khaplang, suspected to be behind the Manipur killing. There was no official comment on the report.

The paper said Tuesday's strike was done in coordination with the Myanmar government after "the clearance to conduct the surgical strikes was given at the highest level".

Delhi claims intercepting Chinese link in last week's attack in Manipur

The paper quoted an Indian Army spokesman as saying: "Any threat to safety, security and national integrity will meet with a similar response."

"Army sources in the Eastern Command had said the ambush was carried out by 15 members of the Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL), a Meitei outfit formed in 1994," the Mail Today reported. The KYKL is closely aligned to the NSCN-K that broke off a 14-year ceasefire with the government this April.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday condemned the attack on army convoy in Manipur and described it as a "very distressing" and "mindless" assault. The militants used rocket-

propelled grenades and automatic weapons to ambush a military convoy killing at least 20 personnel. Reports described it as the worst such attack in recent years. Eleven army men were injured in the ambush.

Reports of the cross-border raid in Myanmar came a day after The Hindu reported from Beijing that the China-India track on a possible new round of confidence-building measures (CBMs) could run into problems.

The Hindu spoke of a contest expected between New Delhi's insistence on the clarification of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and Beijing's focus on the elaboration of a "code of conduct" among border troops.

Diplomatic sources told the paper that the resumption of the clarification of the LAC, which was publicly raised by Mr Modi during his China visit last month, is one of the core objectives of the CBM process.

"It was formally documented in the peace and tranquillity accord that was signed in 1993 in the backdrop of friction such as the one caused during the Wandung incident of 1986 in Arunachal Pradesh. Neither side wanted a repeat of such an eventuality," unnamed sources told the paper.

They emphasised that the spirit behind LAC clarification, which was raised by Mr Modi, was to prevent inadvertent incidents along the border. "Unless we have a reliable reference point, which a clarified LAC would provide, there is always a danger of inadvertent border incidents on the ground or in the air," the paper quoted the unnamed sources as saying.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is another recent point of disagreement between India and China.

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