

Govt: Hot pursuit a message to all

Written by JPNN

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JPNN/New Delhi/June 11, 2015/The death toll in the Army's strike on two militant camps inside Myanmar on Tuesday could touch 70 as defence officials spoke of keeping up the pressure on anti-India insurgents operating from there. In a late-night development, the Myanmar government denied any raid on inside its territory. The news agency AFP reported that Zaw Htay, Director of Myanmar's Presidential Office, said in a Facebook post: "According to the information sent by Tatmadaw Myanmar Army battalions on the ground, we have learned that the military operation was performed on the Indian side at India-Myanmar border." "Myanmar will not accept any foreigner who attacks neighbouring countries in the back and creates problems by using our own territory," he said. While there was no official response to the Myanmar statement, diplomatic sources said the reaction was "understandable" as Indian operations inside its territory could cause a controversy for the Myanmar government over sovereignty issues. The denial from the office of President Than Sein came hours after Indian High Commissioner to Yangon, Gautam Mukhopadhyaya, finished a series of meetings in the Myanmar Foreign Ministry to discuss action against terror groups in the country such as the NSCN(K). According to a source, the Myanmar government "wasn't pleased with how the operations had been portrayed in Indian media". In comments to a television channel on Tuesday, Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had taken a bold step by giving the go-ahead for "hot pursuit". "It is undoubtedly a message to all countries... even if there are groups within countries that harbour terror intentions, we will choose the time and the place of hitting them," the Minister said.

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A top Indian official told The Hindu that the Army had no plans to deploy extra troops. National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, specially tasked by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to prepare a response to the June 4 killing of Army men in Manipur by a Naga group, is travelling to Myanmar to discuss joint action against the militants. On the modalities of the cross-border operation, Army officials said commandos from the 21 Para unit were airdropped from helicopters on the border, from where they sneaked across in small teams. The two camps, hit by the Special Forces, one facing Manipur and one facing Nagaland, are believed to be 5-7 km inside Myanmar. An Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) was giving live feed of the operation to the control room. Intelligence sources estimate that insurgent camps in Myanmar are located across 20 locations within 5-15 km from the border. On the fallout of the operations, one Army officer said the confidence of the militants was shattered and they might shift camp to other locations. The officer also felt that the response by insurgents is likely to be 'scaled up.' Agency