

OFF THE RECORD

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Sacks Three Govt Employees Over Terror links

The Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday sacked three government employees, who were working for Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Hizb-ul-Mujahidin (HM).

Since taking office in August 2020, Manoj Sinha has prioritized weakening terrorism's infrastructure by targeting both active terrorists and their support networks, including overground workers (OGWs) and sympathizers embedded in government institutions.

Sinha has ensured aggressive counter-terrorism operations, with security forces neutralizing hundreds of terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir between 2020 and 2024 and termination of more than 75 OGW/Terror associates from the government jobs under Article 311(2)(c) of the Indian Constitution. He has pledged to root out terrorism and their support structures, ensuring strict action against terrorists and their aides.

The three sacked employees, who are in jail, are: Malik Ishfaq Naseer, a police constable; Ajaz Ahmed, a teacher in the school education department; and Waseem Ahmad Khan, a Junior Assistant in Government Medical College, Srinagar.

A senior security official said the government employees fired by the Lieutenant Governor were actively working for the terror outfits and helping terrorists to execute terror attacks on security forces and civilians.

“Having a mole and a dangerous terrorist associate in the ranks of police and other government department is a huge threat a continuation of which can be extremely expensive for the sovereignty and integrity of the nation,” he said.

Malik Ishfaq Naseer was recruited as a constable in J&K Police in 2007. His brother Malik Asif Naseer was a Pakistan-trained terrorist of LeT. He was killed by security forces during an encounter in 2018. Malik, however, continued his terror activities with impunity and being police constable he was able to evade any suspicion. His LeT link was exposed in September, 2021 when J&K police was investigating a case related to smuggling of arms and explosives in Jammu region. Malik's despite being the police constable, who took oath to protect the

integrity of India, was helping terror outfit LeT to drop arms, explosives and narcotics. These consignments were guided by GPS technology and dropped at a pre-shared coordinates facilitated by Malik to Pakistani terrorists and his handlers.

“ He was not only identifying the safe location, sharing the coordinates with LeT handlers in Pakistan but he was also collecting and distributing arms and ammunition to terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir region enabling them to carry out terrorist attacks on security forces and civilians,” A senior security official said further adding that instead of helping the police department in fighting the terror which he was mandated for, he chose to be a mole and a collaborator and betrayed his oath and uniform.

“Malik’s disloyalty towards the nation and department by becoming an accomplice and a ring leader of LeT terror outfit has wreaked colossal damage to the department, society and the nation,” the official observed.

Ajaz Ahmed, the teacher in School Education Department, was working for HM. He was recruited as a teacher in 2011. He became a trusted terror associate of HM in Poonch region. He was actively helping the terror outfit in smuggling arms, ammunition and narcotics. The terror link with HM was exposed in November 2023 when Police arrested Ajaz and his friend during a routine check. Both were carrying arms, ammunition and posters of HM in Ajaz’s Toyota Fortuner. Further investigation had revealed that consignment was received on the direction of his handler Abid Ramzan Sheikh, an HM’s terrorist in PoJK. The consignment was to be delivered to terrorists operating in Kashmir for carrying out attacks on security forces and civilians. Investigation further revealed that Ajaz had been receiving huge consignment of arms and ammunition for the past many years and delivering it to terrorists in Kashmir valley.

Another government employee sacked on Tuesday is Waseem Ahmad Khan, Junior Assistant in Government Medical College, Srinagar. He was appointed in 2007 by Health and Medical Education Department. His terror links with HM outfit was exposed in August 2018. According to senior officials in the security establishment, Waseem Ahmad Khan was found to be one of the conspirators in the plot that led to targeted killing of Journalist Shujaat Bukhari and his two PSOs by terrorists on 14th June 2018.

“ He was actively associated with the terrorists from LeT and HM, who killed Shujaat Bukhari on the direction of Pakistan’s ISI. He had also provided crucial logistical support to terrorists to carry out attack against CRPF and J&K police deployed at Secretariat in Srinagar. He also accompanied the terrorists during the

execution of attack and help them to escape afterwards. He was arrested on 12th August 2018 when Police was investigating terror associates involved in a terror attack in Batmaloo,” the senior officials said.

Under Manoj Sinha, the Jammu and Kashmir administration has strengthened the vetting processes for new recruits in every government department, mandating police verification to prevent infiltration by terror sympathizers. A government official said that termination of terror associates has instilled the fear among potential terror associates and reduced the chances of internal sabotage.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha’s multi-pronged approach- combining aggressive anti-terror operations, disruption of terror financing, and purging government ranks of sympathizers and moles- has significantly weakened the terror ecosystem in the UT of J&K,” the official said.