

2 jawans killed as Pak. forces resume firing in Jammu

People desert houses as shelling along International Border injures 10 civilians

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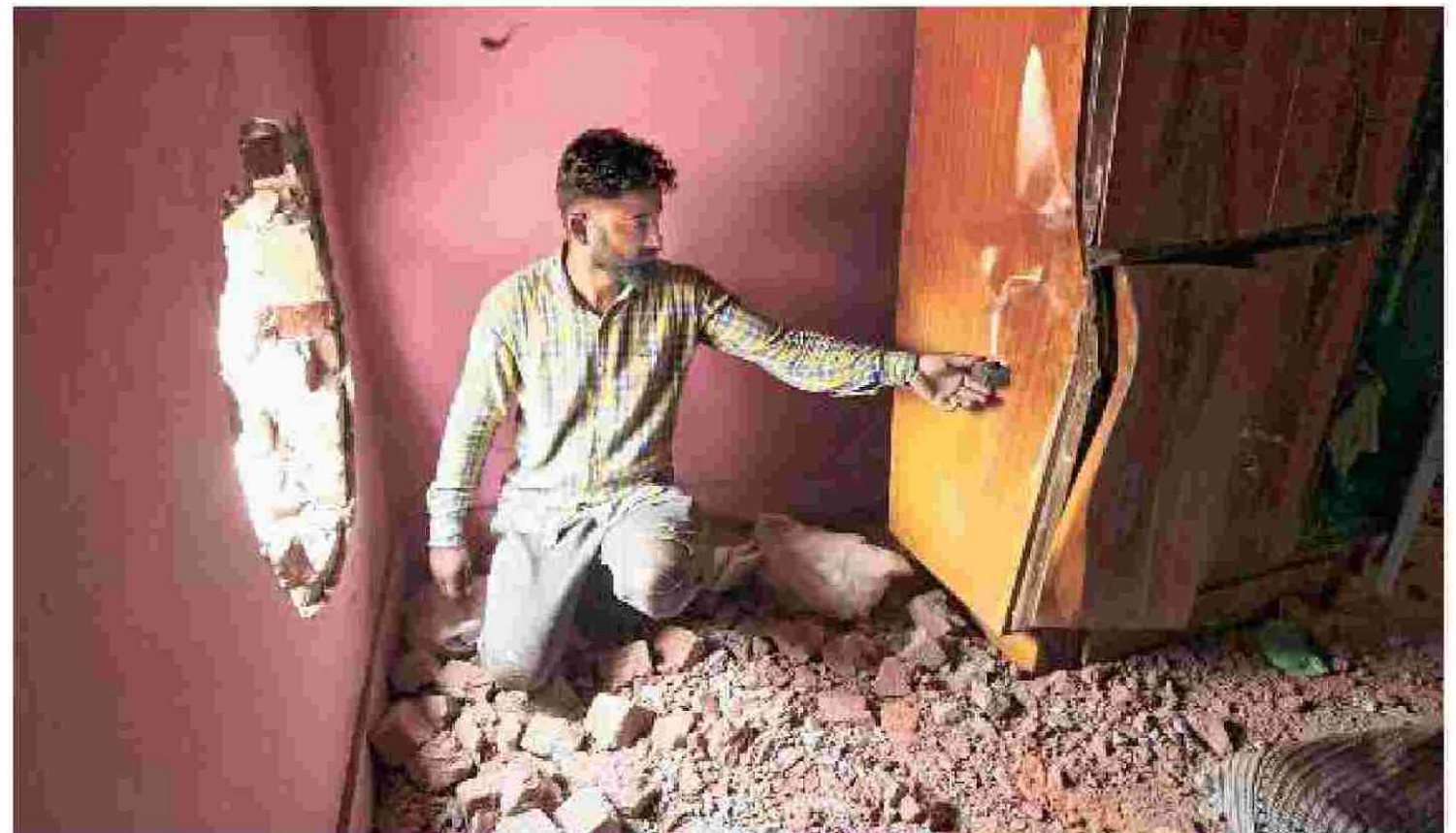
Two Border Security Force (BSF) jawans were killed and 10 civilians injured in fresh shelling and firing by Pakistani troops on the International Border (IB) in Jammu on Sunday, just six days after the Directors-General of Military Operations of India and Pakistan agreed to implement the 2003 ceasefire pact.

Meanwhile, one infiltrator was killed in the Kashmir Valley. "Two jawans were martyred in fresh cross-border shelling in the Pargwal, Kana Chak and Gharkhal areas [on the International Border in Jammu]. The ceasefire violations by Pakistan started around 2.15 a.m.," said Arun Manhas, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Jammu.

Taken to hospital

Ten civilians were injured in Kana Chak, Shama Chak, Jhiri and Pargwal, he said. They were shifted to the Government Medical College Hospital. A BSF spokesman identified the deceased personnel as assistant sub-inspector Satya Narayan Yadav and constable Vijay Kumar Pandey.

"They attained martyr-



Bearing the brunt: A villager examining the damage caused by a Pakistani mortar shell, which punched a hole in the wall of his house at Gol Pattan on Sunday. ■ AP

dom facing and retaliating to unprovoked fire from Pakistan in Sunderbani," he said.

Sources said the jawans fell victim to sniper fire. One policeman was also injured in the firing at Shama Chak.

People were seen deserting their houses in the affected areas. "The exchange of fire continued till Sunday afternoon," said the official spokesman. An alert was also sounded in the R.S. Pura, Arnia, Ramgarh, Samba and Hi-

ranagar sectors.

Unfortunate: Mehbooba

Termining the fresh ceasefire violation "unfortunate," Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti said the DGMOs "should hold a dialogue again and stop the bloodshed."

On May 29, the DGMOs agreed to fully implement the ceasefire agreement in letter and in spirit forthwith to stop border skirmishes.

The border areas of Jammu had witnessed intense shelling from Pakistani troops between May 15 and May 23, leaving 12 persons, including two jawans, dead. The meeting of the DGMOs had raised hopes that peace would return to the border areas.

The Army on Sunday said an infiltration bid had been foiled in the Keran sector in Kupwara, and one militant had been killed.

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“A joint team of the Army and the BSF near Ustad Post in Keran sector along the Line of Control (LoC) noticed some suspicious movement near the fence on Sunday afternoon. On being challenged, the militants fired indiscriminately. In the retaliatory firing, an infiltra-

tor was killed,” said an Army source.

The body of the militant and an AK-47 were recovered from the spot. The identity and outfit of the militant could not be ascertained immediately. “The operation is on in the area,” said officials.