

Pak. using social media to lure Kashmiri youth: police

Multiple battles:Inspector-General of Police Muneer Ahmad Khan addressing media in Srinagar.NISSAR AHMAD

Pakistan has started a relentless social media campaign to lure youth to join militancy in Kashmir, Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Kashmir Range, Muneer Ahmad Khan said at a press conference here on Thursday.

He said “religious exploitation” was another reason for the youth to join militancy. “Most of them [militant recruits] are either school or college dropouts,” Mr. Khan said.

He said over 15 militants had been arrested in the past four months in south Kashmir, where militancy figures are showing an upward trend this year.

Describing the arrest of three militants from an encounter site in Kulgam in the past 24 hours, Mr. Khan said this was a reflection of “our commitment to the repeated offer of surrender to local boys”.

“All militants will be welcome if they want to join their families and the mainstream. We will continue to offer the surrender option to militants caught in an encounter if they raise their hands up for it,” Mr. Khan said.

Operation continues

He said the detention of three militants during the Kund operation in Kulgam showed the resolve of the security forces.

“Despite the fact that a soldier was killed on November 14, security forces shifted an injured militant, Atta Muhammad, hit by bullets in the legs, to hospital. He is out of danger now. He could have died too,” he said.

Mr. Khan said the operation in Kulgam continued to “arrest two on-the-run militants, including a foreigner”.

The police identified the two detained militants as Shams-ul-Viqar and Bilal Sheikh, who were brought before presspersons in Srinagar on Thursday.

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