

‘Army working to deal with drone threat’

General Naravane says talks are on with China at various levels, which has helped build trust

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Army chief Gen. Manoj Naravane on Thursday said that with the easy availability of drones, they would be increasingly used in all sorts of combat, both by state and non-state actors, and capabilities were being developed to deal with them.

On the Ladakh stand-off, he said the situation on the ground had been normal since February and talks were on with China at different levels that had helped build trust between the two sides.

His comments came after explosions last Sunday at the Jammu Air Force station, which were believed to have been carried out using drones, the first such attack in the country. “We are seized of this problem. We have put in place certain



Keeping watch: Security personnel standing guard outside the IAF station in Jammu on Tuesday. •PTI

measures. All our troops on the ground have been sensitised for this evolving threat and we are developing capabilities to deal with that, whether by state-sponsored or by states themselves. We are developing capabilities to deal with the drone threat both in the kinetic and non-kinetic realm,” Gen. Nara-

vane said at a webinar organised by Global Counter-Terrorism Council in association with the Department of Defence Production.

He stated that they were catering to both the offensive use of drones and defensive measures or the counter-drone systems to prevent attacks on any critical instal-

lations whether by state or non-state actors.

On the stand-off in Eastern Ladakh, he noted that the situation had been normal since the disengagement in February from the northern and southern banks of Pangong Tso (lake) as well as the Kailash ranges. “Since then, both sides have strictly adhered in letter and spirit to the disengagement that was agreed upon,” he observed.

LoC situation

The two sides were engaged at different levels – political, diplomatic and military. “This has helped build trust between the two sides and going ahead we are sure we will be able to resolve all the remaining issues,” he said.

On the situation along the Line of Control (LoC), he said that since the ceasefire

understanding between the Directors-General of Military Operations of India and Pakistan in February, the situation in Jammu and Kashmir had seen improvement. There had been little to no infiltration, he said.

Stressing the need to incorporate Artificial Intelligence (AI)-related technologies, he stated that this would require simplified procedures. “Unfortunately, this has been one of our biggest stumbling blocks. The transition to the digital age is contrarian to Defence Procurement Procedure and Defence Procurement Manual mindsets.” In order to harness technologies like AI, exploit the depth in IT and realise the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat, we need to shed old mindsets and make our procedures more flexible and adaptive, he added.