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Government of India**

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Shri G Kishan Reddy addresses the National Conference of Chiefs of ATS/STFs organized by National Investigation Agency (NIA)

Pakistan-sponsored cross-border terrorism and jihadi terrorism the biggest external security challenge for the country: Shri Reddy

As the world's largest democracy, India has a duty to support the international community in fighting the menace of terrorism: Shri Reddy

New Delhi, October 15, 2019

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Shri G Kishan Reddy addresses the National Conference of Chiefs of ATS/STFs organized by the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Reddy congratulated the NIA and called terrorism a major challenge for the country, a curse for any civilized society and the biggest obstacle to modern development . He added that India has always been capable of meeting such challenges. He outlined the importance of NIA in the context of detailed investigation of terrorist incidents and said that the organization was vital to ensure national security.

Detailing the agency's work, Shri Reddy said that the NIA has registered 286 serious terrorism cases during its tenure of 10 years since its inception. Out of these, professional investigation of 210 cases has been successfully submitted in the NIA Special Courts. He noted that the success achieved by NIA in such a short time and the work it has done in the field of counter-terrorism has emerged as a veritable signature. Shri Reddy also congratulated the NIA for exposing Pakistan's role in

Pathankot, Uri, Banihal and Handwara cases of terrorist attacks and in the manufacturing and circulation of fake Indian currency.

Shri Reddy remarked that India's national security challenges were functions of its unique geography, diversity and regional as well as global developments. He enumerated fundamentalism, separatism movements, extremism, communalism and Maoist violence as the major internal security challenges faced by India. He emphasized that all problems and grievances should be solved peacefully within the constitutional provisions of the nation.

Giving the example of Jammu and Kashmir, Shri Reddy said that the state of Jammu and Kashmir, despite being in India, was acting as a separate sovereign state due to disruptive and separatist activities. He added that the Government of India has merged the state of Jammu and Kashmir with India by removing Article 370. He noted that with the abrogation of Article 370, the Government has succeeded in crushing cross border sponsored terrorism to a and there would be all-round development of Jammu and Kashmir as well as Ladakh.

Shri Reddy said that the biggest challenge before the Government was to ensure a peaceful environment in the country so that the fruits of development reach everyone. He noted that our internal and external adversaries are keenly watching the remarkable development of India and want to disrupt the journey of this development, and urged the officers present to be mindful of this fact. He called Pakistan-sponsored cross-border terrorism and jihadi terrorism the biggest external security challenge for the country.

Shri Reddy flagged the increasing use of cyberspace by terrorist organizations as an emerging global challenge and noted the role played by NIA in containing this new threat. He noted that the extent of cyberspace is wider than the national boundaries and therefore exercising effective jurisdiction over it is a very difficult task. He said that the only way to deal with this problem effectively is through international cooperation and coordination between all stakeholders.

Shri Reddy said that for decades India had waged a patient fight against terrorism, and that the Government is determined to eradicate terrorism completely. He hailed the success of security forces in bringing peace to

the states of Punjab, North-East of India, Kashmir and parts of the country affected by Left Wing Extremism as a barometer of the security forces and agencies. He said that as the world's largest democracy, India has a duty to support the international community in fighting the menace of terrorism.

Shri Reddy called a strong legal framework with all the necessary infrastructure and human resources essential to defeat terrorism and noted the strengthening of the legal framework in India by making desired amendments in the anti-terrorist laws against terrorism, and by amending the NIA Act.

Shri Reddy expressed confidence that after the seminar there would be better coordination between ATS /STF of different states and they would emerge stronger and stronger to deal with different aspects of terrorism.

VG/VM/HS/SS