

One militant, policeman killed in Kashmir gunfight

The police claimed to have gunned down a militant in a long drawn Kashmir shootout during which a special police officer (SPO) was killed and 13 security men, including an paramilitary officer, were wounded Wednesday.

Security forces killed one of the hiding militants Wednesday afternoon in Warpora locality of Sopore town, in north Kashmir, 54 km from here, said a police officer here.

A joint team of 22 Rashtriya Rifles (RR), Special Operations Group (SOG) of the police and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Tuesday evening surrounded a suspected militant hideout in the area.

An unofficial report said four guerrillas of the Hizbul Mujahideen militant outfit were holed up inside the house.

'As the joint raiding party tried to enter the house, the troopers came under heavy automatic gunfire from the militants who also hurled grenades,' the police officer said.

In the ensuing 22-hour-long shootout, 'SPO Abdul Rashid was killed on the spot and 13, including seven RR troopers, four SOG personnel and two CRPF men were injured', the officer said.

The injured CRPF men included deputy superintendent Jatinder Kumar, the officer said, adding the exchange of fire was on when reports last came in.

"Senior police, RR and CPRF officers are at the spot supervising the operation,' he said.

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