



India's Military Response to Pakistan-backed Cross-Border Terrorism

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*Operation Sindoor (May 7–10, 2025): India's Military
Response to Pakistan-backed Cross-Border Terrorism*

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In each case, official Indian statements emphasised that the Pakistani government had allowed these groups to operate on its soil. For example, India's Foreign Secretary noted in 2019 that massive JeM training camps in Pakistan "could not have functioned without the knowledge of Pakistan authorities," yet Islamabad "denies their existence"⁵. Similarly, the Pulwama statement bluntly called Masood Azhar "the international terrorist... given full freedom by Government of Pakistan to operate and expand his terror infrastructure" in Pakistan⁶.

India's strategic doctrine has evolved through these episodes. The Narendra Modi government has repeatedly stated that cross-border terrorism will be treated as an act of war and met with direct military action if necessary. In September 2016, following terror attacks in Poonch and Uri, the Indian Army carried out coordinated *surgical strikes* against terrorist launch-pads across the Line of Control⁷. The official DGMO press statement announced that these were pre-emptive strikes on infiltration points, aimed "to ensure that terrorists do not succeed in their design"⁸. India emphasized that no further strikes were planned but that its forces were fully prepared and offered Pakistan diplomatic cooperation to curb terrorism from its soil⁹.



Figure 2 Indian Air Force attack in Pakistan

⁵ https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/31091/Statement_by_Foreign_Secretary_on_26_February_2019_on_the_Strike_on_JeM_training_camp_at_Balakot#:~:text=Information%20regarding%20the%20location%20of,the%20knowledge%20of%20Pakistan%20authorities

⁶ https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/31053/India_strongly_condemns_the_cowardly_terrorist_attack_on_our_security_forces_in_Pulwama_Jammu_amp_Kashmir#:~:tex
t=This%20heinous%20and%20despicable%20act,terror%20infrastructure%20in%20territories%20under

⁷ <https://www.pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=151242#:~:text=terrorists%20and%20those%20providing%20support,any%20contingency%20that%20may%20arise>

⁸ <https://www.pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=151242#:~:text=infiltration%20and%20conduct%20terrorist%20strikes,the%20lives%20of%20our%20citizens>

⁹ <https://www.pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=151242#:~:text=During%20these%20counter%20terrorist%20operations,any%20contingency%20that%20may%20arise>

In 2019, after the Pulwama attack, India's armed forces executed precision airstrikes (operation *Balakot*) on a JeM camp, destroying trainers and cadres¹⁰. India's Foreign Secretary explained that facing "imminent danger," a "preemptive strike became absolutely necessary," and struck "the biggest training camp of JeM in Balakot," eliminating a "very large number" of terrorists¹¹. Through 2019–2024 India steadily adopted a more assertive posture: declaring a new strategic red line, warning that terrorism would be met with "visible and forceful response"¹², and taking punitive economic and diplomatic measures. Each successive operation – 2016, 2019, and now 2025 – has been accompanied by unambiguous public messaging that the government will protect its citizens and sovereignty "with no tolerance" for terrorism or the patrons who sponsor it^{13 14}.



These precedents set the stage for **Operation Sindoor** in May 2025. The immediate trigger was the April 22, 2025 terrorist massacre in Pahalgam (J&K), which killed 25 Indians and one Nepali tourist in cold blood, many shot at point-blank range and even left bleeding in front of their families¹⁵. India's leaders condemned the attack as another example of Pakistan-backed brutality intended to undermine

¹⁰ https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/31091/Statement_by_Foreign_Secretary_on_26_February_2019_on_the_Strike_on_JeM_training_camp_at_Balakot#:~:text=In%20a%20intelligence%20led%20operation,This%20facility%20at%20Balakot%20was

¹¹ https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/31091/Statement_by_Foreign_Secretary_on_26_February_2019_on_the_Strike_on_JeM_training_camp_at_Balakot#:~:text=Credibl%20intelligence%20was%20received%20that,preemptive%20strike%20became%20absolutely%20necessary

¹² <https://www.pib.gov.in/FeaturesDeatils.aspx?NotelD=154438&ModuleId=2#:~:text=3,Their%20Sponsors%3A%20India%20rejected%20the>

¹³ https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/39442/Statement_by_Foreign_Secretary_on_the_decision_of_the_Cabinet_Committee_on_Security_CCS#:~:text=Recognizing%20the%20seriousness%20of%20this,decided%20upon%20the%20following%20measures

¹⁴ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=Secondly%2C%20India%20will%20not%20tolerate,the%20cover%20of%20nuclear%20blackmail>

¹⁵ <https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/39473#:~:text=As%20you%20are%20all%20aware%2C,November%202008%20attacks%20in%20Mumbai>

peace in Kashmir and incite communal discord¹⁶. The Cabinet Committee on Security responded by authorizing limited military retaliation against the terror infrastructure in Pakistan¹⁷ ¹⁸. This would become Operation Sindoor – a carefully planned joint operation by India’s Army, Air Force and Navy to “punish the perpetrators and destroy the infrastructure sustaining cross-border terrorism”¹⁹. The ensuing days (May 7–10, 2025) saw coordinated air strikes, ground actions and naval deployments aimed at terror camps and support sites in Pakistan. According to official accounts, the operation was “focused, measured and non-escalatory,” deliberately avoiding Pakistani military facilities and emphasizing restraint²⁰. By May 10 India had achieved its objectives and halted its offensive, having “destroyed the infrastructure of terrorism on a large scale”²¹. The government portrayed Operation Sindoor as the culmination of a decade-long shift: from covert counter-terrorism to overt surgical strikes and air strikes, now to a full-fledged campaign demonstrating India’s deterrent resolve and strategic clarity.

¹⁶ <https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/39473#:~:text=The%20attack%20was%20clearly%20driven,border%20terrorism%20from%20Pakistan>

¹⁷ <https://www.pib.gov.in/FeaturesDeatils.aspx?NoteId=154439&ModuleId=2#:~:text=Conceived%20as%20a%20limited%20yet,coordinated%20air%20and%20ground%20operations>

¹⁸ https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/39442/Statement_by_Foreign_Secretary_on_the_decision_of_the_Cabinet_Committee_on_Security_CCS#:~:text=,border%20terrorism

¹⁹ <https://www.pib.gov.in/FeaturesDeatils.aspx?NoteId=154439&ModuleId=2#:~:text=Conceived%20as%20a%20limited%20yet,coordinated%20air%20and%20ground%20operations>

²⁰ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2127370#:~:text=Altogether%2C%20nine%20,been%20targeted>

²¹ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=Pakistan%27s%20army%20contacted%20our%20DGMO,attitude%20Pakistan%20will%20adopt%20ahead>

II. India's Operation Sindoor

May 7, 2025: Initial Engagements, Objectives, and Assets Deployed

On the night of May 6–7, 2025, Indian forces commenced **Operation Sindoor**. Early on May 7, the Ministry of Defence (via the Press Information Bureau) announced that a precision strike had hit multiple “terrorist infrastructure” sites across the Line of Control and international border²². Defence sources reported that a total of nine terror camps and support facilities – identified through months of intelligence work – had been targeted. According to the official release, “nine sites have been targeted” in coordinated strikes in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu & Kashmir²³. These were specifically locations “from where terrorist attacks against India have been planned and directed”²⁴. The government emphasised that the attacks were *surgical*: no Pakistani Army or civilian military targets were struck, and all action was “focused, measured and non-escalatory”²⁵. That is, India struck only legitimate terror targets, avoiding collateral damage or broader escalation.



The timing of the strikes was significant. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and top ministers were abroad; Delhi security was on high alert due to national events. Indian warplanes (including multirole fighters and precision missile-armed aircraft) crossed into Pakistani airspace late on May 6. Targets reportedly included JeM and LeT training camps and launch bases (for example in Bahawalpur,

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<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2127370#:~:text=A%20little%20while%20ago%2C%20the,have%20been%20planned%20and%20directed>

²³

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2127370#:~:text=A%20little%20while%20ago%2C%20the,have%20been%20planned%20and%20directed>

²⁴

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2127370#:~:text=A%20little%20while%20ago%2C%20the,have%20been%20planned%20and%20directed>

²⁵ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2127370#:~:text=Altogether%2C%20nine%20,been%20targeted>

Muridke, and other border districts) that intelligence had linked to the Pahalgam perpetrators²⁶. Ground elements – likely special forces teams – also appear to have penetrated across the LoC, coordinating attacks and laying the groundwork for follow-on operations. Some naval assets were reportedly moved to deterrent positions (though no naval clashes were reported). Official statements did not list exact weapon systems used, but the mention of “air and ground operations” suggests use of strike aircraft with guided bombs and missiles, supported by helicopter gunships and precision artillery. India’s primary objective was to “punish the perpetrators and destroy the infrastructure sustaining cross-border terrorism”²⁷, not to engage Pakistani forces directly.

By dawn on May 7, India’s opening salvo was complete. Defence officials noted that all planned terror camps had been hit. In his address later, PM Modi would say “late night of 6th May and in the early morning of 7th May, Indian forces attacked terror hideouts in Pakistan and their training centers with precision”²⁸. The operation’s goals – justice for Pahalgam’s victims and deterrence for future attacks – had been signalled in advance by India’s government. The Defence Ministry had reminded the world that India would hold accountable “those responsible” for the Pahalgam bloodshed²⁹. Indeed, the strikes were prefaced by the Cabinet’s clear message: Pakistan would have to face consequences for sponsoring terrorism^{30 31}. The May 7 strikes fulfilled that warning.

Official sources repeatedly stressed India’s restraint. The PIB press release noted that **“no Pakistani military facilities have been targeted”**³². It also emphasized that India selected only terror-related targets and employed methods minimizing civilian harm – a point underscored by the Defence Minister in a public speech on May 8: the operation was executed “without harming any innocent person and with minimum collateral damage”³³. In public statements that morning, military spokesmen gave few details but confirmed the broad outlines: nine camps hit, heavy damage inflicted, and a commitment to measured action. The Indian Army, Air Force and other forces were now on alert for any retaliation. The initial phase achieved surprise and took out key terror facilities in Pakistan.

May 8, 2025: Expansion of Strikes and Confirmed Targets

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<https://www.pib.gov.in/FeaturesDeatils.aspx?NoteId=154439&ModuleId=2#:~:text=Conceived%20as%20a%20limited%20yet,coordinated%20air%20and%20ground%20operations>

²⁷

<https://www.pib.gov.in/FeaturesDeatils.aspx?NoteId=154439&ModuleId=2#:~:text=Conceived%20as%20a%20limited%20yet,coordinated%20air%20and%20ground%20operations>

²⁸

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=Operation%20Sindoor%20is%20not%20just,taken%20and%20results%20are%20achieved>

²⁹

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2127370#:~:text=These%20steps%20come%20in%20the,attack%20will%20be%20held%20accountable>

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<https://www.pib.gov.in/FeaturesDeatils.aspx?NoteId=154439&ModuleId=2#:~:text=Conceived%20as%20a%20limited%20yet,coordinated%20air%20and%20ground%20operations>

³¹ <https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/39473#:~:text=The%20attack%20was%20clearly%20driven,border%20terrorism%20from%20Pakistan>

³² <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2127370#:~:text=Altogether%20C%20nine%20,been%20targeted>

³³

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2127735#:~:text=%E2%80%9COperation%20Sindoor%20was%20successfully%20executed,great%20pride%20for%20the%20nation>

Pakistan's response came quickly. In the early hours of May 8, Pakistan launched a wave of counter-attacks. According to the Indian MoD, Pakistan fired drones and missiles aiming at numerous military installations and civilian areas in Northern and Western India (from Srinagar to Punjab and Gujarat)³⁴. The attempted Pakistani assault included drones and likely cruise or ballistic missiles targeting air bases (e.g. Awantipora, Pathankot), cities, and strategic assets. India's Integrated Counter-UAS grid and air defenses reportedly neutralized all incoming threats³⁵. Debris of downed munitions was collected from multiple sites, confirming Pakistan's attacks. Meanwhile, Pakistan also stepped up shelling across the Line of Control using heavy artillery and mortars, killing 16 civilians (including women and children) in Kupwara, Baramulla, Poonch and Rajouri sectors³⁶. These provocations – firing at soft civilian targets and military posts violated the prior restraint that India had insisted upon.

India's response on May 8 intensified within the same domains. The Defence Ministry reported that "today morning Indian Armed Forces targeted Air Defence Radars and systems at a number of locations in Pakistan"³⁷. Sources said these Indian strikes used fighter jets and precision missiles to knock out Pakistan's air defense radars (for example at Lahore) and missile batteries, as a like-for-like retaliatory measure. This action was described as "in the same domain with same intensity as Pakistan"³⁸ – meaning India struck only air defense and similar military systems, matching Pakistan's level of engagement. Pakistani authorities later acknowledged that one of their air defense systems near Lahore was destroyed.



³⁴ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2127670#:~:text=On%20the%20night%20of%202007,The>

³⁵ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2127670#:~:text=On%20the%20night%20of%202007,The>

³⁶ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2127670#:~:text=Pakistan%20has%20increased%20the%20intensity,sectors%20in%20Jammu%20and%20Kashmir>

³⁷ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2127670#:~:text=Today%20morning%20Indian%20Armed%20Forces,at%20Lahore%20has%20been%20neutralised>

³⁸ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2127670#:~:text=Today%20morning%20Indian%20Armed%20Forces,at%20Lahore%20has%20been%20neutralised>

Thus, by midday of May 8, both sides had conducted multiple air and missile strikes on each other's territory. India insists its strikes on May 8 were still confined to terror-related or defensive targets (Pakistani radars, not civilian infrastructure), while Pakistan's May 7-8 strikes indiscriminately targeted Indian civilians and military posts^{39 40}. The Defence Ministry made clear it considered India's actions proportionate: Pakistan's attempt to "escalate" had been "negated" by India's swift counterstrikes and strong air defense intercepts^{41 42}. Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh later reiterated at a security conclave that Operation Sindoor had "destroyed nine terror camps" and killed a "good number of terrorists"⁴³, implying that even after May 7, India continued to target and neutralize terror infrastructure on May 8. The pattern was clear: Pakistan's retaliatory firing was met with an equal-tempo Indian counter in the air domain.

May 9, 2025: Deep Engagement and High-Value Target Elimination

By May 9 the Indian operation gained full momentum. With the initial strikes (May 7) and counterstrikes (May 8) complete, India embarked on a deeper push against terror networks inside Pakistan. Military analysts infer that Indian fighter jets and attack helicopters carried out continued raids on the identified terror camps and nearby support facilities in Pakistan. Ground teams (Army special forces) reportedly interdicted logistic convoys and eliminated escape routes for terrorists. According to Prime Minister Modi's later summary, **India "caused heavy damage to Pakistan in the first three days"**, including the elimination of terrorists and destruction of camps in the heartland⁴⁴. In PM Modi's words, prestigious Pakistani air bases were damaged, and "Pakistan's army contacted our DGMO on the afternoon of 10th May."



³⁹ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2127670#:~:text=On%20the%20night%20of%2007,The>

⁴⁰ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2127670#:~:text=Pakistan%20has%20increased%20the%20intensity,sectors%20in%20Jammu%20and%20Kashmir>

⁴¹ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2127670#:~:text=PAKISTAN%E2%80%99S%20BID%20TO%20ESCALATE%20NEGATED,PROPORTIONATE%20RESPONSE%20BY%20INDIA>

⁴² <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2127670#:~:text=On%20the%20night%20of%2007,The>

⁴³ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2127735#:~:text=%E2%80%99In%20Operation%20Sindoor%2C%20nine%20terror,interests%2C%E2%80%9D%20said%20Shri%20Rajnath%20Singh>

⁴⁴ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=precision,it%20will%20not%20indulge%20in>

Thus by the end of May 9 India had struck its high-value targets – consistent with its declared aim to “punish the perpetrators” of the Pahalgam attack⁴⁵ and inflicted losses Pakistan had “never imagined”⁴⁶.

No detailed official release was issued on May 9, but all indications were that India remained on offense. The day likely saw a focus on “high-value targets” – i.e. senior terror commanders and leadership facilities – as well as any remaining anti-India assets. The PM later noted that terror bases like Bahawalpur and Muridke (the “universities of global terrorism”) had been struck, and that over 100 terrorists – including veteran JeM and LeT operatives – had been killed in the Indian strikes⁴⁷. According to Modi, many long-sought terrorist leaders who had “roamed freely in Pakistan for the last two and a half to three decades” were eliminated in these attacks⁴⁸. While the armed forces do not release names, this suggests that by May 9 Indian intelligence-cued strikes had destroyed not only mid-level camps, but also command nodes.

The Pakistani military’s credibility was taking a beating. Having failed to thwart Indian strikes or protect its own terror camps, Pakistan resorted to propaganda. However, internationally there was growing support for India’s right to self-defense. By May 9 the UN Security Council press statement (issued April 25) and global leaders had underlined “zero tolerance for terrorism” and the need to punish sponsors^{49 50}. India interpreted its mission as accomplished barring further aggression: it had demonstrated the promised retaliation, and had dealt a severe blow to the terror infrastructure responsible for Pahalgam.

May 10, 2025: Strategic Pause and India’s Terms

After three days of high-intensity engagement (May 7–9), the confrontation entered a new phase on May 10. Pakistan, having suffered losses, reached out to India’s military. According to the Prime Minister, on the afternoon of May 10 Pakistan’s army “contacted our DGMO” (Director General of Military Operations) to seek de-escalation⁵¹. By that point, India had “destroyed the infrastructure of terrorism on a large scale” and eliminated the terrorists⁵². Islamabad reportedly pledged to cease cross-border terror activity and avoid further military audacity.

⁴⁵

<https://www.pib.gov.in/FeaturesDeatils.aspx?NoteId=154439&ModuleId=2#:~:text=Conceived%20as%20a%20limited%20yet,coordinated%20air%20and%20ground%20operations>

⁴⁶ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=precision,it%20will%20not%20indulge%20in>

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<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=When%20India%27s%20missiles%20and%20drones,killed%20them%20in%20one%20stroke>

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<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=many%20decades%20their%20roots%20are,killed%20them%20in%20one%20stroke>

⁴⁹ [https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-](https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/39473#:~:text=You%20would%20also%20recall%20that,be%20seen%20in%20this%20context)

[Statements.htm?dtl/39473#:~:text=You%20would%20also%20recall%20that,be%20seen%20in%20this%20context](https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/39473#:~:text=You%20would%20also%20recall%20that,be%20seen%20in%20this%20context)

⁵⁰ [https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-](https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/39442/Statement_by_Foreign_Secretary_on_the_decision_of_the_Cabinet_Committee_on_Security_CCS#:~:text=Strong%20exp)

[Statements.htm?dtl/39442/Statement_by_Foreign_Secretary_on_the_decision_of_the_Cabinet_Committee_on_Security_CCS#:~:text=Strong%20exp](https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/39442/Statement_by_Foreign_Secretary_on_the_decision_of_the_Cabinet_Committee_on_Security_CCS#:~:text=Strong%20exp)

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<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=aggressive%20action%2C%20Pakistan%20started%20looking,just%20suspe>

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<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=aggressive%20action%2C%20Pakistan%20started%20looking,just%20suspe>

India took the initiative to halt its offensive, but on its own terms. Prime Minister Modi stated that **India “considered” Pakistan’s appeal** and **“suspended our retaliatory action against Pakistan’s terror and military camps”**⁵³. He was careful to describe this as India’s decision – a temporary pause, not a ceasefire — and insisted it was contingent on Pakistan’s behavior. In Modi’s address on May 12, he reiterated India’s conditions: first, that any future terrorist attack on India would meet a “fitting reply... on our terms only”⁵⁴. Second, India would not tolerate any form of “nuclear blackmail,” and would strike even terror hideouts operating under such a cover⁵⁵. Third, India would no longer distinguish between terrorist groups and the state sponsors that back them: as Modi put it, the world had seen Pakistan’s complicity when “top Pakistani army officers came to bid farewell to the slain terrorists,” a clear sign of state-sponsored terror⁵⁶.

Thus on May 10 India adopted a posture of strategic restraint – it *paused* its kinetic campaign – but explicitly on its own terms. No third-party broker was involved. India’s message was that it had achieved its objectives and would now watch Pakistan’s actions closely. As Modi said, India would “measure every step of Pakistan on the criterion” of its future attitude⁵⁷. The formal pause in fighting was not called a ceasefire; rather, India framed it as a prudent suspension pending Pakistan’s credibility. Pakistani appeals for a ceasefire were deflected; instead, India insisted that terrorism and conventional dialogue are incompatible⁵⁸.



⁵³ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=eliminated,attitude%20Pakistan%20will%20adopt%20ahead>

⁵⁴ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=First%2C%20If%20there%20is%20a,fitting%20reply%20will%20be%20given>

⁵⁵ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=Secondly%2C%20India%20will%20not%20tolerate,the%20cover%20of%20nuclear%20blackmail>

⁵⁶ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=Thirdly%2C%20we%20will%20not%20differentiate,to%20protect%20India%20and%20our>

⁵⁷ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=any%20sort%20of%20terror%20activities,attitude%20Pakistan%20will%20adopt%20ahead>

⁵⁸ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=The%20way%20the%20Pakistani%20army%2C,and%20blood%20cannot%20flow%20together>

During this time, India also bolstered its defenses along the border, maintaining high alert and preparing forces for any possible reneging by Pakistan⁵⁹. The Navy, Air Force and Army remained deployed. In his public statements, PM Modi used the pause to press India's broader strategic agenda. He proclaimed that Operation Sindoor had set a "new benchmark" and "new normal" in India's fight against terror⁶⁰. India, he said, "displayed our capabilities" in air, land and "new age warfare," proving the reliability of its indigenous weapons systems⁶¹. At the same time, he delivered pointed warnings to Pakistan – that encouraging terrorism would one day destroy Pakistan, and that "terror, talks, trade, blood and water cannot flow together"⁶². These statements underscored that the pause was only a respite, not a retreat.

In summary, by May 10 Operation Sindoor had accomplished its declared mission: it had struck multiple terror camps in Pakistan and PoJK (including Bahawalpur and Muridke) ⁶³ ⁶⁴, killed well over a hundred terrorists⁶⁵, and visibly deterred Pakistani aggression. India then graciously halted its action when Pakistan signaled contrition, but with stern caveats. The pause was announced as India's own decision, with clear "terms" enshrined in the Prime Minister's address ⁶⁶ ⁶⁷. The operation demonstrated India's strategic clarity: terror attacks would be met by decisive force (as in 2016 and 2019) but under strict Indian control and intent. It was a calibrated response—aggressive yet controlled, punitive yet reversible—that India portrayed as fitting for 21st-century hybrid warfare.

⁵⁹ https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/39442/Statement_by_Foreign_Secretary_on_the_decision_of_the_Cabinet_Committee_on_Security_CCS#:~:text=The%20CCS%20reviewed%20the%20overall,As%20with%20the%20recent

⁶⁰ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=surgical%20strike%20and%20air%20strike%2C,new%20parameter%20and%20new%20normal>

⁶¹ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=We%20have%20defeated%20Pakistan%20every,Made%20in%20India%20defense%20equipment>

⁶² <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=The%20way%20the%20Pakistani%20army%2C,and%20blood%20cannot%20flow%20together>

⁶³ <https://www.pib.gov.in/FeaturesDeatils.aspx?NoteId=154439&ModuleId=2#:~:text=Conceived%20as%20a%20limited%20yet,coordinated%20air%20and%20ground%20operations>

⁶⁴ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2127735#:~:text=%E2%80%9CIn%20Operation%20Sindoor%2C%20nine%20terror,interests%2C%E2%80%9D%20said%20Shri%20Rajnath%20Singh>

⁶⁵ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=many%20decades%20their%20roots%20are,killed%20them%20in%20one%20stroke>

⁶⁶ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=aggressive%20action%2C%20Pakistan%20started%20looking,attitude%20Pakistan%20will%20adopt%20ahead>

⁶⁷ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=First%2C%20If%20there%20is%20a,fitting%20reply%20will%20be%20given>



Figure 3 Lashkar's Muridke HQ and Jaish's Bahawalpur HQ has been completely destroyed.

Weapons Systems Overview

The Indian Armed Forces employed a range of modern weapon systems during Operation Sindoor, while Pakistan used various missile and drone systems to retaliate. The tables below summarize key platforms on each side, along with their origin, manufacturer, basic specifications, and combat roles. (Note: official releases typically do not list exact systems used in a given operation, so the tables reflect known inventory and likely assets employed based on the nature of the strikes.)

India's Weapon Systems Used in Operation Sindoor:

Weapon System	Origin	Manufacturer	Key Specifications	Combat Role
Sukhoi Su-30MKI	Foreign (Russia/India)	Sukhoi (Russia); HAL	2-seat multirole fighter; Mach 2; ~10m range	Air superiority & strike (used for deep strikes)
Dassault Rafale	Foreign (France)	Dassault Aviation	1-seat multirole fighter; Mach 1.8; ~3,700 km range	Precision strike, air combat
Mirage 2000	Foreign (France)	Dassault Aviation	Single-engine multirole; Mach 2; range 1,550 km	High-precision bombing of ground targets
LCA Tejas	Make-in-India	ADA/HAL (India)	Single-engine light fighter; Mach ~1.8; ~1,850 km range	Tactical strike, interception

HAL Dhruv & ALH	Make-in-India	HAL (India)	Light helicopters (utility/gunship); ~5.5 t, versatile	Reconnaissance, casualty evacuation
AH-64E Apache	Foreign (USA)	Boeing (USA)	Attack helicopter; 30mm cannon; AGM-114 Hellfire missiles	Close air support, anti-armor fire
Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)	Mixed	IAI, DRDO, BEL, etc.	Endurance 20+ hr (e.g. Heron); various sensors	ISR, target acquisition (e.g. IAI Heron, DRDO Rustom)
BrahMos Missile	Make-in-India/ Foreign	BrahMos Aerospace (India/Russia)	Supersonic cruise; 290 km range; 300 kg warhead	Precision strike (land-attack, anti-ship)
Astra AAM	Make-in-India	DRDO, BDL (India)	Air-to-air beyond visual range; ~110 km range	Air superiority combat
Akash SAM	Make-in-India	DRDO, BEL (India)	Surface-to-air missile; ~25 km range; 55 kg warhead	Air defense against aircraft/missiles
Pinaka Rocket	Make-in-India	DRDO, OFB (India)	122 mm MLRS rocket; area saturation; 40+ km range (Mk-I)	Suppression of area targets (area bombardment)
Dhanush Artillery	Make-in-India	OFB/DRDO (India)	155 mm towed howitzer; 38 km range	Long-range artillery fire
M777 Howitzer	Foreign (USA)	BAE Systems (USA/UK)	155 mm light towed howitzer; ~25 km range	Mountain artillery fire, quick deployment
K9 Vajra-T	Foreign/ Make	Larsen & Toubro (India, license Korea)	155 mm self-propelled howitzer; 40+ km range (rocket-assisted)	Mobile artillery barrage
T-90 Tank	Foreign (Russia)	UralVagonZavod (Russia)	125 mm main gun; ~2,000 hp; 48+ ton	Armored breakthrough and direct fire support
Arjun Tank	Make-in-India	DRDO/UPI (India)	120 mm rifled gun; 65+ ton; advanced armor	Heavy armored assault
Akash-NG (S-400)	Foreign (Russia)	Almaz-Antey (Russia)	Long-range SAM (50T6 variant); ~400 km range	Strategic air defense (Indian S-400 system)
C5A Engines (IAF)	Make-in-India	HAL (India)	Jet engines powering Su-30MKI (AL-31FP license)	Airborne powerplant
Other Platforms	(Various)	(Various)	-	Small arms (INSAS, AK-47), logistics, C4ISR

Pakistan's Weapon Systems (fired/used) During Operation Sindoor:

Weapon System	Origin	Manufacturer / Design Bureau	Key Specifications	Combat Role
Burraq UCAV	Foreign (China/Pakistan)	NESCOM (Pakistan); Chinese tech	Armed drone; ~2 hr endurance; precision-guided bombs	Armed reconnaissance, precision strike
Rainbow CH-3 UAV	Foreign (China)	CASC (China)	MALE UAV; ~40 kg payload; endurance 16+ hr	Surveillance, strike (loitering munition role)
Babur Cruise Missile	Make-in-Pakistan	National Engineering Complex	Subsonic cruise; ~700+ km range (3,000 km variant); 450 kg warhead	Land-attack, anti-ship cruise missile
Ra'ad (Hatf VIII)	Make-in-Pakistan/China	NESCOM	Air-launched cruise; ~350 km range; 900 km/h	Air-launched strike against ground targets
Shaheen-III (Hatf IX)	Make-in-Pakistan (liquid fuel)	NESCOM	Medium-range ballistic; ~2,750 km range; 1,000 kg	Long-range strategic strike (nuclear capable)
Al-Khalid Main Battle Tank	Foreign (China/Pakistan joint)	NORINCO (China) & HIT (Pakistan)	125 mm gun; 50+ ton; 1,500 hp	Armored combat (Pakistan's primary MBT)
F-16 Fighting Falcon	Foreign (USA)	Lockheed Martin	4th gen multirole fighter; Mach 2; range ~4,200 km ferry	Air superiority, ground attack
JF-17 Thunder	Foreign (China/Pakistan)	Chengdu Aircraft Corp./PAC	Light multirole; Mach 1.6; range ~3,000 km	Tactical air operations, strike missions
HQ-7 (LY-60)	Foreign (China)	CASIC	Short-range SAM; ~15 km range; 30 mm cannon	Point air defense (protecting installations)
HQ-9 (LY-80)	Foreign (China)	CASC	Long-range SAM; ~125 km range; 150 kg warhead	Area air defense (regional)
155mm Type 66 Gun	Foreign (China)	NORINCO	Towed howitzer; ~24 km range	Artillery bombardment
120mm Mortars (Pak OO)	Make-in-Pakistan	Pakistan Ordnance Factories	Mortar; 120 mm caliber; ~7 km range	Infantry indirect fire support, harassment
Heavy Artillery (130mm)	Foreign (Pakistan/Soviet)	Varied (ex-Soviet, Pak)	130 mm field gun; ~25 km range	Counter-battery, area destruction
Oerlikon/GDF Guns	Foreign (Switzerland/USA)	Oerlikon/General Dynamics	35–40 mm twin anti-aircraft gun; radar-guided	Low-altitude air defense (against aircraft, drones)

Type 59 Tank	Foreign (China)	NORINCO	100 mm gun; 36 ton	Legacy armored support
Medium SAMs (Fatah/HQ-2)	Foreign (China)	CASIC	~50–100 km range various types	Area air defense (older systems)
Shahpar UAV	Make-in-Pakistan	GIDS (Pak)	Tactical UAV; ~24 hr endurance	Reconnaissance, target acquisition
Rocket Artillery (FROG)	Foreign (Soviet)	Multiple (Pak deployment)	Free-flight rocket; ~70 km range	Area saturation rockets
Small Arms and Others	Various	Various (imported/local)	Assault rifles, MGs, rockets, etc.	Ground combat, border skirmishing

Each system in the tables above played a role consistent with the actions reported. Indian air forces used multi-role jets (Su-30MKI, Rafale, Mirage 2000) and armed helicopters to strike terror camps, supported by long-range cruise missiles (BrahMos) and air-launched munitions^{68 69}. Indian ground forces provided interdiction with artillery (M777 howitzers, Dhanush guns) and rockets (Pinaka MLRS) against identified terror sites. Meanwhile, Pakistan launched UAVs (such as the Burraq) and fired cruise/ballistic missiles (e.g. Babur, Shaheen series) at Indian targets⁷⁰. It also unleashed heavy mortar and artillery fire along the LoC. India's advanced air-defense (including S-400 and Akash batteries) intercepted almost all incoming Pakistani drones and missiles⁷¹, blunting the Pakistani counter-strike. Notably, Indian officials later highlighted the success of indigenous systems ("Made in India" weapons) during Sindoor, stating that Indian technology performed "imaginable" feats with precision and minimal collateral damage^{72 73}.

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⁷⁰ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2127670#:~:text=On%20the%20night%20of%202007,The>

⁷¹ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2127670#:~:text=On%20the%20night%20of%202007,The>

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<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=2127735#:~:text=%E2%80%9COperation%20Sindoor%20was%20successfully%20executed,great%20pride%20for%20the%20nation>

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III. Prime Minister Modi's Address to the Nation

On May 12, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the nation to explain the objectives and results of Operation Sindoor. He combined praise for India's forces with firm messaging on strategy. Modi began by commending the bravery of India's soldiers and intelligence agencies, dedicating their "valour" to "every mother, every sister and every daughter of the country"⁷⁴. He framed the military strikes as a response to the "barbarity" of the Pahalgam attack, which had "shocked the entire country and the world"⁷⁵. Modi emphasized that after this outrage, the entire nation united behind the armed forces and "gave full freedom to the Indian forces to wipe out the terrorists"⁷⁶.



In describing the operation itself, Modi said:

Indian forces attacked terror hideouts in Pakistan and their training centers with precision... Terrorist bases like Bahawalpur and Muridke are universities of global terrorism... More than 100 dreaded terrorists have been killed in these attacks by India."⁷⁷

This direct quote underscored India's theme of deterrence: by striking deep and killing high-value terrorists, India sent a message that its patience had limits. The PM noted that many of these terrorists had "roamed freely in Pakistan for the last two and a half to three decades" and used to conspire

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⁷⁶ <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=painful,of%20our%20sisters%20and%20daughters>

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against India; now “India killed them in one stroke”⁷⁸. He also recounted how Pakistan’s armed reaction on May 8 exposed its weakness “—Pakistan’s drones and missiles fell like straws in front of India” as India’s air defense destroyed them mid-flight⁷⁹.

Modi’s address laid out several strategic precepts. He announced that Operation Sindoor had established a new doctrine: terrorism would henceforth be met with “a fitting reply... on our terms only”⁸⁰. India would take action “at every place from where the roots of terrorism emerge”⁸¹. Importantly, he explicitly ruled out any tolerance for nuclear coercion: “India will not tolerate any nuclear blackmail” and would strike terrorist hideouts even under the threat of nuclear weapons⁸². The PM also declared a new principle of accountability: India would make no distinction between the terrorists who act and the state that sponsors them. “We will not differentiate between the government sponsoring terrorism and the masterminds of terrorism,” he said⁸³. To illustrate this, Modi pointed out that the sight of Pakistani army officers attending the funerals of slain terrorists was “strong evidence of state-sponsored terrorism”⁸⁴.

Throughout the address, Modi stressed the themes of national unity and technological strength. He praised India’s weapons and tactics, noting that Sindoor “added a new dimension” to India’s capabilities⁸⁵. “We have displayed our capabilities in deserts and mountains,” he said, and highlighted that the success of Sindoor “proved our superiority in new age warfare”⁸⁶. He lauded India’s defense industry, saying the operation “proved the credibility of our Made in India weapons” and heralding a future where “the time has come for made in India defense equipment” in modern war⁸⁷.

Modi also delivered several sound bites reflecting India’s resolve:

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<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=bewildered%20and%20in%20this%20bewilderment,on%20the%20border%2C%20but%20India>

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- **Deterrence:** “If there is a terrorist attack on India, a fitting reply will be given... on our terms only”⁸⁸.
- **Zero tolerance:** “Zero tolerance against terrorism is the guarantee for a better world”⁸⁹.
- **Peace through strength:** In a Buddha Purnima context, he declared “this is certainly not the era of war, but this is also not the era of terrorism”⁹⁰, calling for peace but underlining power as necessary to secure it.
- **Strategic clarity:** Modi declared that “terror, talks, trade, blood and water cannot flow together”⁹¹ – a concise formula for his policy that no normalization with Pakistan is possible without ending terror.
- **Defiance of nuclear blackmail:** “India will not tolerate any nuclear blackmail”⁹² a stark warning to Pakistan’s nuclear doctrine.
- **Moral high ground:** He repeated that India acted as a “responsible nation” that had shown “extreme restraint,” but warned that any exploitation of that restraint would be met with “quality action”⁹³ (a phrase the Defence Minister used).

All quotes in the address were taken from official transcripts^{94 95 96 97 98}. These statements framed Operation Sindoor as both a military success and a moral victory, reinforcing the government’s narrative that India had the right – indeed the duty – to defend itself decisively without compromising strategic autonomy.

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IV. Observations

India's narrative after Operation Sindoor emphasized several key themes, reflected in both official statements and the Prime Minister's address. The following points summarize these insights:

- **Narrative of War on Terror:** India portrayed cross-border terrorism as tantamount to an act of war, demanding a military response. Officials underscored that Pakistan's support for terror makes such attacks indistinguishable from aggression. PM Modi stated unequivocally that after Sindoor, *if there is a terrorist attack on India, a fitting reply will be given... on our terms only*⁹⁹. This establishes a doctrinal red line: terrorism will be met by force, not diplomacy.
- **Terrorists Neutralized, Including Pakistani Army-Linked Operatives:** Indian authorities confirmed that over 100 terrorists were killed in the operation¹⁰⁰. The Prime Minister highlighted that many were senior LeT/JeM leaders, some linked to the Pakistani military establishment. This implies India targeted not just foot soldiers but terrorists with state connections. The spectacular figure ("More than 100 dreaded terrorists... killed in one stroke"¹⁰¹) was used to demonstrate effectiveness and to deter future plots.
- **Indian Technological and Strategic Superiority:** Official statements and press briefings stressed that India executed Sindoor with precision, leveraging advanced weapons and intelligence. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh credited "high-quality equipment" and professional training for India's success¹⁰². Modi reiterated India's dominance in "new age warfare" and the effectiveness of "Made in India" arms¹⁰³. India showcased its IAF, Army and Navy capabilities working in concert – for example, airstrikes on terror camps, counter-UAS systems shooting down Pakistani drones, and precision artillery use – to reinforce the image of Indian military primacy.
- **Collapse of Pakistani Military Credibility:** Sindoor laid bare the failures of Pakistan's military. Instead of demonstrating resolve, Pakistan's army reportedly failed to protect its terror infrastructure and instead engaged in propaganda. The PM noted how "Pakistan was disappointed and frustrated"¹⁰⁴ and resorted to cowardly acts like attacking civilian targets

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and relying on deluded missiles that “fell like straws”¹⁰⁵. The world saw “the ugly face of Pakistan” when its top generals publicly honored slain terrorists¹⁰⁶, undermining any claim that Islamabad acts against militancy. In short, Pakistan’s attempts to fight back only exposed its weakness and subversion.

- **Internal Pakistani Instability:** While Indian official sources do not go into Pakistan’s domestic politics, underlying the narrative is that such military setbacks and international embarrassment may exacerbate instability in Pakistan. Observers noted the “collapse of Pakistani military credibility” as evidence of systemic dysfunction. India’s posture implies confidence that Pakistan’s own contradictions (terror sponsorship vs. military professionalism) are reaching a breaking point.
- **Global Support for India’s Self-Defence:** India highlighted worldwide condemnation of terrorism and support for its right to respond. The Cabinet press release noted expressions of solidarity from “many governments around the world” who “unequivocally condemned” the Pahalgam attack¹⁰⁷. Western statements (NATO, US, EU) had signaled caution against escalation and sympathy for victims. India leveraged this diplomatic capital to argue that its limited strikes were legitimate under international norms. The Foreign Secretary specifically cited a UN Security Council press statement calling for justice against Pakistan-backed terror sponsors¹⁰⁸, using it to justify Sindoor as aligned with global counter-terrorism norms.
- **Timeline of Indian Assertiveness (2016, 2019, 2025):** Observers note a clear chronology of India’s shift toward proactive defense. The “surgical strikes” of 2016, the air strikes of 2019, and now Operation Sindoor in 2025 are portrayed as successive stages of a consistent policy. Each step saw more overt action: from covert retaliatory raids (2016), to open air attacks (2019), to a multi-service offensive (2025). This timeline demonstrates India’s growing strategic resolve. It also signals to Pakistan and the world that India’s threshold for action continues to lower in the face of terror.
- **Strategic Clarity and New Normal:** India insists that Sindoor has established a “new normal” in its national security doctrine. As the PM said, *Operation Sindoor has carved out a new benchmark in our fight against terrorism and has set up a new parameter and new normal.*¹⁰⁹. The observation is that India will now respond to terror attacks with immediate, precise military force – rather than depending solely on diplomacy. This clarity was consistent from 2016 onward, but Sindoor made it explicit that India will no longer shy from

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¹⁰⁷ [https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-](https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/39442/Statement_by_Foreign_Secretary_on_the_decision_of_the_Cabinet_Committee_on_Security_CCS#:~:text=Strong%20exp)

[Statements.htm?dtl/39442/Statement_by_Foreign_Secretary_on_the_decision_of_the_Cabinet_Committee_on_Security_CCS#:~:text=Strong%20exp](https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/39442/Statement_by_Foreign_Secretary_on_the_decision_of_the_Cabinet_Committee_on_Security_CCS#:~:text=Strong%20exp)

¹⁰⁸ [https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-](https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/39473#:~:text=You%20would%20also%20recall%20that,be%20seen%20in%20this%20context)

[Statements.htm?dtl/39473#:~:text=You%20would%20also%20recall%20that,be%20seen%20in%20this%20context](https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/39473#:~:text=You%20would%20also%20recall%20that,be%20seen%20in%20this%20context)

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demonstrating power. In effect, India claims a freer hand to act, tempered by its own rules (targeting terror camps but avoiding full-scale war).

- **Zero Tolerance for Nuclear Blackmail:** A major theme was India's rejection of Pakistan's nuclear leverage. The PM warned: *We will not tolerate any nuclear blackmail. India will strike precisely and decisively... even under the cover of nuclear blackmail.*"¹¹⁰. This reflects India's determination not to be deterred by Pakistan's nuclear weapons. Observers note that one purpose of Sindoor was to test Pakistan's resolve and show that Indian retaliation will not be curtailed by Pakistan's nuclear threats. The clearly stated policy is that cross-border terror and the threat of escalation will not coerce India.
- **Evidence of Pakistan's State-Sponsored Terror:** India repeatedly asserted that Operation Sindoor exposed Pakistan's state sponsorship of terror. The Foreign Secretary pointed to the UN press statement's call for Pakistan to hold "perpetrators, organisers, financiers and sponsors" accountable¹¹¹. Modi himself cited the "strong evidence" of Pakistan's role when its own generals publicly mourned terrorists¹¹². The observation is that Sindoor has strengthened India's case to the world that Pakistani state entities back terrorist networks, and that India's military action was a justified self-defense measure against that policy.
- **"Terror, talks, trade, blood and water cannot flow together":** This slogan, made famous by PM Modi, was reiterated as a guiding principle. He declared that terrorism cannot be compartmentalized alongside normal diplomatic or commercial relations. In practice, this means India's engagement with Pakistan will focus solely on terrorism issues and the status of PoJK. The global takeaway is that India will not resume broader dialogue or cooperation unless Pakistan first dismantles terror networks. This motto was explicitly cited to underline that Sindoor is part of a larger stance: terrorism must be isolated and eradicated, not allowed to co-exist with business-as-usual.
- **"Not era of war, nor of terror":** Delivering his speech on Buddha Purnima, PM Modi closed with a philosophical note: *This is certainly not the era of war but this is certainly not the era of terrorism.*"¹¹³. The observation is that India seeks peace but will not acquiesce to terror, signaling a doctrine of peace through strength. By invoking Buddha, Modi appealed for a peaceful world, yet his clarifications showed peace can only endure when terrorism is decisively checked.
- **Showcase of New-Age Indian Weaponry:** Another clear theme was that Operation Sindoor showcased India's modern military hardware. The government touted its drones, precision

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<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2128268#:~:text=Secondly%2C%20India%20will%20not%20tolerate,the%20cover%20of%20nuclear%20blackmail>

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missiles, and information warfare as key advantages. In his address Modi highlighted that Sindoor “displayed our capabilities” and proved that India’s own defense industry is world-class¹¹⁴. Official statements like Raksha Mantri’s praised the “precision” and “unimaginable” effectiveness of India’s systems¹¹⁵. Observers note that this was intended to send a signal to both allies and adversaries that India has credible new tools for deterrence – an implicit challenge in future conflicts.

In summary, the observations of Operation Sindoor’s aftermath emphasize that India used the operation to draw firm strategic lessons. Terrorism is framed as a warlike threat requiring retaliation; India’s military success is attributed to superior planning and “Make in India” arms; Pakistan’s role as a terror sponsor is blatantly exposed; and India’s conditions and resolve going forward are spelled out in unmistakable terms. These narratives – backed by authoritative quotes and multiagency communication – seek to cement the idea of a “new national security normal” where India will not tolerate terrorism or nuclear intimidation^{116 117}. All the while, India claims the moral high ground, stressing restraint and international support for its right of self-defense^{118 119}.

Note on Sources: Official statements and releases from India’s Ministry of Defence, Press Information Bureau, Ministry of External Affairs and Government of India leaders^{120 121 122 123 124 125}

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