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India's Counter Terrorism Doctrine And Global Impact Of The Operation Sindoor

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Abstract
India's counter-terrorism doctrine has undergone a radical transformation where Operation Sindoor (May 7, 2025) is less than a willful strategic signalling of determination against cross-border terrorism (read: emanating from Pakistan). Conceived in retaliation to the April 22, 2025, Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 civilians, Operation Sindoor was a meticulously technology-driven operation inflicted by the Indian forces and involving surgical precision strikes on nine terrorist facilities across Pakistan and its Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) using homegrown systems like the Akash missile, D4 anti-drone system, and Nagastra-1 loitering munition. "It wasn't just that we neutralized over 100 terrorists but also the sort of clear-cut message that we wanted to give to Pakistan, a Rubicon that we had crossed at a very high political levels, and here the message is what was important, and that message was given through precision targeting, stand-off weapon, missiles with supersonic speeds and a telling effect through the electromagnetic power,". Signaled a shift in doctrine away from deterrence by denial, undermining the distinction between non-state actors and their state sponsors, and calling Pakistan's nuclear bluff. Operation Sindoor also elicited support of the major powers internationally (having also been whitewashed by Indian diplomats), in which it was presented as a bona fide action in self-defense under Article 51 of the UN Charter. The operation highlighted the emergence of India's defense industry, with post-operation contracts boosting exports and indigenization of the defense industrial base under the "Atmanirbhar Bharat" drive. This abstract explores the operation's strategic execution, its role in redefining India's counter-terrorism framework, and its broader implications for regional stability, global security paradigms, and the evolving norms of state-sponsored terrorism accountability.
Keywords *Security Doctrine, Brahmos, Nuclear Deterrence, Indigenous Missile System, Counter Terrorism, Pahalgam Massacre, Anti-Drone System, Regional Security, All-party delegation, Defense Industry Growth*

INTRODUCTION

India launched Operation Sindoor on the night of 7 May 2025. The operation was launched in response to the barbaric Pahalgam terrorist attack in which 25 Indians and one Nepali citizen were murdered. Pakistani attackers asked people their religion, and killed them. A clear attempt to incite communal violence, this marked a shift from cross-border attacks to dividing India from within. It was a massive attack on Indian territory that affected the tourism of Jammu and Kashmir. We lived up to the commitment that those responsible for this attack will be held accountable, and then India's top leadership took a bold decision to launch an operation. Finally Indian Armed Forces carried out a precision strike at terrorist camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir, including centers in Bahawalpur and Muridke linked to Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Taiba—both globally designated terrorist organizations. Altogether, 9 sites have been targeted. Backed by real-time satellite intelligence and advanced guided munitions, the strikes eliminated over 100 terrorists and decimated key infrastructure supporting cross-border terrorism.

Although many operations have been done in the past but Operation Sindoor was bigger than all of them. It shows the Modi doctrine that it's today's India, "Na Jhukega Na Rukega". Also, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in the Security Council meeting, "This time, our response will not just send a message, it will reshape the security landscape." India framed Operation Sindoor within universally accepted principles of international law regarding self-defense. Officials consistently emphasized that the actions undertaken were "focused, measured, and non-escalatory. The operation showcased India's ability to conduct targeted strikes with precision and restraint, while also highlighting the complexities of the region's geopolitical landscape. This type of operation is an example of proactive diplomacy and secures India's regional security. In this research paper, we also discuss the impact all all-party delegation.

Research Objectives

The primary objectives of this research are:

- Suspension of the Indus water treaty
- To examine how the Indian armed forces have conducted calibrated military strikes
- to evaluate the future of space warfare
- to examine how effectively the Indian air defense system defends the people of India
- to compare the operation Sindoor with the previous operations like Surgical strikes (2016) and Balakot air strikes (2019)
- to evaluate the role of indigenous Rockets like the Akash surface-to-air missile and BrahMos supersonic cruise missile
- to evaluate the growth in the defense industry of India for the upcoming years

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current study tries to explain India's new tendency towards terrorism and the impact of these types of operations on a global level. The nature of this research is completely descriptive. It is conceptual research based on previous research in this area. All the data that has been used in this research has been collected from secondary sources, like- journals, newspapers, government websites, and various e-sources.

From stability to instability in the Indus water treaty

The Indus Water Treaty was signed in September 1960, under World Bank mediation. It divided the waters of the Indus basin between India and Pakistan, allocating the eastern rivers (Ravi, Beas, Sutlej) to India and the western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab) to Pakistan. India has been sharing water with Pakistan for over 60 years, which is a long time, and the Indus Water Treaty faced many wars, but the Pahalgam massacre sets a different scenario between India and Pakistan. In the late April 2025 government of India suspended the Indus water treaty and Prime minister Narendra Modi said on Indian Television he made it clear why India took this step, saying, "Water and blood cannot flow together," meaning India could no longer share water peacefully while terrorism continued also Prime Minister Narendra Modi, however, has made it clear his government will not reconsider this decision, so long as Pakistan continues to support cross-border terrorism. In a counter-escalatory gesture, Pakistan has suspended the Simla agreement as part of a series of retaliatory actions. The Simla Agreement was aimed at promoting friendly and harmonious relationships and establishing peace between India and Pakistan. The accord signed on July 2, 1972, by the then Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and Pakistan President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, ended in the creation of Bangladesh by splitting from Pakistan after India's intervention. However, these moves are not good for the relations, India and Pakistan.

Indian Armed Forces showcased a top-level military strategy.

The operation unfolded on all levels: land, air, and sea. It showcased better coordination between the Army, Air Force, and Navy. The Indian Air Force played a very crucial role in conducting accurate air strikes over the terror camps in Pakistan. It conducted high-impact air operations on targets such as Nur Khan Air Base and the Rahimyar Air Base. The Indian Air Force's air defense system protected Indian airspace from enemy drones and UAV attacks.

On a ground level Indian Army's artillery regiment was worth seeing, artillery fired continuously and retaliated against every single attack of Pakistan. The Army's air defense units worked in unitedly with the Air Force, deploying a wide array of systems ranging from shoulder-fired MANPADS and LLAD guns to long-range SAMs. These units were helpful to counter the attacks of drone and munition launches by Pakistan. After all of the enemy's attacks, Indian forces succeeded in securing both military and civilian.

The role of the Indian Navy in Operation Sindoor was very crucial. The Indian Navy had sensed every danger and deployed 36 ships, including the INS Vikrant-led Carrier Battle Group, to enforce a blockade near Karachi within 96 hours of the Pahalgam attack. This confined Pakistan's naval and air forces, with live-fire drills and robust maritime domain awareness ensuring deterrence. The Navy's air defense, led by MiG-29K fighters, prevented enemy incursions, and its coordinated pressure with the Army and Air Force forced Pakistan to seek a ceasefire by May 10, 2025.

Difference between the operations Sindoor, Balakot strike, and Surgical strike

Operation Sindoor, Balakot, and Surgical Strikes were all aimed at the same target but differed in scale, technology used, and targets.

Aspect	Surgical Strike (2016)	Balakot Airstrike (2019)	Operation Sindoor (2025)
Trigger	Uri attack (19 soldiers)	Pulwama attack (40 CRPF)	Pahalgam attack (26 civilians)
Date	Sept 28-29, 2016	Feb 26, 2019	May 7, 2025
Type	Ground-based	Air-based	Tri-service (missile/drone)
Targets	7 launchpads in PoK	1 JeM camp in Balakot	9 camps in PoK and Pakistan
Depth	A few km across the LoC	60-80 km inside Pakistan	Up to 100 km inside Pakistan
Technology	Rifles, grenades	Precision bombs, jets	Standoff missiles, drones
Casualties (Claimed)	35–40 terrorists	250–300 terrorists (disputed)	50–100 terrorists
Pakistan's Response	Denied strike	Retaliatory airstrikes	Artillery fire, vowed response
Geopolitical Scope	Limited (PoK)	Significant (mainland Pakistan)	Expansive (multiple regions)

India's future in space warfare

The origin of space warfare is considered to have begun in 1944, when a German engineer, Wernher von Braun, developed a missile named the V-2. This missile had a liquid-fueled engine. The V2 rocket was the first man-made object that entered space. Actually, the V2 rocket was made for WW2, but it laid the foundation of the first space militarization. After WW2, two great powers came forward in front of the world, one was the US and the other was the USSR. Then a space race starts between these two. After this, the U.S.S.R. launched its first rocket, Sputnik 1st is launched, in 1957, and with this the space exploration began again. Parallel to all these events, in the vision of Vikram Sarabhai, India was starting its space program. Dr. Vikram Sarabhai established an independent Indian space program with limited resources and geopolitical challenges. Dr Sarabhai advocated for a dedicated space research committee. After his tireless efforts, his dream started turning into reality. In 1962, India's first PM, J.L. Nehru, approved the creation of the Indian National Committee for Space Research. Later on, 15 August 1969, it was renamed as the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), which was created to develop technology for the socio-economic benefit of the nation.

While space warfare emerged as a strategic concern globally, India pursued a peaceful and developmental vision of space technology under Sarabhai's leadership, even as it kept pace with advancements in global space capabilities. This duality highlights the contrasting pathways nations took during the formative years of space exploration and warfare. During the 1960s, significant advancements were taking place in space exploration globally, and India was eager to participate in this emerging field. Recognizing the importance of space technology, India sought to understand and explore space while aspiring to launch its rockets.

In November 1963, India took its first step by launching a sounding rocket, supplied by the United States and inspired by NASA's space efforts. This marked the beginning of India's journey into space exploration. On November 20, 1967, India achieved another milestone by successfully developing and launching the Rohini-75, a sounding rocket designed domestically. This period represented the initial phase of India's space program, laying the foundation for the nation's future advancements in space technology.

In 1975, India launched its first artificial satellite, Aryabhata, marking a groundbreaking achievement for the nation's space program. This historic milestone was made possible when the satellite was launched

aboard a Russian rocket from the Soviet Union (USSR). The success of Aryabhata demonstrated India's potential in space exploration and set the stage for future advancements.

In the 1980s, India took a major step forward by developing its first indigenous launch vehicle, the Satellite Launch Vehicle-3 (SLV-3). With this launch vehicle, India successfully placed the Rohini Satellite into orbit, a significant accomplishment that boosted the country's confidence in its technological capabilities. Building on this success, India began working on more advanced launch systems, including the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) and the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV), which would later become cornerstones of its space program.

In 1983, ISRO collaborated with NASA to launch the INSAT (Indian National Satellite) system, a multipurpose satellite network designed for telecommunications, weather forecasting, and broadcasting. This system revolutionized India's ability to deliver television broadcasts and provide accurate weather predictions.

India's achievements in space exploration gained further recognition in April 1984, when Rakesh Sharma became the first Indian to travel to space. As part of a joint mission with the Soviet Union, Sharma spent eight days aboard the Soyuz T-11 spacecraft, conducting scientific experiments. His journey was not only a testament to India's growing space ambitions but also a result of strategic foreign policy and the intellectual prowess of individuals like Rakesh Sharma. His iconic reply, "Sare Jahan Se Achha," when asked by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi how India looked from space, remains etched in the country's memory as a proud moment.

This period highlighted the collaborative efforts, technological advancements, and visionary leadership that propelled India's space program to new heights.

Post-1984: Evolution of India's Space Program

1980s–1990s: Building Indigenous Capabilities

- Satellite Development: After Sharma's mission, ISRO focused on self-reliance in satellite technology. The successful launch of the INSAT-1B satellite in 1983 (preceding Sharma's flight) was followed by the INSAT-2 series in the early 1990s, India's first indigenously developed multipurpose satellites for communication, broadcasting, and meteorology. INSAT-2A, launched in 1992, marked a significant step in reducing dependence on foreign systems.
- Launch Vehicles: The development of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) began in the 1980s, with its first successful launch in 1994 (PSLV-D2). This versatile rocket became ISRO's workhorse, enabling launches of remote-sensing satellites like the IRS series, starting with IRS-1B in 1991, which bolstered India's capabilities in earth observation for agriculture, disaster management, and urban planning.
- International Collaboration: The Indo-Soviet partnership continued to influence India's space program, with technical assistance in launch vehicle technology. However, ISRO's focus shifted toward indigenous innovation, driven by the need for strategic autonomy amid geopolitical constraints, such as sanctions following India's 1974 nuclear test.

2000s: Expanding Horizons

- Chandrayaan-1 (2008): India's first lunar mission, launched on October 22, 2008, was a landmark achievement. Chandrayaan-1's Moon Impact Probe confirmed water molecules on the lunar surface, a discovery credited globally and placing India among elite spacefaring nations. The mission showcased ISRO's ability to execute complex interplanetary missions on a modest budget of ~$80 million.
- GSLV and Cryogenic Technology: The Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) program progressed, with GSLV-D1 in 2001 marking India's entry into heavier payload launches. The development of indigenous cryogenic engines, despite delays due to technology transfer restrictions post-1998 nuclear tests, culminated in the successful GSLV Mk II launch in 2014, solidifying India's capability to place communication satellites in geostationary orbits.
- Global Recognition: ISRO's cost-effective approach gained international acclaim. The PSLV's reliability led to commercial launches for countries like Canada, Singapore, and Germany, establishing India as a competitive player in the global space market.

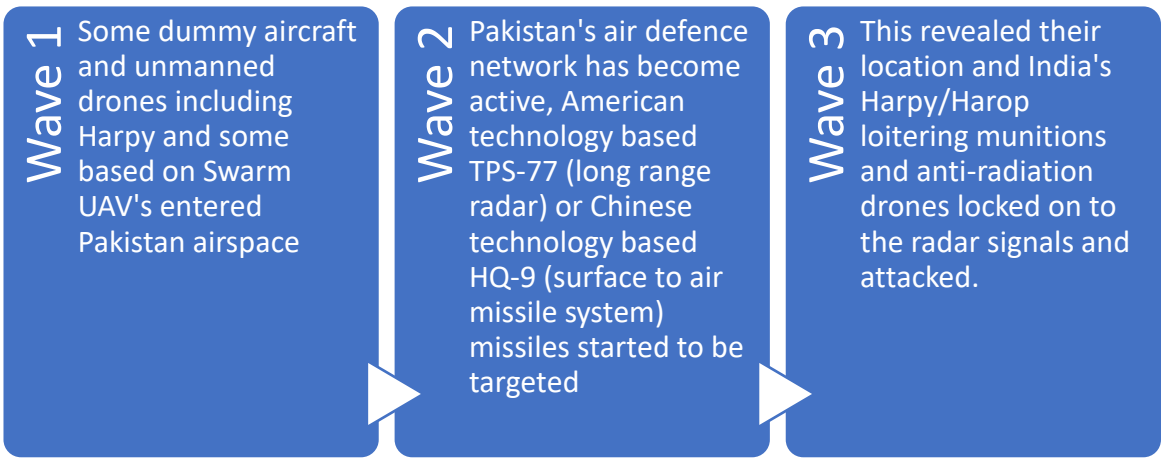
2010s: Strategic and Scientific Milestones

- Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan, 2013): Launched on November 5, 2013, and entering Martian orbit on September 24, 2014, Mangalyaan made India the first Asian nation to reach Mars and the first globally to succeed on its maiden attempt. Costing just $74 million, it demonstrated ISRO's frugal engineering, earning praise for achieving scientific objectives like methane detection at a fraction of NASA's mission costs.
- Mission Shakti (2019): On March 27, 2019, India conducted an anti-satellite (ASAT) test, destroying a low-earth-orbit satellite with a kinetic kill vehicle. This made India the fourth nation (after the US, Russia, and China) with demonstrated ASAT capabilities, signaling its strategic focus on space as a military domain.
- Institutional Growth: The establishment of the Defence Space Agency (DSA) in 2018 and the Defence Space Research Organisation (DSRO) reflected India's shift toward militarized space applications, integrating space assets for surveillance, navigation, and communication in operations like the 2016 Surgical Strike and 2019 Balakot Airstrike.

2020s: Ambitious Goals and Global Leadership

- Chandrayaan-2 and -3: Launched in 2019, Chandrayaan-2 included an orbiter, lander, and rover, achieving partial success with the orbiter's high-resolution mapping despite the lander's crash. Chandrayaan-3, launched on July 14, 2023, achieved a historic soft landing on the lunar south pole on August 23, 2023, making India the first nation to land there and the fourth to soft-land on the moon. The mission's Pragyan rover confirmed sulphur and other elements, advancing lunar science.
- Gaganyaan Program: India's first crewed mission, Gaganyaan, is slated for 2026, aiming to send three astronauts to low-earth orbit for seven days. Preparations include astronaut training in India and Russia, with four IAF pilots selected, building on Sharma's legacy of human spaceflight.
- Space Warfare and Technology: By 2025, India will operate ~26 military satellites, with plans for 52 by 2030, focusing on ISR, navigation, and quantum-secure communications. The January 2025 satellite docking mission and exercises like IndSpaceEx (latest in 2024) underscore India's growing space warfare capabilities. The upcoming Bharatiya Antariksh Station (2035) and missions like Chandrayaan-4 (2027) aim to cement India's dual-use expertise.
- Private Sector and Commercialization: Reforms in 2020 opened India's space sector to private players, with startups like Skyroot and Agnikul developing reusable rockets. ISRO's commercial arm, NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), and IN-SPACe facilitate launches, targeting a $44 billion space economy by 2033.

How India breached Pakistan's defence system



Through all these Indian attacks, America's TPS-77 radar and China's HQ-9 missile system were doing Pakistan's air defense. This incident has raised questions about the trustworthiness of not only Pakistan

but also China and America's weapons, and India has made Beijing and Washington ready for the situation of a real war.

Capabilities of the Indian air defense system

During Operation Sindoor, launched on May 7, 2025, in response to a terror attack in Pahalgam, the Indian Air Force demonstrated its advanced air defense capabilities through a robust, multi-layered system. The Integrated Air Command and Control System (IACCS) provided real-time situational awareness by integrating data from radars, sensors, and assets across the Army, Navy, and Air Force, enabling rapid detection and neutralization of Pakistani drones, missiles, and fighter jets. The indigenous Akashteer system, with its Akash Next Generation missiles, effectively countered drone swarms and guided rockets like Pakistan's Fateh-2, boasting a 70 km range and advanced Electronic Counter-Counter Measures (ECCM). Additionally, the S-400 Triumph (Sudarshan Chakra) squadrons, with a 400 km engagement range and the ability to track 80 targets simultaneously, deterred Pakistani aircraft and intercepted missiles, showcasing India's superior air defense network in safeguarding its airspace.

Indigenous Weapons and Growth in the Defense Industry of India

From the day that headlines were lit by the Operation Sindoor bombshell in May 2025, India's homegrown defence industry has been on an exhilarating flight to the stars. Fellas, just a few years ago, in 2023-24 — some may argue, that was not even a decade ago — we were in the process of manufacturing defense goods worth Rs 1.27 lakh crore, 2024-25, hey, our exports could not have been more cheerful — ₹ 23,622 crore; not a small figure if you recall looking back at ₹ 686 crore where we started in 2013-14! And it all comes down to the big push by the government with "Make in India" and "Atmanirbhar Bharat", the fuel to our dream to rise and shine as a self-reliant country. It was in Sindoor that India displayed its muscle with modern weapons such as the Akash missile, D4 anti-drone system, Nagastra-1 loitering munition, and Akash-Tir air defense, shooting down 600 enemy drones and telling the world, we are business. The success set off a spate of deals: for ₹6,900 crore for peerless artillery guns from Bharat Forge and Tata Advanced Systems; for ₹2,500 crore for the Nag anti-tank missile, a ₹3,800 crore deal to export BrahMos missiles to Indonesia, and a Rs 6,000 crore sale of Akash missiles to Armenia by 2024. For 2025-26, the government is just about coughing up ₹6.81 lakh crore for defence of the realm, and ₹23,855 crore for DRDO to make the great Indian innovation engine rev on—think INS Vikrant (75% made-in-India pride), LCA Tejas jets, HAL Prachanda helicopters. Big players such as L&T, which has ₹360,000 crore of orders for which it has already announced orders worth ₹145 crore; a 45% market share in the segment, and Bharat Dynamics—₹22,700 crore orders, are spearheading the charge, start-ups like Raphe mPhibr, funded to the tune of ₹855 crore, are whipping up the next generation of drones and the tech to intercept them. The EDEX program's 194 startups and defense corridors in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu fetched ₹37,219 crore in investments. Sure, we've got barriers — lack of semiconductor tech, a sluggish government, and public sector behemoths that vacuum up all the disciplines — but the future is bright. With AI, autonomous systems, and exports to over 100 countries, India's gunning for ₹50,000 crore in defense exports by 2029 and 70% self-reliance by 2027, proving we're not just keeping up but aiming to lead the global defense game.

Impact of the all-party delegation of India

On behalf of the Indian government to examine the impact of the Operation Sindoor on the world, a seven-member delegation was sent by the government of India, consisting of 59 members. A total of 51 members from NDA and opposition parties, including Ravi Shankar Prasad, Shashi Tharur, Supriya Sule, Sanjay Kumar Jha, Baijnath Panda, Kanimozhi Karunanidhi, and Srikant Eknath Shinde, were included in it. Apart from these, eight former diplomats were also included in it. The delegation was sent to 33 countries and the European Union headquarters in Brussels from May 21 to June 5, 2025. It was a diplomatic follow-up to Operation Sindoor, the Indian military strikes on 7 May 2025 that targeted terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir after the April 22, 2025, Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 people. The delegation aimed to expose Pakistan's role in state-sponsored terrorism, counter its UNSC narrative (upheld by its vice chairmanship of the counter terrorism committee), and build global support for India's proactive counter terrorism stance, rejecting Pakistan's "nuclear blackmail". They reached out to parliamentarians, ministers (Saudi Arabia's Adel al-Jubeir, Greece's Tassos Chatzivasileiou) think tanks, media (Russia's TASS and RT), and diaspora communities,

garnering support from Saudi Arabia, South Africa, France, Italy, Indonesia and Greece, as well as advocating for Pakistan to be put on the FATF grey-listing to curb terror financing. However, Colombia publicly condemned India's statement, and countries like China and Turkey, allied with Pakistan, could not support, reflecting geopolitical constraints. At home, led by Kiren Rijiju, the move – that Prime Minister Modi described as a source of India's 'Pride' during the June 2025 meeting – struck an unusual bipartisan consensus, though the Congress taunted the BJP over 'politicization of the campaign (merely through NDA-CMs meet and "Tiranga" rallies, and some of the posters questioned – "100 cr cost by Modi ji but vague result not even entry in UN Security Council or clear in FATF, meetings with all key partners strong notwithstanding").

CONCLUSION

In the end, it can be said that Operation Sindoor was not a war, but it created a situation like a war. Under the leadership of PM Modi, the Indian government took all possible steps and forced Pakistan to stop the conflict while protecting its people. This operation also showed that no matter how strong the enemy is, India is always ready to protect its people. This is today's India is the India of the 21st century. It can also develop its own indigenous weapons and adopt the most modern technologies of the world. And India's Brahmos in the news all over the world is a good signal for India's defense industry growth; however, Operation Sindoor is still going on, and as PM Modi said in the Parliament session, if the enemy dares to do anything in the future, he will be given a befitting reply.

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