

# 'Surgical strikes' filmed: India

NDTV ONLINE

The surgical strikes in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir that were carried out by India last night were recorded on cameras; the government will decide whether and when to release the footage, including some obtained through drones, said top sources. At midnight, India moved troops across the Line of Control to target seven different camps where terrorists had been placed to infiltrate India and carry out attacks within Kashmir as well as other major metros, said the army yesterday. "Pakistan was caught totally by surprise, said sources, crucial to "achieving full impact."

The government had recognised "mass anger" among people after the terror attack at an army base in Uri earlier this month, said ministers who were present this morning at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's review of security. They added that recent moves by India to isolate Pakistan by "tinkering with its Most Favoured Nation trading status or recalling envoys was no longer enough to address the levels of anger."

Indian soldiers went at least two kilometres across the Line of Control to different parts or sectors, said ministers. "Our forces have gone deep in and come back before sunrise," they said, adding that Pakistan's denial of the strikes is expected. Explaining the action, sources said that "Modi tried peace for two years, (but) Nawaz Sharif has decided to toe his army's line."

In recent days, as his government moved to isolate Pakistan diplomatically and to pressure it by rethinking crucial water-sharing and trade agreements, the PM was urged by some within his own party as well as opposition leaders to take strong action against Islamabad to prove terrorist attacks in India will not be tolerated.

# RETALIATION FEARS OVER 'SURGICAL STRIKES' ACROSS LOC

# INDIA ON HIGH ALERT

### Pakistan PM reviews situation with army chief, top aides as tensions soar

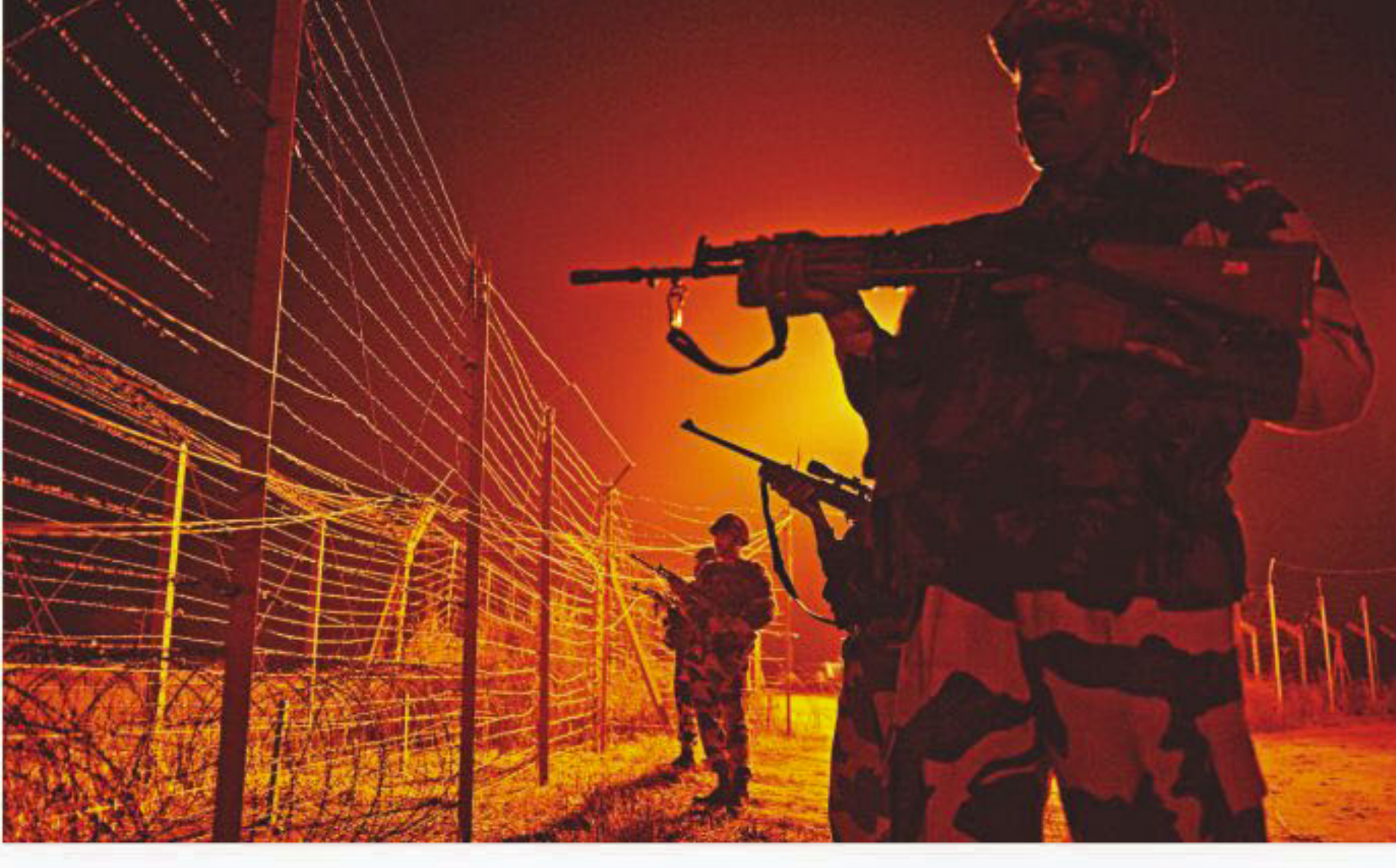
AGENCIES

India was on high alert yesterday fearing a Pakistani backlash after its military carried out surgical strikes on terror launch pads across the Line of Control (LoC).

Amid anger in India over a recent deadly assault on one of its army bases in Kashmir, officials said troops had conducted "surgical strikes" several kilometres inside the Pakistan-controlled side of the disputed territory to prevent attacks being planned on major Indian cities.

The strikes aimed at "neutralising the terrorists" had caused "multiple casualties", according to Indian officials.

As the tensions escalated, Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif reviewed his country's defence preparedness, holding talks with army chief Raheel Sharif and other top aides.



Raheel apprised the premier over the firing incidents at the LoC, the sources said, adding that the army chief told him that Indian claims of surgical strikes were "baseless". Sharif told the army chief that the entire nation had high morale and was committed to defend the motherland along with the armed forces.

Reports said Sharif has shown satisfac-

tion on the level of preparedness of Pakistani armed forces to match any "provocation" by Indian security forces.

In India, Officials said the Border Security Force (BSF) has issued orders to all its units along international border in Jammu, Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat to step up vigil and bolster their numbers at the posts by bringing in all personnel who

are in the reserve. The ceremonial beating retreat ceremony at Attari border has also been closed for public yesterday, officials said.

People living within 10km of the border with Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab have been asked to shift to safer places and schools ordered to be shut till further notice in the wake of surgical strike carried out by the Indian Army across the LoC.

Stepping up India's diplomatic offensive, foreign secretary S Jaishankar yesterday met envoys of 22 countries, including five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, and briefed them about the surgical strikes.

To mount international pressure on Pakistan, India has already opted out of the Saarc summit, which was to be held in Islamabad. After India, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Afghanistan also followed suit, leading to postponement of the Saarc summit.

Meanwhile, Union home minister Rajnath Singh briefed leaders of major political parties on the situation. Singh chaired the hurriedly called all-party meet after DGMO Lt Gen Ranbir Singh announced that surgical strike on terror launch pads were conducted last night.

# Congress backs strikes on terror bases

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Sonia Gandhi, head of India's main opposition party Congress, yesterday said a "strong message" has been sent with the surgical strikes by the army against terror bases in Pakistan across the Line of Control (LoC) and insisted that Islamabad bears a "great responsibility" in the continuing cross-border attacks in India.

Offering the party's support to the government in the battle against terror, Sonia said in a statement that "this is a strong message that conveys our country's resolve to prevent further infiltration and attacks on our security forces and our people".

Gandhi asked Pakistan to dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism and ensure that its territory is not used for terrorist purposes against India.

Congratulating the armed forces on the success, she said the party stands by the government in its actions to protect the country's security and deal with the menace of terrorism from across the border.

**DEVELOPMENTS**

NEW DELHI BRIEFS ENVOYS OF MAJOR NATIONS ON THE STRIKES

VILLAGES EVACUATED, SCHOOLS SHUT ALONG PAK BORDER

INDIA HOLDS ALL PARTY MEET TO DISCUSS SITUATION

# US backs India, warns Pakistan

### China urges dialogue to ease tensions; UN urges restraint

AGENCIES

The United Nations yesterday urged India and Pakistan to exercise restraint after New Delhi carried out a series of strikes inside Pakistani-controlled Kashmir.

"The United Nations calls on the government of India and Pakistan to exercise restraint and encourage them to continue their efforts to resolve their differences peacefully and through dialogue," said UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric.

UN officials are following the increase in tensions in Kashmir "with great concern", said Dujarric, adding that UN military observers were in contact with both sides to try to obtain further information.

A day earlier before the surgical strikes, the Obama administration affirmed its support to India on the issue of cross-border terrorism, while putting Pakistan on notice for its failure to act against UN-designated ter-

rorists and entities. US National Security Adviser Susan Rice spoke to her Indian counterpart Ajit Doval to offer condolences to families of the Uri attack victims and express support for India on the issue of terrorism, National Security Council spokesman Ned Price said in a read-out on the call.

Although the statement did not

## CROSS-BORDER TERRORISM

explicitly pin the Uri attack on Pakistan, there was a broad censure of Islamabad for continuing to harbour proscribed terrorists and terrorist outfits, with a pledge that Washington would "deepen collaboration on counterterrorism matters including on UN terrorist designations."

"Highlighting the danger that cross-

border terrorism poses to the region, Ambassador Rice reiterated our expectation that Pakistan take effective action to combat and delegitimise United Nations-designated terrorist individuals and entities, including Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Muhammad, and their affiliates," the statement said. India has blamed Jaish operatives for the Uri attack.

Also on Wednesday, China called on Pakistan and India to solve their differences over Kashmir through dialogue.

The deputy minister, Liu Zhenmin, also told the envoys that China values Pakistan's position on Kashmir.

China has long been a strong diplomatic, military and economic supporter of Pakistan, and the two call each other "all-weather friends". Their ties have been underpinned by wariness of their common neighbour, India, with which China fought a brief but bloody border war in 1962.

# What is 'surgical strike'?

Surgical strike is not a war or a call for it. These strikes are military operations undertaken by forces across the world to move on the offensive, hit enemy targets and installations, and return to primary positions - all with lightning speed and with the added precaution of suffering limited casualty.

Surgical strikes require not just detailed and exhaustive planning but need to be carried out with absolute precision to

achieve the objective of taking down targets with either no or minimal collateral damage.

Indian Army's took similar steps in June when it struck inside Myanmar and killed 38 Naga insurgents. Globally too, military forces of several nations rely on such operations to eliminate immediate threats when diplomatic and all other non-military channels do not bear fruit. SOURCE: TIMES OF INDIA, DAWN



"Some terrorist teams had positioned themselves at launchpads along the Line of Control. The Indian army conducted surgical strikes last night at these launchpads." Lieutenant Ranbir Singh, director general of Indian military operations

"This was simply an episode of cross LoC fire that they [India] have been doing. Small arms and mortars were used in the fire, similar to what has been used before...we gave a befitting response."

Lt Gen Bajwa, director general of the Pakistani military's media wing



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (2nd R) yesterday chairs a Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) meeting in New Delhi over alleged Pakistani ceasefire violations at the Line of Control in the disputed Kashmir region jointly administered by India and Pakistan. PHOTO: AFP

# 'Nukes aren't showpieces'

PTI, New Delhi

Islamabad is open to using tactical devices — a reference to tactical nuclear weapons that Pakistan is believed to possess — against India if it feels its safety is threatened, Pakistani Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif said in an interview to Pakistani TV channel SAMAA.

Tactical weapons, our programmes that we have developed, they have been developed for our protection. We haven't kept the devices that we have just as showpieces. But if our safety is threatened, we will annihilate them (India)," Asif said in the interview, telecast on September 26.

He had made a similar comment on Geo TV on September 17, a day before the terrorist attack in Uri.

# SEPARATIST MOVEMENT IN BALUCHISTAN Would welcome help from India

### Says rebel chief, refuses talks with Pak govt

REUTERS, Islamabad

The elusive leader of a major rebel group fighting for independence in Pakistan's Baluchistan province said he would welcome cash and other help from India, words likely to alarm Islamabad which accuses New Delhi of stirring trouble there.

In his first video interview in five years, Allah Nazar Baloch, head of the ethnic Baluch group Baluchistan Liberation Front (BLF), also vowed further attacks on a Chinese economic corridor, parts of which run through the resource-rich province.

The planned \$46 billion trade route is expected to link western China with Pakistan's Arabian Sea via a network of roads, railways and energy pipelines.

"We not only wish India should support the Baluch national struggle diplomatically and financially, but the whole world," said Baloch, a doctor-turned-guerrilla believed to be about 50, in filmed responses to questions sent by Reuters.

Baloch's appeal for Indian help may deepen Pakistani suspicions that India has a hand in a decades-old insurgency in the vast southwestern province.

Baloch, leader of one of three main armed groups fighting for Baluchistan's independence, said that while he wanted support from India, the BLF had not received funding from Modi's government, or India's spy agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW).

Brahmardagh Bugti, the Switzerland-based leader of the Balochistan Republican Party, another major separatist outfit, last week told Indian media that he planned to seek "political asylum" in India.

Human rights activists say that thousands of people have been killed or arbitrarily detained in Baluchistan by the military, a charge Pakistani security forces deny.

Asked if he would be open to negotiations with the Pakistani state, the rebel chief was clear: there would be no dialogue with what he considered "the biggest terrorist country". "There will be no negotiations with Pakistan without national independence and without the presence of the United Nations," he said. "Our destination is independence."



Nazar Baloch

# MFN STATUS TO PAKISTAN Review meet postponed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

A crucial meeting, which was to have been chaired by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday to review the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to Pakistan, has been postponed to next week.

The decision to review the MFN status had come in the wake of the deadly terror attack, blamed by India on Pakistan, on an Indian army camp in Jammu and Kashmir on September 18 which left 18 troops dead.

After the attack, India has been weighing various options to isolate Pakistan, including reviewing the MFN status and the Indus river water-sharing treaty of 1960 with Pakistan.

Officials from Commerce and External Affairs ministries were to have attended yesterday's meeting on MFN status.

India granted MFN status to Pakistan in 1996 but the latter is yet

to reciprocate.

According to sources, next week's meeting's may discuss the option of India dragging Pakistan to the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) dispute settlement mechanism for not according similar status to India.

Under MFN, a WTO member country is obliged to treat other trading nation in a non-discriminatory manner, especially with regard to customs duty and other levies.

In 2015-16, India's exports to Pakistan stood at \$2.17 billion, while imports were \$441 million.

Instead of holding the MFN meeting, Modi yesterday presided a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security on the prevailing tense situation along the de facto border with Pakistan. It was attended, among others, by Defence and Home Ministers Manohar Parrikar and Rajnath Singh, Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar and army chief Gen Dalbir Singh Suhag.

# Escalation unlikely: experts

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Indian Army's "surgical strikes" on terrorist launch pads across the Line of Control has sent a message to Pakistan to not take India for granted, security experts said yesterday, and noted that there may not be escalation in the situation as Islamabad has denied there was any such military action.

The cross-border strikes were carried out on Wednesday night in retaliation for Pakistan-backed terrorist action on Indian soil, the army said.

Former Indian army Chief Gen VP Malik said that Indian Army's military action was not against Pakistan or the Pakistani Army but on terrorist launch pads.

"While India is not interested in the whole situation escalating but if Pakistan does something, we will have to be prepared," Gen Malik said.

The general, who was the Army chief during the Kargil war, hailed the "first-ever" calibrated surgical strike by the Army.

"Chances of escalation may be minimal but in such a situation, you cannot rule (that) out. I don't think it is in India's interests to see an escalation but if Pakistan wants it then India will have to be prepared," he added.

C Uday Bhaskar, security analyst and director, Society for Policy Studies, said the surgical strike against the terrorist camps announced by the Director-General of Military Operations (DGMO),

Lt Gen Ranbir Singh, has confirmed what had been anticipated over the last few days - namely that the Modi team would "respond" in an appropriate manner to the enormity of the Uri terror attack.

"With this two messages have been conveyed. One, India does not wish to escalate the military operation and the target was terror - and not the territorial integrity or sovereignty of Pakistan. Two, the onus for restraint or escalation is now on Rawalpindi - the GHQ of the Pakistan military," he added.

A former government security official, who did not want to be named, said that Pakistan has reduced its options by denying the Indian military action.

"I don't know the reason why they have denied. But by doing so, they have sort of reduced their options," the official said.

Former foreign secretary Shashank hailed the army action and said India has adopted a comprehensive strategy in the wake of the Uri terror attack.

"There has been a comprehensive and coordinated strategy on all directions - strategic, diplomatic as also economic. This will ensure that terrorists will think twice now before infiltrating to India," Shashank said.

"I don't see the situation escalating because Pakistan has denied there has been any such surgical strike. If they escalate on their own, the international community is bound to question their motive," Brigadier SK Chatterjee (retd) said.



Mazdak Dilshad Baloch, son of prominent author-activist Naela Qadri Baloch, protests against Pakistan's ongoing human rights violation in Balochistan, in New Delhi, yesterday. PHOTO: AFP