

Air Marshal Harish Masand on

The 'Real Thing'



Representative picture of IAF Mirage 2000 releasing free fall bombs

26 February 2019 : Strike on J-e-M at Balakot

12 days after the terror attack on Indian security forces at Pulwama in the Kashmir Valley on 14 February 2019, the Indian Government decided that enough was enough and responded with air strikes on key J-e-M terrorist camps reportedly located at Jaba Top near Balakot in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in “mainland Pakistan” itself. What was significant about these strikes was not the body count nor confirmation on the number of terrorists actually eliminated but that, for the first time, Indian forces had not only crossed the LoC but also went into Pakistan itself for carrying out this particular strike. Even during Kargil 1999, where clear aggression by the Pakistani military had been established India had fought with one hand tied behind its back with the *Lakshman Rekha* regarded as the LoC in Kashmir. There can be little debate on the argument that if then the LoC was not kept



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