

India's Hammer Blow: What it Means, What Next.



Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri (centre) with Indian Army officer Colonel Sofiya Qureshi (left) and Indian Air Force officer Wing Commander Vyomika Singh address the media after 'Operation Sindoor'. (AP Photo).

In the military domain naming an operation is as important as the operation itself. Thus, Op Sindoor bears the symbolism of response to the anger which gripped India on 22 April after the Pahalgam attack. However, it doesn't end here and could even be the beginning of a new season of confrontation.

After February 2019 when the Balakot operation was executed post Pulwama terror attack, we always knew that another attack of serious proportions would be repeated someday. The Balakot strike was not an act of deterrence but a strategic message; it was controlled escalation at a lower rung. I had wondered then what would be our response the next time some big terror attack took place. Six years later Pahalgam happened against the run of play. It was even more serious than Uri or Pulwama and demanded an Indian response of higher proportion.

We knew that an Indian military response would come sooner than later, although I continued to wonder whether India would finally hit where it hurts Pakistan most:

Pakistan's Punjab heartland. And finally, GOI and the armed forces did, and did so effectively. The decision to hit Pakistan's heartland and the choice of targets may have been finally decided by the preliminary findings of NIA that mentioned the conspiracy between Pak army, ISI and Lashkar-e-Taiba; the deepest of the deep state that runs Pakistan's security and foreign policy interests.

The nine targets selected were a mix of those in PoJK and in Pakistan's Punjab. They were terror holding and training facilities, camps and launch pads in the vicinity



Images of terrorist camp destruction at various sites. (Photos by ANI)