



Balakot Surgical Strike: India's New Strategy against Terrorism

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Abstract: India is suffering from problem of terrorism in its unbearable form since last three decades. Various efforts have been made by peace-loving India to tackle it not only internally but also regionally and internationally. With changing times, terrorists are also changing their ways of operations. So it is high time for India to change its tools to tackle terrorism. India showed one glimpse of it in form of Balakot Surgical strike as its new strategy against terrorism.

Key Words: India, Terrorisms, Balakot Surgical strike.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Terrorism is a global problem. ^[1] Most of the countries are suffering from it in one way or the other. India is no exception to it. India is suffering from menace of terrorism since last three decades. Terrorism is basically a violent act which is performed to terrorise people and to fulfill terrorists' political motives. Terrorist attacks not only threaten country's security but also affect its economic & social life.

Terrorism in India basically has historical legacy attached to its partition. Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) was not part of India and Pakistan at the time of partition. Later on, J&K joined India through an instrument of accession but Pakistan attacked on it and it became a bone of contention between India and Pakistan since then. Pakistan is conducting proxy war in J&K through terrorism. ^[2] There are many terrorist groups active in J&K such as Lashker-e-Taiba, Hizbul Mujahadeen, Jaish-a-Muhammad, tahrir e taliban Pakistan etc. ^[3] Every now and then, we hear of terrorist attacks in India. Such attacks on Pathankot Air Force Station, Uri, Sunjuwan, Pulwama etc. bleed India to its inner depth.

India and Pakistan has fluctuating relationship since their appearance on world map. Their mutual relations are not very friendly. They had fought 4 wars in 1949, 1965, 1971 & 1999. In 1971 Indo-Pak war, a new state with name Bangladesh was born out of east Pakistan. India played a pivot role in its formation. Its army Mukti Bahini was trained by India. Refugee Influx from east-while east-Pakistan forced India to get involved in the matter. But many Pakistani Terrorist Groups consider it India's deliberate move and try to take revenge for it by supporting separatist tendencies in J&K, north east and other sensitive area in India by conducting terrorist activities.

India since independence has bearing pain of partition. Initially, it was in form of migration of people with huge toll of life; later on, wars, insurgencies, terrorism etc. India has made lots of efforts to fight terrorism. Different Institutions, Agencies have been created to fight this menace. Stringent laws have been passed. India has raised its voice against terrorism on many regional and International platforms. India strongly aspires to have worldwide accepted definition so that coordinated efforts to fight terrorism can be comparatively easy and fruitful. With changing science and technology terrorists are also changing their modus operandi. So counterterrorism tactics and strategies are also needed to be changed. One such changed move in counterterrorism efforts from India is in form of Balakot Surgical Strike.

2. BALAKOT SURGICAL STRIKE :

It was conducted by the Indian Air Force on the morning of February 26, 2019 in Balakot on the bank of river Kunhar in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan to destroy Pakistan based militant camps of Jaish-e-Muhammad. ^[4] It was revenge action by India against Pulwama attack in which near fifty Central Reserve Police Force personnels were killed. This attack's responsibility was taken by Jaish-e-Muhammad terrorist group. ^[5] Indian intelligence services also informed about further terrorist attacks in India by Pakistan based terrorist groups. This surgical strike was successfully conducted with 12 Mirage 2000 ^[6] fighters which used Spice-2000 ^[7] bombs made by Israel. This strike was code named 'Operation Bandar'. ^[8]



3. CHANGES IN INDIA'S STRATEGY AGAINST TERRORISM :

India has been a peace loving nation since its independence. Its foreign policy is based on Panchsheel Doctrines in which we respect other nations' sovereignty, stay away from their internal matters, peaceful resolution for any dispute and expected the same from other nations also. Even after entering in Nuclear power club, we kept policy of 'No first Use'. We reiterated our faith in peaceful and friendly neighbourhood. But with time we came across problems like naxalism, insurgency, terrorism etc. We felt need to change our policy according to changing surroundings. Against terrorism, a more pierced policy supplemented by advanced science and technology is the need of hour. India showed its changed tools against terrorism in form of Balakot Surgical Strike which give us glimpse about Changes in India's Strategy against Terrorism as under:

Credible Deterrence

Repeated terrorist attacks were bleeding India. These attacks were damaging India in many ways like economy, manpower, social unity, security etc. Our deterrence against such attacks was not giving the required results which are indicating that we need to change our strategy. In previous times also, such strikes were suggested by security experts but not paid attention in political streets. But this time, it is accepted and it provided credible deterrence to India against terrorism. There is noticed a decline in number of terror attacks after this strike.

Capability to Retaliate

This surgical strike has shown that India has retaliation capability not only in terms of physical assets but also in wills and decisions. Technology used in such strikes is highly advanced. Modern instruments like satellite image gathering with high resolution, precision attacks on target, radar deceiving carriers are some examples of this. This strike clearly shows to terrorist groups that India is well equipped and day-by-day improving them indigenously and with friendly support from other nations like Israel, Russia, France etc.

Pre-emptive Strike

It is the first attack on the enemy to destroy it so that it cannot carry out any operation of attack. It is carried out when there is imminent danger of attack. It is most useful when the enemy does not have second strike capability. In India's surgical strike case terrorist group was able to maintain second strike capability. Pre-emptive move will break backbone of terrorist group which is need of hour all over the world.

Secrecy and Surprise

Such strikes are carried with utmost secrecy and surprise to the enemy. Any slight disclosure about it might ruin its planning and execution and escalate war between nations. But successful execution by India shows that secrecy was maintained at every required level which will also be one of main elements for such action in future. Surprise has been the main element of any attack since time immortal. It has been mentioned as a winning tool by many defence experts. When you leave your enemy in a mind boggling state in which it is not able to use its resources to their full capacity and it leads to your victory at a comparative ease.

Paradigm Shift

After 1971 Indo-Pak war, Indian Air Force has not been used outside Indian borders. But in this strike, this has happened. India has been following defence approach against terrorism but this is clearly offensive move which depicts change in Indian terrorist tackling attitude and actions.

Risk Taking Capability

This strike shows that India is now more open to take risk to maintain its security, integrity, unity against terrorism. Such risk can be taken when you are capable enough to bear neighbourhood, regional and international pressure. India is articulating its policy with changing international scenario. It is raising its voice against terrorism with much firmness. India has asked Financial Action Task Force to take strict actions by black listing Pakistan for its terrorism support and money laundering.

Clarity on approach to Terrorism

In last century, there were concepts of good terrorism and bad terrorism in the world. Coordinated actions were not possible with these conflicting approaches. From the very beginning, India has been criticising these conflicting approaches. Now clarity on part of most nations is clearly visible which makes it possible to move in the direction of tackling terrorism with converging efforts which India is aspiring for since long time.



Capacity Building

After such a successful strike, India has devoted its attention to capacity building of its defensive forces. Arms procurement has been speeded up. Indigenous defense sector has been promoted with new vigour. Self-reliance and minimum dependency on others has been the guiding principle of our government in recent times which are going to yield fruits in the near future. India is moving ahead with great speed on the defence trade path from importer to exporter.

Psychological Strike

This strike has not only attacked physical assets of terrorists groups but also hanged them mentally. The psychological domain of attack is most important. It gives one multidimensional advantages. One's own countrymen feel enthusiastic. They believe in their nation's capabilities, it gives them a moral boost. Along with this defence forces and security agencies also get stimulus. Success makes them more active, capable and confident. On the other hand, the enemy feels low, confused, and feared which is victory in its own way.

4. CONCLUSION:

No doubt India has been fighting terrorism from a long time but we are not getting required results. Reasons are many like lack of political will, comparatively weak and dependent economy, technologically not so advanced equipments, regional and international pressure etc. After gaining freedom, India has worked in every possible dimension whether it is political, economic, social, science and technical, local, regional, international etc. We have to articulate our approach according to the changing situation of our country as well as in the world. It is new India which is going to be a 5 trillion dollar economy in near future. Developing countries, which see India as their firm supporter in war against terrorism and developed countries, which consider India as important player against terrorism will always find in India a true fighter against terrorism.

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