

Topic: Crossing the Line of Control

After running through a variety of non-military responses to the **September 18 terrorist strike** at an Army camp in **Uri**, the Centre on 29th September announced that Indian forces had carried out “**surgical strikes**” across the Line of Control. With this, India’s next steps, post-Uri, are in uncharted terrain, with New Delhi abandoning the **self-proclaimed policy of “strategic restraint”** adopted in the face of earlier provocations by terrorists believed to be backed by Pakistan. The operation, that began and concluded in the early hours, was claimed to be a **military success, with no injuries to the Indian para-commandos** who went across the Loc into Pakistan-occupied Kashmir to attack several locations. The decision to strike in this manner was evidently taken after specific intelligence that terrorist groups were planning attacks in India. This may not be the first time India has undertaken quick cross-LoC operations, but it has never before chosen to share information so publicly.

The terms “**surgical strike**” and “**pre-emptive strike**” used by the Centre were intended to convey that this was not an attack on Pakistan’s defence forces, but a targeted action against terrorists poised to wreak damage in India. Pakistan of course has played down the Indian operation, characterizing it as an act of **habitual cross-border shelling**. It is welcome that New Delhi declared the strikes complete shortly after the operation, with the DGMO calling his Pakistani counterpart to convey that India would not escalate the conflict beyond this. This, along with the briefings held in New Delhi for envoys of various countries, indicates that the Centre wants to end hostilities with Pakistan for the moment. This strengthens the view that the operation was the result of **pressure on the Modi government to manufacture a strong response to Uri**. Over the past few days there has been a cascade of moves to underline that such provocations cannot be followed with business as usual. The government reviewed the working of the **Indus Waters Treaty**, declared it is flirting with the idea of reviewing Pakistan’s Most Favoured Nation status, and pulled out of the SAARC heads’ meet to be held in Islamabad. Having made it known that India does not want further escalation, even as people living along the International Border and the Loc are shifted to safer locations, the Centre will need to articulate what it regards as the new normal — and indeed, how it hopes, or plans, to dissuade Pakistan from escalating the situation in turn.

The Whole Story Captured Below:

What: India confirmed that surgical strikes were conducted along the LoC to safeguard our nation. Pakistan, however, has dismissed India’s claim of surgical strike and has termed it as a “**quest**” by India to create media hype by re-branding cross-border fire that **killed their two soldiers**, as a surgical strike. In a statement, Pakistan Defence Minister **Khawaja Asif** said, “The Pakistani Army gave befitting response to the Indian army. Indian Army opened up small arm fire last night on five sectors across LoC. India is doing this under a well-planned objective. If India tries to do this again, we will respond forcefully. India is doing this only to please their media and public.” Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif condemned the attack and said, “**Strongly condemned the unprovoked and naked aggression of Indian forces resulting in martyrdom of two Pakistan soldiers along LoC.**”

Topic
Introduction

When: Indian news agencies reported that the strikes were conducted between **12:30 a.m. to 4:30 a.m.**, on 29th September. According to a statement released by Pakistan's Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), the firing started around **2.30 a.m and continued well after dawn till 8.00 am.**

Where: The **seven terror launch pads** were located between **500 meters to three kilometers** across the LoC in Pakistan. An ISPR statement said, town of **Bhimber, Hotspring Kel and Lipa sectors** in Pakistan were attacked.

Why: These attacks were the latest in the offensives launched by India since the Uri attack. On September 18, four men executed what was one of the worst terrorist attacks on the Indian Army and killed **19 army jawans in Jammu and Kashmir's Uri** in the rear office of an Indian Army infantry installation. The attackers are believed to have come from Pakistan. Since then, India has upped its diplomatic offensive against Pakistan in a bid to isolate the country internationally.

Causalities: The Defence Ministry confirmed that there were **no casualties on the Indian side**. The Pakistan side has accepted that **two soldiers were killed** in the early morning firing. There are some reports that upto **40 terrorists were killed in the strikes** across multiple launch pads. However, the Indian defence apparatus has not yet authenticated any of these reports.

Aftermath in India:

Leaders from various parties supported the Centre with Congress president **Sonia Gandhi** saying her party stands with the government on the strikes. **AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi** said his party stood in solidarity with armed forces and the country in the wake of the "surgical strikes". Lauding the armed forces and **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** for the "surgical strikes", BJP leaders maintained that it was a preemptive strike for defence in an area "where India has every right to defend." **BJP president Amit Shah** said the strikes indicated the rise of a "new India", as the country has given a "clear response" to militants. The strikes rang in with a wave of happiness across the country, with many prominent figures condoning it, emphasizing how it was the need of the hour and the best action against terrorists. Families of some Uri martyrs also condoned the attack, saying their martyrdom has been honoured. **In Punjab and Kashmir**, villages falling within **ten kilometers** of the International border were asked to **vacate their homes** soon after the strikes in view of the escalating situation. All border schools have been shut for the time being even though military experts termed the action premature. **Villagers had to leave their crops**, which were especially crucial for them as the time to harvest them was near. The villages have also been evacuated in order to plant land mines in the area for any infiltrators who may come in from across the border. The Aam Aadmi Party also alleged that the evacuation was only causing panic among the villagers and not doing anything fruitful. After the surgical strikes, the Indian Motion Picture Producers Association also passed a resolution to ban Pakistani actors from the industry in the wake of the Uri attack. Geopolitical tension got the better of the market as **the Sensex plunged over 465 points** — the **biggest single-day fall** in 3 months — after the strikes. The intra-day plunge was even higher at 573 points, but some bargain-buying at lower levels helped the index settle higher than the day's low of 27,719.92. The rupee too was caught in the crossfire, sharply down 39 paise against the US dollar, at 66.85.

Aftermath in Pakistan:

Pakistan, in response, vehemently denied India's claims of the strike, **calling it a 'farce'**. Pakistan also informed UN Secretary General **Ban ki-Moon** that the news of surgical strikes is false. It has, however, not condemned the Uri attack in spite of being prodded by US and UN.

Aftermath Internationally:

The **SAARC summit** which was to be held in Islamabad **has been cancelled** after many nations chose to back out of it. The backing out started with India and was followed by Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Afghanistan. **Pakistan eventually postponed** the summit and Nepal, the current chair of the SAARC, cancelled it.

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<http://thewire.in/70409/surgical-strikes-questions-still-remain/>

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/the-aftermath-of-indias-surgical-strikes-across-loc-a-timeline-3061415/>

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/surgical-strikes-india-pakistan-loc-jammu-and-kashmir-indian-army-3059059/>

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