

## Indo-Pak Relations and Impact of Operation Sindoor

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### Abstract

India and Pakistan have had their history of struggles and conflicts prior to the Independence of both the countries. Since 1947, this struggle has continuously increased with advent of time.<sup>1</sup> This study examines the complex dynamics of India-Pakistan relations, with a specific focus on the implications of latest Operation Sindoor, a military operation conducted by India in May 2025. The operation targeted terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, signaling a notable shift in India's strategic approach to cross-border terrorism. The targets were handled with specific technological precision and accuracy. It was a reflection of new technological warfare exhibited both by India and Pakistan. Till now, India was considered to be a non-aggressive policy operant nation with no first initiation of combats or attacks. The world took India's decision with mixed responses. So, its impact on international domain is worth a case to study and analyze deeply. Moreover, this step was a major shift in India's approach towards solving the internal conflicts through external strikes. This step has not only given a new makeover to Indo-Pak strains but has also impacted the generalized opinion across the world. This paper analyzes the operation's strategic, economic, and geopolitical ramifications, exploring its effects on India's stance to security, its bilateral relations, global perceptions, and regional stability. It tries to explain that, such aggressive shifts in security handling can not only impact India's approach but it can create a deep and long lasting impact throughout South Asia.

**Keywords:** India-Pakistan relations, Operation Sindoor, Shift in India's policy, international relations. South Asian politics.

### Introduction

The relationship between India and Pakistan has been historically tumultuous, with the Kashmir region serving as a central point of contention. The terrorist attack in Pahalgam on April 22, 2025, which resulted in the deaths of 26 civilians, prompted India to initiate Operation Sindoor.<sup>2</sup> This operation involved a series of precise airstrikes targeting terrorist camps in Pakistan and PoK, aiming to dismantle terrorist infrastructure while minimizing civilian casualties. There has been a long history of India facing Cross border terrorist activities from terror groups being funded by Pakistan Army. On various international forums, both the nations have diplomatically confronted over this issue.<sup>3</sup> Despite various international interventions and mediations, still attack like the one occurred in Pehalgam, Kashmir, laid the backdrop for operation sindoor, which eventually had an all around impact. This paper shall let us know, how this attack will create an impact on India Pakistan relations thus enabling us for future predictions of any such incident and its impacts.

### Strategic Implications

Operation Sindoor represents a significant evolution in India's strategic approach to cross-border terrorism. By conducting precise, intelligence-driven strikes deep into enemy territory, India demonstrated its military capabilities and willingness to take decisive action against terrorism. So far India's key principles of foreign policy involved concepts of non-aggression and peaceful co-existence. But here, this was a significant shift from its traditional approach of India's foreign policy. The operation conveyed a strong message about India's commitment to national security and its ability to respond effectively to terrorist threats. It conveyed that any cross border activity particularly involving atrocities on civilian population will be dealt with zero tolerance. As John Spencer, renowned warfare strategist conveyed that It has been a direct message to 3 countries, viz. Pakistan, the real accused, China (through its military technology) and Turkey (through its military technology support).<sup>4</sup> The successful execution of the operation highlighted India's military preparedness and its capacity to adapt to emerging security challenges. The latest exhibitions of Rafael, S-400 etc showed the military capability and reflection of India's military might to the world. India's drones proved to be up to date to the modern warfare.

### **Economic Implications**

India and Pakistan's recent conflict also had deep lasting traces on economics of the region. The economic implications of Operation Sindoor are multifaceted, affecting both India and Pakistan in distinct ways. The operation led to significant market reactions, with Pakistan's Karachi Stock Exchange experiencing a notable decline. India's stock market, while resilient, reflected cautious investor sentiment amid heightened geopolitical tensions. The conflict has the potential to disrupt trade and investment flows between the two nations, exacerbating existing economic challenges. The trade so far is inclined towards India's favor, so any bitterness can lead to further aftermaths.<sup>5</sup>

### **Geopolitical Implications**

The geopolitical implications of Operation Sindoor extend beyond the immediate region, influencing global perceptions and regional stability. All the stake holders of South Asia were concerned towards this recent conflict and tried to pacify the conflict. The international community's response to the operation has been varied, with some nations supporting India's right to self-defense while others have called for restraint and dialogue. The countries like Turkey were against India's aggression in subtle words where as countries like Israel defended India's right to protect itself from aggressors. The operation has underscored the complexities of regional dynamics, highlighting the need for a nuanced approach to managing security challenges in South Asia. It is globally evident that China is trying to have hegemony over regional dynamics of South Asia, so such a aggression has established India as a solid contender for the same.

### **Impact on Indo-Pak Relations**

Operation Sindoor has further strained the already fragile relationship between India and Pakistan, setting the stage for a prolonged standoff. The operation has brought renewed attention to Pakistan's role in supporting terrorist groups, emphasizing the need for India to

remain vigilant in its security measures. There were inputs with India's intelligence about the terrorist bases in Pakistan. Striking those terror bases and the latest pictures of terrorist leaders like Maulana masood azhar with Pakistan army officers have proven the involvement of Pakistan army behind the terrorist camps. The conflict has led to increased diplomatic tensions between the two nations, with potential long-term implications for their bilateral relations. India has discontinued the Indus water treaty which has opened an another front of diplomatic tensions between the nations. In retaliation, Pakistan has parted its way from Shimla Agreement. The operation aftermath has suspended visits to Kartar pur Sahib Corridor, Opposition of Pakistani actors in Indian movies, disturbing cricket ties and many such postponements of issues concerning the healthy bilateral relations. The post operation sindoor has also left the battle of media and propaganda among the nations. From electronic media to social media, both the nations have constantly involved in bringing down each other. In addition to that, both the governments have sent the delegations of Members' of Parliaments to present the cases of their respective nations explaining how both the countries dealt with the issue. Another significant aspect of this strike has been proven role of American hegemony in the region. USA played a self proclaimed mediator in the conflict and used its influence to ensure ceasefire in the current armed struggle. The statement of US President, that had he not intervened, this struggle could have turned into a full blown nuclear, though seems exaggerated but could have turned a realistic possibility had this standoff been prolonged for a longer duration of time.<sup>6</sup>

### **Future Prospects**

The outcome of Operation Sindoor will likely influence India's future strategies in dealing with cross-border terrorism and its relations with Pakistan. Possible future directions include that India may continue to refine its counter-terrorism strategies, potentially leading to further military operations or diplomatic initiatives. In pursuance of this goal, defence ties with Russia have been increased and further diplomatic efforts will be made to ensure that solid power equilibrium can be maintained in the region. There may be renewed efforts to engage in diplomatic dialogue with Pakistan, aimed at resolving longstanding issues and reducing tensions. But this time, this diplomatic effort will also be envisaged in a manner where dominance of India's foreign policy shall be reflected. The operation's impact on regional stability will depend on how both nations navigate their relations and address security challenges in the future.

### **Conclusion**

The trajectory of India-Pakistan relations has long been shaped by a history of partition, territorial disputes, ideological differences and repeated cycles of conflict and conciliation. The enduring mistrust and frequent border tensions have made the bilateral relationship one of the most sensitive and volatile in global geopolitics. Within this complex environment, the emergence of Operation Sindoor has added a significant new element to the regional equation, influencing how the two nations perceive each other and recalibrating strategic calculations on both sides. One of the key consequences of Operation Sindoor has been the evolution of India's strategic and military posture. It underscores a shift toward a more proactive and assertive

approach, reflecting India's readiness to respond firmly to security threats. This marks a departure from previous periods characterized by strategic restraint and suggests a new paradigm where deterrence is defined on India's terms. Such a shift has significant implications for how Pakistan assesses the risks and consequences of its own policies and actions, particularly concerning cross-border activities and support for militant groups.

Diplomatically, Operation Sindoor has also served to bolster India's narrative on the global stage regarding its sovereign right to defend itself from terrorism emanating from across the border. India has successfully leveraged the operation to highlight ongoing threats and justify defensive measures while maintaining an image of a responsible regional actor. This has earned India a measure of understanding, if not outright support, from international partners who recognize the challenges posed by terrorism in South Asia. Consequently, Operation Sindoor has contributed to a subtle rebalancing of diplomatic dynamics, potentially giving India greater leverage. From Pakistan's vantage point, Operation Sindoor introduces new strategic uncertainties. It underscores India's willingness to take decisive action, thereby complicating Pakistan's calculations about escalation dynamics and potential costs. However, Pakistan's own domestic challenges—including political instability, economic pressures, and security concerns—limit its options. Beyond military and diplomatic spheres, Operation Sindoor has also influenced public sentiment on both sides of the border. In India, it has fueled a sense of national pride and a demand for resolute action against terrorism. Meanwhile, in Pakistan, it has contributed to narratives portraying India as an aggressive neighbor, potentially deepening public suspicion and hardening attitudes. These perceptions, if left unaddressed, could further complicate future dialogue efforts and sustain a cycle of mutual hostility. In conclusion, Operation Sindoor represents a pivotal development in the long and complex relationship between India and Pakistan. While it does not resolve the deep-rooted conflicts between the two nations, it marks a significant shift in India's security and diplomatic approach. Its influence is felt both immediately, in terms of deterrence and signaling, and potentially in the long term, as it reshapes regional security calculations. Whether Operation Sindoor paves the way for further tensions or ultimately contributes to stability will depend on how both nations navigate the challenges and opportunities it presents, and whether diplomatic engagement can prevail over confrontation in the evolving geopolitics of South Asia.

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