

## Pakistan Raises Alarm After India's Dual Nuclear-Capable Missile Tests



Pakistan has voiced strong concerns following India's recent successive tests of two nuclear-capable ballistic missiles, the Prithvi-2 and Agni-1, on July 17, 2025. These launches, conducted from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur, off the Odisha coast, were described by India as routine trials. However, coming shortly after a period of intense cross-border hostilities in May 2025, Pakistan views these developments as provocative and a potential threat to regional stability, escalating rhetoric around nuclear deterrence in South Asia.

The Prithvi-2, with a strike range of 350 kilometers, and the Agni-1, capable of reaching targets up to 700 kilometers away, are integral to India's strategic forces and are considered "Pakistan-specific" in their orientation. This marks a rare occasion where two such nuclear-capable missiles have been tested on the same day. India's Ministry of Defense affirmed that the launches validated all operational and technical parameters.

These missile tests transpired against a backdrop of heightened tensions stemming from "Operation Sindoor" in May 2025. This four-day military confrontation was triggered by a terrorist attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, which India attributed to Pakistan-backed militants. The ensuing exchange of airstrikes and cross-border fire, including the unprecedented use of drones, resulted in significant casualties on both sides and prompted international alarm, leading to a US-brokered ceasefire.

Pakistan's Foreign Office issued a statement reiterating its commitment to "full-spectrum deterrence" and expressing deep concern over India's continued military modernization. Pakistani officials have previously warned that the use of any nuclear-capable missile,

regardless of its warhead, could be perceived as a nuclear first strike due to the short flight times and the difficulty of distinguishing between conventional and nuclear payloads in a crisis. This introduces a dangerous element of miscalculation into the already fragile strategic balance of the region.

Analysts suggest that while India maintains a "No First Use" (NFU) policy and a doctrine of "credible minimum deterrence," the development of advanced capabilities such as the Agni-V with Multiple Independently Targetable Re-entry Vehicle (MIRV) technology, alongside these recent tests, could signal a shift towards a more flexible and robust deterrence posture. This, in turn, risks an arms race in the region, compelling Pakistan to respond in kind and potentially lowering the threshold for nuclear escalation in any future conflict. The current situation shows the urgent need for robust bilateral or regional risk-reduction mechanisms to prevent miscalculation.