

Rahul Gandhi Demands Clarity on Trump's 'Jets Shot Down' Claim, BJP Rebuffs



A fresh political skirmish has erupted in India following President Donald Trump's latest remarks regarding military actions between India and Pakistan. On Saturday, July 19, 2025, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi publicly questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's silence on Trump's claim that "five jets were shot down" during a past conflict, demanding a clear explanation for the nation. The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) swiftly countered, accusing Gandhi of anti-India sentiment.

Trump, speaking at a private Republican dinner, reiterated his previous assertions that he had intervened to de-escalate tensions between the two nuclear-armed neighbors, primarily through trade threats. This time, he added a specific detail: "Planes were being shot out of the air... four or five, but I think five jets were shot down, actually." Trump did not specify which nation's jets were purportedly lost.

Rahul Gandhi quickly seized on the statement, posting on X (formerly Twitter), "Modi ji, what is the truth about the 5 jets? The nation has a right to know!" Senior Congress leader P. Chidambaram echoed this sentiment, writing, "After President Trump's latest statement, what does the government of India have to say? Silence is no answer." The Congress party has consistently pressed for the Prime Minister to address Trump's repeated claims about mediating a ceasefire and the circumstances surrounding it, especially given what they describe as PM Modi's past "friendship and hugomacy" with Trump.

The BJP, however, strongly condemned Gandhi's questioning. Amit Malviya, head of the BJP's IT cell, launched a sharp attack, accusing Gandhi of exhibiting a "traitor's mentality." Malviya questioned why Gandhi assumed the downed aircraft belonged to India, suggesting, "Why not assume they were Pakistan's? Does he have more sympathy for Pakistan than for his own country?" He further asserted that "whenever the country's army teaches the enemy a lesson, Congress gets riled up. Anti-India sentiment is no longer just a habit for Congress; it's become their identity."

This exchange highlights the ongoing political sensitivity surrounding past military engagements and international relations. As the Monsoon Session of Parliament approaches, it is anticipated that the opposition will press the government for a formal statement on the matter, seeking to clarify the official Indian position on Trump's persistent claims. The debate underscores the delicate balance between diplomatic narratives and domestic political discourse.