

## India Confirms Downing of Six Pakistani Aircraft



The Indian Air Force (IAF) chief, Amar Preet Singh, announced on Saturday that India shot down six Pakistani military aircraft during Operation Sindoor in May. Speaking at a memorial lecture in Bengaluru, Singh provided the first official confirmation of the number of Pakistani losses from the brief but intense conflict. The IAF chief detailed that the aircraft downed included five fighter jets and one high-value surveillance plane.

The May conflict, which lasted four days, was a direct response to an April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam, which killed 26 tourists. India launched precision strikes on terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir on May 7, which triggered cross-border hostilities between the two nuclear-armed nations.

Singh revealed that the strikes were a significant military achievement, with one aircraft, which is a high-value airborne surveillance platform, shot down at a distance of approximately 300 kilometers. He described this as the "largest ever recorded surface-to-air kill that we can talk about." The IAF chief also credited India's recently acquired Russian-made S-400 air defense system as a "game-changer," stating its range kept Pakistani aircraft from penetrating Indian airspace.

Furthermore, Singh provided satellite images and intelligence reports to show the extent of the damage. He said air strikes had hit critical military sites, including two command and control centers and six radar stations. He also mentioned that an F-16 hangar at the Shahbaz Jacobabad airfield was partially destroyed, with indications that several F-16s inside were damaged.

In his remarks, Singh highlighted that the success of the operation was due to a combination of political will, clear directions, and operational freedom. He emphasized that the attacks were a high-tech, calibrated effort, designed to send a clear message that cross-border terrorism would be met with decisive retaliation.

In response to the Indian claims, Pakistani Defense Minister Khawaja Asif rejected the statement as "comical" and "implausible," asserting that not a single Pakistani aircraft was hit. Asif challenged India to allow independent verification of aircraft inventories to prove its claims. Pakistan's government had previously claimed that it had shot down six Indian military aircraft during the same period.

The conflict concluded with a ceasefire on May 10, following Pakistan's request to talk with India's Director General of Military Operations. Singh stated that India agreed to the ceasefire after achieving its military objectives.