

# It's payback on the Myanmar border: Army launches counter-attack on militants five days after 18 soldiers were massacred

By MAIL TODAY BUREAU

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The Indian Army on Tuesday carried out a surgical strike at two locations on the Indo-Myanmar border, pre-empting a terror attack and inflicted heavy damage on the militants.

Executing hot pursuit for the first time, the operation carried out by 21 para (special forces) with support from Indian Air Force was swift, smooth and precise as the soldiers returned without any casualties while destroying two militant camps.

While the Army claimed that the operation was conducted on the Indo-Myanmar border at two locations at Tuensang in Nagaland and Ukhrul in Manipur, indications were that troops actually crossed the international border, though there was no official confirmation.

"We are in communication with the Myanmar authorities on this matter. There is a history of close cooperation between our two militaries. We look forward to combat such terrorism with them," said additional director general military operations Major General Ranbir Singh.

The officer only read out a statement without elaborating on the operation.

The Indian Army's counter-attack came five days after 18 of its soldiers were massacred in Manipur's Chandel district by militants drawn from various groups, including NSCN-Khaplang and Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL).

The Army also confirmed on Tuesday that the strike on the 6th battalion of the Dogra regiment in Chandel five days ago had not gone without retaliation. One of the bodies of militants recovered from the ambush site has been identified as the leader of the group of the assailants, said officials. Two more bodies were recovered.

The Army said Tuesday's operation was based on intelligence input about militants planning another strike. Though it was not clear how many militants were killed, the number of casualties could be anywhere between 12 and 50 or even more.



Major General Ranbir Singh said the Indian Army looks forward to combating terrorism with Myanmar

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**Grim relic: A charred Army vehicle at the ambush site in Manipur's Chandel district**

Among the militants killed are many of those who ambushed the Army convoy in Chandel.

The go-ahead for the operation was given right from the top as Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar, Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh, national security adviser Ajit Doval and Army chief General Dalbir Singh had taken stock of the situation and asked the troops to go all-out against the militant groups.

It had become clear that all options were explored, including precision strike on the camps operating from Myanmar. It was known that militants who had ambushed the Army convoy in Chandel had crossed over to Myanmar.

The Army's statement is clear that Myanmar was informed after the operation was executed.

"We look forward to working with them to combat such terrorism," said an Army statement.



**Security personnel at the site of the militant ambush. The NIA has now taken over the case from Manipur police.**

By going for the bold option of hitting back, the Indian Army has sent a strong message to militant groups that any attack will not go unanswered and they will have

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to pay a heavy price for any misadventure.

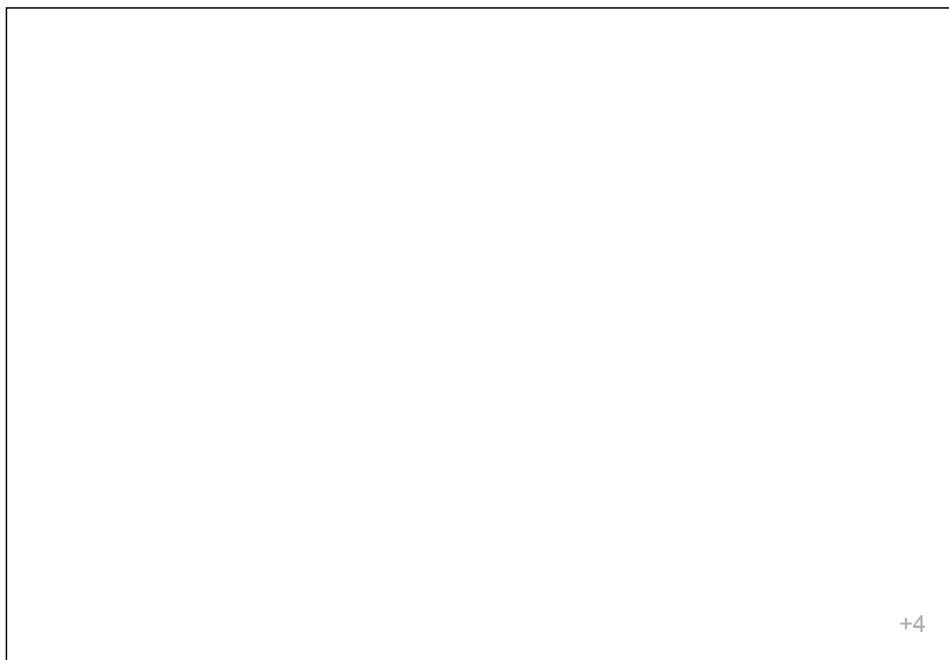
The government in New Delhi is also firmly backing the proactive policy and issues are being taken up at diplomatic levels.

Tuesday's operation has clearly spelt out new rules of engagements to deal with terrorism and the message will also go to the western border with Pakistan.

New Delhi will no longer hesitate from undertaking cross-border operations is the underlining message.

"While ensuring peace and tranquility along the border and in the border states, any threat to our security, safety and national integrity will meet a firm response," said a statement released by the Army which was clear in intent.

Sources said that precise intelligence information was the backbone of the success of Tuesday's operations. Unlike the attack in Chandel, which was attributed to intelligence failure, the Army was alert this time to inputs. All the armed forces are on high state of alert.



## Army's new plans to fight rebels

By Mail Today Bureau in New Delhi

The Myanmar ambush carried out by the army shows that they have set new rules of engagement with militants, even as the armed forces are coming in terms with breakdown of the ceasefire agreement with the insurgent group NSCN-Khaplang.

The militants have long used Myanmar as an escape haven. Even though India and Myanmar enjoy a cordial relationship, it only had limited impact on checking the activities of militant groups.

For years, India had invested steadily in improving military ties with Myanmar, which had always shown a commitment to fighting terrorism.

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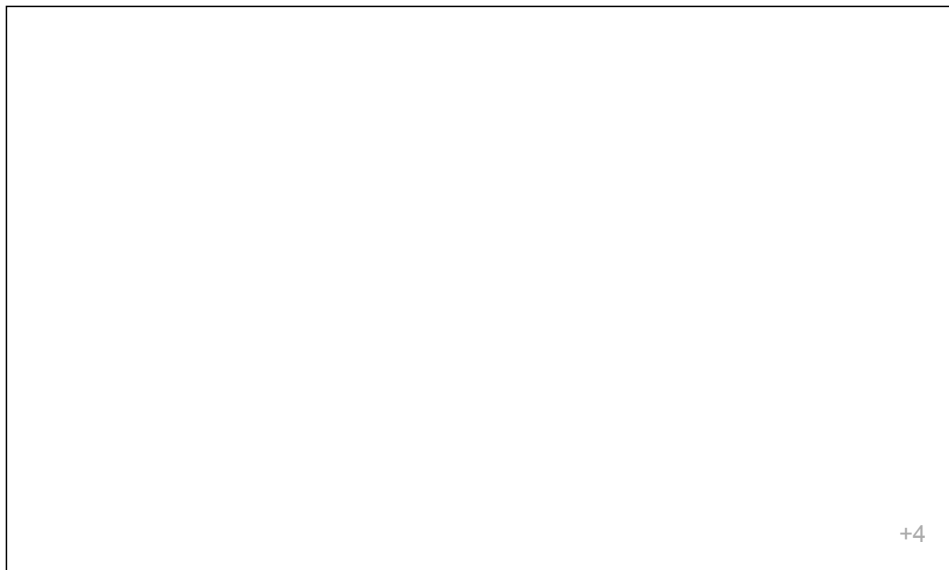
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## Weapons belonging to the Indian Army officers who were killed by militants on June 4

But the recent Manipur ambush, which killed 18 Armymen, has made some officials feel it is a testing time for Indo-Myanmar ties.

India has also signalled that its approach to deal with terrorists will be proactive. The terrorists will no longer be allowed to escape to their safe havens. Not only do they retreat to their sanctuaries across the border, but they also use their extensive network to procure sophisticated weapons.

The fact that the Indian Army convoy was ambushed using such weapons had raised eyebrows about their preparations.

The border between India and Myanmar is porous at several locations and the armed forces cannot function without the support from the other side.

The immediate task for them in the North-East will be to manage the ceasefire breakdown.

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Ironically, there have been three major strikes by the militants after the ceasefire was broken two months ago.

Reports also point a finger at the manner in which the breakdown took place, as many believe that even the army was not aware of it.

Officials, however, said that while a rise in the level of militancy is expected, the armed forces were equipped to handle the situation.

According to officials, the ability to strike across the border has given a big advantage to the armed forces and the militants will now get the stern message that there are no safe havens left for them.

This is the first time that India has crossed the border to execute a military operation, a move which will have significant ramifications for the region.

## NIA visits ambush site in Manipur

A National Investigating Agency (NIA) team on Tuesday seized some Lethod gun shells and an unexploded Improvised Explosive Device (IED) from the site where 18 army personnel were killed in Manipur's Chandel district.

Official sources said the NIA, which has taken over the case from Manipur police, conducted a thorough search of the area five days after the attack, the worst on the army in recent times.

They said the IED was defused by explosives experts from the army.

Naga insurgent outfit NSCN (Khaplang) had claimed responsibility for the ambush in a release.

The militant outfit claimed the attack was a joint operation by itself, Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup, and Kangleipak Communist Party.

The NIA has taken over the case from Manipur police and registered a case in the agency's Guwahati branch under various sections of the Indian Penal Code, Arms Act and Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

According to the intelligence reports, ULFA's fugitive chief Paresh Baruah, who is alleged to be operating at the behest of China's PLA, is believed to have convinced NSCN-K leader S S Khaplang to snap the ceasefire agreement with Indian government in March last year. *PTI*

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Jack, 32, was casually attired in a blue shirt

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► **Alison Brie shows her Fall style in white sherpa jacket and skinny jeans as she picks up gourds Her brunette locks were loose and styled**

► **Ariana Grande's brother Frankie sends supportive message to sister... amid reports she called off engagement with Pete Davidson**

**The Voice: Emma Willis stuns in all-black ensemble alongside**

► **glamorous Jennifer Hudson at star-studded photocall ahead of new series**

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► **I'm A Celeb Extra Camp: Scarlett Moffatt, Joe Swash and Joel Dommert are confirmed to present spin-off show once again this year**  
Back again

► **EXCLUSIVE: Mel B reveals how she downed 200 aspirins in suicide bid, snorted cocaine and propositioned women for threesomes**

► **Lottie Moss is barely recognisable as she shows off her new brunette hair transformation for the first time**  
Makeover

► **Amy Adams FIRST LOOK: The star is seen in character as an agoraphobe while filming The Woman In The Window in New York City**

► **Killing Eve's back, along with a MASSIVE spoiler: Jodie Comer is spotted shooting scenes for hit thriller's second season that reveal incredible twist**

► **Alyssa Milano sobs as she explains to daughter why she spoke out about sexual assault - while crediting the four-year-old for giving her the 'strength'**

► **La La Anthony and estranged husband Carmelo are 'spotted making out' at swanky NYC event as she admits they're 'figuring out' marriage**

► **Grammy winner Daya reveals she's bisexual in belated National Coming Out Day post**  
The 19-year-old Pittsburgh pop star (born Grace Tandon)

► **Charlamagne tha God cancels mental health chat with Kanye West amid fears it'd be 'a distraction'**  
Radio personality decided to nix the event

► **Eleanor Tomlinson cuts an elegant figure in smart black ensemble as she puts in a stylish appearance at Women's Initiative event**  
Smart

► **Love Island's Megan Barton Hanson shows off her toned legs in a plunging cut-out dress as she joins boyfriend Wes Nelson at MIPCOM in Cannes**

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► **EXCLUSIVE: Five WILL become one again says Mel B as she lifts lid on failed Spice Girls reunion - and disastrous 2008 tour where 'tension got too much'**

► **Ben Affleck cuts an edgy figure in leather jacket and aviator sunglasses during low-key outing in Los Angeles**  
Behind the wheel

► **EXCLUSIVE Now even Ayda Field's MOTHER is in on the act! Gwen, 68, dresses up as a Playboy BUNNY in never-seen-before X Factor clip to surprise hopefuls in LA**

► **Kendra Wilkinson reveals she has signed her divorce papers after 'fighting to the last second' to save marriage to Hank Baskett**

► **Busy Philipps dons checked double-breasted suit as she 'channels my inner Blake Lively' for SiriusXM interview**  
Suited and booted

► **Is Fergie's tweetstorm a swipe at Meghan for upstaging Eugenie with baby news at her wedding? Duchess furiously posts pictures from daughter's big day**

► **American Horror Story: Apocalypse: Jessica Lange returns in extra long episode Return To Murder House directed by Sarah Paulson**

► **Maniac star Jonah Hill walks hand in hand with his girlfriend Gianna Santos as the couple step out on Beverly Hills date night**  
Low-key

► **EXCLUSIVE: Tragedy for Veep star Julia Louis-Dreyfus as her 44-year-old sister is found dead of a seizure after overdosing on cocaine and alcohol**

► **Katie Holmes wears pink coat in New York City as she's seen with her daughter Suri who is weighed down by a heavy backpack**  
Mother daughter time

**Josh Brolin 50, and his heavily pregnant wife Kathryn, 31, take off their shirts for outdoor photo shoot**

▶ just days before her  
due date

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▶ Whoopi Goldberg tells audience that actresses have sex with 'ugly-a\*\*' men to bag movie roles and awards during a talk on the #metoo movement

▶ Lily Allen joins Corbynistas in suggesting the timing of Harry and Meghan's baby announcement is a 'conspiracy' to cover 'Brexit shambles'

▶ Meghan's pregnant: 'Delighted' Queen shares her excitement after Prince Harry and his wife reveal they're expecting their first baby

▶ Olivia Cooke rocks two different looks in red sequinned bardot dress and pink trouser suit at Life Itself premiere at BFI London Film Festival

▶ How Thomas Markle's string of gaffes and sour comments mean Meghan's exiled father may never see the baby who will bring daughter and Doria closer

▶ Camilla Kerslake stuns in pink silk dress at London NFL game as rugby ace husband Chris Robshaw supports her from the sidelines

▶ US TV personality Jenelle Evans shares post op pics of her 'rough recovery' following nose surgery for deviated septum On the mend

▶ Jada Pinkett Smith follows in the footsteps of her daredevil husband Will Smith and sons by jumping out of a plane High-octane

▶ PICTURED: Big Brother US's Cody Nickson and Jessica Graf tie the knot in lavish Malibu wedding ceremony Wedding bells

▶ Queen Maxima of the Netherlands looks chic in a lilac lace dress as she joins husband King Willem-Alexander in welcoming the Chinese premier and his wife

Was Meghan pregnant when Harry laughed off royal fan? How Prince was asked 'when are



▶ you getting going?' around the time couple conceived first child

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- ▶ Tiffany Watson showcases her sensational physique in revealing bikini snaps from her romantic getaway to Thailand with new man
- ▶ Lena Dunham says she will always look 'four months pregnant' even though she can never get pregnant after hysterectomy... and that's 'hot2me'
- ▶ Christina and Tarek El Moussa's son Brayden, 3, recovering after being rushed to hospital with croup  
Tarek posted a photo to his Instagram
- ▶ Kiernan Shipka wears mismatched sports socks with her high heels as she promotes The Chilling Adventures Of Sabrina in NYC
- ▶ Kate Hudson pampers herself to mud mask as new mother admits her life has begun to 'normalise' weeks after giving birth  
Me time

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