


[tizen.in/index.php/en\)](https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en)
[zen.in/index.php/hi\)](https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/hi)
[the citizen.in/index.php/hi\)](https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/hi)

C U R I O U S

28 November 2018 03:16 PM

26°C
DELHI
[Subscribe \(https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/subscribe\)](https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/subscribe) |

[Donate \(https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/donate\)](https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/donate)

P O L I T I C S

[\(h t t p s . / / w w w . t h e c i t i z e n](https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/politics)

O P I N I O N

[\(h t t p s . / / w w w . t h e c i t i z e n](https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/opinion)

W O R L D

[\(h t t p s . / / w w w . t h e c i t i z e n](https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/world)
[L I F E \(h t t p s . / / w w w . t h e c i](https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/life)

S P O R T

[\(h t t p s . / / w w w . t h e c i t i z e n](https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/sport)

B O R D E R

[\(h t t p s . / / w w w . t h e c i t i z e n](https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/border)

S O U T H A S I A

[\(h t t p s . / / w w w . t h e c i t i z e n](https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/south-asia)

G E N D E R

[\(h t t p s . / / w w w . t h e c i t i z e n](https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/gender)

Y O U T H

[\(h t t p s . / / w w w . t h e c i t i z e n](https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/youth)

GAYETI SINGH (<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/contributer/detail/GAYETI-SINGH>) | 12 JUNE, 2015

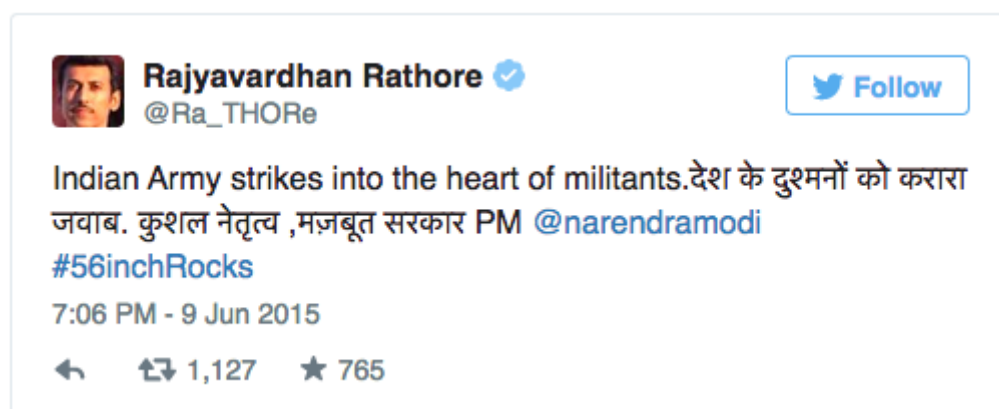
Five Questions That The Myanmar Operation Raises

India's operation in Myanmar raises some crucial questions

NEW DELHI: Tuesday was a 'proud' day for Indians as the country woke up to the news that the Indian army has avenged the attack that killed 18 soldiers in Manipur's Chandel district on June 4. The Indian army had crossed over into neighbouring Myanmar, where rebels who carried out the Manipur attack are based. Military officials proudly said that between 30 to 50 rebels were killed in the surprise raids. Other accounts pinned the number at close to a 100.

India's junior information minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore told TV channels that the "hot pursuit strikes" on separatist bases in Myanmar had been authorised by India's Prime Minister, Narendra Modi. "Be it Yemen or Iraq, attacks on Indians are not acceptable. This is also a message to our neighbours who shelter terrorists," Rathore said.

Rathore then started a viral trend, with the hashtag #56InchRocks trending after the minister posted the following Tweet: "Indian army strikes into the hearth of militants #56InchRocks."



It was a proud day indeed as India not only avenged the Manipur attack but also issued a strong message to its neighbours. Rathore articulated this best when he said that the strikes were a message to all countries, including Pakistan, and groups harbouring "terror intent" towards India that "we will strike at a place and at a time of our choosing."

Without intending to dampen the 56 inch chest thumping that has emerged as a hashtag on Twitter, the above narrative raises some pertinent questions.

1. Why is Myanmar denying that the operation took place within its territory?

This is confusing. According to the Indian account, the Indian army struck militants at bases within Myanmar's territory. Myanmar, on Wednesday, denied this claim. In a Facebook post, Zaw Htay, director of Myanmar's presidential office, said, "According to the information sent by Tatmadaw (Myanmar army) battalions on the ground, we have learned that the military operation was performed on the Indian side at India-Myanmar border." "Myanmar will not accept any foreigner who attacks neighbouring countries in the back and creates problems by using our own territory," he added.

Given that India and Myanmar have a long standing agreement, even authorising the two armies to cross the border to combat terrorism, why is Myanmar denying the Indian government's very categorical claim? Is it embarrassed and worried about the major publicity India seems to be giving to the 'hot pursuit' by the special forces, or is there more to it?

2. Why is the NSCN-K denying that any of its members were killed?

The Indian account states that the NSCN-K -- The National Socialist Council of Nagaland -- Khaplang, the group behind the Manipur attack were targeted. The NSCN-K, however, denies this. In fact, the group has outrightly denied that it even has camps in the area that the Indian army says the operation took place.

"There were no NSCN-K camps in areas claimed by the Indian army," the rebels reportedly said. The militants added that the attack was "completely false" and said the reports were efforts by the Indian army "to save their reputation". The release further challenged the army to show the bodies of cadres who were supposedly killed in the attack.

Further, the rebel group said areas shown by television channels as camp locations were "non-existent" in the borders areas. "The topography shown on TVs are all non-existent. We do not have a well-maintained footpath or the pine garden that were shown," the NSCN (K) added.

The answer to the question regarding why the NSCN-K is denying the Indian army's claims is fairly straightforward, as it does not want to demoralise its cadres. But the denial does raise the question.

3. Who were the people killed?

Combat, whether national or cross-border, is governed by standard operating procedures aimed to prevent human rights violations and civilian casualties. However, given the secrecy surrounding the Myanmar operation (for good reason and not-so-good reason), there is a lot of ambiguity regarding the number (and nature) of people killed. Was it between 20 and 50? Was it 100? Further, who were these people? Were they all military aged males? Were they all armed? How did the Indian army ensure only "militants" were killed?

4. What about China?

The operation fails to address one of the most crucial factors governing militancy in India's northeast: China.

Rahul Bedi wrote in The Citizen: "Intelligence sources said Chinese arms began trickling into the region around 2005 via Bangladesh and reports on last week's ambush indicate that sophisticated weaponry, including grenade launchers, was employed in the attack.

The Chinese are believed to have established an armaments factory in Myanmar, which reportedly is supplying arms to militant groups operating in the northeast.

If it is indeed, confirmed that rebel weaponry was sourced from China it would seriously embarrass the Modi government, unctuously cosying up to Beijing.

It would also present a dilemma for Modi with the possibility of the relatively dormant insurgencies re-igniting. There is enough local resentment for the varied militant

groups, especially in Manipur, to tap into that could well turn the region into a violent tinder box.”

If the Myanmar Operation served as a “lesson” to India’s neighbours who aid and shelter terrorists, then it is indeed worth exploring what the Modi government has to say on China’s role in fostering militancy in India’s northeast, whilst the Prime Minister cosies up to Xi Jinping.

5. And now what?

From 2001 to March 2015, the NSCN(K) had a ceasefire with the Indian government. Although the talks achieved little, every year, the ceasefire was extended. Does India’s decided course of action mean that any prospect of negotiations are off the table?

Most importantly, the above question demonstrates the core of the Naga problem. It relates to the larger question of the roots of the militancy in Nagaland, where a number of rebel groups are fighting for a unified Nagaland. Addressing militancy in any region usually relates to root causes – social, economic, political, and cultural.

The only solution to militancy is through an understanding of the root causes. This can only be made possible through negotiations (made possible in turn by a ceasefire). While a military operation may achieve short-term gains, it will accentuate long-term costs by increasing alienation amongst an already disenchanted population. This is not to say that a military operation holds no validity, but rather, to ensure transparency as well as addressing questions relating to a future course of action.

Instead of vocalising patriotism through the facade of military action and retribution, it is perhaps worth asking: now what? What are the implications of the breakdown of the ceasefire and the Indian government’s choice of action on the ethnic conflict in Nagaland? This is the most crucial question that demands an answer.

STREAM

THE CITIZEN
BUREAU
(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/contributer/detail/THC-CITIZEN-BUREAU>)

Governor Malik Is Ready For a “Transfer” But Sajad Lone Left High and Dry
(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/governor-malik-is-ready-for-a-transfer-but-sajad-lone-left-high-and-dry>)
33 MINUTES AGO

THE CITIZEN
BUREAU
(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/contributer/detail/THCITIZEN-BUREAU>)

**Spot the Difference:
Congress in MP Outdoes
BJP on Hindutva**
(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/the-Difference-Congress-in-MP-Outdoes-BJP-on-Hindutva>)
46 MINUTES AGO

P.K.BALACHA
NDRAN
(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/contributer/detail/P.K.BALACHANDRAN>)

**For the First Time in
Lankan History,
Government Boycotts
Parliament**
(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/the-First-Time-in-Lankan-History-Government-Boycotts-Parliament>)
57 MINUTES AGO

SARAH
WARIS
(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/contributer/detail/SARAH-WARIS>)

**Her Passion and Strength
will be Mary Kom's Legacy**
(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/Passion-and-Strength-will-be-Mary-Koms-Legacy>)
1 HOUR AGO

RIBHU
RANJAN
(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/contributer/detail/RIBHU-RANJAN>)

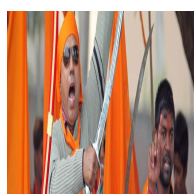
**Temple Politics Challenges
the Supreme Court**
(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/Politics-Challenges-the-Supreme-Court->)
1 HOUR AGO

RELATED



(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/NewsDetail/index/2/15650/Spot-the-Difference-Congress-in-MP-Outdoes-BJP-on-Hindutva>)

Spot the Difference: Congress in M
(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/Spot-the-Difference-Congress-in-MP-Outdoes-BJP-on-Hindutva>)



(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/NewsDetail/index/2/15647/Temple-Politics-Challenges-the-Supreme-Court->)

Temple Politics Challenges the
(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/Politics-Challenges-the-Supreme-Court->)



Has The Farmers March to Delhi Dr
(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/NewsDetail/index/2/15642/Has-The-Farmers-March-to-Delhi-Driven-the-BJP-to-Ayodhya>)



Will You Prepare a Case Against Th Now?
(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/NewsDetail/index/2/15637/Will-You-Prepare-a-Case-Against-Those-Sympathising-with-the-Rohingyas-Now>)



Government Policy is Corr
(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/NewsDetail/index/2/15636/Government-Policy-is-Complicit-in-the-Death-of-John-Allen-Chau>)

(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/NewsDetail/index/2/15636/Government-Policy-is-Complicit-in-the-Death-of-John-Allen-Chau>)

CITIZENS KEEP THE CITIZEN INDEPENDENT. DONATE.

(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/donate>)

**THE
CITIZEN**

(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php>)

ABOUT

(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/about>)

CONTRIBUTORS

(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/contributors>)

CONTACT

(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/contact>)

ARCHIVES

(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/Archives>)

COMMENT POLICY

(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/comment-policy>)

PRIVACY RIGHTS

(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/privacy-rights>)

SITEMAP

(<https://www.thecitizen.in/index.php/en/thecitizen/sitemap>)



(https://twitter.com/TheCitizen_in)



(<https://www.facebook.com/thecitizen>)



(<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC>)



(<https://www.instagram.com/thecitizen>)