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Indian High Commissioner to Eswatini Ram Prasad.

India Appreciates Eswatini's Solidarity after terror attack - *by Sibusiso Dlamini*

MBABANE – INDIA has expressed deep gratitude to Eswatini for its support and solidarity following the devastating terrorist attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir. The attack in April left 26 civilians dead, including 25 Indian nationals and one Nepali.

Speaking during a press conference yesterday, Indian High Commissioner to Eswatini, Ram Prasad, acknowledged the country's swift condemnation of the attack through Prime Minister Russell Dlamini on social media platforms.

He thanked His Majesty King Mswati III, government and Emaswati for standing with India at a time of profound national grief.

The attack, carried out on April 22 by militants affiliated with The Resistance Front (TRF), a group linked to the UN-designated terrorist organisation Lashkar-e-Taiba, targeted a group of tourists who were communally profiled and executed in front of their families. The assault has been described by Indian authorities as one of the most barbaric terrorist incidents in recent memory and the deadliest attack on civilians in India since the 2008 Mumbai attacks.

"This was not just an attack on innocent lives, but a deliberate attempt to fracture the social fabric of our secular society and to destabilise the economic progress of Jammu and Kashmir," said Prasad.
India responded to the attack with a set of diplomatic and military measures, beginning with the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty and cross-border trade and mobility with Pakistan. Visa restrictions on Pakistani nationals were also imposed as part of the immediate diplomatic fallout.

In a pointed military response, India launched 'Operation Sindoor' on May 7, striking nine terror bases located in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

The operation, named after the sacred vermilion powder worn by married Hindu women, was intended as a symbolic tribute to the spouses of those killed in the Pahalgam attack.

“These precision strikes targeted only terrorist strongholds and carefully avoiding civilian and military infrastructure to prevent unnecessary escalation. It was a measured and proportionate response to an unprovoked act of terrorism,” he said.

‘Operation Sindoor’, according to the high commissioner, neutralised more than 100 militants, including high-ranking members of groups such as Jaish-e-Mohammad and Lashkar-e-Taiba. Indian intelligence claims some of these figures received State honours during funerals in Pakistan, signalling what New Delhi sees as clear State complicity.

“When Pakistan retaliated with strikes on Indian military and civilian installations, India responded again on May 10, targeting 11 Pakistani military facilities as a calibrated and definitive move,” said the high commissioner, stating that this compelled Islamabad to request a ceasefire, which was agreed upon by both nations’ director generals of military operations on the same day.

“The ceasefire understanding was reached only after India had clearly conveyed its intent to retaliate proportionately and decisively against any further provocation,” he added. He further warned that ‘Operation Sindoor’ represented a new normal in India’s counter-terrorism doctrine, one that does not distinguish between terrorists and their State sponsors.

“India will not be subjected to nuclear blackmail. Any terrorist attack from across the border will be met with decisive retaliation,” he said, quoting Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s national address on May 12. This redefined security posture, Prasad said, consists of three pillars: swift and proportionate retaliation to terror attacks, rejection of nuclear blackmail, and treating terrorists and their sponsors as one and the same.

“As the region remains tense and ‘Operation Sindoor’ reportedly continues in a surveillance phase, India’s leadership maintains that peace can only be achieved if Pakistan permanently dismantles its terror infrastructure,” emphasised the high commissioner.

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