

BORDER SECURITY FORCE MODERNISATION POST OP SINDOOR

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Border security and management represent some of the most crucial elements of national security. Effective border security serves as the foundational component of any counter-terrorism strategy. A strong system of border security management, equipped with robust mechanisms to prevent cross-border infiltration, can significantly alleviate pressures on other areas of national security. In this context, the article examines the increasing importance of the Border Security Force (BSF) in the broader national security framework and the ongoing modernisation efforts aimed at ensuring safer borders and minimising cross-border infiltration. Although the BSF is also actively involved in counter-insurgency operations, this article exclusively focuses on the essential counter-terrorism roles of the force, highlighting its critical position as the first line of defence alongside army foot soldiers in counter-terrorism operations. Enhanced capabilities within the BSF are vital for addressing contemporary security challenges effectively and efficiently.

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NEED FOR BSF MODERNISATION

Proxy wars are foreign policy mechanisms pursued by revisionist states to fulfil their wider objectives of exerting influence in the region and fulfil political and strategic goals. Pakistan has rarely been in the status quo, and revisionism has been a major means by which it has sought to fulfil its strategic and tactical objectives. Proxy wars have formed a major component of this revisionist policy, in addition to its own defence modernisation process, which it justifies as a step to deter India's conventional superiority.

These proxy wars lower warfare to a sub-conventional level but under the shadow of Pakistan's nuclear weapons. This makes sub-conventional level of war-fighting very challenging. These challenges have been aggravated because India is no longer willing to confine this mode of warfare at the sub-conventional level, but responds militarily with counter terrorism strategies that would extend beyond borders. But military actions that extend beyond the borders will result in military responses from the other side of the border. It could be a proportionate response or a military response much greater in magnitude than the military actions that India would undertake.

Protecting the borders and managing the borders remain the utmost priority in national security. Another reason why border management and security are crucial is to prevent sleeper cells from crossing borders, as they too become a threat to national security and could also create instability in the country.

Op Sindoor has become an eye-opener to the need for modernisation of this force, which has constantly devoted its honed skills towards better border management during the Operation Sindoor, [reducing the scope for cross-border infiltration](#). It thwarted such attempts during the military

actions, therefore forming a vital link in synergising the operations. The force has displayed "[conspicuous bravery and unmatched valour](#)" during the Op Sindoor. During the Operation, according to the Deputy Inspector General, Vikram Singh, the BSF [also destroyed](#) several terrorist launch-pads, coercing Pakistan to relocate its launch pads to interior locations away from the border.

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NEW AGENDA: SMART BORDER PROJECT

In May 2026, the Union Home Minister, Shri Amit Shah [announced](#) the 'Smart Border Project' to modernise the BSF. In the next one year, the Modi government will "establish an impregnable border grid...equipped with

drones, radars, modern cameras, and advanced technologies.” The BSF is already being streamlined into a more efficient counter-terrorism force through effective border management skills and technologies. The new project will further illuminate the capabilities to larger macro-level national security objectives.

This announcement was no surprise, as last year the Minister had already stressed India’s dedication to modernise the BSF as a priority for the next five years to make the force become the “most modern and aggressive force in the world.”

Major focus is on improving the infrastructural facilities and firearms of the BSF. Plans to equip the BSF with state-of-the-art technologies and systems have been in process [since 2018](#), and funds for the same have been approved and allocated since then. Boost to firepower is also a major priority, and the force has already witnessed several transformations leading to advancements in its firepower capabilities, which enabled it to become a force to reckon with.

In fact, the force is one of the few paramilitary forces to possess its own artillery units for strengthened firepower capabilities. It has several artillery regiments and continuously devotes its focus to modernisation of these regiments, integrating its firing systems with the “[help of computer-based synchronised technology](#).”

*Major focus is on improving the **infrastructural facilities** and **firearms of the BSF**. Plans to equip the **BSF with state-of-the-art technologies** and systems*

In fact, in 2026, a regiment of artillery of BSF participated in Exercise Topchi, which is an annual firepower demonstration and training of the Regiment of Artillery Devlali to ensure, according to the Commandant of the Artillery School, Lt. Gen Navneet Singh Sarna "[underscores operational preparedness.](#)" There is also an effort [to modernise](#) its small arms capabilities by replacing older assault rifles with advanced technologies of larger calibre of 7.62mm for higher kill probability and greater range.

BSF is also leaping to integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI) into its operational activities for integration of command channels with crucial software systems and also for surveillance purposes. Anti-drone technologies are becoming a sought-after technology for the BSF as an effective counter-drone strategy. "[Smart Border Observation and Monitoring System](#)" is an AI driven platform is a testimony to the fact that the BSF is also majorly focused on tech-driven advanced intelligence-gathering systems.



BSF ARTILLERY MODERNISATION PLAN

Artillery has become not only integral to India's military might, but also for paramilitary forces. The Border Security Force (BSF) is a rare paramilitary force to possess artillery equipment for firepower capability in its counter-terrorism operations. In Op Sindoor, BSF utilised artillery to neutralise terrorist camps. It is in this context that the article aims to understand BSF's artillery modernisation process and its implications in counter-terrorism.

The BSF has several regiments of artillery with credible firepower capabilities. However, the organisation is focused on modernising its firepower capabilities and shifting towards electronic platforms from manual ones. Under the leadership of DG Daljit Singh Chawdhury, BSF is transitioning into a technology-driven paramilitary force. Focus has been on operational readiness and strategic deployment of the force. Strategic deployment of the BSF for counter terrorism operations could only take place when its artillery regiments are technologically advanced and are capable of inflicting debilitating strikes on critical targets that harbour terrorism. On many occasions, the force could also employ such systems for suppression of targets.

The focus on digital and electronic firing systems to upgrade artillery regiments is a continuous process aimed at increasing the efficiency of the BSF to respond to counter-terrorism operations in times of crisis. The BSF is keen to modernise its artillery regiment to support the army's military operations and keep pace with the changing nature of warfare. Counter terrorism operations have become a challenging process and require precision and long-range capabilities. Small arms cannot be the sole backbone for combat for a paramilitary force like BSF, whose paramilitary actions are holistic and comprehensive.

The BSF is also keen to make advancements in operational readiness of its artillery regiments. In 2026, it has also participated in Exercise Topchi to

ensure credibility in its combat operations against proxy combatants. These kinds of exercises will mark a remarkable shift in BSF's strategy in counter terrorism operations. The Indian Army's artillery is a conventional mode of deterrence and stability and will be employed only when a crisis scenario demands. However, BSF's artillery regiment is the first line of defence owing to the fact that BSF is the first line of defence in counter terrorism operations. Hence, while the former's artillery systems, even when inducted along borders, are for deterrence unless deterrence fails, the latter's artillery systems will be for combat.

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105mm Indian Field Guns have become a strength for BSF's combat capability, providing direct fire support and precision strikes in a challenging environment and also suitable for border management roles. However, the force could also be focused on transitioning to the Mounted Gun System (MGS) of 105mm calibre with shoot-and-scoot capabilities owing to the fact that it operates in mountainous, rugged terrain. The 122mm D-30 allows the force to manage the sensitive border regions. This towed artillery is best suited for counter-terrorism operations, and it could also be converted to self-propelled guns if necessary.

Though BSF does not operate self-propelled guns, in future it could operate owing to the fact that during wartime, the artillery units of the BSF fall under operational control of the Indian Army. 122mm guns in self-

propelled mode could help to neutralise high-value targets and operate in rugged terrain. Enfilade and defilade methods could increase their survivability.

BSF is also modernising its mortar system to suit the hybrid warfare environment. Automated mortar firing systems enhance the capabilities of mortar regiments in the BSF for holistic responsiveness. Computer-generated indoor simulators enhance the efficiency of firepower and result in lesser scope for loss of human lives. The employment of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in command and control makes decision-making easier in an ever-time-sensitive battlefield. GPS-guided mortar systems increase the possibility of credible firepower with better capability for 'shoot and scoot'. A 'shoot and scoot' tactic will only become effective if mortar systems can reach and destroy the correct target, for which GPS is an asset. For counter terrorism operations, targets could also be mobile. Hence, GPS-guided mortars provide precision, agility and the ability to reach time-sensitive targets.

Anti-drone guns are a major focus for countering drone systems in border regions. BSF also possesses anti-aircraft capabilities like the Avni Gun for border defence. Radar-mounted drones for all-weather surveillance have also become a key focus for anti-denial capabilities and are presently in development.

Offensive capabilities, especially in border regions for forces that are the first line of defence, will need to be supported with defensive weapon systems that strengthen denial capabilities. Hence, anti-drone and anti-aircraft capabilities of the BSF strengthen their combat posture in the sensitive border regions.

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CONCLUSION

All these developments imply that BSF is focused on pursuing capabilities that would catapult its efficiency in counter-terrorism operations. Op Sindoor has become an eye-opener for time sensitivity and real-time data. Advanced weaponry and technologies are becoming a priority for the force in order to strengthen their image as the first line of defence in border security and also national security. The force is focused on holistic development, which includes infrastructural developments, improvements in welfare mechanisms and combat capabilities.

Counter terrorism operations will become challenging in the coming years. Drone systems to divert attention during cross-border infiltration and also for surveillance of India's own assets will become major hurdles to overcome for the BSF in the sensitive border regions. Drones will also be used to destroy BSF assets in the border regions in times of crisis and warfare. Artillery modernisation will provide a boost to BSF's own

capabilities to engage in counter-terrorism operations through suppression and neutralisation of targets.

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