

INDIA 'ACCIDENTALLY' FIRED MISSILE THAT ENTERED PAKISTAN, SAYS DEFENCE MINISTRY

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India on Friday said it accidentally fired a missile into Pakistan, calling the incident "deeply regrettable". The defence ministry said the "accidental firing" happened because of a "technical malfunction".

"On 9 March, 2022, in the course of routine maintenance, a technical malfunction led to the accidental firing of a missile," the Ministry of Defence said in a statement.

The Government of India has also ordered a high-level Court of Enquiry into the incident, the defence ministry said.

The Defence Ministry added it was a matter of relief that there was no loss of life.

"It is learnt that the missile landed in an area of Pakistan. While the incident is deeply regrettable, it is also a matter of relief that there has been no loss of life due to the accident," the MoD said.

Violation of Pak's airspace by 'Indian-origin projectile'

Pakistan has summoned India's Charge d'Affaires in Islamabad and conveyed its strong protest over the alleged unprovoked violation of its airspace by an "Indian-origin super-sonic flying object" and sought a thorough and transparent investigation of the incident.

The Indian-origin "super-sonic flying object", which entered into Pakistan from 'Suratgarh' in India at 6:43 PM (local time) on 9 March, fell on the ground near Mian Chunnu city at around 6:50 PM on the same day, causing damage to the civilian property.

Pakistan warned India "to be mindful of the unpleasant consequences of such negligence and take effective measures to avoid the recurrence of such violations in future".

Pakistan Army spokesman Major General Babar Iftikhar said that on 9 March, a hi-speed flying object was picked up inside the Indian territory by the Air Defence Operations Center of the Pakistan Air Force.

"Pakistan strongly protests this flagrant violation and cautions against recurrence of any such incident in future," Iftikhar said.

From its initial course, the object suddenly maneuvered towards the Pakistani territory and violated the Pakistani air space, ultimately falling near Mian Channu, Khanewal district of Punjab at 6:50 PM, also damaging some civilian property but no loss or injury to human life was caused.

"PAF continuously monitored the complete flight path of the flying object from its point of origin Sirsa in India till its point of impact near Mian Channu and initiated requisite tactical actions in accordance with standard operating procedures," he added.

"It was a supersonic flying object, most probably a missile, but it was certainly unarmed," he further said.

It is important to highlight that the flight path of this object endangered many international and domestic passenger flights both in Indian and Pakistani airspace as well as human life and property on ground, according to the spokesperson.

He said India should explain whatever caused this incident to happen, which showed their disregard for aviation safety and reflects very poorly on their technological prowess and procedural efficiency.

Air Vice Marshall Tariq Zia told reporters that the projectile travelled 124 kilometres inside the Pakistani territory in three minutes and 44 seconds.

Iftikhar also made it clear that there was no sensitive installation in Mian Channu where the projectile fell.

Ties between India and Pakistan nose-dived after a terror attack on the Pathankot Air Force base in 2016 by terror groups based in the neighbouring country.

Subsequent attacks, including one on an Indian Army camp in Uri, further deteriorated the relationship.

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