

Work together, PM tells forces

Inaugurates Parakram Parv to celebrate anniversary of surgical strikes

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the annual Combined Commanders Conference in the Air Force Station Jodhpur on Friday and stressed on the need for “jointness” among the three services. The stress was of the speech was on “jointness” and the need for the forces to “work together”, an official source said.

At his address earlier in January 2017 at the Indian Military Academy at Dehradun also Mr. Modi had stressed on “jointmanship” among the services.

After much deliberation, the Government is keen to move ahead with a proposal to set up two of the three joint specialised commands to promote synergy and efficiency. The proposals for a Special Forces command and cyber command headed by two star generals are in an advanced stage, a defence source said.

3-day fete

Later at the Konark stadium, Mr. Modi inaugurated ‘Parakram Parv’ and witnessed an exhibition set up as part of the three-day celebrations to mark the second anniversary of the surgical strikes by the Army on terror launch pads across the Line of Control (LoC).

Inaugurating a huge exhibition on India Gate lawns in New Delhi, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the event was being celebrated to tell the people of the valour of the Army.



Fire power: Bofors guns being displayed during the ‘Parakram Parv’ celebration at the Rajpath lawns in New Delhi on Friday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

‘BJP using security forces for votes’

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The Congress on Thursday slammed the Narendra Modi-led government’s decision to mark the second anniversary of its surgical strike with a ‘Prakram festival’, saying the BJP was using the “blood and

sacrifice” of the security forces as a tool to garner votes. The party said the BJP government had failed to serve the interests of the armed forces.

“I want to ask why has Prime Minister Narendra Modi betrayed India’s soldiers by denying them

‘one rank, one pension?’” Congress media-in-charge Randeep Surjewala said at a press conference, flanked with ex-servicemen.

“Is it not true that in the last 52 months of Modi Govt, in J&K alone, 414 jawans have been martyred?” he asked.

“He [enemy] was totally cowardly in coming into a camp where soldiers were resting; they were not fighting a war. But we paid back, we really gave them back and that is what surgical strike is all about,” the Defence Minister told the media referring to the terror attack on the Uri Army camp

which led to the surgical strikes.

However, the celebrations have drawn severe criticism from serving and retired personnel. “Such actions by the armed forces are not meant to be celebrated in this manner,” one officer said.

The exhibition, open to the public on Saturday and

Sunday, showcases captured terrorists’ weapons that have been brought from Jammu and Kashmir, among others, in addition to short videos of the surgical strikes of 2016.

The event is also being celebrated at 53 locations in 51 other cities, an official release said.