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Exclusive: Pakistan's Chinese-made jet brought down two Indian fighter aircraft, US officials say

By Saeed Shah and Idrees Ali

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[1/2] Indian security force personnel stand guard near the site of a fighter jet crash in Wuyan in India-administered Kashmir's Pulwama district May 7, 2025. REUTERS/Sharafat Ali [Purchase Licensing Rights](#) 



- US officials confirm Pakistan used Chinese J-10 jets against Indian aircraft
- India has not acknowledged loss of planes
- Pakistan claims downing five Indian planes, including three Rafale jets

ISLAMABAD/WASHINGTON, May 8 (Reuters) - A top Chinese-made Pakistani fighter plane shot down at least two Indian military aircraft on Wednesday, two U.S. officials told Reuters, marking a major milestone for Beijing's advanced fighter jet.

An Indian Air Force spokesperson said he had no comment when asked about the Reuters report.

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The performance of a leading Chinese fighter jet against a Western rival is being closely watched in Washington for insights into how Beijing might fare in any showdown over Taiwan or the wider Indo-Pacific.

One U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said there was high confidence that Pakistan had used the Chinese-made J-10 aircraft to launch air-to-air missiles against Indian fighter jets - bringing down at least two.

Another official said at least one Indian jet that was shot down was a French-made Rafale fighter aircraft.

Both officials said Pakistan's F-16 aircraft, made by Lockheed Martin ([LMT.N](#)) , were not used in the shootdown.

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Delhi has not acknowledged the loss of any of its planes and instead said it carried out successful strikes against what it said was "terrorist" infrastructure inside Pakistan.

World powers from the U.S. to Russia and China have called for calm in one of the world's most dangerous, and most populated, [nuclear flashpoint regions](#).

In France, Rafale manufacturer Dassault Aviation ([AM.PA](#)) , and the MBDA ([AIR.PA](#)) , ([BAES.L](#)) , ([LDOF.MI](#))  consortium, which makes the Meteor air-to-air missile, could not immediately be reached for comment on a public holiday.

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While Reuters reported on Wednesday that three Indian planes went down, citing local government officials in India, this marks the first Western confirmation that Pakistan's Chinese-made jets were used in the shootdowns.

Pakistan's Defense minister, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, told Reuters on Thursday that the J-10 was used to shoot down three French-made Rafale planes, which were newly acquired by India.

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Altogether, Pakistan says it downed five Indian planes in air-to-air combat.

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The Rafale and the model of the J-10 used by Pakistan are both considered generation 4.5 fighter jets, placing them at the leading edge of combat aircraft.

Western analysts and defense industry sources said the live use of some of the advanced weapons that could be deployed in future major power conflicts would be scrutinized in minute detail, but emphasized it was too early to draw firm conclusions.

"Air warfare communities in China, the U.S. and a number of European countries will be extremely interested to try and get as much ground truth as they can on tactics, techniques, procedures, what kit was used, what worked and what didn't," said Douglas Barrie, senior fellow for military aerospace at the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

Social media posts highlighted the face-off between China's PL-15 air-to-air missile against the Meteor, produced by European missile group MBDA ([AIR.PA](#))  ([BAES.L](#))  ([LDOF.MI](#)) .

But the analysts and sources said crucial details were unclear including whether Meteors were carried or how they may have been deployed.

"At the moment it's not possible to judge anything. We know so little," a Western defense industry source said.

Nuclear-armed India and Pakistan have fought three major wars, as well as numerous

smaller conflicts.

Blasts rang out across the city of Jammu in Indian Kashmir late on Thursday during what Indian military sources said they suspected was a Pakistani drone attack across the region on the second day of clashes between the neighbors.

Pakistan said earlier on Thursday it shot down 25 drones from India overnight, while India said its air defenses had stopped Pakistani drone and missile attacks on military targets.

Reporting by Saeed Shah in Islamabad and Idrees Ali in Washington; Additional reporting by Tim Hetherer in Paris and Shivam Patel in New Delhi; Editing by Don Durfee and Matthew Lewis

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Idrees Ali
Thomson Reuters

National security correspondent focusing on the Pentagon in Washington D.C. Reports on U.S. military activity and operations throughout the world and the impact that they have. Has reported from over two dozen countries to include Iraq, Afghanistan, and much of the Middle East, Asia and Europe. From Karachi, Pakistan.



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