Akashteer: The Unseen Force Behind India's New War Capability

By the time the enemy knew they were being watched, they were already being targeted.

In the dark skies, a new kind of warrior awakened. It did not roar like a fighter jet or flash like a missile. It listened. It calculated. It struck. This invisible shield, **Akashteer,** is no longer a concept confined to defence journals. It is the sharp edge of India's air defence, the unseen wall that stopped a barrage of missiles and drones on the night of May 9th and 10th, when Pakistan launched its deadliest attack on Indian military and civilian areas. Akashteer is India's fully indigenous, automated Air Defence Control and Reporting System, that intercepted and neutralised every inbound projectile.

What stood between them and their intended targets was not just technology, but years of commitment to *Atmanirbhar Bharat*. While Pakistan relied on imported HQ-9 and HQ-16 systems that failed to detect and intercept Indian strikes, Akashteer showcased India's dominance in real-time, automated air defence warfare.

Akashteer has demonstrated that it sees, decides, and strikes faster than anything the world has fielded.

The integration of multiple elements reduces the possibility of friendly fire, allowing rapid engagement of hostile targets while ensuring the protection of aircraft in contested airspace. The sensors integrated include Tactical Control Radar REPORTER, 3D Tactical Control Radars, Low-Level Lightweight Radar and the radar of Akash Weapon System.

Akashteer: From Passive Radar to Intelligent Combat

Akashteer is not about brute force, it is about intelligent warfare. The system provides a common, real-time air picture to all involved parties (control room, radars and Defence Gun), enabling coordinated air defense operations. It is a system designed to automate detection, tracking and engagement of enemy aircraft, drones and missiles. It integrates various radar systems, sensors and communication technologies into a single operational framework.

Akashteer gathers data from multiple sources, processes it and allows for automated, real-time engagement decisions. Akashteer is part of the broader **C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance) framework**, working in coordination with other systems. **The system is vehicle-based which makes it mobile and easier to handle in hostile environment.**

Unlike traditional air defence models that rely on ground-based radars and manual decisions, Akashteer enables autonomous monitoring of low-level airspace in battle zones and efficient control of Ground-Based Air Defence Weapon Systems. This marks a clear shift in India's strategic principle- from passive defence to proactive retaliation. Its seamless integration with India's larger **C4ISR** (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance) ecosystem allows the Army, Navy and Air Force to operate with unmatched synergy.

India's Unified AD Network: A Silent Force with Loud Impact

Akashteer is the core of the Indian Army's Air Defence (AAD) system. It connects smoothly with IACCS (Indian Air Force) and TRIGUN (Indian Navy), creating a clear and real-time picture of the battlefield. This enables the quick and effective use of both offensive and defensive weapons.

Because all three forces work together through Akashteer, there is a much lower risk of accidentally hitting friendly targets. It improves situational awareness and allows for precise, powerful action. Since Akashteer is vehicle-mounted and highly mobile, it is ideal for deployment in dangerous and active war zones.

The Indigenous Edge

Akashteer is not alone. It is part of a growing ecosystem of indigenous defence platforms that are reshaping India's war-fighting capabilities. The *Make in India* initiative has bolstered growth and enabled the development of advanced military platforms including the Dhanush

Artillery Gun System, Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS), Main Battle Tank (MBT) Arjun, Light Specialist Vehicles, High Mobility Vehicles, Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas, Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH), Light Utility Helicopter (LUH), Weapon Locating Radar, 3D Tactical Control Radar, and Software Defined Radio (SDR), as well as naval assets like destroyers, indigenous aircraft carriers, submarines, frigates, corvettes, fast patrol vessels, fast attack craft, and offshore patrol vessels.

♦ India targets ₹3 lakh crore in defence production by 2029, reinforcing its position as a global defence manufacturing hub.

♦ The private sector plays a crucial role, contributing 21% to total defence production, fostering innovation and efficiency.

♦ A robust defence industrial base includes 16 DPSUs, over 430 licensed companies, and approximately 16,000 MSMEs, strengthening indigenous production capabilities.

♦ 65% of defence equipment is now manufactured domestically, a significant shift from the earlier 65-70% import dependency, showcasing India's self-reliance in defence.

Akashteer: More Than a System- A Message to the World

Experts across the world are calling Akashteer a "**seismic shift in warfare strategy**." With this system, India has entered the elite club of nations with fully integrated, automated Air Defence Command and Control capability. It doesn't just see faster- it decides faster, and it strikes faster than anything fielded globally.

Akashteer is not just a technology; it is India's answer to asymmetric warfare, hybrid threats, and cross-border terrorism. It's successful use in neutralising Pakistan's offensive during Operation SINDOOR stands as proof that India's future lies not in imported platforms, but in its own innovation, being truly Aatmanirbhar.

Santosh Kumar/ Ritu Kataria/ Kritika Rane