

## **Pakistan warns of pending Indian strike**

**Pakistan** Islamabad has warned that Delhi is planning a strike on its territory, the minister for information has warned.

Attaullah Tarar said the country had “credible intelligence” of an Indian strike that could come within 24 to 36 hours.

Narendra Modi, the Indian prime minister, said on Tuesday that he had given the armed forces operational freedom to decide the “mode, targets and timing” of a response to a terror attack on April 22 that killed 26 civilians in Pahalgam, Kashmir.

After the attack, which targeted men on the basis of their Hindu faith, Modi vowed to pursue the culprits and their patrons — in a reference to Pakistan — and to wreak “unimaginable” punishment as part of the “national resolve to deal a crushing blow to terrorism”.

Ministers in Pakistan have made it clear the country is ready for any strike and will respond “decisively”, including using nuclear weapons, if the country is directly threatened. Tarar also claimed that India was using last week’s attack as a “false pretext” for hitting Pakistan.

Military commentators played down the prospect of war but expect an attack on the alleged perpetrators. Satish Dua, a retired Indian general, said: “The armed forces will avoid doing anything that might provoke such a strong response from Pakistan that it could lead to war. There can be a multi-domain response.”