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# STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION IN THE DEFENCE FORCES

BY

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TRIBUNE

ORGANISED BY CENJOWS  
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**ORGANISED BY CENJOWS ON 14<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2024**

The guest speaker, Mr Ajay Banerjee, highlighted the importance of digital media for military communications in his lecture. The lecture primarily focused on the need for defence forces to develop strategic communication capabilities through digital media to counter false narratives and to ensure information ascendancy. Taking examples from history, he highlighted the importance of accurate and timely strategic communication during war.

The speaker addressed the increasing reliance of people on social media for news consumption, underscoring its significance in modern defence communication strategies. We live in a digital era, with 5.35 billion internet users, 5.04 billion social media users, and 5.61 billion mobile phone subscribers worldwide. Social media is a powerful tool today with its massive reach and ability to quickly disseminate information. With these capabilities, they offer immense potential to the defence forces to shape perceptions.

He opined that a lack of narrative setting through social media by the Indian defence forces affects strategic communication. The speaker argued that India's reaction through social media platforms to counter the false narratives set by the opposite force in case of Balakote strike was measured, thereby missing the opportunity to build an authoritative and clear narrative much ahead than the adversary.

Another key point of discussion was the role of visual communication. He emphasised the significance of using pictures and visual effects for effective strategic communication. He also opined that defence forces should seek help from professional media experts to deliver impactful messages when required. In the concluding part, the speaker reiterated that strategic communication is essential and should not be seen as a supplementary component. Strategic communication should be made a part of the mission planning and execution. The session called on the defence forces to adopt a proactive approach towards strategic communication, integrating it into every stage of mission planning. The information operations should be timed to gain a first-mover advantage, thereby enabling a narrative setting before misinformation can spread.