

c) Joining the US led coalition in the war against terrorism has many short and long term repercussions for Pakistan. Elaborate [20]

1) Introduction: Pakistan knowingly enters the lion's den

"We will bomb Pakistan back to the Stone Age". The alleged threat delivered to Pervez Musharraf, the president of Pakistan at the time, by the president of US, George Bush, still haunts many Pakistanis. Given the conspicuous gravity of the threat, it takes no genius to figure out why Pakistan, cognisant of the dark fate that awaited it, chose to side with the US-led coalition in the war against terrorism

Maxim.....

2) Post 9-11 America, a Wounded Bear:

9/11 attack on World Trade Center was arguably the deadliest attack on US soil since its inception. Little did Pakistan know, a country that had nothing to do with the attack, that serious repercussions awaited it. Ahead of the 9/11 attack, Pakistan enjoyed cordial ties with Afghanistan. Pakistan had demonstrated its unwavering, unflinching support to Afghanistan during Soviet invasion, training 'Mujahideen' and sending them across the border to repel the usurpers. Much to the dismay of Pakistan, Afghanistan decided to harbour Osama bin Laden, the alleged mastermind of 9/11 attack. Succumbing to the mounting pressure of USA, Pakistan pleaded with the Afghan Taliban to hand over Osama to USA, but despite their best endeavours, Afghans remained intransigent.

3) Pakistan's Entry in the War:

The US, driven by anger, was

adamant on expunging the menace of terrorism from the face of the earth. Afghans refusal to hand over Osama did not go well with the Americans. Consequently, Pakistan found itself on horns of dilemma when faced with the choice of "you are with us or against us" by the ~~amr~~ Americans. The choice was akin to choosing between devil and the deep sea. The troubled nation, in a bid to avert the impending destruction, chose to side with America.

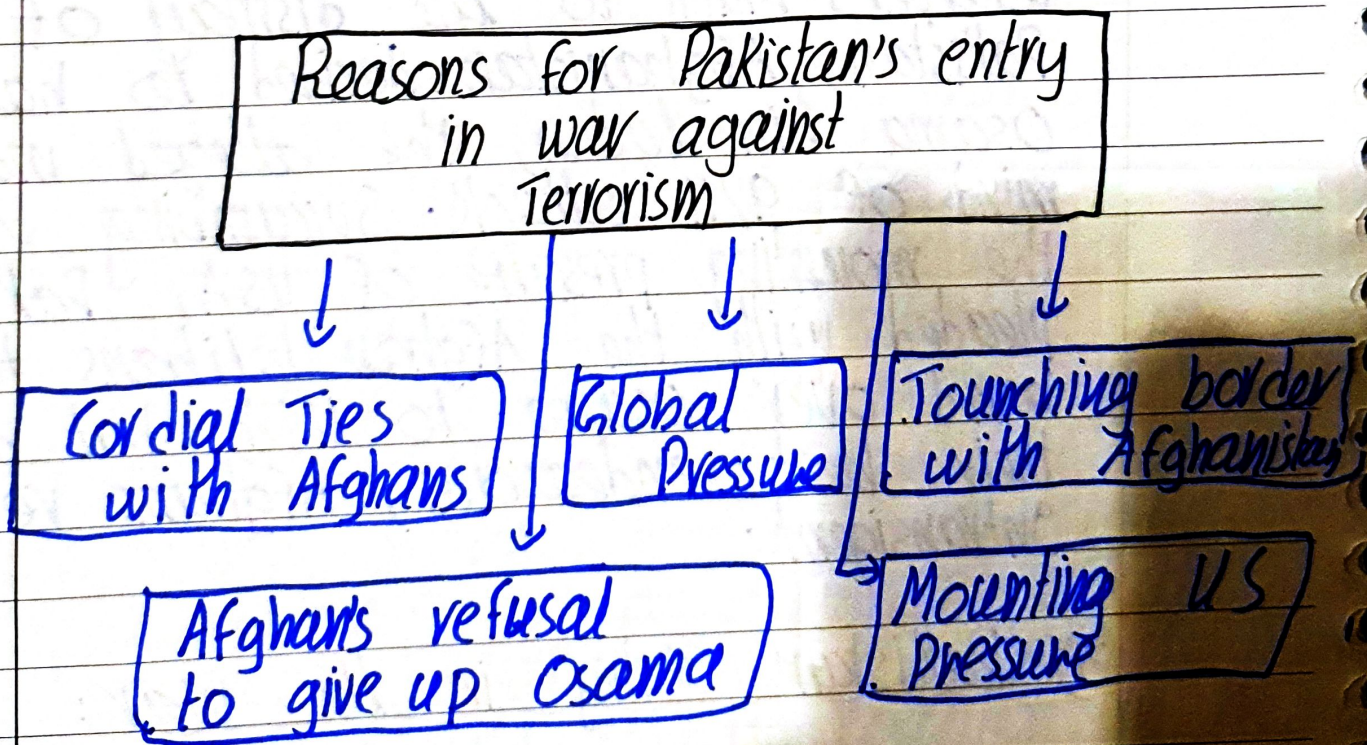


Fig 1: Reasons why Pakistan entered the war.

4) Short and Long term Repercussions on Pakistan:

4.1) Short-term Repercussions:

4.1.1) Security Concerns:

Pakistan got on Afghan Taliban's bad side as soon as it entered the war. Soon after, the Taliban declared Pakistan as an enemy state, which ensued in a barrage of terrorist attacks on Pakistani soil. Pakistan, being unprepared for such intensity of attacks, found itself in a predicament as it did not have the capacity to foil such attempts.

4.1.2) Internal strifes:

Since there were deeply rooted, cultural, ideological, religious ties between Afghans and Pakistanis, the Afghan base Taliban enjoyed much support within the peripheries of Pakistan. Moreover, the collective jihad launched against the Soviets solidified the bond of

of brotherhood between the two nations. This is why many locals were adamantly averse to the government's decision to step in the war against Afghans. Consequently, Pakistan was left bare to internal strifes, which only added to the plight of the country.

4.1.3) Refugee Crisis:

The commencement of the war witnessed a massive Afghan exodus pouring into Pakistan. These refugees were engulfed in severe challenges and were in dire need of support. Pakistan, being scant on resources, could not provide for such a massive influx. Moreover, many terrorists leveraged this migration to reach Pak soil, where they then conducted their insurgencies, further contributing to the problems of the beleaguered nation. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNCHR], ~~states~~ states that Pakistan has hosted over 2.1 million Afghan Refugees.

4.2) Long-Term Repercussions:

4.2.1) Militancy and Radicalisation:

The long-term repercussions include the growth of militancy and radicalisation within certain segments of the population, contributing to the ongoing security challenges. Reinforcing this thought, A report by Brown University's Cost of War Project notes that war-related violence has killed over 65,000 people in Pakistan.

4.2.2) Strained Diplomatic Relations:

Pakistan's alignment with the US strained its diplomatic relations with some countries. This was due to the fact that many countries had opposing views to the war, ~~at~~ while some harbouring anti-American sentiments and Pakistan growing relations with US did not go well with them.

4.2.3) Economic Consequences:

The aftermath of the war saw economic

strain due to increased military expenditure and disruptions in trade route. At the outset of war, Pakistan did not feel an economic stress ~~since~~ because of the heavy influx of financial resources by US-led coalition in the form of aid. But as the patronage started to wither away, so did the economic reserves of the country. The military expenditure remained the same, if not increased, but the dwindling aid made it hard for Pakistan to bear the cost of the war.

4.2.4) Global Perception:

Participation in Afghan war has tainted Pakistan's global image. A country that had ~~no~~ involvement in the 9/11 attack is globally perceived as a depot for terrorists. The country has also courted much controversies and criticism, with many accusing it of harbouring terrorists for its own self-serving motives. Global terrorism index 2023, indicates that Pakistan is ranked 6th globally for countries most affected by terrorism.

Consequences of joining Afghan War

Short-Time Repercussions

- Immediate Refugee Crisis
- Internal Strifes
- Security Concerns

Long-Term Repercussions

- Militancy
- Radicalisation
- Economic Strain
- Strained Diplomatic Relations
- Tainted Global Perception

5) Conclusion :

There remains no ambivalence that Pakistan has suffered heavy losses spanning Security, Economic, and social dimensions. Albeit the US-led ~~coalition~~ coalition consisted of many countries, primarily ~~comprising~~ NATO countries, Pakistan had to bear the brunt of the war, with consequences perpetuating hitherto. Nonetheless, this battle hardened nation has demonstrated its mettle in the face of this menace. The country can still be steered to safer shores by devising meticulous and stern policies.