

Q No. 5:

What is meant by the term "Proxy War"? Are there any extrinsic factors at play in the internal security situation of Pakistan?

1. Proxy War: An Introduction

A proxy war is an indirect type of war in which two or more opposing powers fight against each other by the use of third parties such as smaller nation or groups without direct military confrontation. Such type of war is called as "proxy war". A proxy war is also called as "Hybrid War" or "Fifth generation war" because it use non-conventional or non-traditional methods such as cyber-attacks, propaganda, economic pressure and proxy warfare etc.

2. Objectives of Proxy War:

A proxy war is an indirect war that use no military operations or armed forces, following are the objectives

of proxy war.

1. Influence and Control:

Major forces may seek to extend their influence and control over a region or government by supporting proxy war that align with their interests. Proxy war allow the countries to achieve their goals without direct involvement providing a degree of plausible deniability in the international affairs.

2. Destabilization of Rivals:

Proxy conflicts can be used to create instability in a rival country weakening its government and reducing its influence on the global stage, and it aims to topple an existing government and replace it with one that is more aligned with the supporting power's interests or ideology. Thus it causes regime change.

3. Disturbing Policy makers of Rivals:

Proxy war actually disturbs the policy makers of rival by weakening its political structure. Public opinion and

domestic pressure can affect policy decisions regarding proxy wars especially if there is opposition to involvement in distant conflicts.

4. Ideological Alignment:

The countries might support the proxy forces that share their ideological beliefs such as communism, democracy or religious affiliations in order to spread their preferred values. Major powers may use proxy war to contain the influence of a rival power preventing it from expanding its reach in a particular region-

5. Testing and Showcasing the Military Technology:

Some countries might support proxy war to test new military strategy, tactics and technologies in a real world conflict scenario. proxy forces trained and armed by external powers might eventually turn against their sponsors if their interests diverge or if local dynamics change.

3. Examples of Proxy War from History

Here are few examples of proxy war from history.

- (i) Korean War (1950-1953)
- (ii) Vietnam War (1955-1975)
- (iii) Afghan War (1979-1989)
- (iv) Angolan Civil War (1975-2002)
- (v) Syrian-Civil War (2011-present)
- (vi) Yemeni-Civil War (2014-present)
- (vii) Ukraine-Russia conflict (2014-present)
- (viii) Libyan Civil War (2014-present)

4. Reasons of Choosing Proxy War over full scale War:

Why Proxy War has become a trend.

Proxy war is now a biggest threat to global peace yet it often preferred over full scale war.

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because of following reasons.

(a) No direct Confrontation:

Proxy War is preferred because it involves no direct confrontation and it minimize the potential for catastrophic global conflicts.

(b) Cost effective:

Secondly proxy wars can be cost-effective as they involve supporting local actors rather than deploying extensive military resources.

(c) When public is not in favour of war:

Proxy war is often preferred when the public is not in the favour of war (full scale), but proxy war can escalate unexpectedly and their outcomes might not align with the original intentions of the involved parties.

(d) Plausible Deniability:

Major powers can maintain the plausible deniability in the proxy wars making it harder for the international community to attribute their involvement.

5. Extrinsic Factors that disturb the internal Security of Pakistan:

Extrinsic Factors:

Extrinsic factors mean the factors that refer to external influences that impact a situation, decision or outcomes.

In proxy wars "Extrinsic factors" play a significant role in shaping the dynamics and outcomes of such conflicts.

Following are the extrinsic factors that disturb the internal security of Pakistan.

(a) Indian objectives to use proxy war against Pakistan, India as an extrinsic factor.

(b) United States (USA) interest: an extrinsic factor that is threat to internal security of Pakistan

(c) Israel's Interest: An extrinsic factor.

(Φ) Iran and Afghanistan Interests.

(a) India Objective to use proxy war against Pakistan

India is marked as an important extrinsic factor in proxy war against Pakistan and a threat to internal security of Pakistan, because of

(i) Historical Rivalry:

India and Pakistan have a history of tense relations marked by the conflicts and disputes including over the region of Kashmir. India has supported separatist movement or insurgent groups in Pakistan as a way to exert pressure or counter Pakistani influence in certain region.

(ii) To take Over Jammu Kashmir

AJK and GB :

India wants to take over Jammu Kashmir (AJK), Gilgit Baltistan (GB) by subjugating the Kashmiri people. India wants to destabilize Pakistan by avoiding a full scale war, therefore it prefers proxy war against Pakistan.

(iii) To break bond (Sino-Pak)

China-Pak bond is great threat to India. India want to weaken the relationship between china and pakistan by supporting proxy conflicts or unrest. This is complex and sensitive geopolitical matter, and can cause unrest and instability in Pakistan.

(iv) To contain China and CPEC Projects:

India has expressed concerns about china's growing influence in Pakistan and its involvement in CPEC. India has raised objections to the project as it passes through the disputed territory of Gilgit, Baltistan. Which India considers part of its territory. This India is involving in proxy wars against Pakistan.

(v) To isolate Pakistan:

India may seek to isolate Pakistan diplomatically by garnering support from other countries and international organizations to exert pressure on Pakistan. India could build alliances with countries to weaken Pakistan on geostrategic and geo-political grounds.

(vi) To accept India's hegemony on Indian Sub-continent:

India wants to accept its hegemony on Indian sub-continent, but Pakistan could not accept and this can exert pressure on Pakistan. Hegemony implies dominance and control over other nations which is generally not conducive to maintain peace and stability.

(vii) To hamper Western Support for Pakistan:

India wants to hamper the western support for Pakistan because India has strong bilateral relation with US and it is again a threat to Pakistan economy. Therefore India use proxy war to weaken Pakistan geopolitically, geo-socially and geo-economic.

(viii) To declare Pakistan a Terrorist Nation:

India declared Pakistan as a terrorist Nation by using proxy war through supporting non-state actors against Pakistan.

(b) USA: A biggest Extrinsic factor in proxy war against Pakistan

USA (United State of America) is biggest extrinsic factor in proxy war against Pakistan because of following reasons.

(i) New Cold War against China:

USA wants to contain a peaceful rise of China that has large stakes in Pakistan. It already hinted to Pakistan to stay away from alignment of China, but for Pakistan, China is a trusted friend and its friendship is important for Pakistan defence and economy. Thus this is a big challenge from USA.

(ii) Chose India as a regional power:

USA has chosen India to become a regional power, therefore it want Pakistan to accept its hegemony, but Pakistan could not accept it. Hence the West has also started proxy war against Pakistan.

(iii) Containment of Chinese role in Afghanistan:

Containing China's role in Afghanistan is a complex challenge that involves diplomatic, economic and strategic considerations. Countries concerned about China influence in Afghanistan might focus on strengthening regional partnership, supporting the Afghan government stability and engaging with neighbouring nations to ensure a balanced national/regional power dynamics.

(c) Israel's Interest:

Despite India and USA, Israel is also involved in proxy war against Pakistan.

(i) Pakistan a biggest threat to Israel after Iran:

For Israel, Pakistan could become the biggest threat after Iran so it engaged close ties in the neutralizing Pakistan. These concerns regarding regional conflicts, security challenges and geopolitical rivalries among people.

(ii) Ally of India

India and Israel have developed a closer relationship over the years characterized by democratic, defence, cooperation and diplomatic ties. This can be threat to Global Peace.

(iii) Only Muslim Nuclear State

Pakistan is the only Muslim majority country that is recognized as a Nuclear armed state. Its nuclear status has geopolitical implications and affect its relations with other countries. This has been a great threat to Israel as Israel and Pakistan do not share diplomatic relations.

(d) Iran and Afghanistan Interest

Due to regional and sectarian reasons, Iran and Afghanistan also engage in low scale proxy wars against Pakistan.

(i) Hamper Chabahar Port:

Chabahar is located in Iran, Southern large but underdeveloped and sparsely populated province of Sistan and Balochistan. Chabahar is the only oceanic ports of Iran. India investment in this port increase threats to Pakistan security.

(ii) Shia Community:

Shia community in Iran is largest religious group predominately 90-95% population is Shia Muslim. The religious differences in this a big challenge to Pakistan security.

6-Non State actors Used by the External powers to create an internal security Threat for Pakistan:

(a) Ethnic

(b) Sectarian.

(a) Ethnic:

(i) Pashtoon Tahafuz Movement: (PTM)

Pashtoon Tahafuz Movement (PTM) is a social and political movement advocating for the rights of Pashtoon community. PTM's demands and activities could be a challenge for Pakistan's security.

(ii) Sindhia Desh Liberation

Army (SLA):

SLA is Sindhi Militant organization based in the Sindh province of Pakistan. Darya Khan is the leader of the group.

(iii) MQM London:

The Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) is a political party led by Altaf Hussain who has been based in London. This faction has been involved in Karachi and has been associated with certain ethnic dynamics.

(iv) Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA)

BLA is a militant separatist organization that operates in southwestern provinces of Balochistan in Pakistan. The BLA is involved in series of armed attacks, bombing and violence etc.

(i) Tehreek-Taliban Pakistan (TTP):

Tehreek Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is

often referred to simply as Pakistani Taliban, is an umbrella organisation of various militant groups that operate in Pakistan. It has been responsible for various attacks on Pak security forces, civilians and infrastructure.

(ii) Islamic State IS/ Daesh:

Daesh used to refer to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. This group of espouse an extremist ideology that deviates from the beliefs and practices of the majority of the Muslims in the country.

7. Recent Events that Challenge internal security of Pakistan:

(a) Attack on Gwadar Port:

The Gwadar port in South Western Baluchistan province is the centerpiece of CPEC linking the two countries giving China shortest possible trade access to international market, but attack of Gwadar port itself challenge to internal security of Pakistan.

(b) Attack on Dasu Dam project

Attack on Dasu Hydro power project is itself a challenge because it is part of CPEC, a \$65 bn investment plan that include network of roads, railway, and pipelines between the two countries.

(c) Bomb blast in Peshawar

Mosque :-

Dozens of people have been killed in a bomb attack targeting a mosque in a security compound in the northwestern Pakistani city of Peshawar and it is again a big security challenge for Pakistan.

8. Road map to neutralise Proxy War in Pakistan :

Following are the ways to neutralise the proxy war in Pakistan in future perspective.

(a) Removing Inter-provincial disharmony :-

Initiate open and constructive dialogue among provinces to address grievances and misunderstandings, fostering better understanding and cooperation, and distribute resources development projects and public services across the provinces ensuring that all regions benefit from national programs.

Often referred to Taliban is organization of militant group.

(b) Dealing with insurgents With an iron hand:

Develop a well defined strategy that outlines the objectives, rules of engagement and expected outcomes of the iron hand approach. Gather accurate and comprehensive intelligence about insurgent groups, their activities and their support networks to minimize the civilian casualties and collateral damage.

(c) International cooperation:

Seek assistance from international organization or neutral third parties to mediate between conflicting parties and find peaceful resolutions, Nations cooperate to counter terrorism, combat cyber threats, prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ensure international security through joint operations.

(d) Regional Diplomacy

Foster diplomatic efforts to build stronger relationship with the neighboring countries promoting cooperation and reducing regional tensions, involve the local communities in peace making efforts empowering them to reject the violence and extremism.

9. Conclusion:

To conclude, proxy war is warfare fought to avoid a direct conflict between two nations, it is fought through allies, Pakistan is one of the biggest victims of proxy war, especially due to rivalry with India and its positioning the geo-strategic location of the world. The West is ready to use Pakistani land to contain China's rise, The non-State actors in Pakistan are performing this goal. Therefore to curb this menace and bring stability, peace and prosperity to the region, Pakistan must deal with proxies strenuously by using both hard and soft policies side by side.