

(CSS-2020) Q6: What is meant by the term 'Proxy War'? Are there any external factors at play in the internal security situation of Pakistan?

1- PROXY WAR EXPLAINED

A proxy war is a confrontation between two great powers by the use of non-state actors such as to destroy the political and socio-economic fabric of the rival state without directly getting involved in the armed conflict.

According to Tyrone Gloh, directing the use of force by a politically motivated, local actor to indirectly influence the political affairs in the target state is called a Proxy war.

According to Dr. Phillip Towle, the cold war saw superpowers that financed, armed, and aided proxies, without getting directly involved in the fighting, at a larger scale than any other in the recorded history.

A proxy war is always much easier to fight and is fought on pockets of a state that is looking to avoid mutually assured destruction, in fear of its own stability and the potential sanctions by the international world that could cripple the entire state both politically and economically.

This type of war is fought by a non-state actor on equally beneficial terms but the Patron-client relationship often has unequal power relations and exchange of special services to fund and aid the conflict with the rival state that lies somewhere between interstate and intrastate. Hagege, Phillip Brewer sees it as a 'hybrid' conflict that is interstate in nature but is fought by intrastate means. However, this type of conflict is not particular to powerful states only.

2- WHY PROXY WARS

With the game of the term 'Proxy wars' after the Cold War between USA and USSR, the main question that arises is that of the reasons this type of war is preferred by intervening states. When on one hand a direct intervention by one state may seem necessary for it to win in order to maintain its dignity and reputation in the international community, an indirect intervention in the name of concealed and secret Proxy war saves many lives whereby winning is not the only goal of an intervening state; it can be to enhance an ongoing conflict in the target state as well, along with many other

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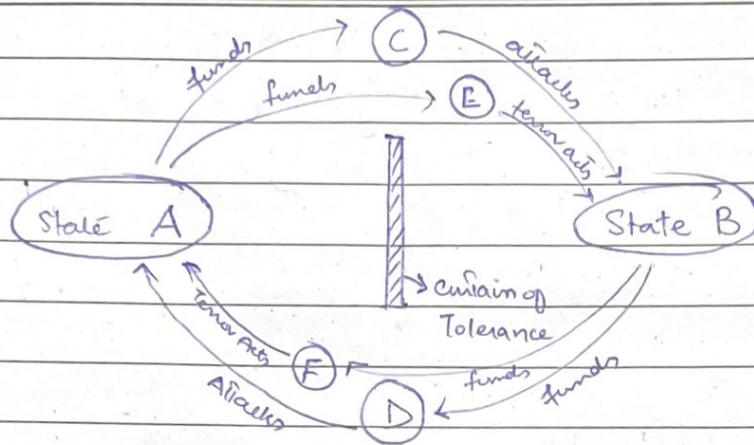
possibilities. The responsibility of this task is often put on the shoulders of non-state actors to avoid a direct conflict between the two states. This position is often assumed by mercenaries that are employed to fight the opponents and increase the sphere of influence of the intervening state without costing an arm and a leg.

Proxy wars are fought to preserve the national interests of the intervening state or regional powers and are often a part of foreign policy of intervening party. As M. Amir Rana, a security analyst, said in his writing 'Concerns of Proxywar', that 'A lobby in United States favours a plan for proxy warfare so that America can sustain its Global influence.'

3- WHY STATES AVOID DIRECT CONFRONTATION

With several reasons spanning the area as to why states avoid direct confrontation and resort to a proxy war, mentioned ahead are four major reasons.

- 1) Risk of escalation increases when states directly intervene
- 2) Risk of instability due to lack of domestic support.
- 3) Lack of international support negatively affects cost-benefit ratio.
- 4) A lack of capacity makes direct intervention untenable.



The depiction of a Proxy war in a Diagram.

4- RATIONALE BEHIND PROXY WARS

a) Fear of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD):

The proxy wars always make their way as a determinant of superpowers' foreign policies because of their role in keeping MAD from happening. Previously, when USA bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6th and 9th August in 1945, respectively, hundreds and thousands of casualties were recorded, estimated at a whopping 129,000 killed in Hiroshima and 226,000 killed in Nagasaki, most of whom were civilians. This depicts the use of Nuclear weapons in wars. Therefore, proxy wars are much preferred for their role in saving this type of Mutually Assured Destruction from happening.

b) Public not in support of a direct war:

Public opinion plays a crucial role in the governmental policymaking and when this said group does not support its own nation in fighting a direct war, the state becomes unstable and weak.

During the Soviet-Afghan war in 1979, USA supported Mujahideens as a proxy against the USSR, because a direct military intervention would not have been taken positively by the public. Consequently, it can be said that proxy wars are fought to keep public opinion from going against the governments.

c) Fear of International Sanctions:

International laws when applied to the world in general, help maintain peace and prosperity, because states are afraid to break those laws and be condemned by the rest of the world in form of sanctions. The Saudi-Iran rivalry that started after the Iranian Revolution of 1979, is often taken out in the grounds of other countries, such as Yemen and Syria in form of civil wars with each side supporting the opposite party of the war, in order to avoid direct confrontation and getting

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trapped by the international world's prying eyes. These regions serve as a proxy for two powers without getting directly involved and managing everything behind the curtain, to avoid falling prey to international sanctions.

d) less expensive:

As compared to the conventional wars, the proxy wars are less expensive to finance and also prevent the socio-economic fabric of the country from destroying. This results in this type of war being more cost-saving in the long run.

e) Difference between military strengths:

Due to the difference in the military strengths of two countries, the weaker side may resort to a proxy war to offset the power imbalance and counterbalance the adversary. During the Arab-Israeli conflicts, due to Israel having greater military strengths, Arabs are allegedly supporting and funding terror organisations such as Hezbollah and Hamas. This shows that proxy wars are the new techniques

employed by the world in the contemporary times to maintain the balance between two imbalanced military powers.

5- TYPES OF PROXY WARS

a) Initio unil: It is a proxy war type where a major power actively supports a proxy in order to achieve a clear victory in a specific conflict or issue.

b) Holding Action: This type of proxy war is often fought to maintain the status quo in the intervening states' interests.

c) Meddling: It is fought to disrupt the status quo and interfere in other countries' internal affairs to create unrest or advance meddler's interests.

d) Feeding the chaos: Just as the name suggests, feeding the chaos is a type of proxy war that is fought to alter the status quo by extending the conflict within the target state to stop it from adding to its power and influence, in secret.

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6- EXTRINSIC FACTORS IN PAKISTAN'S INTERNAL SECURITY

a) Foreign Influence and Sponsorship of Militant Groups:

Pakistan's internal security situation has been significantly influenced by foreign factors since its inception. Militancy and terrorism is the main reason of Pakistan's now crippling economy. During the Afghan-Soviet war in the late twentieth century, Pakistan was played by USA to play a key role in supporting Afghan Mujahideens that not only harmed Pakistan's economy but also gave birth to terrorism and militancy that to this date is destroying the country's image and its domestic affairs, with security concerns being top of the list. Another example is that of Indian sponsored terrorist organisations that work under the disguise of Baloch Separatist movement and others. These types of proxies under the foreign influence work to worsen the internal and external security dynamics of Pakistan.

b) Cross border infiltrations:

Another factor that threatens Pakistan's internal

Security

Security is cross border infiltrations from neighbouring countries, especially Afghanistan, that has given rise to militancy and terrorism in Pakistan mainly due to free cross border movements of Afghan militants that have strengthened their roots in Pakistani soil.

Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has been one of the biggest outcome of this that continues to spread terrorism across the country, along with others such as Hqani Networks, HIG, Lashkar-e-Taiba, and Jandallah, all due to relative ease in making crossborder movements.

c) Regional conflicts:

Regional conflicts have however had a negative impact on Pakistan's internal security. For example Afghan war led thousands of refugees to move to Pakistan which had severe impacts on the country. The refugee influx, not only affected the security conditions, but also misuse of national resources which are the birth right of Pakistani citizens, along with other public facilities, such as hospitals, schools, public recreational centers, etc. The presence of Afghan Taliban is also an effect of regional conflict which still threatens Pakistan's security.

7- IMPACTS OF PROXY WARS ON PAKISTAN'S SECURITY

a) Destabilization and Conflict:

The effects of internal as well as external proxy wars have had profound impact on Pakistan's security.

Afghan war resulted in proliferation of arms and rise of militancy in Pakistan, which is an example of the effects of external proxy war on Pakistan's security. Moreover, the Indian proxies working in Pakistan have also had a ripple effect on Pakistan's security conditions. Allegedly Indian funded BLA, BLM, BLF, UBA, and Azad, amongst others have made several attacks on militaymen, CPEC workers, and other members of states. In 2015, BLA took the responsibility of attack on Karachi's bus and killed dozens of Pashtun laborers. In 2018, three Chinese workers working for the CPEC project, were killed by Baloch Militants as well. This is enough to advocate for the fact that proxy wars, whether internal or external, has damaged security structure of Pakistan to a great extent.

b) Political unrest due to foreign proxies:

The foreign proxy actors have long been the main reason of political unrest in the targetted countries.

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throughout the world. There have been numerous instances whereby proxies were majorly hired to create political turmoil by the intervening state. In 2016, Pakistani military arrested an Indian Spy, Kulbhushan Yadav, near the Chaman Border of Balochistan. He had a valid Iranian passport and confessed to have been sent to hinder CPEC related activities and sabotage the whole project, along with aiding terrorist activities in Karachi, which is the economic hub of Pakistan. If succeeded, this would have resulted in international political turmoil due to CPEC being a ray of hope for Pakistan's ailing economy, and a flagship project of BRI to revive the old silk route. It would also have affected the major project by China - BRI, to enhance peace and security in the region.

Another example of this is May 09 Riots in Pakistan, which were escalated by foreign proxy interventions to erode public trust in their strongest institutions and weaken the security and political structures of the country. It is allegedly called to be an Indian-sponsored agenda.

c) Socio-economic consequences:

The proxies fought inside or outside the country had

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had major socio-economic implications for Pakistan. After the fall of USSR and Pakistan's role in it, several international sanctions were placed on Pakistan, which resulted in nearly no Foreign Direct Investments, paving the way for worsened economic conditions. This disruption in economic growth impacted the daily lives of the citizens as they were already dealing with terrorism and refugee influx. Additionally, the proxies have also resulted in the lack of development in tribal areas of Balochistan and the rise of militancy due to a sense of deprivation and foreign manipulation.

8- COUNTERMEASURES AND SECURITY CHALLENGES

Pakistani government and military forces have implemented a wide range of techniques to combat security issues in Pakistan over ^{the} several past decades, which were mainly the result of proxy wars. These measures include intelligence gathering, military operations, and counter-terrorism struggles. Operation Zarb-e-Arab and Operation Rad-ul-Fasad that started in 2014 and 2017, respectively, ended terrorism to a great extent. Terrorist safehavens were destroyed in North Waziristan which helped contain terrorism.

for the next few years.

These counter measures came along with several challenges as well. The complex terrain of Pakistan, tribal areas, and cross-border sanctuaries in Afghanistan have allowed Pakistani military and para-military forces to eliminate the issue of terrorism completely. Radicalism and extremism also needs proper measures to be dealt with through multiplexed approach such as anti-radicalisation programs and socioeconomic development in the militant's targeted areas, such as Balochistan.

9- FUTURE TRENDS & FIFTH GENERATION WARFARE IN PAKISTAN

Challenges and Recommendations:

With the increased use of cyber attacks, misinformation, and other unconventional tactics to arise conflicts, Pakistan needs to be prepared for these threats and build capacity to counter these cyber attacks, along with raising awareness to deter these campaigns.

Pakistan should adopt the following measures to effectively address the Fifth-Generation Warfare:

a) Enhance cyber security to protect digital infrastructure and sensitive data and systems.

b) Develop the capacity to counter disinformation warfare and promote awareness in this area.

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- c) Implementing programs to counter extremism and radicalisation by promoting moderate ideologies.
- d) Improve intelligence capacity to gather and analyse data promptly and more effectively to disrupt unfriendly activities.
- e) Enhance border security to stop free movements of militants.
- f) Review and update legal frameworks to deal with data breaches and other such concerns.
- g) Invest in technology such as artificial intelligence and machine learning to detect Fifth Generation warfare activities early.

When states go towards proxy wars to avoid direct confrontation, several internal and external consequences are faced. Amidst international and intranational proxies, Pakistan has fallen prey to ill wills due to its disputed history and significant geostrategic location, which affected the internal security of the country by destabilization, conflicts, political and social unrest, and other socio-economic factors. Pakistani government and military have always made extreme efforts to combat these challenges, amidst the threats

consistent and
of pipeline generation alongside with their development
and contacts, Pakistan can eventually come out of the
allies of despair and grow up the horizon, as commonly
said, when there is a will, there is a way!