

Q: Wars through Proxy are exploiting the internal security situation of Pakistan, thus rendering an unsurmountable loss by maligning its peace, prosperity and development.

Explicating Proxy Wars

According to Tyron Giloh, proxy war can be defined as "direct use of force by a politically motivated local actor to indirectly influence political affairs in the target state." Dr.

Philip Towle defines proxy war as "the cold war saw superpowers that financed, armed and aided proxies, without getting directly involved in the fighting, on a large scale than any other in recorded history."

The states usually prefer proxy wars because the confrontation of superpowers could potentially escalate into Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD).

For this very reason, the archrival states of Pakistan are using the

the third soil or politically motivated actors to assail Pakistan. Moreover, many strong states like KSA, USA have used Pakistan as its proxy in war against their enemies that had sown seeds of permanent conflicts in Pakistan.

Proxy Wars Waged in Pakistan by Archrival States

a. Proxy War Waged by India Against Pakistan

In South Asia, the two countries with shared border, getting independence in 1947 from queen's crown have been horns to horns over various issues.

India has been involved in using malicious proxy tactics for posing internal security threats to Pakistan.

India is enflaming Baloch insurgency, Pak-Afghan rivalry and Pak-Iran border skirmishes through its proxy tactics. Since Pakistan is far more stronger than India in its defence

capacity and is also a nuclear power like India, so in order to avoid Pak-India nuclear stand off, India is being involved in a proxy war against Pakistan.

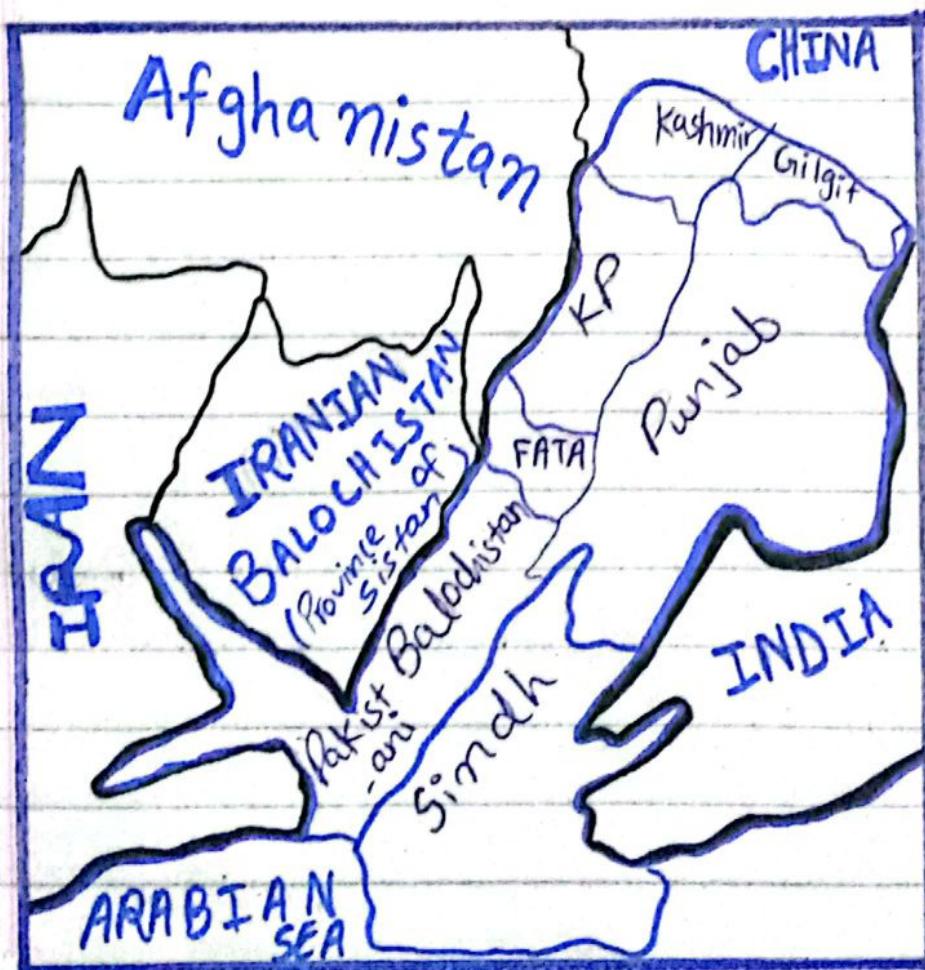
The Scenario of Pakistan-India nuclear stand off modelled by Researchers in 2019 and published in Dawn on October 3rd, 2019:

“Researchers warn that Pak-India nuclear stand off could kill 100 million people.”

⇒ Aim of Proxy Tactics Employed by India Against Pakistan

India is aimed at damaging the economy and internal security situation of Pakistan. Although, it is not getting directly involved in war with Pakistan but it is constantly involved in political issues of Pakistan. India is tying close ties with Afghanistan and Iran for creating security threats for Pakistan. India knows

this very well that direct intervention in Pakistan would require a win to sustain its reputation and global legitimacy. So, it is trying to Encircle Pakistani borders from the West, North-West and Eastern sides and for this purpose it is forming close nexus with Iran (in West of Pakistan) and Afghanistan (in North West of Pakistan).



Pakistani Borders Encircled by India, Iran and Afghanistan

⇒ Expounding Proxy Tactics Employed by India against Pakistan

i) Exploitation of Iranian Soil for Enflaming Baloch Insurgency in Pakistan

India was forming close ties with Iran in the form ^{of} Zahedan project and its \$100 billion investment in Iran for this project. India was doing so in order to exploit Iran's soil for spreading Baloch Insurgency in Pakistan and to sabotage CPEC.

Raw Agent Kalbushan Yadav arrested in March 2016 was deployed in Iran's soil (Chahbahar) before crossing into Balochistan to meet some separatist leaders who were igniting Baloch insurgency in Pakistan. (tribune, Raw involvement in Balochistan, March 2016). India's close nexus with Iran in past can be clearly observed by the book of Hillary Clinton; in which she has said

that the main purpose of her visit in India in May 2012 was to convince India to reduce its reliance on Iranian oil (Hillary Clinton, Hard Choices, 2014).

ii) Using Afghanistan soil for Igniting terror attacks in Pakistan

In recent years, India is forming a strong nexus with Afghanistan by building dams there like Salma Dam, Shaktot Dam, hydro electric power project in Afghanistan.

All these investments have common objective that is to create security threats for Pakistan.

- Terrorism on Eid Milled Ul Nabi in Mastung (Balochistan) : More than 50 innocents were killed in this terror attack of TTP that was armed by India (BBC, Exposing India-Afghan nexus, sept 2023).

iii) Establishing illegitimate Dams on Rivers of Pakistan

India is trying to damage economy of Pakistan through its various proxy tactics. India has constructed dams on rivers of Pakistan for controlling the flow of water and production

of electricity. It is creating hurdles for economy of Pakistan as Pakistan's economy is solely dependant on agriculture. But the illegitimate construction of dams are posing great threat for Pakistan's agriculture sector.

Kishanganga (Neelum) river is a major tributary of west-flowing Jhelum River. Economy is an issue related to internal security so by controlling water flow in Pakistani rivers, India is threatening economy or internal security of Pakistan.

iv) **Conducting False Flag Operations against Pakistan to deligitimize Kashmir Issue**

India has ^{been} conducting false flag operations for isolating Pakistan at international level. India is trying to portray a false image of Pakistan in the world by these false flag operations. It is aimed at portraying Pakistan as a terrorist country in

in the world so that it could damage image of Pakistan in front of international market to hit its export industry.

Examples of false flag operations conducted by India:

Pulwama Attack 2019

Uri Attack 2016

The main objective of India for these attacks is to undermine Kashmir Issue. Firstly, India conducted Pulwama attack 2019 in Kashmir and then Revoked Article 370 in disputed territory of Kashmir. Moreover, in 2016 when strong Kashmiri protests were threatening India's integrity, the PM Narendra Modi crossed 'red line' when he mentioned Balochistan in his speech (Dawn, Indian PM statement, August 2016).

(v) Isolating Pakistan at International level

India is trying to create internal security threats for Pakistan by isolating it at international level.

Pakistan as

India is portraying the "bankrupt" or "Default" country on its media. It is also trying to challenge the independent ideology of Pakistan by its Hindutva Policy.

→ Modi's Akhand Bharat Policy in G20 summit: In G20 Summit, India has portrayed its image as Akhand Bharat in which the map^{of India} presented by Modi government had also included Pakistan as part of Akhand Bharat.

→ Creating hurdle to Pakistan's entry into BRICS

BRICS is golden opportunity for Pakistan to uplift its economy that is the first goal of Pakistan's recent National Security Plan. But India does not want^{Pakistan's} to enter BRICS to avoid strengthening of Pak-KSA relations. As in 2022, due to political instability of Pakistan MBS skipped stopover in Pakistan while

India had taken advantage of this situation and had started funding **IMEC** in **KSA**. Similarly, largest food corridor of India is funded by **KSA**. So, by creating hindrance in entry of Pakistan into **BRICS**; India is actually trying to put **Pakistan** in isolation zone and weakening its ties with Middle East.

b. **P**roxy War Waged in Pakistan by **USA**

USA has used the land of Pakistan against its rival states for a very long time. Pakistan's geo-strategic location has made it extremely important for US in its war against USSR, Afghan Taliban and now for China. But the proxy tactics that have been employed by US against its rival states, have created long-lasting impacts for

Pakistan. The main objectives or interests of US led wars were :

i) Disintegration of Soviet Union

US has used Pakistani soil for the disintegration of Soviet Union. Pakistan was first used as a proxy in cold war by the hands of US.

- Baghdad Pact 1955 : The main objective of this pact was to gain the cooperation of Pakistan in attacking Soviet Union.

- Provision of Air bases 1960 :-

In 1960s, when Martial law was imposed in Pakistan the air bases were provided to US against USSR. Due to this act, U2 incident took place in 1962.

- US led Afghan War 1979 :

Against Soviet Union, Pakistan was proxy of US in Afghan war. US funded madrassahs of Pakistan to strengthen Afghanistan and

Mujahid groups against USSR.
After a long training of these Taliban and Mujahid groups, US got successful in disintegration of Soviet Union in 1991.

ii) Global War on Terror Kickstarted by US

As 9/11 incident took place, UNSCR was passed. US turned its war on terror into Global War on terror.

At that time, Pakistan was not left with any other option other than to support US in its war on terror against Afghan Taliban.

General Pervez Musharraf recalls, in his memoir "In the Line of Fire", being told by Americans that

"If we chose the terrorists, then we should be prepared to be bombed back to the stone age."

This statement also proves the theory of Imperialism of John

Galton that says that no state goes into proxy war by its own will.

iii) US sabotaging CPEC for Targeting China's Economy

US has always used Pakistan as its proxy against its archrival state due to geo-strategic significance of Pakistan. Since Chinese economy size is more than \$30 trillion approximately, while size of US' economy is approximately more than \$19.9 trillion. So, in this way China is posing threat to US' hegemony.

BRI - A threat for US' hegemony:

Through BRI China is investing in:

- NEOM of KSA.
- CPEC of Pakistan

So in this way China is threatening US by weakening it in Middle East and South Asia.

Containment of China by forming Acrimonious ties with Pakistan: US is aimed at containing China for which

US needs Pakistan. For this very reason, US added (TTP-JA) Jamaat-ul-Ahrar to the terror list of July 2016 following their claim of responsibility for a failed car bombing in Manhattan.

This action of US was aimed to push the group out of tribal region of Pakistan and into areas that China was eyeing for CPEC (The Diplomat, Counter terror operations pushing Balochistan in war, Sept 2016)
Decoding Indo-US strategic partnership

During recent 2023 Modi's visit to US, India received significant investments and defence agreements from US for the purpose of countering China's emerging economy and to pose a threat to Chinese borders via their strategic alliance. US is making India strong in Arabian Sea against Pakistan-China alliance. So, in this way US is creating internal and external security threats for Pakistan by using India or non-state actors (TTP) for the containment of China or to sabotage CPEC.

c. Proxy War Waged in Pakistan by KSA and Iran

The proxy war waged in Pakistan by KSA and Iran mainly finds its roots in the conflict or rivalry between KSA and Iran. It is actually started from ideological clash and in the race of spreading one's ideology in the whole Muslim world.

⇒ Aim of KSA and Iran in waging Proxy war in Pakistan:

Since Pakistan is only Muslim country that has become a **Nuclear** ^{important} **power**, so it is really for both KSA and Iran to come under the nuclear umbrella of Pakistan.

Their main objective is to spread their own ideology in the only nuclear power of Muslim world alongwith rest of the Muslim countries like Yemen, Serbia, Lebanon etc. Like they have used their proxies in Yemen, Lebanon, Syria in

spreading their ideology; they have also played a key role in promoting their ^{religious} school of thought in Pakistan.

⇒ Funding Religious Seminaries in Pakistan :

Since KSA is a Sunni dominant country that has been over-whelmingly dominated by Malana Abdul Wahab legacy. So, it has been promoting Wahabi school of thought in Pakistan by funding Madrassahs from 1979 onwards. It has also funded Afghan Jihadist movements.

On the other hand, Iran being Shia dominant state has been involved in promoting Shia ideology in Pakistan. Iran has been funding Imam Bargahs of Pakistan from 1979 onwards.

These religious seminaries of Pakistan were used as proxies of KSA and Iran in their own rivalry but has led Pakistan towards never-ending chaos.

Elucidating the Impacts of Proxy Wars on Pakistan

i. Economic Losses

Economic losses ^{incurred in Pakistan} due to proxy tactics of India: According to report published by Foreign Services of Pakistan, more than \$10 billion _{economic} losses have

been incurred in Pakistan as a result of proxy war initiated by India. Even recently, due to control of India on the flow of river waters and India's hegemony in South-Asia, India had released 1,85,000 cusecs of water into Ravi river that terribly destroyed economy of Pakistan. According to report of World Bank in 2022: The assessment indicates that total damages and losses in floods were around \$30 billion and it has pushed 9.1 million Pakistani people into poverty.

Economic losses incurred in Pakistan due to US led wars.

DG ISPR General Babar Aftikhar reported that Pakistan lost

\$126 billion in US led war on terror.

According to reports of US, Pakistan has lost nearly \$110 billion in war on terror.

ii. Loss of Lives of Local Masses

- Loss of lives due to proxy tactics of India

India opened the barrages and flowed its water towards Pakistani rivers to destroy the Agriculture sector of Pakistan in 2022. But the flood ensued in 2022 not only destroyed economy but also impacted lives of millions of Pakistani villagers. According to PDMA report, Floods of 2022 have affected at least 33 million people and killed 1,739 people from the beginning of Monsoon season in mid June 2022 to November 2022.

Loss of lives of local masses in US led war on terror. According to a report of Brown University's Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, Pakistan has lost 23,372 Pakistani civilians in war against terror between 2003 and 2009.

iii) Ideological Divide

Ideological Divide ignited by BLA:
The interest of India and US converge on igniting the ^{Baloch} separatist movements as their aim is to sabotage CPEC. But the flaring ^{up} of ideological ^{-ge} divide by BLA has led towards organized political violent events that rose to peak in 2015 with 96 events and 383 total reported fatalities for the years (Relief Web, Violent events in Pakistan, 2015).

Sectarian Conflicts flared up by Ideological Divide: Due to ideological divide created by KSA and Iran whose main goal was to promote their

own ideology; led Pakistan towards sectarian conflicts. Many violent attacks have been taken place due to hate between Shia and Sunni community. Its clear example is the deadly attack on a bus carrying Shia minority sect in Karachi where 40 people were killed. Even from 2010 to 2015, over 2000 people have been killed and 3500 injured in sectarian conflicts (South Asia Terrorism Portal, Sectarian Conflicts in Pakistan, 2015).

iv) Terrorism

Due to proxy tactics of India, US, KSA and Iran; hate, ideological divide and religious intolerance was sparked in Pakistan. This hate was responsible for a surge in terror attacks in Pakistan. Due to difference in ideologies, the terrorist organizations ^{emerged} like

- Lashkar-e-Tangwi
- Sipra-e-Sahaba
- Sipra-e-Muhammad etc

Primarily, TTP was risen when different outlawed groups agreed to work together against Pakistan military. Since TTP was mainly strengthened by funding of US during Afghan war; when US forces invested huge amount on training of these Jihadi groups for disintegration of Soviet Union. Later, these Jihadist groups were funded by KSA. Even they got strong enough to plant deadly terrorist attacks in Pakistan. Its most gloomy example is of APS attack 2014. In 2022 alone, more than 150 attacks were launched by TTP across the country (Al-Jazeera, Terror attacks in Pakistan, Jan 2023).

v) Prevalence of Institutional Acquisition Syndrome:

The proxy wars waged in Pakistan have given rise to Institutional Acquisition Syndrome across the country. This is posing a serious threat to internal security of Pakistan.

Funding the insurgent groups is leading towards mistrust in local masses against military, judiciary etc. In Pakistan, the non-state actors like BLA are trying to disintegrate Pakistan. Recent Baloch protests against military and government clearly highlight this syndrome. Now BLA is trying to ignite these protests for expanding this syndrome in local masses.

vi) Misuse of Ideologically biased Sects for Political Gains

Unfortunately, due to proxy tactics being employed by external territories; an opportunity has arisen for those political parties who prefer their self-interests over national interests. They have exploited the decades old turf between Shia and Sunni; creating an atmosphere of polarity in nation. These politicians have enraged the hate of one sect for another for their popularity.

They have even used Blasphemy laws for getting popular among local masses. They have tried to use religion card for ^{achieving} their objectives. This has given rise to a culture of misusing Blasphemy laws against minorities.

According to BBC report 2022: 266 cases have been reported in 2020-221 against Christians by misusing Blasphemy laws.

vii) Trouble for Pak-China Alliance

Since the main goal of US and India for employing their proxy tactics is to create trouble for Pak-China alliance. The main target of US' funding ^{for} insurgent groups like TIP for creating hurdles in completion of CPEC is to sabotage Pak-China relations. Similarly, BLA that is backed by RAW is spreading Anti-Chinese and Anti-Pakistani sentiments in

Balochistan that is the heart of CPEC. BLA has carried out multiple attacks on Chinese nationals.

For example:

- BLA ambushed a convoy of 23 Chinese engineers in August 2023.

(tribune, BLA attack on Chinese engineers, Aug 2023)

- BLA has given a 90 day ultimatum to China to withdraw its project from Balochistan, in October 2023.

But after this 90 days, serious Baloch protests ^{have} erupted in Pakistan that are impacting the project of China (CPEC).

- Even in 2022 Chinese tutors were killed in Karachi University bombing (BBC, Attack on Chinese in Karachi, April 2022).

All these attacks are deteriorating Pak-China relations.

viii) Deterioration of Pak-Afghan Relations

Due to US led war on terror, Pakistan is badly threatened from its North-Western borders. Due to funding of KSA in Jihadi groups, the insurgent groups have become extremely strong against Pakistan. Due to strong nexus of India with Afghanistan, serious internal and external threats have been risen in recent years.

According to Al-Jazeera Report 2023: TTP, ISIS and BLA are tools of enemy that operate from (Pak) Afghanistan and Afghan Taliban do not miss any opportunity to do any nefarious work for financial gains.

Statement of Pakistan's ^{former} defence minister:

"Afghan soil is being used by armed groups to launch attacks in Pakistan as TTP have found safe havens in Afghanistan."

In this way, Pak-Afghan relations are getting deteriorated due to proxy wars waged in Pakistan.

Concluding Thoughts

Proxy wars, ignited by India, US and Middle East have given irreversible damage to Pakistan.

But still this damage can be rehabilitated by taking efficient steps. As it is a formless and soundless war, so there is a need to strengthen the national integrity of Pakistan.

“Be extremely subtle, even to the point of formlessness. Be extremely mysterious even to the point of soundlessness. Thereby, you can be the director of opponent's fate.”

(Sun Tzu)