

Do you think war is a rational act?
Explain your stance using 4 days india pakistan war in May?

~~Definition~~
~~War defined~~

"A conflict between political groups involving hostilities of considerable duration and magnitude."

The two most prominent theories or perspectives on causes of international war and international relations are **Realism** and **Liberalism**.

These theories consider the state as a single rational actor. In other words both are system level theories that consider the state as the main actor in the

international system.

Organized violence between sovereign states.

War is an actual, intentional and widespread armed conflict between states

Stanford Encyclopedia

"Continuation of politics by other means"

An act of force to compel your enemy to do your will.

Carl Von Clausewitz

Why states go to war

1

Security and defence

2

Territorial Disputes

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Ideological difference

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Economic interests

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Nationalism and Prestige

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Alliance Obligations

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Regime Change

“Causes of war can be found: within man, within the structure of the separate states, within the state system.”

kenneth Waltz

From a Realist perspective, war can be rational when states believe that the strategic gains outweigh the costs.

The May 2025 limited conflict between Pakistan and India showed that both states used controlled and calculated military force to secure security interests without escalating to full-scale war - indicating rational interest driven behaviour.

a ~~Security and Defence~~

States often go to war when they perceive an immediate threat to their sovereignty and survival. Realist theory argues that ensuring national security is the primary goal of every state. In 2025 India and Pakistan's limited clash demonstrated how both sides used controlled force to strengthen deterrence.

Their actions were meant to signal readiness and protect strategic positions without entering a full-scale war.

Add IR jargons in
headings

b ~~Territorial disputes~~

Territory remains one of the most sensitive causes of war, especially when tied to national identity or strategic value. Kashmir has historically kept Pakistan-India relations volatile and any incident along the Line of Control quickly escalates. The 2025 **confrontational** reflected this territorial sensitivity where each state aimed to protect its claims. War here becomes a national tool to assert control and prevent perceived encroachment.

c Ideological Differences

Add Huntington

States with contrasting

ideologies often experience deep mistrust and rivalry. India's rising Hindu nationalist politics and Pakistan's identity as an Islamic republic create conflicting national narratives. These ideological divides shape security doctrines and influence decision-making during crises. The 2025 clash showcased how ideology strengthens the political will to respond militarily.

d Economic Interests

Economic motives such as securing trade routes, regional markets or strategic corridors, can

drive states toward limited conflict. South Asia's stability directly effects economic activity, investment flows and regional competition. Military responses sometimes aim to protect broader strategic economic stakes even if war is not openly fought for resources. In 2025 demonstrating control along the **border** indirectly supported each state's claim to regional leverage.

e Nationalism and Prestige

Governments may resort to force to maintain domestic support and uphold national honor. In highly patriotic societies leaders face

pressure to respond strongly to provocations. The short 2025 clash allowed both states to satisfy internal nationalist expectations without escalating uncontrollably. Such controlled use of force can be rational for preserving political legitimacy.

f Alliance Obligations

States sometimes engage in conflict due to commitments with allies or global strategic partners. While Pakistan and India did not fight on behalf of alliances in 2025, both acted within boundaries acceptable to major powers like China and the US. This influenced

Add case studies that are widely acknowledged

their decision to keep the conflict short and controlled. Alliance dynamics thus shape the rational limits of war.

8 Regime change Motives

Some wars are fought to weaken, destabilise or replace rival governments. Although the 2025 confrontation sought no regime change the limited strikes were intended to influence each other's strategic behaviour.

By applying calculated force states attempt to modify the opponent's policies without overthrowing them. This represents a rational use of military pressure for political outcomes.

* WAY as a Means to Express National Policy

War is a horrible encounter that ruins and destroys lives beyond limits and makes normal life impossible. It imposes unbearable burden on national economies and jeopardizes the freedom of everyone. It endangers man's existence on the planet. War is the great curse of international society the common disease of the nation state system. The problem of war is the greatest unresolved riddle in politics and the advent of total war and the nuclear and the

Space age has given it a new and greater urgency. The war is used of armed forces in a conflict especially between two or more countries. The conventional view is that for a conflict to be termed as a war, it should end with at least 1000 battle deaths.

Types of wars

Hegemonic wars

Total wars

Limited wars

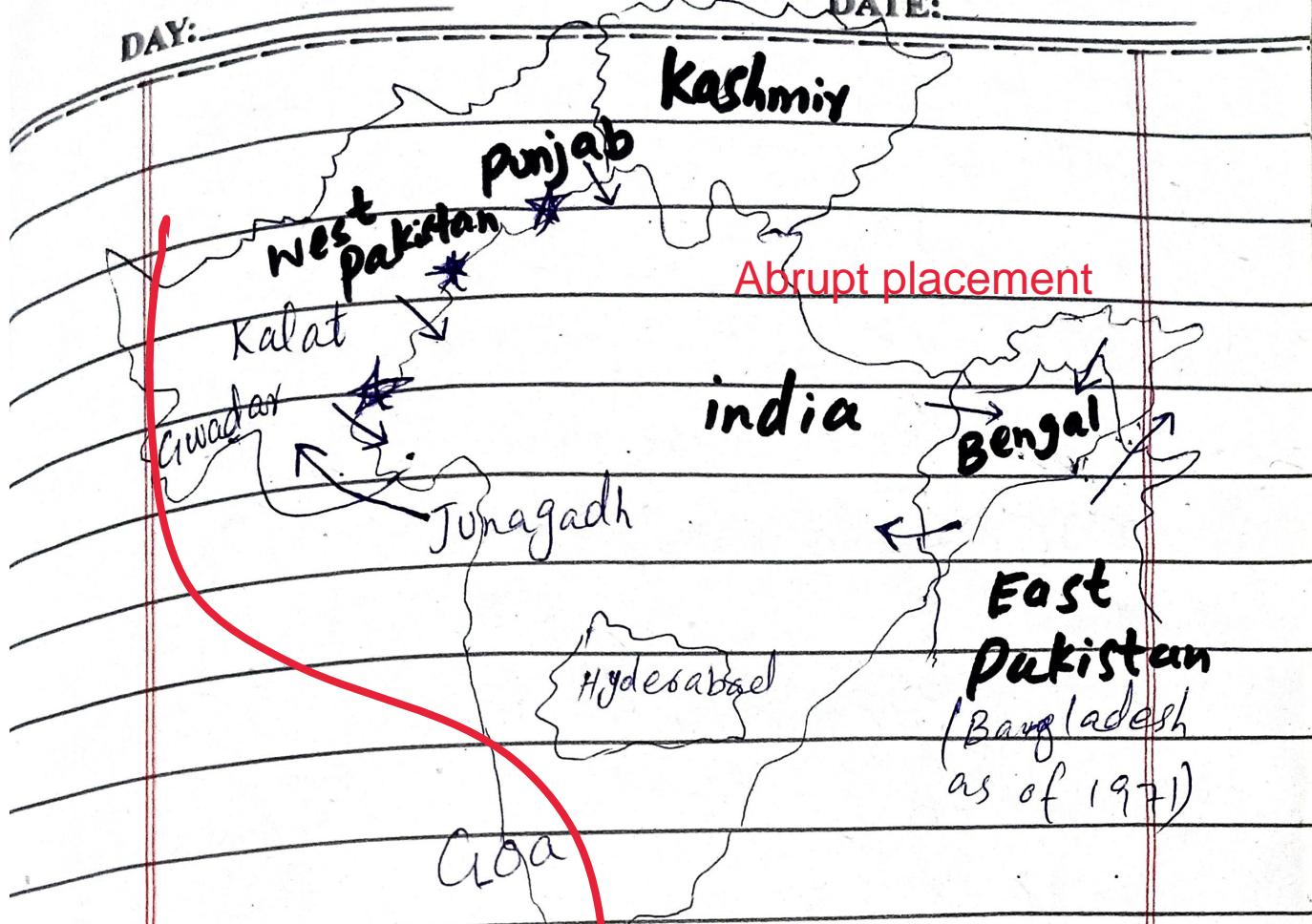
Civil wars

Proxy wars

Guerrilla wars

DAY:

DATE:



- * inter-communal conflicts
- Movement of Hindu and Sikh refugees
- ← Movement of Muslim refugees

Conclusion

War becomes a rational act only when States employ it deliberately proportionately and with specific political objectives in mind. The 4-day Pakistan-india clash of

May 2025 demonstrated that modern conflicts are often limited, calculated and strategically managed to avoid uncontrolled escalation. Both States used force not out of impulsiveness but as a measured tool to defend interests. Signal deterrence and preserve national prestige. Ultimately war is rational only to the extent that it serves state interests more effectively than diplomacy, yet its costs always remind us that rationality in warfare is not moral.

Content is fine
Try integrating IR THEORIES OR
STRATEGIC PERSPECTIVE in headings.