

# Waging a war is not a solution for the roaring Bengal tiger

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## Abstract

**Background/Objectives:** India and Pakistan are at loggerheads even after 72 years of independence. The conflicts and tensions between them have led to an increase in defense expenditure for both. Between them, the two nations have also seen four wars. All this has been at the cost of economic development. This study discusses the political and economic concerns for India in the eventuality of a war with Pakistan.

**Methods/Statistical analysis:** The methodology of this study is descriptive in nature and therefore no statistical approaches have been included. The study has applied a content analysis approach to understand and evaluate the problems/concerns through political and economic transitions with regards to the topic with facts base.

**Findings:** India should not wage a war with Pakistan and use caution in adopting retaliation measures to avoid collateral damage to its economy that is surging ahead with a demographic dividend.

**Improvements/Applications:** Strategic measures are required to deal with enemy nations in the nuclear world where irresponsible use of atomic warfare by irresponsible nations can result in an apocalypse like situation.

**Keywords:** India, Pakistan, War, Economic Comparison, Nuclear Capability.

## 1. Introduction

At the stroke of the midnight hour, when India gained independence, a final stroke of divisive politics had already been played by the Britishers by dividing India into two nations. As the British Raj dissolved, partition of India was set forth in the Indian Independence Act, 1947. The partition of India led to the creation of two countries as India and Pakistan at midnight on 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> August, 1947. Since then, the two have emerged as arched rivals with four wars between them-1947, 1964, 1971 and 1999. The fundamental reason for the dispute between the two nations remains the State of Kashmir and over the years the geopolitical tensions between India and Pakistan have only heightened with rippling affects across the globe.

The recent Pulwama terror attack carried out by Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) outfit on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2019 resulted in further deepening the animosity between the two countries. It shook the entire country of India and was felt by the world at large. The attack resulted in the death of 44 CRPF soldiers. The aftermath of the attack saw shell shocked Indians baying out for vengeance. World leaders strongly disapproved and condemned the attack and also came out in support of a move towards retaliation and teaching the militant groups a lesson not to be forgotten. A large number of people in India are also convinced that a war with Pakistan is the only way to teach the latter a lesson and put a stop to its terrorist sponsoring activities targeted against India.

## 2. Why war is not advisable for India?

Waging a war with Pakistan is no solution to the Pulwama attack or other similar terrorist attacks carried out in the past. Strategies for a war against terrorism should be made in a neutral environment away from any kind of political agendas at all fronts. A war will only result in harmful consequences for both India and Pakistan with India having more to lose compared to Pakistan since its path of economic progress is much ahead and stronger than that of Pakistan's. To substantiate the same, let us draw an economic comparison between the two countries.

### 3. Economic comparison-India Vs Pakistan

Based on World Bank Data, the global GDP in current prices totaled \$ 80.7 trillion in the year 2017 [1]. India's share of GDP from this stood at \$2.59 trillion which amounts to 3.27% of the world's share. As against this, Pakistan's share of global GDP is only \$ 0.3 trillion which is only 0.38% of the global GDP [2].

Today, India's growth rates in 2018-19 are projected to be well above China's [3]. India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world with World Bank pegging India's growth rate at 7.5% for the three years from 2019 to 2021 well ahead of China's growth rate at 6.2%, 6.2% and 6.0% for the years 2019, 2020 and 2021 [4]. As per the World Bank data, in 2017, India became the 6<sup>th</sup> largest economy with a GDP of \$ 2.59 trillion, having overtaken France with its GDP at \$ 2.58 trillion [5].

According to World Investment Report 2018, global FDI flows have decreased by 23% in 2017. Notwithstanding this fall, the Indian economy fetched an FDI inflow of \$ 39.96 billion whereas for the Pakistani economy it was a meager \$ 2.81 billion [6]. Thus, for Pakistan it has a catching-up to do with the stronger Indian economy. But for India, Pakistan's economy is not its benchmark. India has a larger picture and goal of catching up with the best economic players in the world like China that received an FDI inflow of \$136.3 billion in the year 2017. It's a game that can be won with grit and determination and with focus on the productive track. For Pakistan's economy, it is primarily a task of survival while for India it is a race to be a winner.

Thus, Pakistan may not have much to lose from a war but for India it would mean jumping off the winning race track. On the contrary, Pakistan's military generals' and political game changers may gain from a war for the economic gain that may come their way since most of the arms and ammunition industry in Pakistan is controlled by the generals.

#### 1. Political premise of war between the two nations in the background of weapons of mass destruction

Political leaders from both the countries have speculated a war between the two nations and have been more than vocal in how and why a war could destroy the other. Today, we cannot forget the fact that both are nuclear powers and it would be suicidal on their part to initiate a war against the other. A comparison of their nuclear strength demonstrates that both are adequately equipped with weapons of mass destruction.

#### 2. Nuclear capability comparison-India Vs Pakistan

Though, India is economically much stronger than Pakistan, on the nuclear front both are well equipped. In 2018, India allocated about \$ 45 billion dollars for defense expenditure in its budget constituting to about 2.2 % of its GDP and with a growth of 7.7% from the previous year while Pakistan's allocation was about \$ 9.6 billion dollars for defense expenditure which constituted to about 3.6% of its GDP with a growth of 20%. Even though India's spending on defense in proportion to its GDP remained low in comparison to that of Pakistan's, but in monetary terms it's spending on defense is higher than that of Pakistan's.

Though monetary spending is higher on defense for India in comparison with Pakistan, but taking into consideration the size of Indian economy it's not significant. Also, when we compare the two countries missiles and nuclear capability, both nations possess ballistic missiles capability of delivering nuclear weapons. According to Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Sweden, Pakistan has 140 to 150 nuclear warheads, compared with India's 130-140 warheads. According to the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Washington, India has nine types of operational missiles with a range of 3,000 km to 5,000 km while Pakistan's missile programme also has a variety of short and medium ranges with an outreach of weapons to any part of India, with the longest range of up to 2,000 km.

A one megaton nuclear bomb creates a firestorm covering 100 square miles. The firestorm in Hiroshima destroyed 13 square kilometers (about 5 square miles) of the city resulting in about 1,80,000 deaths [7]. The blast was from a uranium gun-type atomic bomb of about 13 kilotons [8]. Much has changed from the days of 'The Little Boy' and 'The Fat Man'. From 1945 to 2019, there has been technological advancement and improvements in the production of nuclear warfare, which means destruction from any of the nuclear warhead detonation, either from India or Pakistan, will have destructive impact of a much higher magnitude and a near nuclear apocalypse possibility for the two countries, posing the danger of erasing a major part of the two civilizations together comprising of about 156 crores [9].

Defense Statistics, 2018-19		
Parameter	Pakistan	India
Defense Budget (in US billion dollars)	9.6	45
Growth of Defense Budget (%)	20	7.7
Share of Defense Budget in GDP (%)	3.6	2.2
Missiles & Nuclear Warheads		
Nuclear Warheads	140-150	130-140
Source: Institute for Defense Studies & Analysis, Interim Defense Budget 2019-20, L.K Behera; Shauraya Gurang , 20% Increase in Pakistan Defense Budget Signals Neighbour’s intent , Economic times, 30th April, 2018; Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Sweden		

#### 4. Alternative to war

Having said the above, sitting idle over Pulwama like threats are also no solution for India. The perpetrators of terrorism certainly need to be taught a lesson. And what better way than to hit Pakistan where it will hurt the most. In the wake of the ghastly attack, India has stripped the Most Favoured Nation(MFN) status given to Pakistan and has hiked the basic customs duty on all goods imported from the neighboring country to 200% [10]. Alternate to this could be, India severing all the ties with Pakistan. It is not possible to indulge in economic, cultural, sports and social ties with a nation that initiates terrorist attacks. Talks with a hostile nation can lead to a positive result only when that nation has any rationality of thought process in its Government. Pakistan’s democracy is pseudo, with the omnipresent dominance of military power over the Government, leaving little room to arrive at a positive outcome to any talks. Alternate to this, India should impose reparation compensation on Pakistan and if the same is not acceptable to the latter, the matter should be taken to International Courts for justice. The Treaty of Versailles required Germany to pay high reparations to cover civilian damage caused by war. This in turn led to a near collapse of the German economy. In the aftermath of the Pulwama attack, India also withdrew security of 18 Hurriyat leaders and 155 other political persons [11]. Such moves would lead to weakening of the negative forces against India. Further instead of a head- on war, surgical attacks like the one in Balakot in the terrorist prone areas can be carried out but with assistance from nations like Israel that support anti-terrorist retaliation actions and have the necessary expertise and intelligence for the same.

India and Pakistan are both members of international institutions like World Bank, IMF, WTO, SAARC, etc. The countries that are developed and controlling these institutions are by far and large strongly against any form of terror attacks since they have themselves experienced such devastation in recent years. Strategic lobbying and right negotiations with the dominant members of these institutions like USA, France, Russia, Germany, etc. would swing the wind in India’s favour and see to it that Pakistan is declared as a ‘terrorist supporting and sponsoring’ nation and is shifted from the *grey list* that it is now in to the *black list*. Even though China recently on 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2019, blocked a move by United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to designate Jaish-e-Mohammad Chief Masood Azhar as a global terrorist, key UNSC members including US are working towards bringing in a resolution asking for a UNSC vote to declare Masood as a global terrorist [12]. The vote may not have the same strong effect that would have been under the 1267 Sanctions Committee, but nevertheless it will have a significant impact in cautioning nations from extending any kind of support to terrorists linked organizations.

#### 5. Concluding remarks

The Pulwama attack was like a last straw for India with Indians crying out for justice for the innocent lives lost in terror attacks and also for putting a stop to Pakistani sponsored terrorism. But, war is certainly not a solution to this hostility. An onslaught of war between the two would only divert the two nations on an unproductive path with India’s economy having more to lose than Pakistan’s. The study has justified the premise that war is definitely not advisable for India as it will divert it from the path of development. Therefore, options other than war should be employed, as discussed in the article that involve tough diplomatic and intelligent strategic measures by the Indian Government, for pruning Pakistan’s terrorists sponsored activities against India.

India is the world's most graceful democracy. Therefore, its approach in dealing with rogue nations like Pakistan should be one that is strategic, sharp, smart and intelligent and leaves a long term causal impact. Such measures would seek justice for the 44 young lives prematurely lost, would ensure that countries like Pakistan do not attempt to carry out suicide net- practice sessions with India ever again and will also not deviate India from its progressive path.

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