

The rivalry between india and pakistan history essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

If there were only two men in the world, how would they get on. They would help one another, harm one another, flatter one another, slander one another, fight one another, make it up; they could neither live together nor do without one another’.

– Voltaire, Philosophical Dictionary, 1764.

INTRODUCTION

1. The South Asian region, which includes states of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka has long been significant in world affairs. It is a region of great racial diversity with innumerable cultures, languages, and religions. No other region in the world possesses such unique distinctions and characteristics. India has common boundary with all other six states of this region, but no other country has a common boundary with each other. So India is assumed as the core of the South Asian system. This geo-strategic reason has made India a regional power.

2. Throughout history, South Asia has faced many wars. In the 8th and 12th century, Arab and Turkish Muslims took over the control of this region from Hindus fighting many wars. Religion and expansion of territory were the main causes of those wars. Then came the Mugals in the 15th century and fought innumerable wars for establishing control and expanding their territory. In the 17th century the British came and gradually took over the region through numerous wars in establishing their colonies. Though Nepal was the only the nation that the British Empire failed to colonise. Then the people of this sub-continent started their movements for independence

against British Imperialism inspired by nationalism. Ultimately the British had to leave the region in 1947.

4. After India becoming independent, this region also faced different conventional and unconventional wars. There were four conventional wars fought in this region: between India and Pakistan in 1948, 1965 and in 1971 and between India and China in 1962. There were many unconventional wars in this region: Sikh, Naga, and Mizo problems in India, Baluch and Sindh problems in Pakistan, Chakma insurgency in Bangladesh, Tamil insurgency in Sri Lanka, and Maoist insurgency in Nepal; etc. Interestingly, India is assumed as one party of this conflict within this region directly or indirectly.

5. South Asia, the most poorest region of the old utilising their budget mostly in other sector like defense and solving conflicts instead of in the development sector. In the case of Nepal, she is also using a good amount of budget in the peace process and conflict management.

CAUSES OF WARS IN SOUTH ASIA

6. Study of the conflicts in South Asia shows that the numbers of conventional wars are less in number and in severity than the unconventional wars. There were multifarious causes of wars in South Asia. No single cause was directly responsible for any war or conflict in this region. The causes of wars in South Asia in general are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Consequence of the Cold War

7. Since independence of the countries of this region, it has been an arena of clashing interests and economic, political and diplomatic competitions of the major powers. But those powers did not engage themselves in direct large-scale military confrontation. For all the countries of South Asia, large and small, relations with the United States, the former Soviet Union, and China are extensive and of great significance.

8. In 1947 India established good relation with USSR. In 1949 Pakistan also established good relation with Soviet Union as a result of India's relation with USA. A Cold war was introduced in this region when Pakistan joined South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) in September 1954 and the Baghdad Pact in September 1955. India and Pakistan both took the chance of strained relations between the two super powers due to the cold war. In this context the USA supported Pakistan and the USSR supported India. India and Pakistan both received Military aid worth of billions of dollars from these two super powers. Pakistan also established good relation with China to counter India and was supported substantially.

9. It can easily be deduced that in addition to heavy economic assistance, vast quantities of military supplies flowed into the sub-continent, which led to the endless arms race between India and Pakistan since independence. Nuclear tests by both the countries in 1998 were a clear example of the severity of the arms race between these two countries. Also both of them were competing as a nuclear country that they made nuclear tests one after another. The arms race between India and Pakistan and the role played by the major powers due to the cold war situation were responsible in leading to

the Indo-Pakistani wars (in 1965 and 1971). These were also responsible for the border war between India and China in 1962.

India Factor

10. Geo-strategically India has a greater advantage than other states of this region. This region is Indo centric, which is unique in the world system.

Geographically, economically and population wise India is largest country in this region. India occupies 72% of the area of this region and bears 77% of its population. She also generates 78% of the gross national product of this region. So India is known as the regional super power for South Asia. It's assumed that India was the one of the participants of all conventional and unconventional wars fought in this region directly or indirectly.

11. India is in advantageous position to intervene in the internal affairs of other countries of this region. Study of insurgencies and communal violence in this region also proves that it is India, who directly or indirectly helped the militants. Involvement of India can be clearly understood in the Tamil crisis in Sri Lanka, the Chakma crisis in Bangladesh, the Nepalese exiles; etc.

12. India as a regional power always wanted to dominate the region. She also wants to limit the influence of outside power, upon her neighbours, as she takes into account her neighbours as an integral part of her security. India was always sensitive about the presence of extra-regional power in South Asian politics.

Rise of Sub-State Nationalism

13. The South Asian region is one of the most populous areas in the world. There are numerous communities in this area who are from different religions, tribes, and speak in different languages. Since the primitive days there were conflicts between the communities. In a multi-racial and multi-cultural society when a particular group of people establishes domination over power and hampers equal distribution of resources and other amenities, trouble starts within a country. Indians fought their British rulers as one entity, but once near the freedom they were split and become two countries as Pakistan (Muslim majority) and India (Hindu majority). Lately in 1971 West Pakistan also separated as Bangladesh (Bengali majority). Most countries within this region were/are facing internal conflict; e. g. Maoist problem of India in some states, Tamil problem of Sri Lanka, Maoist and Terai problem in Nepal.

14. In present context the Janajati leaders of Nepal are uniting for a caste system state. Madhesi parties are uniting for Terai demanding one Madhesi state. Far western people say that they need a undividable far eastern state and some demand Tharuhat, Limbuwan, Tansaling, Tamuwani, Newa State; etc. This shows the rise of sub-state nationalism. Not only Nepal, but most of the South Asian countries are facing this sort of problem; e. g. Gorkhaland state fighters at Paschim Bengal India.

Neo-Colonialism

15. Nowadays the concept of domination by capturing the land physically is almost over. Today powerful states try to exert their influence on less powerful states by neo-colonizing them; i. e. by controlling them

economically as well as politically. Market domination is one of the major measures for neo-colonizing other states in this age. India always wanted South Asia as her secured market for industrial as well primary products. She is almost successful in achieving her purpose, only Pakistan is in a challenging position.

Rivalry between India and Pakistan

15. South Asian conflicts revolved basically around the traditional and endless conflicts and rivalry between India and Pakistan and their respective relationship with other states of the region. The roots of the conflict are complex and can be traced back to the demand for a separate homeland for the Indian Muslims. The organizing principles of the two states are different; one based on religion and the other on secularism. This has affected their internal politics. They also have disputes over territories, have mutual suspicions and distrust. At present a situation of low intensity conflict is prevailing between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir issue. But it is not expected to achieve anything bilaterally due to the nature and state of relations between the two; also the stalemate over Kashmir is likely to continue for an indefinite period.

16. The nuclear tests by both the countries in 1998 have further complicated the situation. The conflict between India and Pakistan is too emotional. They are also lacking sophisticated command and control system for nuclear weapons. All these might spark an accidental nuclear war between these two countries, which may have spill over effect on all other countries of the region.

Poverty of South Asia

17. This region is the most poorest in the world. Every Nation bearing this problem because of bad governance, internal conflicts, corruption; etc. Per capita income of all nations is low and GDP is also low. Because of poverty, living standards of the majority of the people within this region is horrible. Some of the internal conflicts of the region are just because of poverty; e. g. insurgency in Nepal, Maoist problem in some states of India; etc.

Conclusion

18. Causes of wars varied with the changes of world systems in different ages. In the primitive days people used to fight wars for very simple causes. But with the technological and social advancement these causes have become complex and multi-dimensional. Today the contemporary schools of war divide the causes into two groups. Sometimes the State itself becomes the cause of war. Nationalism also considered as a major cause of war. Role of special interest groups in a state cannot be ruled out both in developed and under-developed countries.

19. The South Asia region has long been significant in the world affairs. Throughout the history this region was the focal point of the western interest, which caused many wars. These ranged from minor irritants and non-violent disputes to full-scale wars since the World War II. So far four conventional wars were fought in this region of which three were between India and Pakistan.

20. Poverty within South Asia is one of the most challenging problems in the region. Boarder disputes, rivalry between India and Pakistan, sub-state nationalism are also the problems for this region which may cause wars. Solving this problem requires good leadership in each nation, regional cohesiveness and far sight vision of regional leaders is necessary.