ESSENCE AND CONTROL OF MILITARY CONFLICT – AN APPROACH PAPER

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Introduction

1.   While the nature of war is understood to be permanent, its character is ever changing. In the contemporary context, nation-states are consistently challenged by this very changing character of war. A precise understanding of war, warfare and military conflict is essential for the policymakers, decision-makers, and the executioners to prepare their respective entities to successfully meet the challenges associated with military competition. Once this essence of military conflict is understood, the next step is the correct approach towards its control.

Aim

2.   The aim of this paper is to offer an approach towards understanding the nature and character of military conflict and issues related with how military conflict is controlled.

Methodology

3.   **Theory in Use**. This paper developed its subject matter with the application of the **Grounded Theory** approach. For the purpose of 'understanding military conflict', this paper relied on **Clausewitzian Theory on War**.

4.   Applying 'Qualitative Data Analysis' approach, publications available in open source were analysed to identify the relevant theoretical constructs related to the subject at hand and correlate these with the prevalent sentiment on the subject in the environment. This was followed by critical exercise applying **Case Study Analysis** of certain real military conflict situations.

ESSENCE OF MILITARY CONFLICT

Nature & Character of War

5.   In his seminal treatise 'VomKriege'[1], Prussian General Carl von Clausewitz mentions, "*War is an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will*". The author thereafter goes on to define the essential facets of war which include, though not limited to (Clausewitz 1976, 75-89):-

     (a)   War invariably has a political aim. War is not fought for its own sake: it has an aim, often normatively defined in political terms, but perfectly capable of being more narrowly and militarily defined, for example as the pursuit of victory.

     (b)   It involves the use of force or imminent threat of massive destruction.

     (c)   It is essentially a violent clash of opposing wills. War therefore is not a one-sided activity but assumes resistance. Hence, it rests on contention.

     (d)   War assumes a degree of intensity and duration to the fighting. For example, frontier skirmishes and isolated clashes between patrols are not necessarily war. India-Pakistan dispute over Kashmir is today sustained by force without resulting in war.

     (e)   Those who fight do so not in private capacity, but as public servants. A personal vendetta is not war.

6.   Thus, the enduring Nature of War can be summarized as violent, interactive and fundamentally political. Clausewitz further defines the prominent tendencies of war as a '*paradoxical trinity*' comprising primordial violence, hatred and enmity; play of chance and probability and; its subordination as an instrument of rational policy. When we study this trinity under the social construct it can be likened to the People, the Army and the

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[1] Book on war and military strategy by Prussian General Carl von Clausewitz, which has been translated into English as 'On War' by Michael Howard and Peter Paret.

Government. War therefore has its origins linked to the passion of the people; courage and probability of chance of the military and rational thinking and political aims of the government. No wonder according to Clausewitz "*War is a mere continuation of politics by other means*" (Clausewitz 1976, 87).

7.   Taking a cue from Arthur F. Lykke Jr.'s strategic framework of ends, ways, and means; it may be concluded that if **Victory** is the **End State; Force** the **Means**; then **Ways** of employment of force is **Character of War**, which unlike the Nature of War, is continuously evolving as it is influenced by evolution of mankind, society, politics, economics and technology; as well as will of leadership, military doctrine and organization. Recent trends indicate a shift in **Character of War** from military means to use of unrestricted means which include non-military/ covert/ non-contact and non-linear means to subjugate the enemy. In lieu of targeting enemy forces, adversaries target enemy's perception and society, and disrupting the support system on which the enemy military depends. We shall discuss this evolving character of war later in this paper.

Objectives of War

8.   As per Clausewitz, if political purpose dictates a military action, then theoretically the objectives of war will be (Clausewitz 1976, 90):-

(a)   Destruction of enemy forces, i.e., they must be put in such a condition that they can no longer carry on the fight.

(b)   The country must be occupied; otherwise, the enemy could raise fresh military forces, and

(c)   Enemy 'will' has to be broken, else hostilities can be renewed again in the interior, or perhaps with allied help.
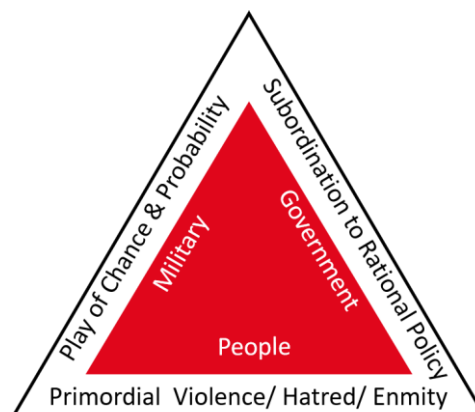

Fig 1: The Clausewitzian Trinity

9.   This theoretical construct may seem detached with respect to reality as there are enough and more examples wherein treaties were concluded before one of the antagonists could be called powerless, or even before the balance of power had been seriously altered. This disconnect has over the centuries been one of the major critiques of the Clausewitzian theory on war[2]. However, we have seen from historical evidence that 'war' assumes an amorphous form and branches out into various domains making it difficult for theorists to define a shape whose limits can be defined. The complexities associated with defining rules and structure of such an unstructured construct are many, and therefore, while Clausewitz delved into the intangible domain of 'will of the enemy', 'hostile feelings', 'intellect and temperament of the Commander', et cetera; other theorists of that time restricted themselves to quantification of 'physical matter' such as the size of adversary's force. This was truly out of the ordinary.

Relevance of Theory of War

10.   The view of the critics and Clausewitz's own admission therefore does put a question to the relevance of 'Theory of War'. We however need to be cognizant of the fact that theory in any field of study provides the necessary framework for understanding a phenomenon, which in the extant case is 'War', and also comprehend the likely limitation of the theoretical construct with respect to reality. Thus, when Clausewitz states that "*actual war is often far removed from the pure concept postulated by theory*" what he may actually mean is that given the nature of the subject, we must remind ourselves that it is simply not possible to construct a model for the art of war or an algebraic formula for use on the battlefield that can serve as a scaffolding on which the commander can rely for support at any time. He further mentions that these principles and rules are intended to provide a thinking man with a frame of reference for the movements he has been trained to carry out, rather than to serve as a guide which at the moment of action lays down the precise path, he must take (Clausewitz 1976, 133-142).

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[2] Clausewitz himself subsequently states that 'actual war is often far removed from the pure concept postulated by theory. Inability to carry on the struggle can, in practice, be replaced by two other grounds for making peace: the first is the improbability of victory; the second is its unacceptable cost'.

War versus Military Conflict[3]

11. Theoretically, if 'War' is a '*clash between major political interests, which is resolved by violent interaction and bloodshed*' with the desired end state of '**winning**' (Clausewitz 1976, 149), then as per the contemporary military theory, 'Armed Conflict' may be defined as something which is short of the intense violent nature of war, yet a result of clash of opposing political interest and will of the adversaries with the desired end state of '**resolution of conflict/ dispute**'. This distinction is bound to raise questions in the minds of readers of this paper and therefore an explanation in support of this argument is attempted in subsequent paragraph(s).

> (a)   United Nations Charter of 1945, article 2(4), prohibits "*the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations*". This article essentially prohibits (or bans) '**War**' between two states[4]. The UN however supports Laws of Armed Conflict (LOAC)[5] enunciated as an outcome of Geneva Convention of 1949, which legitimizes use of armed forces to attain legitimate military objectives while protecting humanity by differentiating between combatants and non-combatants.
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> (b)   The ibid UN article clearly indicates that 'war' can only be waged against another 'state'. However, 'armed conflicts' are known to have a taxonomy which classifies them as International Armed Conflict and Non-international Armed Conflict (also as Interstate, Intrastate and Extrastate conflicts as depicted in the Fig 2). In accordance with this definition state of Israel went to war with the states of Egypt and Syria in 1973 (Yom Kippur War or Ramadan War), while the violent interaction of Israel with Hezbollah (a non-state actor) in 2006 is an apt example of Armed Extra state Conflict. Fig 2 also indicates a sharp decline in Interstate conflicts since end of WW II and an exponential rise in intrastate conflicts during the same period.

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[3] While the prevalent literature on the subject treats conflicts as 'armed conflicts', this paper restricts its study to 'military conflicts' only, which means certain other forms of conflict such as those between two non-state actors, etc are excluded.

[4] In International Relations, a 'State' is defined as a large social system with a set of rules that are enforced by a permanent administrative body (government). That body claims and tries to enforce sovereignty. That is, the state claims to be the highest source of decision-making of the social system within its jurisdiction, and it rejects outside interference in making or enforcing its set of rules. Colloquially, 'State' is referred to as a country or a nation.

[5] Also called International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and applicable only at times of armed conflict. While IHL and International Human Rights Law (IHRL) are complementary bodies of international law that share some of the same aims, however, there applicability differs. For e.g. while IHL applies exclusively in armed conflict, human rights law applies, in principle, at all times, i.e. in peacetime and during armed conflict.
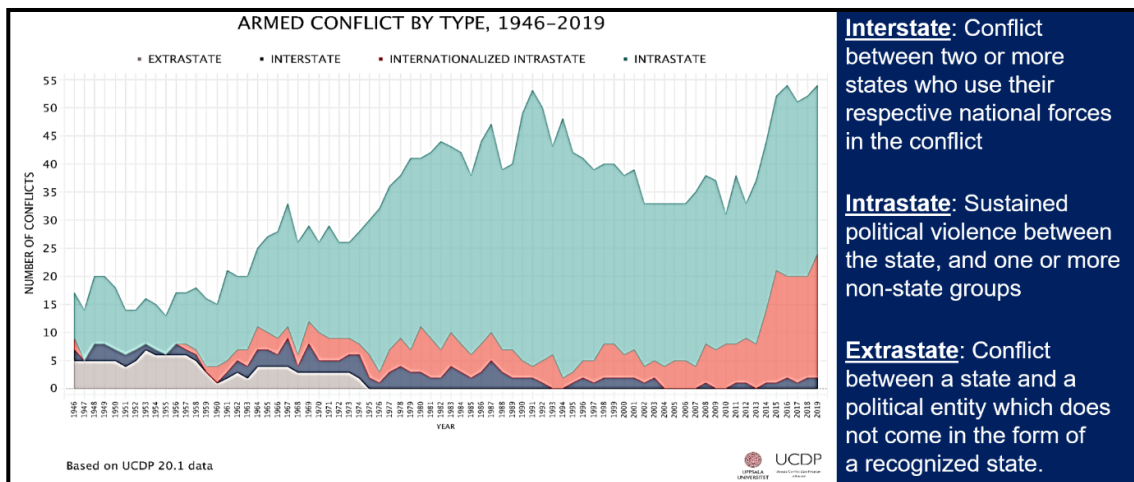
Fig 2: Types of Armed Conflict (1946 – 2019)

(c)   Even Clausewitz drew a philosophical distinction between "*absolute or ideal war*," and "*real war*", which in the contemporary nomenclature is sometimes referred to as 'General/ Total war' and 'Limited War or Armed Conflict' respectively. While there are quite a few prominent critics who have reservations with such a distinction, however, in essence 'Total' war involves all resources of a nation, with few, if any, restrictions on the use of force, short of nuclear strike/ retaliation with the aim of total annihilation or subjugation of the opponent [6]. World War II could be considered as the last 'total' war, in a multinational context, which had the unconditional surrender as the stated aim of the Allied Powers, and witnessed use of repeated 'strategic bombing' of civilian populace by most belligerents (IHQMoD(Navy) 2015, 19).

Why are Conflicts Preferred?

12.   From the foregoing arguments it is apparent that while 'war' and 'armed conflict' both signify violent interaction between two or more states or non-state actors (only in case of armed conflict) and are used interchangeably in our daily lexicon and appear analogous, however, they refer to activities which may not be similar. This also indicates a certain degree of bias of the world community towards one word as compared to the other. Review of literature available in the open domain does provide some justification for this bias, some of which is enumerated below:-

(a)   Art 2(4) of UN Charter of 1945, prohibits 'war' but acknowledges likelihood of 'armed conflict' which may be interstate (very few since

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[6]Obviously Clausewitz had in the 19th Century not envisaged atomic weapons as a means of fighting wars.

end of WW-II) or between state and non-state actors. Existence of 'Laws of Armed Conflict' is a testimony to this fact.

(b) 'War' needs to be declared by the belligerent states and may need approval of respective government/ parliament/ congress, whereas, definition of 'armed conflict' being nebulous provides the flexibility of waging it without formal declaration. For example, use of military force by US against Vietnam, Iraq and Libya was authorized by the Office of the President of the USA and not by the Congress for which it faced considerable internal criticism. Similarly, actions taken by nation-states against adversaries which are below the threshold of war or in the zone of deniability and therefore do not require parliamentary approval.

(c) Besides the legal provision requiring formal declaration for a 'conflict' to be termed 'war', such a classification also runs the risk of escalation above the limited level. Hence, many limited wars have instead been termed as 'border clash/ skirmish', 'armed intervention', etc. All of these, however, fall under the generic classification of 'armed conflict' (IHQMoD(Navy) 2015, 20).

(d) Armed Conflict provides belligerents the flexibility of restricting forms of violence below the threshold of applicability of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and therefore fall within the scope of other normative frameworks. Further, Art 51 of UN Charter of 1945, legitimises inherent right for anticipatory individual or collective self-defence, presumably using violent means, if threat of an armed attack is imminent.

(e) Theoretically, 'war' cannot be declared against a non-state actor, however, use of military force to counter terrorism sounds more benign and is a credible way to persuade like-minded states to form a coalition for a supposedly 'just cause'. Case in point being Global War on Terrorism or GWOT.

(f) On the contrary, we often come across example of acrimonious competition between states in the domain of trade, economics, ecology, cyber et cetera; which are far removed from any kind of violent interaction and yet are annotated with suffix 'war' to provide it the required significance. These forms of warfare therefore define the Character of War which unlike the enduring Nature of War is continuously evolving.

Spectrum of War/ Conflict

13.   The foregoing argument justifiably begs the question, 'what is the full range of situations in which military forces may be called upon to operate and how will such a situation qualify to be called an armed conflict or a war.' Notwithstanding that any attempt to explain this will be marred by counter interpretation, the authors make a humble attempt at doing so.

14.   Spectrum of Conflict at Fig 3 diagrammatically depicts the position of specific forms of conflict depending on its ways, means and ends. The Spectrum of War/ Conflict is spread across a continuum which has Non-Violent Conflict at one end and Violent Conflict at the other. In this spectrum Violent Conflict comprises Non-conventional, Conventional and Nuclear hostilities, while Non-Violent Conflict includes Political, Ideological and Economic competition. Actions such as Peacekeeping &Enforcement, Low Intensity Conflict and Subversion being escalatory in nature straddle across Non-Violent and Violent Conflict. History is testimony to the fact that it is difficult to find any long periods of absolute peace. The best condition, therefore, depicted in the spectrum of conflict would be that of non-violent conflict. The zone of 'Conflict' in this spectrum would therefore straddle across Non-violent Conflict upto midway of Conventional hostilities, while that of 'War' would include the zone of Conventional (partially) and Nuclear hostilities. It is important to note that the dividing line between the above echelons of the conflict spectrum is not always distinct. For example, assistance to or abetment of internal non-state violence by a foreign state could lead to inter-state armed conflict below the threshold of overt declaration of (conventional) hostilities or war. The attendant difficulty in classifying the conflict is accompanied with major politico-strategic consequences, particularly in terms of deciding the nature of military response (IHQMoD(Navy) 2015, 13-14
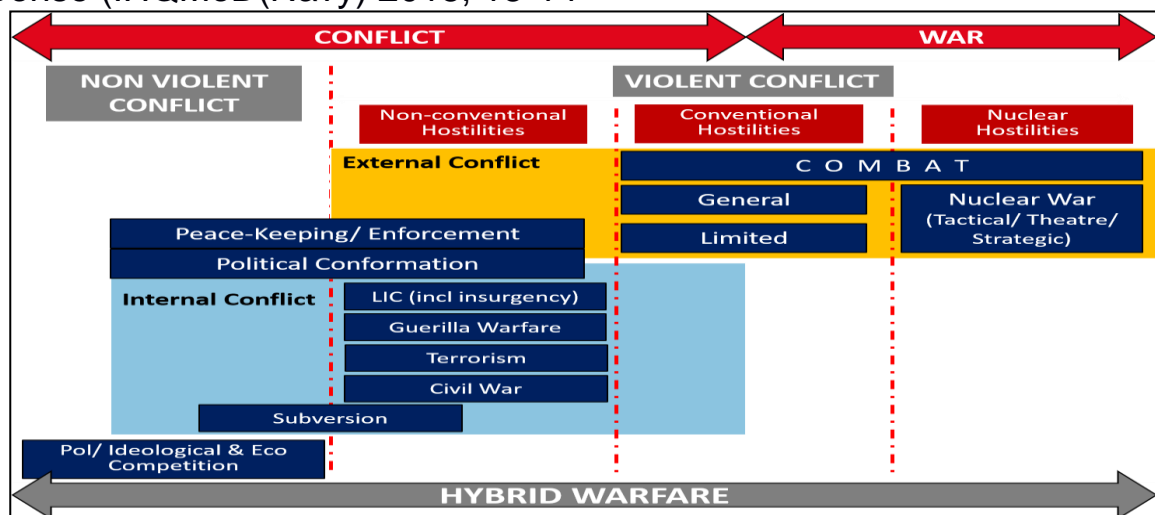

Fig 3: Spectrum of Conflict (Adapted from Indian Maritime Doctrine, 2015)

15. It is pertinent to note that contemporary term 'Hybrid Warfare' essentially defines the evolving 'character of war'. Hybrid warfare seeks coordinated employment of conventional military and unconventional tools of warfare to achieve synergetic and convergent effects in physical and psychological dimension of conflict to achieve geopolitical and strategic objectives, while avoiding any form of attribution or retribution by the adversary. This form of warfare may be applied at all times and therefore spans the entire spectrum of war/ conflict.

16. Further, as discussed in the foregoing, military conflict occupies that spectrum on the continuum between War and Peace which betrays the state of Peace, at the same time remains just below the threshold of War. In the modern context[7], sometimes this space is also referred to as the **Gray Zone**(Army 2018, 2)(Troeder 2019).

CONTROL OF MILITARY CONFLICT

17. Having discussed the 'essence of military conflict', the 'control of military conflict', irrespective of type and its main drivers, invariably follows a sinusoidal cycle comprising:-

Fig 4: Conflict Cycle (Adapted from Michael Lund's 'Curve of Conflict')

    (a)   Conflict Prevention.

    (b)   Conflict Management.

    (c)   Conflict Mitigation.

    (d)   Conflict Termination.

Anatomy of Military Conflict

18. However, before we discuss various facets of 'control of military conflict', it will be prudent to understand the 'Anatomy of Military Conflict'. A logical representation of the anatomy of military conflict helps us understand its contemporary character. The nation-states operate in a national security environment which is extremely dynamic. All states seek to achieve and sustain competitive advantage which lies in fulfilment of their respective National Interests (Sciences 2020). Within this environment the states interact with each other. Depending on its nature, this interaction may be characterised as **competition**, **collaboration**, **neutrality**, or a **preferred position**. For instance, in the present-day world environment, USA and China may be considered as competitors. Following the same yardstick,

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[7]Militaries world over have now more or less converged on the understanding of the Gray Zone Warfare. The US Army War College offers the similar definition of this concept as given in the Indian Army's Doctrine.

while India and Japan emerge as collaborators, Mexico may be considered as holding a neutral position with respect to India. In this context, Preferred Position is that in which State A favours State B to hold A's chosen position. This relationship is indicated[8] in the figure below.
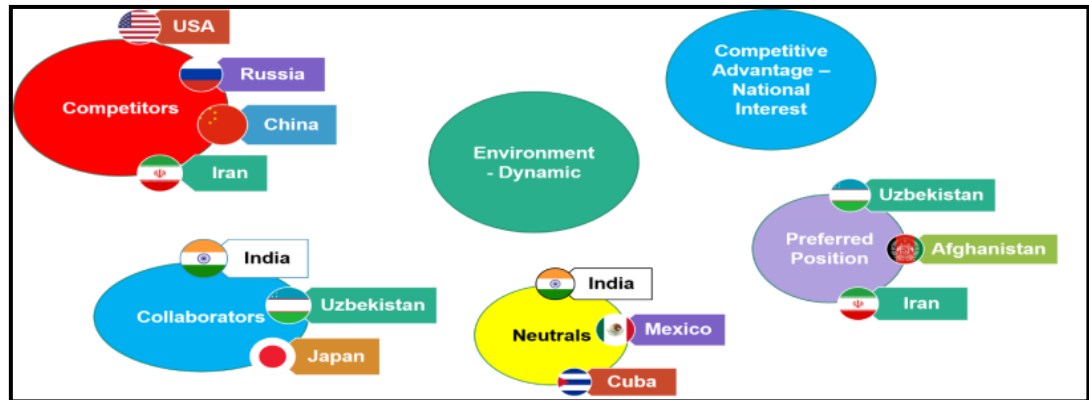

Fig 5: Anatomy of Military Conflict

19.   It may be discerned that an adversary will be found from amongst the competitors. State of conflict emerges from disturbance/ migration in these mutual relationships among the nation-states.

Control of Military Conflict – Case Studies

20.   As discussed earlier in this paper, control of any military conflict involves four phenomena, viz, Conflict Prevention, Conflict Management, Conflict Mitigation (which is essentially Escalation Control), and Conflict termination[9]. Any conflict may or may not necessarily go through all these stages. Further, a conflict situation is too dynamic to follow any sequence, theoretically though, prevention-management-mitigation-termination appear to be a logical and desired hierarchy for any conflict control or conflict resolution mechanism. While explaining the concept of the life cycle[10] of a conflict in a Concept Paper published by a Joint Transatlantic Research and Policy Centre (Niklas L.P. Swanström 2005, 10), the authors caution that "…*the division into phases* (of a conflict cycle) *is a much-simplified description of reality. Also, there are disagreements both within the*

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[8]This is an approximate indication inspired by academic analysis and should not be considered as an accurate or official indication.

[9] In certain literature, the term 'Conflict Management' includes Conflict Mitigation, Escalation Control and Conflict Termination or Resolution. Which implies that Conflict Management is used as a broader term to include the other aspects within it.

[10] A conflict cycle in its most simplified form denotes rise from stable peace to war and the de-escalation to stable peace. Thus, conflicts tend to be described as cyclical regarding their intensity levels. According to most schools of thought, these cycles may be reoccurring. This however is an ideal model of the conflict cycle, not always in line with the empirical reality.

academic and the policy community, as well as between the two as to how these measures should be understood and applied".

21.   As a consequence of the discussions in the foregoing; it is apparent that any, a combination of, or all the four phenomena described earlier may be applied towards control of a military conflict. This may be understood by analysing certain case studies pertaining to actual conflict situations in the Indian context. Four such Case Studies, one each related to the four phenomena are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

22**.   Instruments of Power and their Application**.   In pursuit of its National Interests, a nation-state relies on various instruments of power which are primarily categorised as Diplomatic, Information, Military and Economic (Sciences 2020). Towards resolution of a conflict/ dispute, the application of these instruments of power by a nation-state can vary from being competitive, collaborative, or neutral. Depending on what choice of application is made; a conflict is either prevented, triggered, managed, controlled, or resolved[11].

23.   **Conflict Prevention**. Havingwitnessed   the   conflicts   that   arose immediately after the end of the Cold War, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, former UN Secretary General, wanted a more pro-active approach that would reduce the risk of violence and act as an early warning system for areas where conflict appeared imminent. This led the UN to change their approach towards conflict prevention rather than focusing on peace-making or peace-keeping, which happens in the aftermath of violent conflicts (Boutros-Ghali 1992). However, the root cause of the conflict still remains unaddressed. Accordingly, conflict prevention, also referred to as preventive diplomacy, is a method to prevent and manage escalating tensions to avoid conflicts, and to set the conditions for long-term peace and stability. It includes:-

(a)   Peace-time diplomacy.

(b)   Political dialogue among States.

(c)   Intervention by International Org (UN/ ICJ).

(d)   Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) which may include, transparency of military activities, information exchanges, means for verification and compliance, and military co-operation.

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[11] This, of course, would also depend on what mode of application of instruments of power is chosen by the adversary/ competitor.

24. **Case Study 1 - Conflict Prevention**.

(a) **Case Narrative**.

| Conflict Situation	Conflict Background
The unsettled borders/ boundary disputes of India	Besides a long coastline, India shares its land borders with seven other nation-states with major border disputes with at least three of them
	India's border disputes with its neighbours include unsettled borders ranging from non-delineation, non-demarcation, territorial claims, and occupied territories
	Besides the settled International Boundary (IB), the disputed borders are thus known as Line of Control (LoC), Line of Actual Control (LAC), and Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL)
	These unsettled borders are a principal source of conflict as they witness perpetual cross border firing, troop engagements and suffering by local population
	Since this threatens the Vital National Interests, it leads to a broader politico-military conflict

Table 1-Case Narrative: Conflict Prevention
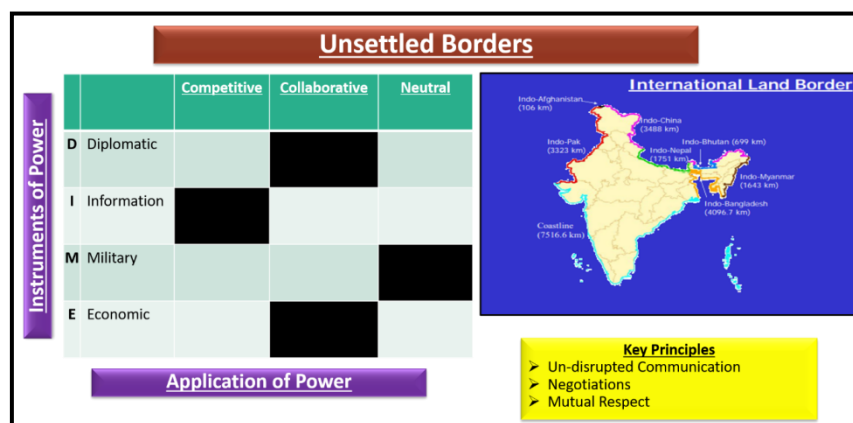
Fig 6:Case Analysis - Conflict Prevention[12]

(b) **Case Analysis**. Refer Figure 6 above. India as a nation-state with majority of its borders unsettled since independence, its territories illegally occupied by adversaries, rival territorial claims by belligerents and its population suffering and constantly living under threat, exists at the cusp of conflict and war. While it has fought wars, their numbers are certainly not proportional to the causes of conflict that it lives with. This is possibly because of the strategy of conflict prevention that it so relentlessly pursues. Conflict Prevention focuses on peaceful prevention of disputes by application of a set of instruments used to prevent or solve disputes before they develop into active conflicts (Niklas L.P. Swanström 2005, 5,19). Towards prevention of a conflict, how does application of its instruments of power by a nation-state vary

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[12] Map source - https://www.examdristi.in/international-land-border-and-length-of-the-coastline-of-india/

from being competitive, collaborative, or neutral. As is evident from Figure 2, the **Diplomatic** and **Economic** instruments of national power have been applied in a collaborative manner. This behaviour has been independent of the perceived size or might of the competitor. This has enabled India to keep its adversaries/ competitors consistently engaged in a constructivist approach. Unsettled borders of India have been a long-drawn dispute, continuing for last 73 years, still, even at the height of tensions, India has never withdrawn or ceased its diplomatic engagements with the rival states. India has secured firm institutional mechanisms with China, Pakistan and Nepal for discussion and resolution of territorial disputes (Malhotra 2014). Similarly, the economic relations have been consciously made to survive these tensions. For instance, India had granted the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status for trade and commerce to Pakistan from 1996 to 2019[13], for almost two-and-a-half decades, even while the territorial disputes were nowhere near resolution. Similarly, India has almost 11 Institutional Bilateral Economic and Commercial Dialogue Mechanisms with China (China 2020). On the other hand, the instrument of **Information** has been applied in a competitive mode. This has allowed India to maintain parity with its competitors in strategic communications. Lastly, the application of the **Military** instrument has been neutral, which means its offensive application has been avoided while keeping it ready as a deterrent always. Had the application of military been in any other mode, competitive or defensive, conflict would not have been prevented at the scale at which it has been achieved. Since, even if military posture were purely defensive, the other side would have felt encouraged to use its military thus leading to violent conflict. How is such a sensitive and delicate combination of application of instruments of national power achieved? The fundamental principles, adherence to which enabled this, are that of maintaining un-disrupted communications, reliance on negotiations and emphasising mutual respect while dealing with each other.

25. **Conflict Management**. While conflict prevention discussed previously aims at using techniques to prevent disputes from arising, prevent them from escalating into armed conflict and prevents the armed conflict from spreading; Conflict Management essentially refers to measures that limit and/or contain human and material destruction due to the ongoing conflict without necessarily solving it. A few recognized measures of managing conflicts are:-

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[13] As reported in The Economic Times, E-Paper, 16 Feb 2019, accessible at https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/pakistans-most-favoured-nation-status-crapped/articleshow/68018002.cms

(a)   Laws of Armed Conflict enunciated as an outcome of Geneva Convention of 1949 which are applicable at times of armed conflict.

(b)   International Human Rights Law (IHRL) applicable at all times, i.e. in peacetime and during armed conflict.

(c)   Peacetime and wartime Rules of Engagement (RsoE) promulgated by apex political authority of various nation-states that delineate the circumstances and limitations under which the country's armed forces will initiate and /or continue combat with the enemy force.

(d)   Peacemaking and Peace Enforcement operations under UN mandate. Peacemaking generally includes measures to address conflicts in progress and usually involves diplomatic action to bring hostile parties to a negotiated agreement. Whereas, peace enforcement involves the application of a range of coercive measures, including the use of military force. It requires the explicit authorization of the Security Council (UNO, United Nations Peacekeeping 2020).

26.   **Case Study 2 – Conflict Management**.

(a)   **Case Narrative**.

Conflict Situation	Conflict Background
The cross-border terrorism in the Indian Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir	The erstwhile Northern most state and now a Union Territory, Jammu & Kashmir has been subjected to Pakistan sponsored cross border terrorism for the last three decades since 1990
	This active violent conflict was initiated by Pakistan as a tool of Proxy Warfare under Low Intensity Conflict to compensate for its conventional disparity with India
	This conflict has so far witnessed more than 71,000 Terrorist Initiated Violent Incidents, causing almost 14,000 civilian casualties besides, more than 5200 armed forces personnel killed. As part of Counter-Terrorist operations, more than 22,500 terrorists have been neutralised[14]
	The scale of casualties in this conflict has far exceeded that of other conventional conflicts combined, that India has engaged in with Pakistan
	The terrorist operations are facilitated through a network of training camps and launch pads across the Line of Control in Pakistan Occupied Jammu & Kashmir

Table 2-Case Narrative: Conflict Management

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[14] Data source - http://www.indianewsnetwork.com/20191101/fact-sheet-of-jammu-kashmir-and-ladakh
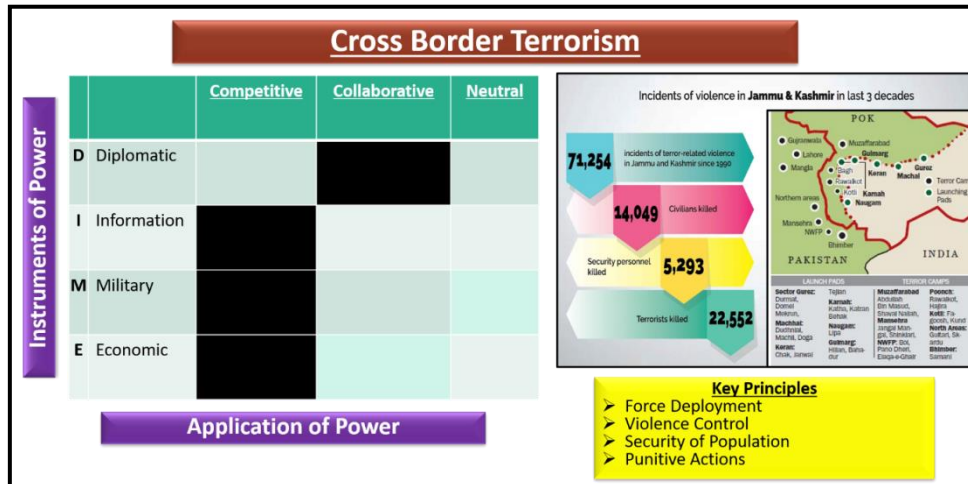
Fig 7: Case Analysis: Conflict Management[15]

(b) **Case Analysis**. Refer Figure 7 above. The Indian state has been engaged in the Low Intensity Conflict of cross border terrorism in J&K since early 1990s. Having been forced into this conflict by its adversarial Western neighbour, it has been deeply engaged in managing this conflict. In this context, Conflict Management[16] deals with state's responses in various domains when faced with an active conflict, which means when the conflict become manifests. It involves limiting the conflict without necessarily solving it (Niklas L.P. Swanström 2005, 5, 23). Conflict Management focuses on execution of counter strategies, conduct of military operations along with application of several other non-military measures. Thus, Conflict Management is believed to lay the foundation for effective Conflict Resolution (Wallensteen 2002, 5-8). Towards management of a conflict, how does application of its instruments of power by a nation-state vary from being competitive, collaborative, or neutral. As is evident from Figure 3, all instruments of national power except **Diplomatic** have been applied in a competitive manner. Besides the Indian state, the other actors involved in this conflict have been the state of Pakistan, its proxy-the terrorists, and the local populace. The competitive application of **Information** has allowed India to achieve edge against Pakistan in strategic communications while at the same time effectively manage its ill effects on the local populace. Restoration of law and order, maintenance of the state authority, elimination of the terrorist cadres, and limiting the cross-border support system is achieved through competitive application of the instrument of **Military**. This includes the punitive military strikes against the source of terror on the lines of prominent actions such as the 'surgical strikes' against the terrorist camps across the LoC in

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[15] ibid

[16] As explained earlier, this paper excludes the aspects of Conflict Mitigation and Conflict Termination from the concept of Conflict Management and treats them separately.

2016 and the Balakote Air Strike against a major terrorist facility in 2019. This, of course, is in addition to routine conduct of incessant counter terrorist operations both in the hinterland as well as along the LoC[17]. A series of Ministry of Home Affairs Annual Reports emphasise how the Govt of India in tandem with the local Govt of J&K adopted a multi-pronged approach in the **Economic** domain to promote economic activity in the region while ensuring severance/ neutralisation of the terrorist groups' resources of funding, both local and cross border (Ministry of Home Affairs 2018-19). On the other hand, the instrument of **Diplomacy** has been applied in a collaborative mode. Despite being subject to this proxy conflict, India has continued its diplomatic engagements with Pakistan. It has also pursued various institutional mechanisms formal and informal, official, and back door, for discussion and resolution. Had the application of diplomacy been in any other mode, conflict could not have been contained and limited. How is this combination of application of instruments of national power achieved in this case? The fundamental principles, adherence to which enabled this, are that of active and heavy force deployment both along the IB/ LoC and hinterland, controlling the violence level within manageable limits, ensuring security of local population at all costs, and punitive actions against the perpetrators of violence.

27.   **Conflict Mitigation (Escalation Control)**. Dictionary tells us that '**mitigation**' denotes action of reducing the severity, seriousness, or painfulness of something. In the domain of inter/ intrastate conflict studies, mitigation refers to measures to prevent increase in the intensity of conflict during the course of an operation or **Escalation Control**.   Escalation can be achieved by a belligerent by changing ways, means and ends of use of force, such as increase in the quantity and type of forces used and their targets. Horizontal escalation entails an increase in the geographical area of operations, while vertical escalation indicates a higher level of violence. There is inherent scope for escalation whenever force is used, as the equilibrium of force is not determined by one side alone. It is equally dependent on the response of the opponent, prompting either side to increase the level of force used to attain its objectives (IHQMoD(Navy) 2015, 27). Measures of escalation control therefore include:-

(a)   Dynamic Response Strategy to limit response options available to the adversary.

(b)   Diplomatic and economic sanctions.

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[17] More account of such military operations can be studied in the books 'India's Most Fearless-1 & 2' co-authored by defence journalists Shiv Aroor and Rahul Singh.

(c)   Peace negotiations and agreements under arbitration by a third party.

(d)   Peacekeeping operation under the UN mandate.

28.   **Case Study 3 – Conflict Mitigation (Escalation Control)**.

(a)   **Case Narrative**.

Conflict Situation	Conflict Background
Indo-Pak Kargil Conflict - 1999	This military conflict occurred between India and Pakistan in Ladakh's Kargil district between May-Jul 1999
	The conflict is believed to have been orchestratedby the then Pakistan army chief Gen Pervez Musharraf without the knowledge of Pakistan Govt
	It began with the infiltration of both Pakistani troops and terrorists into Indian territory. The infiltrators positioned themselves in key locations that gave them a strategic advantage during the start of the conflict
	Based on intelligence, the Indian Army was able to ascertain the points of incursion and launch 'Operation Vijay'
	The Pakistan intrusions were evicted through military action with the official casualty figures on the Indian side as 527, while that on the Pakistani side as between 357 and 453[18]

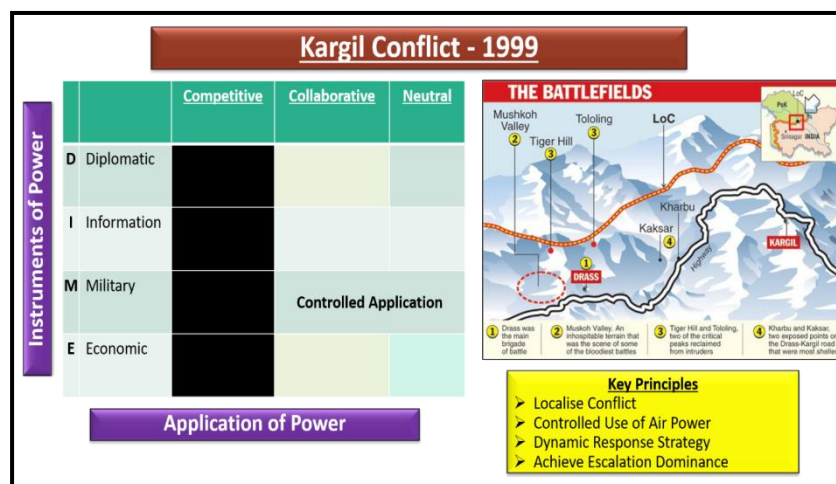*Table 3-Case Narrative: Conflict Mitigation*

Fig 8: Case Analysis: Conflict Mitigation[19]

(b)   **Case Analysis**.   Refer Figure 8 above. This military conflict was a manifestation of Indo-Pak security competition amidst the nuclear backdrop in South Asia since it quickly followed the nuclear tests by the two states. Pakistan's political objectives might have been "*to create a situation where India would be forced to the negotiating table and perhaps agree to a solution to Kashmir*" (Learning 2017).Nuclear

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[18] Data source - https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/all-you-need-to-know-about-kargil-war/kargil-vijay-diwas/slideshow/59772216.cms
[19] Image source - https://medium.com/@shringiprabhakar/the-kargil-war-a-saga-of-patriotism-4029e8a4e325

weapons emboldened Pakistan to push harder at the status quo than they had previously been able to because the weapons acted as a shield against retaliation. Kargil conflict was a departure from the Low Intensity Conflict since it saw both sides engage with regular military forces across a de facto border in the face of Pakistan attempt to seize and hold territory (Ashley J. Tellis 2001). This conflict was thus particularly dangerous and sensitive to escalation since intense fighting occurred along the LoC causing significant casualties on both sides and fanning fears that the conflict could escalate and end in a nuclear conflagration. India engaged in this conflict with the intent of Conflict Mitigation, while achieving its politico-military objectives, since it realised the importance of Escalation Control in this case. In this context, Conflict Mitigation deals with state's responses in various domains when faced with an active conflict, with focus on preventing escalation (Wallensteen 2002, 275-283). Towards mitigation of a conflict, how does application of its instruments of power by a nation-state vary from being competitive, collaborative, or neutral. As is evident from Figure 4, all instruments of national power by India have been applied in a competitive manner. However, the striking difference here is the **controlled application of the instrument of Military**. India chose vertical escalation by introducing air power into the conflict. However, it retained control over horizontal escalation by limiting the use of force to Indian Territory and on the Indian side of the LoC and restraining from attacking Pakistan elsewhere in the region. Even in the vertical escalation domain, its use of air power was confined to acting from own side of the border. The unabated competitive application of **other three instruments of power** was significant since it drew **conflict mitigating** responses from other influencers. Both India and Pakistan made diplomatic overtures in the early and middle phases of the conflict. Beijing refused Pakistan requests for support, while the USA played an active role and clearly indicated to Pakistan to unconditionally withdraw from the conflict zone. India also forced Pakistan to realise its lack of economic stamina to sustain the conflict should it prolong or escalate. Conflict mitigation strategy thus proved effective and inflicted heavy costs on the adversary by exposing and exploiting Pakistan's economic vulnerability, political instability, and international isolation (Ashley J. Tellis 2001). Had the application of military been in any other mode, conflict could not have been mitigated and escalation controlled. How is this combination of application of instruments of national power achieved in this case? The fundamental principles, adherence to which enabled this, are that of localising the conflict, controlled use of air power, executing the Dynamic Response Strategy to limit response

options available to the adversary while ensuring Escalation Dominance by own forces.

29.   **Conflict Termination**. While strategic thinkers and authors have paid a great deal of attention to how wars get started, and even more attention on how to fight wars, we tend not to talk very much about how a war should end. The dilemma the United States faces in getting out of Iraq and Afghanistan is an apt example of how difficult it is to work on conflict termination. Notwithstanding the ways and means of achieving it, the desired end state has to be termination of ongoing conflict. This demands that at least one party in conflict decides to abandon coercive behaviour and adopt some form of settlement strategy, through concessions and conciliation. An important characteristic of conflict termination is that it is basically a bilateral process, the main roles being played out directly by adversaries. It is interesting to note that while there are many unilateral declarations of war, but none of peace. It does take one party to make a war, but at least two to make a peace.
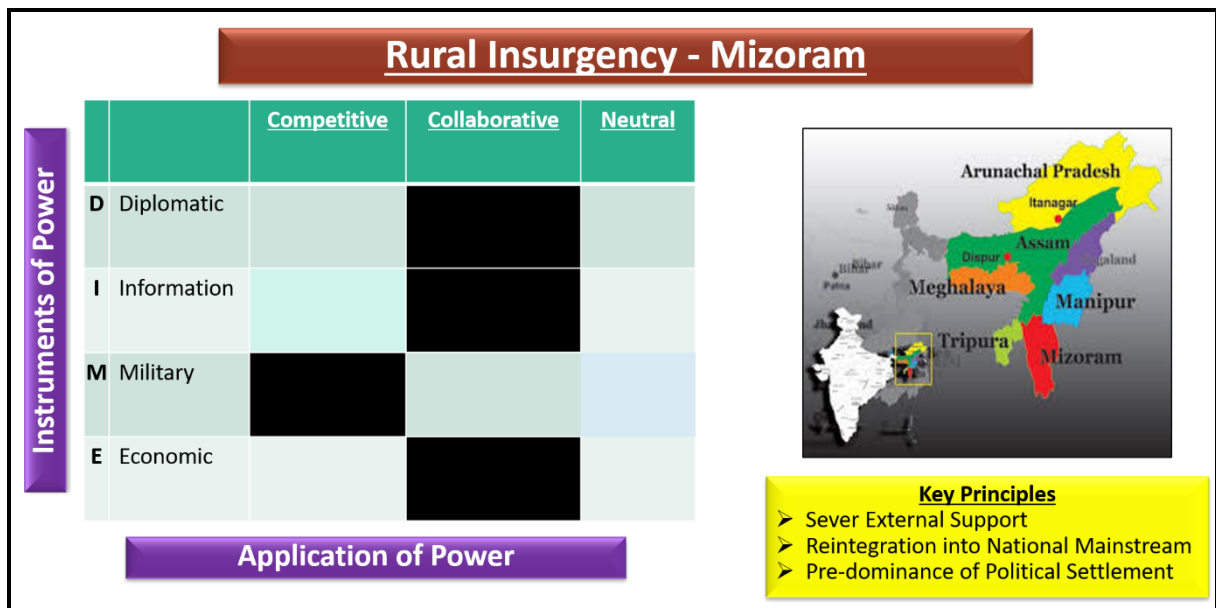
30.   **Case Study 4 – Conflict Termination**.

    (a) **Case Narrative**.

Conflict Situation	Conflict Background
Rural insurgency in the Indian state of Mizoram[20]	In 1959, Mizo Hills was devastated by a great famine known in Mizo history as 'Mautam Famine'. In this hour of darkness, many welfare organizationserupted to help starving villagers to facilitate supplies to the remote villages. Mizo National Famine Front (MNFF) was one such society formed in Sep 1960
	The MNFF dropped the word 'Famine' and a new political organisation, the Mizo National Front (MNF) was born on 22 Oct 1961 under the leadership of Laldenga with the specified goal of achieving sovereign independence of Greater Mizoram. Large scale disturbances broke out on 28 Feb1966
	While the MNF took to violence to secure its goal of establishing a sovereign land, other political forces in the hills of Assam were striving for a separate state. MNF was outlawed in 1967. The demand for statehood gained fresh momentum. A Mizo District Council delegation, which met then PM Mrs Indira Gandhi in May 1971, demanded a full-fledged state for the Mizos.The union govt on its own offered the proposal of turning Mizo Hills into a Union Territory in Jul 1971.The Mizo leaders were ready to accept the offer on condition that the status of UT would be upgraded to statehood sooner rather than later. The Union Territory of Mizoram came into being on 21 Jan1972. Mizoram got two seats in Parliament, one each in the Lok Sabha and in the Rajya Sabha
	Mizo Peace Accord was signed on 30 Jun 1986. The MNF cadres came out of their hiding and surrendered arms. The formalization of Mizoram State took place on 20Feb1987

Table 4-Case Narrative: Conflict Termination

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[20] Mizoram history accessible at https://mizoram.nic.in/about/history.htm

Fig 9: Case Analysis: Conflict Termination[21]

(b) **Case Analysis**. Refer Figure 9 above. Present day Mizoram is a model Indian state with a literacy rate only second to Kerala and GDP per capita twice that of Uttar Pradesh. It is the model of stability in a region rife with civil unrest and insurgency. It remains one of Independent India's few enduring successes at establishing peace following an outbreak of domestic rural insurgency duly supported by external forces to include China and Pakistan. Receiving arms, funding and training from China and Pakistan, the MNF launched a full-scale insurgency. The Indian govt's response was to launch a counter insurgency military operation against the Mizo National Army (MNA), driving its cadres across the border into then East Pakistan (Wangchuk 2018). Conflict Termination envisages full resolution of the dispute with minimised chances of return to conflict. In this context, Conflict Termination involves focus on "*conflict resolution that traditionally refers to measures attempting to resolve the underlying incompatibilities of the conflict, including attempts to get the parties to mutually accept each other's existence*" (Niklas L.P. Swanström 2005, 5-6). Towards resolution of a conflict, how does application of its instruments of power by a nation-state vary from being competitive, collaborative, or neutral. As is evident from Figure 5, all instruments of national power except **Military** have been applied in a collaborative manner. In this conflict, the Indian state, and the politico-military insurgent group of MNF/ MNA were the two principal actors. The competitive application of **Military** in this case ensured maintenance of requisite pressure by causing sufficient attrition to the armed component of the adversary, thereby creating favourable conditions

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for benign application of the **other instruments of national power**. This included Indian armed forces undertaking a swift and intense operation, securing all the major borders, and preventing any supplies from Myanmar and erstwhile East Pakistan. The MNF rebels were left scattered on either side of the border. Their leader Laldenga, meanwhile, escaped into exile in then East Pakistan until the defeat of Pakistani forces in the 1971 war. He subsequently moved to Pakistan and eventually London. On the other hand, the **other three instruments of power were** applied in a collaborative mode. Behind the scenes, negotiations with insurgents continued pursuing the goal of cessation of armed violence and a settlement along the contours of the Indian Constitution. The most striking feature of conflict resolution mechanism that brought about total conflict termination in this case was signing of the Mizo Peace Accord (Management 1986). How is this combination of application of instruments of national power achieved in this case? The fundamental principles, adherence to which enabled this, are that of severance of external support to the conflict, constitutional and legal steps for reintegration of the conflicting parties into national mainstream, and most significantly, the pre-dominance of a **political settlement**. Conflict termination is not possible without an enduring political settlement to the dispute. In this case, Govt of India agreed to, among other things, full statehood to Mizoram, constitutional protection for the Mizo customary law, religion and social practices, recognition of Mizo as an official Indian language and ownership of land. The MNF, meanwhile, agreed to cease all contact with other insurgent groups in the Northeast. It is believed that among all the peace accords that the Indian govt under PM Rajiv Gandhi signed viz, Punjab, Assam, Sri Lanka, it is the Mizo Peace Accord that has stood the test of time and the state of Mizoram has since treaded the path of development without looking back(Wangchuk 2018).

Conclusion

31.   It is evident from the discussions in the foregoing that military conflicts and war are not synonymous concepts. It is precisely this distinction that must be accurately discerned by both the national decision-making leadership and the strategic military executioners so that the most effective combination of application of various instruments of national power is made. Favourable control of conflict is contingent upon this understanding.

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