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STRATEGIC MANEUVERING, INTERNATIONAL OBJECTIVES AND HIDDEN AGENDA OF MODI GOVERNMENT AND PAKISTANI DEEP STATE UNDER WAR TENSION

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Nationalist Political Capital

Electoral Strategy: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), led by Narendra Modi, has heavily used nationalist sentiments to consolidate support. By positioning Pakistan as a threat, the Modi government has successfully mobilized voter support during election periods. Cross-border skirmishes, such as the Pulwama attack (2019), were followed by the Balakot airstrikes, both of which played a significant role in rallying the electorate by portraying Modi as a strong, decisive leader.

Diversion of Attention from Domestic Issues

Media Strategy: The heightened tensions often provide a distraction from domestic problems, such as unemployment, economic slowdown, and protests. This creates an environment where the government's foreign policy success overshadows internal dissent and issues.

Example: The Kisan Andolan (Farmer's Protests) against agricultural reforms in India gained little media traction when cross-border tensions with Pakistan increased, particularly

around the time of 2019 military strikes.

MODI GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGIC USE OF INDO-PAK TENSIONS

Increased Defence Budgets and Strategic Alliances

Strategic Leverage: The threat from Pakistan justifies increased defence budgets and strengthens India's relationship with global powers, notably the United States. Through partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region, India is seen as a counterbalance to China's growing influence. Defence deals and military modernization programs, such as the Rafale fighter jet deal with France, gain political legitimacy in the face of perceived Pakistani threats.

Control over Kashmir Narrative

National Security Agenda: Tension with Pakistan is used to justify policies in Kashmir. The revocation of Article 370 in 2019, which stripped Jammu and Kashmir of its special status, was framed as a national security measure in response to Pakistani-backed terrorism. Pakistan is portrayed as a source of instability in the region, enabling the government to legitimize its actions and portray Kashmir as a "domestic issue" rather than a disputed territory.

Pakistani Military Deep State's Strategic Use of Indo-Pak Tensions

Consolidating Control Over Civilian Government

Political Leverage: The military in Pakistan has historically used the narrative of a national security threat from India to maintain its dominance in national politics. The Pakistan Army wields immense control over foreign policy and security, often undermining civilian governments to retain a primary role in decision-making. Heightened tensions with India provide the military with justification for its interventions.

Economic Interests

Military-Run Businesses and Foreign Aid: Conflict with India ensures a steady flow of defense spending, which benefits the military's economic empire. The military runs large corporations such as the Fauji Foundation and Bahria Town, and continues to gain aid from countries like China and Gulf states under the premise of counterterrorism cooperation. This creates a win-win scenario for the military.

Sustaining Nationalist Rhetoric and Public Unity

Narrative Control: Pakistan's military uses anti-India rhetoric to foster national unity, portraying itself as the guardian of the country's sovereignty. The conflict narrative is used to legitimize the military's policies, silencing opposition, and justifying actions in Baluchistan and Kashmir. The "Kashmir cause" remains a core part of its ideological justification, fostering support from Islamist factions and public sentiment.

Maintaining Strategic Alliances

Geopolitical Leverage: By framing itself as the victim of Indian aggression, Pakistan ensures the continuation of strategic partnerships with countries like China, which provides both military and economic aid. Tensions with India allow Pakistan to position itself as a key player in regional security, thus entrenching its importance on the international stage.

Shared Benefits: Manufactured Conflict as a Strategic Tool

Factor	Modi Government (India)	Pakistan Military (Deep State)
Political Capital	Consolidating power through nationalism	Strengthening military control over civilian government
Distraction	Diverting attention from internal issues	Consolidating power by focusing on external threats
Economic Leverage	Defence spending, foreign arms deals	Economic empires, foreign military aid
Strategic Influence	Indo-Pacific partnerships, countering China	Strategic position in Gulf and China relations
Nationalism	Justifying actions in Kashmir	Legitimizing the military's role and ideology

Conclusion

Both the Modi government and Pakistan's military establishment benefit from perpetuating tensions with one another. These tensions offer political gains, economic benefits, and strategic leverage. For India, Pakistan is often used to foster a nationalist agenda, while for Pakistan, anti-India sentiment justifies military dominance and control over the civilian government. Both sides, while promising peace, continue to use the conflict narrative to serve their own internal and external interests.

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