
WAR OR PEACE: WHY INDIA'S RESPONSE MATTERS?

***AARCHI**

1. Introduction: The Crossroads of Provocation -

As we are aware of the fact, India is well known for its peaceful ways of solving crucial matters through treaties. The recent Pahalgam attack of 22 April 2025, in which 26 civilians died at Baisaran Valley in Jammu and Kashmir. Consequently, Operation Sindoor constituted a multi-domain, high-precision offensive spread across Pakistan's Punjab province and PoJK, signaling a strategic evolution in India's approach to cross-border terrorism. This step represents the strategic evolution of India's counter-terrorism doctrine. Of course, India is a pacificatory nation for its people first. Their safety and security are her priority. Let us have a look at Shrimad Bhagwat Geeta perspective on War and peace:

"Atha chetatvamimam dharmyam sangramam na karishyasi

Tatah sva-dharmam kirtim cha hitva paapamavapsyasi."

(But if you do not engage in this righteous battle, then, abandoning your own duty and honor, you will incur sin.) — Chapter 2, Verse 33¹

2. Historical Reflections: Lessons from Past Conflicts:

India has conducted at least ten major military operations in response to aggression or terrorism emanating from Pakistan, including Operation Trident (1971), Operation Vijay (1999), Operation Bandar (2019) and most recently, Operation Sindoor (2025).

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¹ Swami Mukundananda, 'BG 2.47: Chapter 2, Verse 47 – Bhagavad Gita, The Song of God – Swami Mukundananda' I "Atha chetatvamimam dharmyam sangramam na karishyasi Tatah sva-dharmam kirtim cha hitva paapamavapsyasi." (But if you do not engage in this righteous battle, then, abandoning your own duty and honor, you will incur sin.) — Chapter 2, Verse 33 <<https://www.holy-bhagavad-gita.org/chapter/2/verse/47/>> accessed 29 June 2025.

In 1947, India fought their **first Indo-Pak war**, during the war India responded with military deployment. Nevertheless, in 1949, the UN announced a ceasefire and the LOC- Line of Control formation. The conflict is still going on to date.

In 1965, Second Indo-Pak War, Pak launched Operation Gibraltar to conquer Kashmir. The ceasefire occurred through the Tashkent agreement. In 1971, India supported **the Bangladesh Liberation War**, 90,000 soldiers of Pakistani forces surrendered on December 16, 1971, and East Pakistan renamed as Bangladesh as the result.

In 1999, **Pakistani troops and militants infiltrated Kargil**. Operation Sindoor was launched by India to ensure nation's security. In 2016, after militants attacked its army base in **Uri**, India carried out retaliatory strikes on terrorist launch points in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. In 2019, After 40 CRPF personnel were killed in Pulwama, India conducted airstrikes on a Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) camp in Balakot, marking the first aerial attack inside Pakistan since 1971.

3. **Understanding Provocation: Strategic or Symbolic?**

India must realize that symbolic strikes won't stop a nuclear-armed enemy that uses terrorism as a cheap, strategic tool. India's **Operation Sindoor** is strategically showing that India is always prepared for war and protects her fellow citizens.

George Washington states

"To be prepared for war is one of the most effective means of preserving peace."²

This is the principle, which India follows. Our army forces do not have the feeling of hatred for the enemies but they love their compatriots first. Therefore, this is their mandatory duty to protect their people.

² 'George Washington: "To Be Prepared for War Is One of the Most Effective Means of Preserving Peace." — The Socratic Method' | 'To be prepared for war is one of the most effective means of preserving peace.' <<https://www.socratic-method.com/quote-meanings-and-interpretations/george-washington-to-be-prepared-for-war-is-one-of-the-most-effective-means-of-preserving-peace>> accessed 30 June 2025.

4. **Civilian Sentiments and National Identity**

Nowadays, Most of the people claim that India should not indulge in any kind of war. When you ask them why, they will simply say that India is a peace-promoting country. We will get nothing out of war. Instead, there will be loss of life for our fellow citizens as well. Yes, I agree they are right here. However, sometimes, war is not only to get something, instead, it is to save us from representing ourselves as brave and powerful.

5. **Strategic Depth: What the Future Demands**

Once **Chanakya pandit** said, Even if a snake is not poisonous, it should pretend to be venomous. In order to protect itself. One should behave in such a manner that one's enemy never underestimate their potential.

The creation of fear is a necessity for peaceful co-existence. Here, I would like to refer Bhagwat Geeta **Shloka 2.47**:

karmany-evādhikāras te mā phaleṣhu kadāchana
mā karma-phala-hetur bhūr mā te saṅgo 'stvakarmaṇi

You have a right to perform your prescribed duties, but you are not entitled to the fruits of your actions. Never consider yourself to be the cause of the results of your activities, nor be attached to inaction.³

This verse explains in the most beautiful way that you have to fulfill your given responsibilities but we should not be worried about the results. We can understand with an example from our daily life.

Assume that you are a student who has prepared your best for your exams. In this given scenario, you have an opportunity to prepare well enough to ace your exams but your results are in your hands. So,

³ ABP Live, 'Bhagwad Gita's War Wisdom — 10 Verses That Go Beyond The Battlefield' (7 May 2025) | karmany-evādhikāras te mā phaleṣhu kadāchana mā karma-phala-hetur bhūr mā te saṅgo 'stvakarmaṇi You have a right to perform your prescribed duties, but you are not entitled to the fruits of your actions. Never consider yourself to be the cause of the results of your activities, nor be attached to inaction. <<https://news.abplive.com/religion/bhagwad-gita-war-wisdom-in-10-verses-1770641>> accessed 29 June 2025.

one should focus on one's actions without being attached to its fruits. Here, you are well aware that the fruits will be proportionate to your actions. Hence, focus on your actions {roots}, not on the fruits.

Hato va prapsyasi swargam jitva va bhoksyase mahim

Tasmaaduttistha kaunteya yuddhaya krita-nischayah.

(If you are slain, you will attain heaven; if you conquer, you will enjoy the earth. Therefore, O Kaunteya (Arjuna), rise up with a firm resolve to fight!) — Chapter 2, Verse 37⁴

6. Conclusion: Reimagining Strength Beyond the Battlefield

"Akirtim chapi bhutani kathayishyanti te'vyayaam

Sambhavitasya chakirtirmaranadatirichyate"

(People will forever speak of your infamy, and for one who has been honoured, dishonour is worse than death.) — Chapter 2, Verse 34⁵

In case, our security forces do not ensure protection and security of their compatriots. Then, No one will appreciate them for promoting peace instead they will be treated as cowards. In addition, this dishonoring situation is even worse in death. The same lesson can learn through *Chapter 2, Verse 34* of Bhagwat Geeta as well. As Bhagwat Geeta explains one have to fight for the righteous, the same India follows. There is no doubt India always tries to upheld peace but along with that India has be accountable to her public as well.

⁴ ibid Hato va prapsyasi swargam jitva va bhoksyase mahim Tasmaaduttistha kaunteya yuddhaya krita-nischayah. (If you are slain, you will attain heaven; if you conquer, you will enjoy the earth. Therefore, O Kaunteya (Arjuna), rise up with a firm resolve to fight!) — Chapter 2, Verse 37.

⁵ ibid 'Akirtim chapi bhutani kathayishyanti te'vyayaam Sambhavitasya chakirtirmaranadatirichyate' (People will forever speak of your infamy, and for one who has been honoured, dishonour is worse than death.) — Chapter 2, Verse 34.