ARMS RACE AND
SOCIO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
SOUTH ASIAN PERSPECTIVE

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POVERTY STATUS OF SOUTH ASIA

South Asia accounts for 23% of globe’s population but it accommodates 40% of world’s poor.

77% of Indian Population lives on less than Rs.20/- (0.4 US$) per day (Aurjun Sen Gupta Commission report 2008)

According to a recent study 6.2 per cent of India’s population have fallen below the poverty line due to expenses incurred on health.

More than 40 per cent of the Indian population has to borrow or sell assets for treatment, according to the 2004 National Sample Survey Organisation.
### Human Development Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>HDI</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Life Expectancy</th>
<th>Adult Literacy</th>
<th>GDP per Capita</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>0.611</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>3,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>0.539</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>49.9</td>
<td>2,225</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The south Asian countries are at high risk for several diseases including bacterial diarrhoea, hepatitis A and E, typhoid fever, dengue fever, malaria, and cutaneous leishmaniasis.
Among all the BRICS nations, India’s share of public expenditure in the total health expenditure is the lowest. While the yearly average between 2004 and 2009 for BRICS nations as a whole is 2.4 per cent, in India it was a meagre 1.3 per cent. This difference in spending is even more daunting against the background of growth rate of population during the period which was 1.36 per cent for India, but only 0.7 per cent for the BRICS group as a whole.

Hovering around 1% of GDP, India’s public spending on health is one of the lowest in the world.
India ranks number one in the arms import in the world.

India imports 12% of global arms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Arms Imports</th>
<th>Ranks</th>
<th>Per Capita</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>%age of GDP (per $1000)</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>$2.375 billion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.199</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>0.716</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>$344 million</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.118</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BOTH INDIA AND PAKISTAN HAVE HUGE ARSENAL

### Number of Arms In India and Pakistan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of Privately Owned Firearms</th>
<th>Number of Registered Firearms</th>
<th>Estimated Number of Illicit Firearms</th>
<th>Rate of Civilian Firearm Possession per 100 Population</th>
<th>Number of Military Firearms</th>
<th>Number of Law Enforcement Firearms with Police</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>40,000,000</td>
<td>6,300,000</td>
<td>33,700,000</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>5,704,0005</td>
<td>1,900,0006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>18,000,000</td>
<td>7,000,000</td>
<td>11,000,000</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>2,922,5005</td>
<td>460,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SMALL ARMS VIOLENCE HAS CAUSED INNUMERABLE LOSS OF LIFE

Fatalities in terrorists related violence in the state of Punjab in India 1981-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Civilians</th>
<th>Terrorists</th>
<th>Security forces</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>11696</td>
<td>8090</td>
<td>1746</td>
<td>21532</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Deaths in last 21 years of armed violence in Jammu and Kashmir

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Militants</th>
<th>civilians killed by militants</th>
<th>civilians killed by security forces</th>
<th>policemen killed by militants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>43,460</td>
<td>21,323</td>
<td>13,226</td>
<td>3,642</td>
<td>5,369</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Fatalities in Terrorist Violence in Pakistan 2003-2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Civilians</th>
<th>Security Force Personnel</th>
<th>Terrorists/Insurgents</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16430</td>
<td>5074</td>
<td>26092</td>
<td>47596</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SRI LANKA**
The civil war in Sri Lanka for quarter of a century, claimed around 130,000 lives. The UN estimates that 40,000 civilians alone died in the five months before the war's end in May 2009.

**NEPAL**
Nepal reports a violent death rate of 6.2 per 100,000 in an average year between 2004 and 2009.
Human rights violations

Human rights violations by security forces and by the non state actors are rampant. Killing of innocent people, rape and other heinous crimes have been reported in the Kashmir valley.

The terrorist groups indulged in crime against women in Punjab in the form of forced marriages at gun point.

They silence first the people from their own community so that no one speaks to defend the victims of their crime. Political opposition was targeted in a way that barring a few progressive groups most of the opposition parties preferred to close their eyes. The victims were branded as informers so that no one sympathizes with them.
**Displacement**
During war with Pakistan people were forced to shift to the refugee camps where despite best efforts people could not be provided with basic amenities. In recent ethnic violence in the state of Assam in north eastern part of India, it was difficult to provide health care to people even in the refugee camps because of fear of onslaught by the opposite groups.

**Criminalization of politics**
Use of arms is steadily increasing to achieve political ends thus weakening the democratic institutions.
Women And Children Are Used To Indulge In Arms
Women and children are worst sufferers. They have to wait for the men who have gone out to work and in such violent situations may never come back.
Mistrust in the society increases under such situations even among the people of same community or ethnic groups.

Hopelessness, Apathy and Stress disorder are common.
Slowing down of economic activity
Activities close down early so the growth and development opportunities suffer.
FACTORS WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO INCREASE IN ARMED VIOLENCE IN THE REGION

Unfriendly Relations Between Neighbours
India and Pakistan have fought four wars - 1948, 1965, 1971 and 1998. In addition there have been intermittent violent conflicts at the border. In the year 1998-99 after terrorist attack on Indian Parliament 130,000 soldiers on both sides stood face to face each other in a high red alert.

Fundamentalism
Fundamentalist forces on both sides want to continue situation of perpetual tension for their narrow political ends. Possession of arms with the non state actors scuttle peace initiatives by the governments and peace groups.
External Intervention
Continued external intervention by the big powers since decades has worsened the situation. These powers do not want the region to be in peace as this will reduce their sale of arms.

Arms sale is associated with many economic scandals.

Uneven Economic Development
Poor and uneven economic development in the countries and in different parts of each of the country contributes to the violence and use of arms as many forces utilize this scenario.

Rising economic gaps in the population has further aggravated the situation. These gaps have increased under the neoliberal economic policies being pursued by the governments.

There is violence both for greed, need and desperation.
**Political instability**
Unstable political situation leads to increase in the violence and use of small arms. Poor governance in this situation further worsens the condition.

Criminals take advantage. Patronage to the drug cartels by some higher ups in the government gives them free hands to use arms.
PRIORITIES FOR SOUTH ASIA

• Develop mutual trust between nations
• Divert funds from arms race to development
• Increased spending on Health and Education
• Clean Drinking Water and Sanitation Facilities
• Food Security
• Gender Equality
• Economic policies to ensure inclusive Growth
Violence is not our culture
References
Small arms survey 2001  A Project of the Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva

Peace & Conflict Review Volume 2, Issue 1 ISSN: 1659-3995, Socio-Economic Impact of Arms Transfers to Developing Countries Ajit Singh


http://www.gunpolicy.org/