

IS KASHMIR (OR ANYTHING) REALLY WORTH 100 MILLION IMMEDIATE CASUALTIES AND CATASTROP

Written by John Hallam

Monday, 07 October 2019 13:35 - Last Updated Monday, 07 October 2019 13:35

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https://www.facebook.com/Human-Survival-Project-388802504634024/?eid=ARBbjb6dyGcogx_mAjgpjRpx5JWx9VLx3vs-Br8SPa8pATm9jtDCWUY0QbGtNgp81aEXXK14EDw5WrvQ

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IS KASHMIR (OR ANYTHING) REALLY WORTH 100 MILLION IMMEDIATE CASUALTIES AND CATASTROPHIC GLOBAL CLIMATIC IMPACTS?

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With recently released scientific climate modelling

(<https://advances.sciencemag.org/content/5/10/eaay5478>)

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indicating that a war between India and Pakistan involving between 150 and 200 warheads each could cause up to 100 million immediate (prompt) casualties, and cause global climatic impacts, the question has to be asked:

'What, if indeed anything at all, could possibly be worth the cost of that, and of the complete and utter destruction of both India and Pakistan as functioning societies?

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And the answer is clear: **Nothing whatsoever, no rational human, political, or indeed religious goal** (unless perversely propelled by a real desire to initiate the destruction of everything and everybody) **, could possibly be worth that cost.**

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And those of us (most of us hopefully) who emphatically do NOT share the goal of the destruction of everyone and everything, will rightly see those who are prepared to bring about, or even to risk, the complete destruction of everyone and everything, as diabolical as people who far from being elected to office or worse still actually put in charge of the very means of universal destruction, - ought to be locked up far from the possibility of doing damage, or if free, to be shunned by everyone.

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Unfortunately that has not happened. Utterances and behaviour by **both** sides in this futile standoff have suggested that each side is at least prepared to RISK a catastrophe that not only will destroy both nations, but that will have global climatic effects (you might call it 'nuclear winter lite', except it is not very 'lite'), that affect food production worldwide, not to mention

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risking the destruction of the ozone layer. There has been a competition of macho chest-beating and threats of 'befitting responses' by both sides – almost mirroring each other- that drags us toward the abyss. This kind of talk is extremely dangerous and must stop forthwith.

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Let us be clear. What the recent study by Toon, Robock, Kristensen and others makes clear is that:

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--even a so-called 'limited' nuclear war is unlikely to stay 'limited'. This means it is most likely to escalate into the use of a large proportion of Indian and Pakistani nuclear weapons. Escalation is unlikely to be controllable or able to be limited.

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--The immediate (prompt) casualty numbers for such an exchange, involving the targeting of cities, is likely to be around 100 million. (in fact higher estimates do exist, up to 200-250 million prompt casualties). (It is this authors contention that these estimates are more likely to be UNDER estimates than to be over- estimates.)

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--Studies by amongst others, Dr Ira Helfand of ICAN, suggest that the smoke from burning cities could create global climatic effects by blotting out the sun, whose impact would create up to a further 2 billion deaths from starvation over the next decade.

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In fact none of this is particularly new. Studies have been around for the past decade indicating that even a 'relatively small' India-Pakistan nuclear war would have these catastrophic impacts. The most recent study merely underlines and makes more certain, that these hypothesised impacts are indeed real.

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But this study comes at a time of unprecedented tension between India and Pakistan, and at a time when talk of nuclear war between the two is almost daily.

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And when viewed in the light of the recent study, a moral question is raised:

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What if any, rational political goal could possibly justify such catastrophic costs, or the mere risk of such costs?ÂÂ

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And who but madmen unfit for public office would dare to justify such risks?ÂÂ

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Indians and Pakistanis (or at least, policymakers and military planners) must read this study, learn and inwardly digest. Prime ministers should read it.

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And immediate measures should be taken to take nuclear war on the subcontinent permanently off the agenda forever, starting with the reinforcement of India's policy of No First Use, and^^ a range of sensible risk reduction and confidence building measures, so that catastrophe is more than one terrorist incident and one silly miscalculation away.

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