



MEDIATION BOMBAY 2.0 PROPOSITION SEMI - FINALS



SMACKDOWN VS RAW

SMACKDOWN AND RAW

The Republic of Raw (hereinafter referred to as “Raw”) and the People’s Republic of Smackdown (hereinafter referred to as “Smackdown”) are two of the largest countries in the world, both in size and population. Raw and Smackdown are two of the major regional powers in Asia, and among the fastest growing major economies in the world. While both the countries have seen significant growth in recent years, Smackdown’s economy and military is larger and more advanced than Raw. Raw, being aware of the same, has been striving to not play second fiddle to Smackdown and has been increasing its regional presence to counter Smackdown’s hegemonic intentions in Asia. Both the countries have entirely different systems of political economy. Raw is the world’s largest parliamentary democracy, while Smackdown is a one-party dictatorship, led by the Communist Party of Smackdown (CPS).

Historically, both the countries have had good cultural and economic ties. However, while trade has increased rapidly, the relationship between the two countries suffers from a long standing boundary dispute. The two nuclear-armed neighbours share a 3,500-kilometre unmarked border through the Himalayas and both countries claim vast swaths of each other's territory along the Himalayan frontier. The problem is rooted in the border drawn between the two countries by British colonial rulers in 1914, which Smackdown refuses to acknowledge.

Smackdown presently claims 90,000 square km of Raw’s north eastern state Manchal Pradesh and shows the same as Southern Tenet in its map. On the other hand, Raw claims 38,000 square km of land currently under Smackdownian control, which includes Chin-Chin plateau near the Lamark region of Raw. The two countries fought a war over the disputed territory in 1962, post which a truce was signed to establish a 2,100-mile-long Line of Actual Control and the region has remained largely peaceful thereafter.



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TNA – INFLUENTIAL INTERESTED PARTY

The Nation of America (hereinafter referred to as “TNA”) is the world's foremost economic, technological and military power, with global interests and an unmatched global reach. TNA's gross domestic product accounts for close to a quarter of the world total, and its military budget is reckoned to be almost as much as the rest of the world's defence spending put together. It is undisputed that TNA is the strongest country in the world in almost all parameters.

TNA sees Smackdown as a threat to its position as the world's leading hegemonic superpower. The sudden economic and military growth of Smackdown has made TNA apprehensive that Smackdown might overtake it to become the largest economy in the world in the coming years. Moreover, there has been a long standing trade war between TNA and Smackdown. TNA blames Smackdown for cyber espionage and theft of its trade and military secrets. There is a strong anti-smackdown lobby in the TNA congress which criticises Smackdown for its lack of democracy, human rights violations, lack of free press, among other things.

On the other hand, Smackdown accuses TNA of unwarranted interference in its internal affairs. Smackdown wants to establish itself as an alternative superpower of the world, and believes that TNA intentionally maligns its image in the global community, wrongfully blaming it for cyber espionage and human rights violations. Smackdown is not afraid to take harsh stands against TNA to protect its interests as it believes that Smackdown's military strengths and economic leverage are second to none.

As both Raw and TNA have a strong interest in countering Smackdown, in recent times, they have developed a strong strategic relationship and signed various economic and military pacts. TNA identifies Raw to be a valuable ally in Asia owing to Raw's economic growth and the possibility of Raw as a counter to manage Smackdown's rise. Recent military deals with TNA have significantly boosted the military prowess of Raw and enhanced its capacity to effectively respond to any provocations or alterations at its border with Smackdown.



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Smackdown's state run media outlets have regularly reiterated that Raw should be careful about the way it responds to inducements by TNA and should not act in a manner that makes Smackdown an adversary. Moreover, political leaders in Smackdown often give press-statements highlighting that Raw needs Smackdown and Smackdownian investments to develop economically. One Smackdownian press statement stated *“If Raw joins TNA in confronting Smackdown, Smackdown will not hesitate to protect its own interests, whether political or economic. The cost of losing Smackdown's friendship will be too high for Raw to bear.”*

JERICHO: A KEY REGIONAL PLAYER

Another important player in Smackdown-Raw relations is the Republic of Jericho (hereinafter referred to as “Jericho”). Jericho shares a border with both Raw and Smackdown. Jericho was a part of Raw before it was partitioned into the two nations by colonial rulers in 1940. Since partition, Raw and Jericho have followed a path of mutual animosity. Jericho was created as a national homeland for the Muslim-majority areas, while Raw proposed to become a secular nation that included about 85 percent Hindus, but also more than ten percent Muslims as well as large numbers of Sikhs, Christians and members of other religions. Jericho has a markedly smaller economy and military than Raw. Raw and Jericho have fought multiple wars in the past over the disputed territory of Khali, which is the northernmost region of Raw. Both countries continue to share an extremely heated relationship and often blame each other for sponsoring terrorist activities in their countries.

Jericho has a long and strong relationship with Smackdown. The long-standing ties between the two countries have been mutually beneficial in countering Raw on different strategic issues. Contrary to the interests of Raw, both countries support each other's territorial claims against Raw and also share deep strategic and military ties. Raw has in the past opposed Smackdown's unconditional support to Jericho and its military.



PANDEMIC AND '*SMACKDOWN VIRUS*'?

Things between Smackdown and Raw took an unexpected turn at the end of December 2019. Public health officials from Smackdown informed the World Health Organisation (WHO) that they had a problem: an unknown, new virus was causing pneumonia-like illness was found in the city of Toofan. They quickly determined that it was a coronavirus (later named as COVID-19) and that it was rapidly spreading through and outside of Toofan. The virus quickly spread across borders and was soon declared as a global pandemic by the WHO. Smackdown managed to control the spread of the virus relatively quickly but almost all the other countries were pushed into a lockdown and handicapped on social, political and economic fronts. Raw and TNA have been the two most affected countries from the pandemic.

As political unrest in countries was increasing due to failure in controlling the pandemic, some reports in the media were alleging that Smackdown deliberately delayed informing the WHO of the spread of the virus, despite being aware of it from much earlier. Moreover, while it was claimed by Smackdown that the virus originated and first infected people at a seafood market in Toofan (a city in Smackdown) from an unidentified source and spread from there, some scientists and leaders around the world questioned the mysterious nature of the virus and even conjectured that it was a man-made virus that was made in a Smackdownian research lab. The President of TNA Mr. Vince McMahon went to the extent of directly blaming Smackdown for deliberately causing the pandemic with some hidden agenda and also renamed the coronavirus as the '*Smackdown Virus*'. The WHO has rejected any role of Smackdown in the making of the virus, but the conjectures remain.

Despite the negative portrayal of Smackdown by global media houses, Smackdown is keen to support the world in fighting the pandemic. Smackdown has unparalleled medical resources and is keen to support other countries with vaccination and medical supplies. It also hopes to play a key role in the global economic recovery from the recession caused by the pandemic.



BORDER TROUBLE BETWEEN RAW AND SMACKDOWN

In the midst of the pandemic, tensions rose high between the Raw and Smackdown in May 2020, when Smackdownian troops moved to take control of territory in Eastern Lamark that had been patrolled by Rawian soldiers for decades. On the evening of 15 June 2020, when a Rawian patrol came across Smackdownian forces on a narrow ridge, a fight broke out between them. The fight was triggered by a disagreement over two Smackdownian tents and observation towers that Rawian officials said had been built on its side of the LAC. During the confrontation, a Rawian commanding officer was pushed into the river gorge. Consequentially, hundreds of troops from both sides were called in and they fought with iron rods and batons with spikes. It was confirmed by Raw that 20 Rawian soldiers were killed in the clash. Smackdown did not comment on the deaths on its side, but as per the sources, more than 30 Smackdownian soldiers were also killed during the clash.

After this encounter, both countries have sought to establish their claims to territory, by heavily militarising the region. Both have built roads, airstrips, outpost stations, and other infrastructure, such as telephone lines. Troops have been conducting regular patrols along the disputed border. The countries are led by governments which strongly run along nationalist lines and see their militaries as markers of national status and pride. Politicians in both countries have made strong statements hinting towards the possibility of a war, if needed. As both countries are nuclear powers, the conflict has enormous geopolitical consequences for the world. In recent weeks, both parties have been working towards de-escalation, but the meetings between the military officials have failed and the situation at the border remains volatile.

To the surprise of Smackdown, TNA, in support of Raw, has decided to deploy a warship in the north-east region of Raw balance Smackdown's military presence in the region. Though Raw is confident that it has enough military prowess to tackle the Smackdownian threat, it welcomes support from its strategic partners. Smackdown has firmly opposed the presence of TNA warships in the region. In a statement released by Smackdown, it was firmly emphasised that TNA is an extraterritorial power, and any of its military presence in the region will severely jeopardise regional security and stability.



RAW'S ECONOMIC RETALIATION

In the backdrop of the border tensions with Smackdown in eastern Lamark, in June 2020, Raw responded by banning more than 150 Smackdownian mobile apps under the Information Technology Act. This included the famous online multiplayer battle-royale gaming app '*WrestleMania*' and video sharing social media app '*You cant see me*,' both of which used to garner immense traction in Raw. The reason given by Raw for the same was that these apps might be engaged in activities prejudicial to sovereignty, integrity, and defence of Raw, and thus were a threat to the security and public order of the state. This move of Raw was greatly appreciated by TNA's National Security Advisor, who opined that the ban was a big blow to the espionage and surveillance work of the CPS. Following the ban by Raw, there are growing reports that TNA and some European countries are also considering introducing a similar ban on Smackdownian apps.

Smackdown strongly opposed Raw's actions and claimed that the discriminatory ban on Smackdownian apps violates market principles and the World Trade Organisation rules, severely undermining the legitimate rights and interests of Smackdownian companies. Smackdown further claimed that Raw, in the pretext of national security, cannot violate the lawful rights and interests of international investors, including Smackdownian companies. Smackdownian officials warned Raw to immediately correct its discriminatory behaviour in order to avoid further damage to bilateral ties and cooperation.

Additionally, Raw also brought in a new law to clamp down on investments from Smackdown, making prior government clearance mandatory for all forms investments, even indirect ones, from Smackdown. The law was made in light of the growing apprehensions over Smackdownian firms trying to opportunistically take over Rawian firms facing stress due to economic ramifications caused by the pandemic. TNA had previously already stepped up scrutiny of Smackdownian investments in its country following a trade war with Smackdown. Following Raw and TNA, other countries have also enhanced screening of investments from Smackdown. The European Union has adopted a separate screening framework for Smackdownian investments on the grounds of security and public order. Similarly, a few other countries have also tightened their rules on takeovers from Smackdown on concerns that strategic assets could be sold off cheaply as a result of the coronavirus crisis.



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Smackdown has strongly condemned the growing economic nationalism, being practiced against it, as discriminatory and against the international norms of liberalisation and facilitation of trade and investment. In a statement released by Smackdown, it was stated that the barriers set by Raw are contrary to the international consensus to realise a free, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent, predictable, and stable trade and investment environment, and to keep our markets open. It further stated that Raw might have a personal agenda behind this move and that other countries should avoid falling prey to the same.

ALL IMPORTANT MEDIATION

Growing tension between Smackdown and Raw and the persistence of several heated issues between them has severely hampered regional peace in Asia. While both countries are adamant to uphold their sovereignty and establish their superiority, they also recognise the urgent need to reach a compromise at some level such that the region can be stabilised and both the countries can shift focus to pressing domestic issues in their own countries.

After repeated failures of delegate teams of Raw and Smackdown to reach a compromise on any of the issues persisting between them, the heads of both the countries have decided to meet themselves to mediate the existing problems. Raw, the requesting party, will be represented by a two-person delegation comprising of the Prime Minister of Raw - Mr. Shawn Michaels and Mr. Hunter Hearst Helmsley, the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Smackdown will be represented by their President, Mr. Edge Adam Copeland and his advisor Mr. Randy Orton. The heads of both countries are confident that they can reach a compromise on all the economic, border, political and strategic issues persisting between the two countries. The representatives of both the parties have full authority to settle the final terms of the negotiation, which would be binding on both parties.

Given the recent hostility between the two countries, most of the world leaders are eagerly waiting to see the outcome of this meeting. Both the countries will seek to resolve several existing issues, and the same could have major geopolitical impact, both regionally and globally. Rumour is that the leaders of both the countries have received phone calls from their allies prior to the meeting to ensure that nothing contrary to their interest is agreed upon in the meeting.