



CENTRE for AEROSPACE & SECURITY STUDIES

INDIA'S HYBRID WARFARE AGAINST PAKISTAN: CHALLENGES & RESPONSE OPTIONS

ISSUE PAPER 2

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Edited by Sarah Siddiq Aneel

© Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies

June 2021

ISBN 978-969-2298-01-8

e-ISBN 978-969-2298-02-5

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■ **INDIA'S HYBRID WARFARE AGAINST PAKISTAN:
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Air Marshal (Retd) M. Ashfaque Arain

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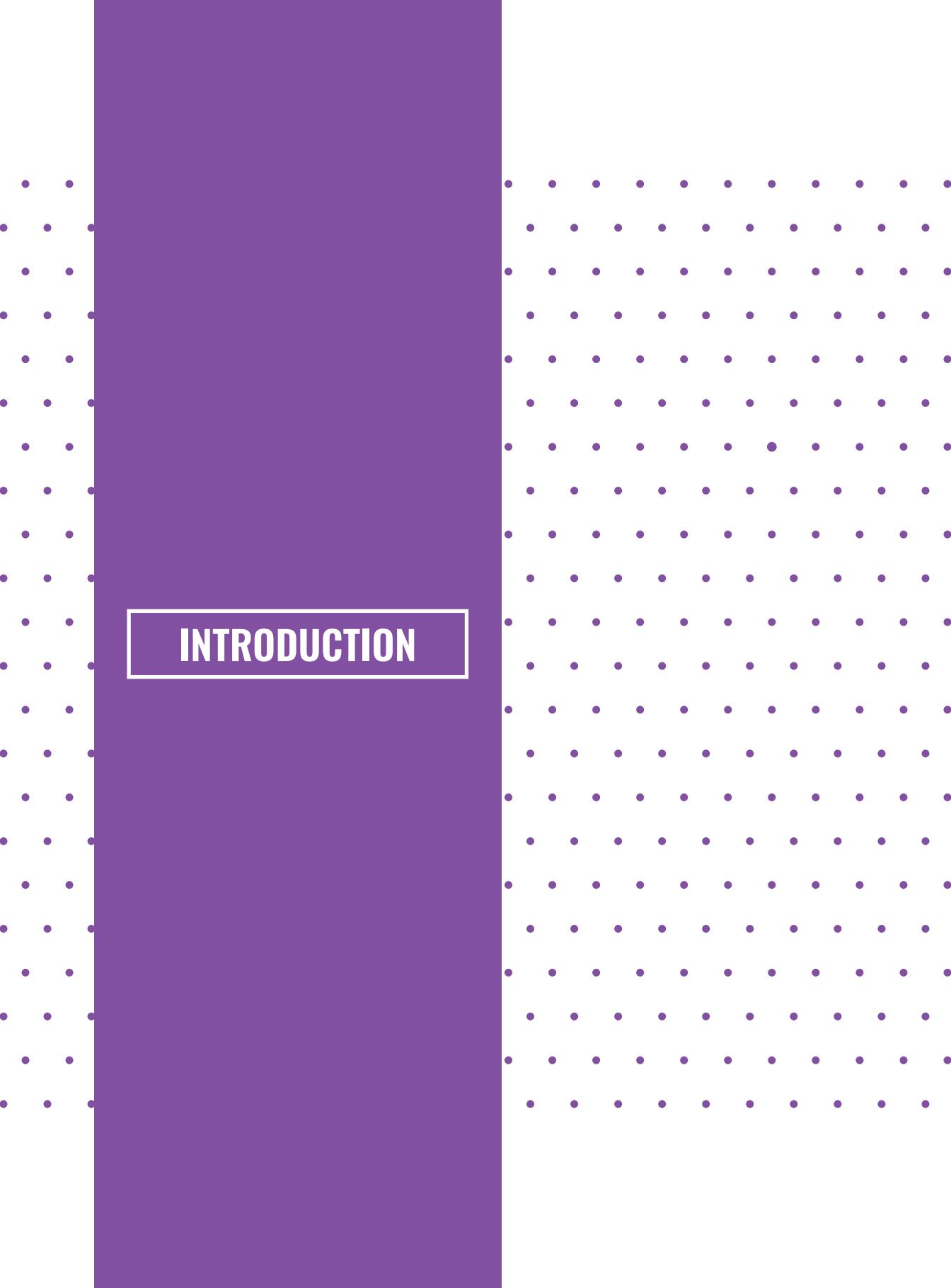
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Abstract

In modern times, “Hybrid Warfare” has evolved as the most formidable and viable strategy to attain a state’s national objectives with simultaneous use of kinetic and non-kinetic means. This type of warfare builds on the concurrent employment of various centers of power, usually led by intelligence agencies to exploit an adversary’s crucial vulnerabilities in economic, diplomatic, political, and social domains. Employment of asymmetrical forces and unusual methods help bring synergy in producing desired effects. The use of kinetic means with subversive activities also enables the aggressor to avoid blame and consequent retribution. For these reasons, hybrid warfare is a good example of “the whole being greater than the sum of its parts.” Modern means of mass communications have greatly enhanced the success of such warfare. The complexity of such warfare as well as its flexible nature necessitates an equally adaptable and well considered response. Pakistan, being a frequent casualty of India’s hybrid war with ever-increasing intensity and effects, needs to understand the threat and formulate a national strategy to counter it.



INTRODUCTION

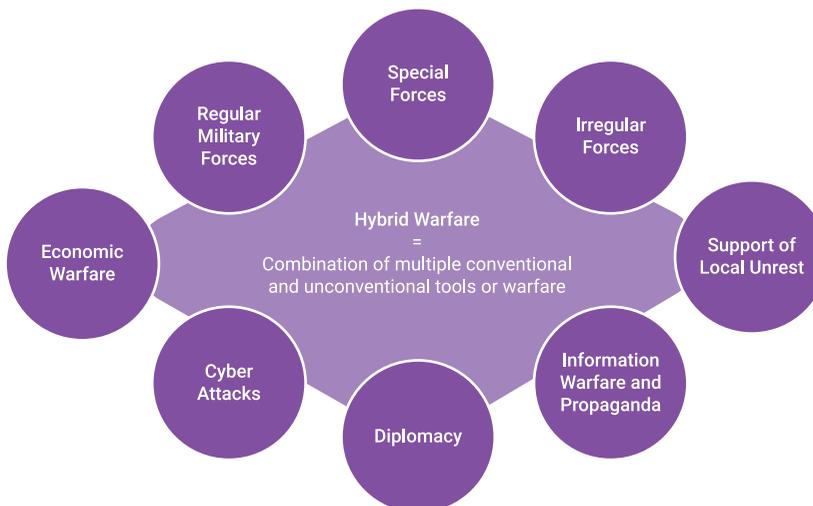
Introduction

The ever-increasing cost of resources, material, especially human life in technology-dependent modern wars has brought hybrid warfare to the forefront as the best means to achieve a state's national objectives with the innovative and concurrent employment of kinetic and non-kinetic means. Despite being an old concept, technological advancements have given new impetus to this type of warfare making it more effective and practical. Hybrid warfare relies on well-coordinated employment of various power centers against enemy weaknesses in diplomatic, economic, political, and societal domains. Such operations are usually led by intelligence agencies, with varying tempo, intensity, and timelines. The use of unconventional warfare, irregular forces and unusual approaches bring synergy to the overall impact.

This type of warfare is aimed at destabilizing, demoralizing, and disintegrating the adversary. The combination of various techniques and means make hybrid warfare different from other modes of combat. The mix of subversive efforts with kinetic means also helps the aggressor avoid attribution or response.

The important components of hybrid warfare comprise of information, economic and cyber attacks as well as proxy warfare, terrorist activities, propaganda, diplomatic and political coercion (see Figure 1). These elements can be applied piecemeal or in various combinations. Additionally, the intensity of each element can be manipulated based on the evolving situational requirements.

Figure 1: Components of Hybrid Warfare



Although pressure may be applied across the complete spectrum of a conflict, perpetrators of hybrid warfare compartmentalize the constituent components to weaken the adversary's ability to establish linkages, in an endeavor to avoid attribution and legal consequences. In this way, the perpetrators benefit from the gap between the adaptation of law and rapid growth of technology as well as social media tools - both of which are capitalized upon in cyber warfare. They also endeavor to create ambiguity to hide the true on-ground situation to create uncertainty between those who want war and those striving for peace. As a consequence, military response to such threats becomes increasingly difficult because of legitimacy issues due to legal and jurisdictional concerns.

For decades, India has been waging hybrid war against Pakistan with ever-increasing intensity and changing modalities. In this regard, India has been exploiting Pakistan's vulnerabilities such as poor economy, ethnic and sectarian divide, identity conflict, failures in governance, under-developed state institutions and fragile political system.

As part of its hybrid warfare strategy, India trained, facilitated, funded, and supported the Mukti Bahini which led to the creation of Bangladesh. Additionally, India was instrumental in hatching of Agartala conspiracy and state managed Ganga airliner hijacking to deny overflight rights to Pakistan's aircraft before the 1971 War. More recently, India has been funding, training, and providing support to Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), Baloch separatist groups and has repeatedly been found complicit in acts of terrorism in Balochistan and Sindh.

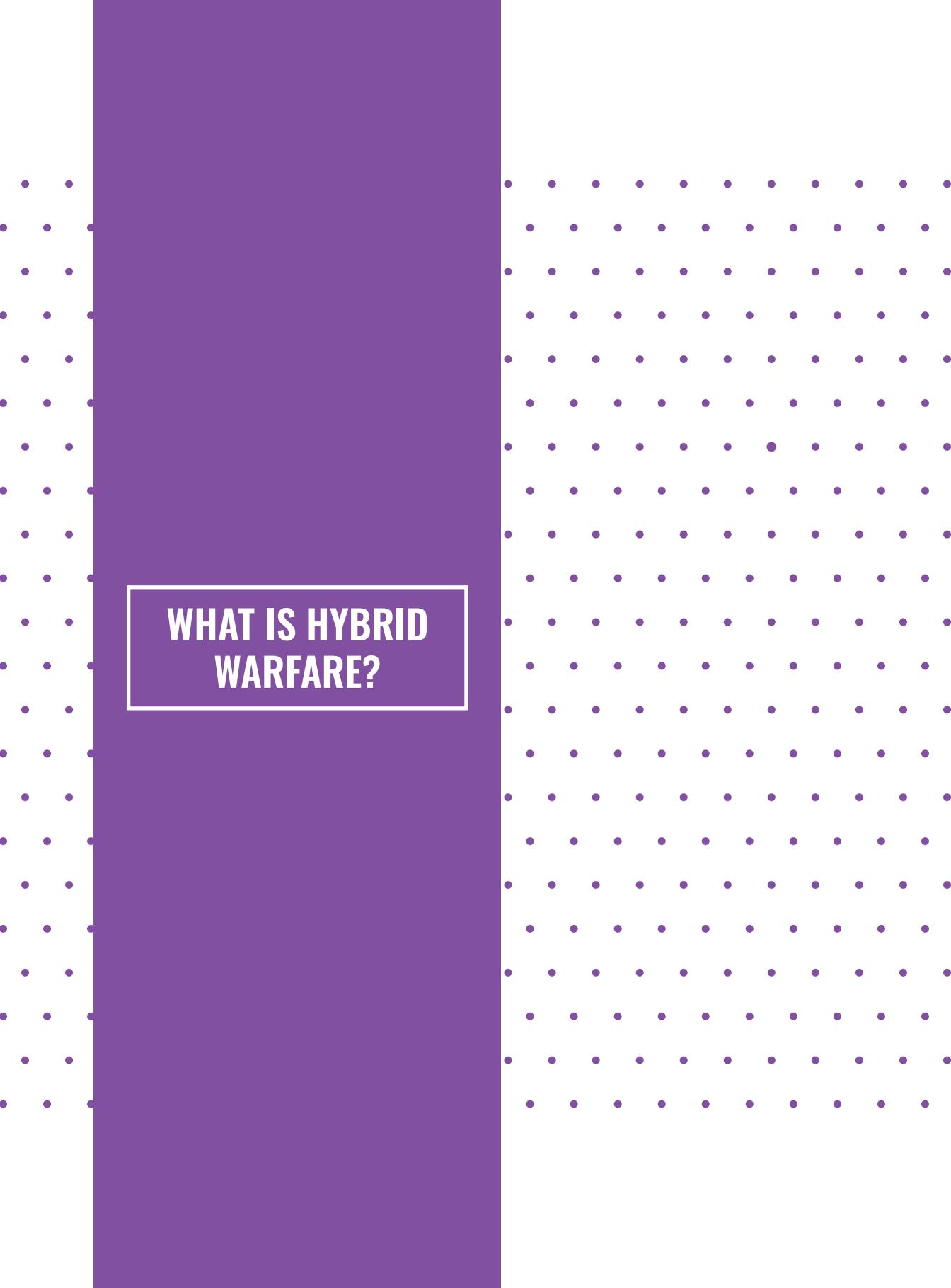
Other Indian acts include hydro warfare in the form of violations of the Indus Waters Treaty, attempting political coercion through military force deployments, corrupting, and influencing international organizations such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), undertaking relentless information warfare and propaganda. In addition to creating internal problems, these Indian actions have also tarnished Pakistan's image internationally.

Since hybrid warfare has serious implications for Pakistan's national security with impact on economic development, political stability, and social cohesion, it is extremely important to understand its dynamics as well as implications to introduce policies and remedial measures against external forces and their local collaborators at the government and institutional levels. Concurrently, defense forces must formulate strategies in sync with the national policy to effectively counter such threats in the relevant areas.

Policy formulation must be aimed at protecting national interests, safeguarding state stability with due cognizance of the changing geopolitical landscape. There is, therefore, a need to:

- strengthen economic development;
- enhance ethnic, religious, interprovincial coherence;
- restructure the education system; and,
- re-evaluate Pakistan's foreign policy.

This would also necessitate creating awareness at the political leadership and public level about the evolving threats the country faces. In this regard, media, academia, civil society, and think-tanks should also work with the government to explore feasible legal options and develop a broad-based national narrative.



WHAT IS HYBRID WARFARE?

What is Hybrid Warfare?

War has been a part of mankind's existence from ancient civilizations, albeit with differing techniques and varying effects. The destruction caused by the nuclear attack on two Japanese cities Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6 and 9 August 1945, forced nations to aspire for similar capability. Acquisition of nuclear weapons increased the cost of conventional warfare exponentially, forcing major world powers to avoid direct military conflict as an instrument to achieve their strategic goals. Nuclear deterrence averted military conflicts but did not lessen interstate rivalry. As a consequence, "Hybrid Warfare" was born to attain geostrategic interests without resorting to kinetic means with a possibility of escalating to nuclear exchange. Granted this is not a new concept as military strategists in the past have been using its varied elements to support their military apparatus to achieve assured victory with minimal losses. However, in the contemporary era, modern technologies have made this type of warfare more practical and cost-effective.

In fact, because of its clandestine and cost-effective nature, hybrid warfare is no longer an exclusive tool in the basket of big powers alone, it is now being applied by middle powers, through state as well as non-state actors (NSAs) alike. It has become the preferred "go-to option" for most states, as its calibrated application helps avoid attribution, especially when obvious military action cannot be taken for various legal constraints.

Important Definitions through the Chinese, American, Russian, UK & EU Lens

The Cambridge Dictionary defines the term "hybrid" as "a plant or animal that has been produced from two different types of plants or animals, especially to get better characteristics" and defines "hybrid warfare" as "the use of a range of different methods to attack an enemy, for example, the spreading of false information, or attacking important computer systems, as well as or instead of, traditional military action."

However, in the military and academic literature, the term "hybrid warfare" initially referred to irregular forces or NSAs possessing advanced military capabilities. In the 2006 Lebanon-Israel War, Hezbollah being a weaker adversary, used multiple means and tactics such as innovative use of technology, guerilla warfare, and highly effective information campaigns to balance the scales given asymmetry in physical forces. After the War, in 2007, an American defense analyst Frank Hoffman used the terms "hybrid warfare" and "hybrid threat" to define employment

of multiple, diverse tactics concurrently against an opponent.¹ Presently, there is neither a universally accepted term nor definition of “hybrid warfare”, leading to various terms and definitions used to explain the concept. These include “hybrid threats”, “hybrid war”, “hybrid adversary”, “hybrid influencing”, “special war”, “non-traditional war” as well as “non-linear war.”

While US military organizations use the terms “hybrid threat”, academia usually uses the phrase “hybrid warfare.” US and Chinese academia and practitioners also use the words “grey zone” and “unrestricted warfare” respectively, to describe the concept.

Since such operations do not clearly violate the acceptable threshold of war because of ambiguity in international law, actions of the aggressor and inability of attribution due to lack of evidence; or because the activities do not justify a response, the term “grey zone warfare” is often used.² A 1999 study called “Unrestricted Warfare”, undertaken by two Chinese officers, argued that war itself had changed into a phenomenon where the Clausewitzian principle of use of armed forces to compel the adversary to submit to one’s will was no longer applicable. Instead, the new principle now suggests “using all means, including armed force or non-armed force, military and non-military, and lethal and non-lethal means to compel the enemy to accept one’s interests.”³

Hybrid Wars are “externally provoked identity conflicts, which exploit historical, ethnic, religious, socio-economic, and geographic differences within geostrategic transit states through the phased transition from Color Revolutions to Unconventional Wars in order to disrupt, control, or influence multipolar transnational connective infrastructure projects by means of Regime Tweaking, Regime Change, and/or Regime Reboot.”

The above is a comprehensive definition and can be understood by deconstructing it into smaller parts. The most important aspect which needs to be understood is that hybrid wars are identity conflicts provoked from outside and are usually a combination of natural and manufactured issues.⁴ They involve employment

¹ Andrew Dowse and Sascha-Dominik (Dov) Bachmann, “Explainer: What is ‘Hybrid Warfare’ and What is Meant by the ‘Grey Zone?’” *The Conversation*, June 17, 2019, <https://theconversation.com/explainer-what-is-hybrid-warfare-and-what-is-meant-by-the-grey-zone-118841>.

² Ibid.

³ Stephen Blank, “The Chinese Concept of ‘Unrestricted Warfare’: Global Competitors Up the Ante,” *Second Line of Defense*, November 4, 2014, <https://sldinfo.com/2014/04/the-chinese-concept-of-unrestricted-warfare-global-competitors-up-the-ante/>.

⁴ Andrew Korybko, *Hybrid Wars: The Indirect Adaptive Approach to Regime Change* (Moscow: Institute of Strategic Research and Predictions, 2015).

of military strategy exploiting combined use of political warfare, conventional warfare, cyber warfare, and irregular warfare along with other influencing means such as fake news, lawfare, diplomacy, and foreign electoral intervention. In this way, the aggressor endeavors to avoid attribution or retribution with the collective use of kinetic operations and subversive activities. Hence, it is:

*The synchronized use of multiple instruments of power tailored to specific vulnerabilities across the full spectrum of societal functions to achieve synergistic effects.*⁵

According to NATO's Bi-Strategic Command Capstone Concept of 2010, hybrid threats are defined as "those posed by adversaries, with the ability to simultaneously employ conventional and nonconventional means adaptively in pursuit of their objectives,"⁶ while the United States Army Doctrine Reference Publication 3-0 describes a "hybrid threat" as "the diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, terrorist forces, or criminal elements unified to achieve mutually benefitting threat effects."⁷

An article by Russian Chief of the General Staff, General Valery Gerasimov, is usually quoted as an example of Russian thinking and clear articulation of New Generation Warfare (NGW). According to him:

*The very 'rules of war' have changed. The role of non-military means of achieving political and strategic goals has grown, and, in many cases, they have exceeded the power of force of weapons in their effectiveness... The focus of applied methods of conflict has altered in the direction of the broad use of political, economic, informational, humanitarian, and other non-military measures - applied in coordination with the protest potential of the population.*⁸

In the United Kingdom, the now superseded "Future Character of Conflict" paper published by the Ministry of Defence warns that "future conflict will be

⁵ Patrick J. Cullen and Erik Reichborn-Kjennerud, "MCDC Countering Hybrid Warfare Project: Understanding Hybrid Warfare A Multinational Capability Development Campaign Project," (Multinational Capability Development Campaign, January 2017), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/647776/dar_mcdc_hybrid_warfare.pdf.

⁶ Sascha-Dominik Bachmann, "Hybrid Threats, Cyber Warfare and NATO's Comprehensive Approach for Countering 21st Century Threats – Mapping the New Frontier of Global Risk and Security Management," *Amicus Curiae* 88 (Winter 2011).

⁷ *ADRP 3-0 Operations, Army Doctrine Reference Publication No. 3-0*, report, (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, October 2017), https://fas.org/irp/doddir/army/adrp3_0.pdf.

⁸ Valery Gerasimov, "The Value of Science in Prediction," *Military-Industrial Kurier*, February 27, 2013, <https://www.ies.be/files/Gerasimov%20HW%20ENG.pdf>.

increasingly hybrid in character.”⁹ The paper proceeds to define hybrid threats as the “combination of conventional, irregular and high-end asymmetric threats in the same time and space.”¹⁰

On the other side, according to the European External Action Service (EEAS), “hybrid warfare can be more easily characterized than defined as a centrally designed and controlled use of various covert and overt tactics, enacted by military and/or non-military means, ranging from intelligence and cyber operations through economic pressure to the use of conventional forces. By employing hybrid tactics, the attacker seeks to undermine and destabilize an opponent by applying both coercive and subversive methods.”¹¹ The High Representative and the European Commission presented the “Joint Framework on Countering Hybrid Threats” in April 2016. The Joint Framework adopted a practical approach and developed a set of proposals for averting and responding to hybrid threats. In contrast to the earlier EEAS food-for-thought paper, noted that:

*While definitions of hybrid threats vary and need to remain flexible to respond to their evolving nature, the concept aims to capture the mixture of coercive and subversive activity, conventional and unconventional methods (i.e. diplomatic, military, economic, technological), which can be used in a coordinated manner by state or non-state actors to achieve specific objectives while remaining below the threshold of formally declared warfare.*¹²

The above definitions from various countries and institutions are indicative that strategists and academics have not yet agreed on what constitutes “hybrid warfare”, although initial definitions mostly considered kinetic means and NSAs as its primary constituents.¹³ Some disagree and stress that it is an abstract term which refers to countering a conventionally superior adversary. The abstractness helps use the term for all non-linear threats. According to them, it can be defined as any type of clandestine non-military effort aimed at destabilization of another state.¹⁴ Despite differences in approach, there is agreement that hybrid warfare includes

⁹ Ministry of Defence, *Future Character of Conflict, Strategic Trends Programme*, report, (Government of Great Britain, 2009), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486301/20151210-Archived_DCDC_FCOC.pdf.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ European External Action Service, *Security and Defence on the Agenda*, Riga Informal Meeting (February 19, 2015), https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/1806/security-and-defence-agenda-riga-informal-meeting_en.

¹² Council of the European Union, *Council Conclusions on CSDP*, 3, 8971/15 (May 18, 2015).

¹³ Patrick Cullen, “Modelling Hybrid Warfare: A Generic and Holistic Approach,” (paper, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, Oslo, 2016). “Hybrid Threats and Asymmetric Warfare: What to do?” (workshop, Swedish Defence University, Stockholm, November 14-15, 2017).

¹⁴ Korybko, A. *Hybrid Wars: The Indirect Adaptive Approach to Regime Change*.

both, numerous synchronized threats to target adversary state's vulnerabilities at varying levels of intensity over time.

The undeveloped and open definition of hybrid warfare helps in discussing other non-kinetic methods which could lead to completely new warfighting domains. Since it permeates multidimensional areas, this kind of warfare is more disastrous as it undermines decision-making, systematically cripples information and financial systems using cyber warfare techniques and strangulates economically using coercive economic diplomacy by influencing international systems and institutions; and all through this, the perpetrator maintains a robust defense posture.¹⁵

Given the peculiar nature of this warfare and interaction of various elements at different levels and ability of the perpetrator to control its levels, the overall result is greater than the sum total of all its constituents. Another advantage of this type of warfare is the state's ability to avoid direct involvement. When a state conducts hybrid warfare against another, it usually includes NSAs and organizations, supported by actors with dubious agendas. For the purpose of this paper, various terms would be used interchangeably as the emphasis in hybrid warfare is on the effect or outcome resulting from use of different actions, mediums, tools or agents and not the specific lexicon being used.

Components of Hybrid Warfare

Keeping in mind various definitions and historical application of the concept, the following section briefly describes the major components of hybrid warfare.

Proxy Warfare/Revolutionaries

Owing to the complexity and destruction caused to the economy, infrastructure, and the military of the two warring nations, direct military conflicts are becoming rare. Proxy war is, therefore, instigated by a "major power which does not itself become involved." To weaken the adversary, countries may opt for sub-conventional wars using proxies. The use of irregular forces or terrorism has become the new instrument of aggression through various groups such as proxies and revolutionaries. They usually exploit existing fault lines or represent a significant vassal for political change.

¹⁵ Yasir Malik, "India's Hybrid Warfare against Pakistan," *Global Village Space*, July 30, 2018, <https://www.globalvillagespace.com/indias-hybrid-warfare-against-pakistan/>.

Information Warfare (IW)

Information Warfare (IW) involves use and management of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in pursuit of a competitive advantage over an opponent and is intricately linked to psychological warfare. Digital technologies, Internet and social media platforms have further complicated an already saturated battlespace as the Internet removes the restrictions of boundaries and borders.

The old techniques of espionage, subversion, propaganda, and counterintelligence have become much more effective with the available technology, cost-effectiveness, and instantaneous reach to intended target populations. Although, IW is mostly used by corporations, political parties etc., the most damaging use is made by the anti-state elements, terrorist organizations and nation-states against other nations through non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or other local support elements.

For state as well as non-state actors, IW is a cost-effective method to undertake influence operations to spread their ideology or hate on the basis of ethnicity or religion. Terrorist organizations use it to appeal to their potential financiers, recruit new members and propagate their battlefield performance to spread fear among the public. Internet-based information dissemination platforms such as social media, websites, blogs, dark web, and video streaming services can be used to spread and propagate one's ideologies. By using IW, states can hurt their adversaries by dividing its society, tarnishing its image, and undermining its interests and exert pressure by threatening their stability.

Such warfare is becoming very sophisticated, thus presenting a major challenge for nation-states that need to develop their own counter IW capabilities to mitigate potential threats. Social media often acts as a prime platform of foreign-funded NGOs, hostile agencies and interest groups to convert legitimate public protests in direction as well as aims to destabilize governance by changing public perception through false information/fake news or twisted facts.

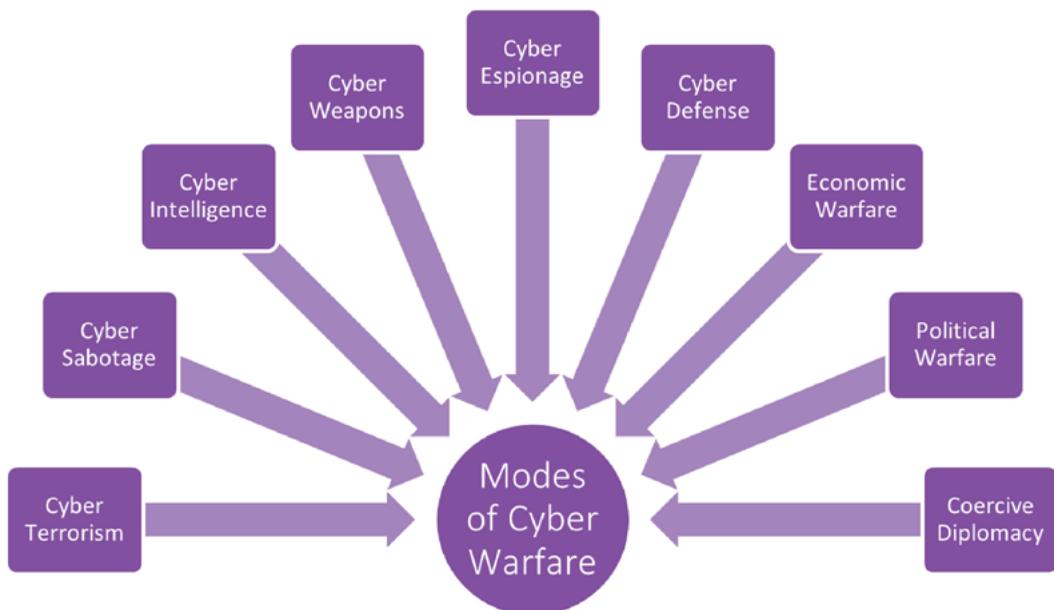
Propaganda

Propaganda is used to influence an audience and further an agenda, which may not be objective and may be presenting facts selectively to encourage a particular synthesis or perception or using loaded language to produce an emotional rather than a rational response to the information. Mass media and social media are used as tools for this purpose.

Cyber Warfare

The increasing dependence on network-based systems and cyberspace has escalated the threat of exploitation and vulnerability faced by individuals, industry, economic institutions, public service systems, and the defense forces; seriously affecting the national security of any country. Hostile cyber operations can either damage and steal data or disrupt computer systems in general. Cyber threats may include but are not limited to computer viruses, data breaches, and Denial of Service (DoS) attacks. Satellites and other space assets also remain vulnerable to cyber risks posing a serious challenge to major national, regional, and international security systems. With evolving technologies, the cyber security landscape is becoming more complex. Rapid technological advancements have enabled NSAs, criminals and terrorist organizations to challenge states and cause damage. Terrorists use anonymity by relying more on the use of technology to bypass standard monitoring systems to conduct their activities in a clandestine manner. Hostile state agencies also rely on cyber warfare to inflict harm on target countries. The problem is compounded by lack of legal frameworks and attributability. Owing to its implications for the target country, cyber warfare has come to be known as one of the most important facets of hybrid warfare strategy, and hostile entities continue to invest in developing offensive capabilities.

Figure 2: Modes of Cyber Warfare



Cyber Terrorism

Cyber terrorism is defined as a criminal act perpetrated by the use of computers and telecommunications capabilities, resulting in violence, destruction and/or disruption of services, where the intended purpose is to create fear by causing confusion and uncertainty within a given population, with the goal of influencing a government or population to conform to a particular political, social, or ideological agenda.¹⁶

Cyber Sabotage

Cyber sabotage is another component of cyber warfare comprising deliberate and malicious acts that result in the disruption of the normal processes and functions, or the destruction or damage of equipment or information. Rogue actors, equipped with cyber warfare capabilities, can aid a hostile state actor to infect systems, computers, software and other critical networks, especially connected with strategic installations.

Cyber Intelligence

Cyber intelligence involves products and processes across the intelligence cycle of assessing the capabilities, intentions, and activities – technical and otherwise, of potential adversaries and competitors in the cyber domain.¹⁷ It is the capability to execute an illegal harvest and analysis of large sets of important digital data which can be detrimental to the interests of the organization or state.

Cyber Weapons

Cyber weapons include software and IT systems that, through ICT networks, manipulate, deny, disrupt, degrade, or destroy targeted information systems or networks.¹⁸ These highly sophisticated cyber weapons are designed specifically to target high-value installations such as nuclear reactors, dams, electricity grids, or economic targets such as the stock market, financial institutions like banks or industrial assets such as oil refineries, etc. “Stuxnet” is a good example of a cyber weapon used to achieve military objectives in the real world.

¹⁶ Daniel Cohen, “Cyber Terrorism,” *Cyber Crime and Cyber Terrorism Investigator’s Handbook* (2014), <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/computer-science/cyber-terrorism>.

¹⁷ INSA, *Cyber Intelligence: Preparing Today’s Talent for Tomorrow’s Threats* (Intelligence and National Security Alliance – Cyber Intelligence Task Force, September, 2015), <https://www.insaonline.org/cyber-intelligence-preparing-todays-talents-for-tomorrows-threats/>.

¹⁸ Nyman Gibson Miralis, “What are Cyber Weapons? Some Competing Definitions,” *Lexology*, September 28, 2018, <https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=65179269-c85e-4253-a9a3-5d9ba1c9c906>.

Cyber Espionage

One of the most difficult problems regarding cyber warfare is defining cyber espionage as different nations have developed their own definitions.¹⁹ In general, it is the use of computer networks to gain illicit access to highly secure information, typically held by a government or other organization. Examples could include military secrets, industrial espionage, technical intelligence, and ongoing surveillance of native networks.

Cyber Defense

Cyber defense is an actual element of cyber warfare where the initiative is taken by the state to thwart a threat or create such circumstances using cyber warfare capabilities to neutralize the effects of any possible hostile action. In essence, it is the capability to assure a response and its importance cannot be overlooked. A quick cyber response will enable a state to minimize the damage of any action done by a hostile element and the same data can be analyzed and quickly used to launch a counter-cyber warfare operation.

Economic Warfare

Economic warfare is defined as the use of, or the threat to use, economic means against a country in order to weaken its economy, and thereby reduce its political and military power. It also includes the use of economic means to compel an adversary to change its policies or behavior or to undermine its ability to conduct normal relations with other countries. In other words, economic warfare is used to weaken a country's economy and slow its rise to a point where it cannot threaten the domination of the existing hostile state. Economic warfare can be waged through legislation such as Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA), controlling or diverting river waters, disrupting energy supplies, arm twisting through international financial institutions, international monitoring bodies such as FATF, containment, and blockade etc. All these are aimed at slowing down economic activity, weakening defense capability and causing unrest in the population of the target country.

¹⁹ Dana Rubenstein, "Nation State Cyber Espionage and its Impacts," (paper, Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, 2014), https://www.cse.wustl.edu/~jain/cse571-14/ftp/cyber_espionage/index.html#defining_espionage.

Political Warfare

Under the broadest definition, political warfare is the employment of all the means at a nation's command, short of war, to achieve its strategic objectives.²⁰ It forms yet another important element of hybrid warfare strategy which employs a mix of legal warfare (Lawfare), diplomatic warfare, lobbying and other political instruments to weaken the target country.

Coercive Diplomacy

Over past few decades, several definitions of “coercion” have been developed. Nevertheless, authors generally agree that the basic idea of coercion is the use of threats to influence another's behavior. In any case, the qualities imputed to the coercive process may differ based on three different measures:

1. types of threats,
2. role of the use of force as compared to the threat of the use of force; and,
3. actors involved in the process.²¹

²⁰ Linda Robinson, Todd C, Helmus, Raphael S Cohen, Alireza Nader, Andrew Radin, and Madelinne Magnuson, “The Growing Need to Focus on Modern Political Warfare,” (RAND Corporation, 2019), https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RB10071.html.

²¹ Silvia Romeo, “Coercive Diplomacy, Theories and Application: A Case Study on US Administration and Libya,” (Thesis Disser. 2015-16, Department of Political Science, LUISS), https://tesi.luiss.it/17579/1/072842_ROMEO_SILVIA.pdf.



**APPLICABILITY OF
INTERNATIONAL LAW**

■ Applicability of International Law

Developing an appropriate response to the legal challenges posed by hybrid threats requires a better understanding of the legal system. Countering the legal challenges presented by hybrid warfare, therefore, involves:

1. formulating a definition encompassing legal dynamics of hybrid threats,
2. understanding legal vulnerabilities, and
3. proactive preparation in the legal domain to strengthen deterrence and defense.²²

Hybrid adversaries operate in unregulated spaces and across judicial boundaries and systems to avoid legal implications. In doing so, they exploit weakness of the law for not being able to adapt to the quick pace of technological growth as well as social media tools being capitalized by hybrid actors. Hybrid adversaries endeavor to pressurize the complete spectrum of conflict, however, they do so while maintaining distance between the constituent elements to evade being caught by the target state. They aim to create ambiguity to mask the actual ground realities to eliminate differentiation between war and peace. Hence, jurisdictional and legal concerns make military response questionable on the basis of legitimacy. The victim of hybrid warfare cannot pinpoint the origin with undeniable proofs and thus, can neither undertake an armed attack utilizing the right of self-defense nor take the issue to court.

Avoiding this trigger promises a significant advantage to a hybrid adversary. The conduct of operations at a lower level of intensity or by limiting the threat of force, instead of use of force, puts a hybrid adversary in an advantageous position by denying the target the right to respond by using force in self-defense. This tactic is possible because the threshold for an armed attack is higher than the threshold for the use of force. This is a legal lacuna and an operational sweet spot between the use of force and an armed attack. Additionally, self-defense is also not available if the attack originates from within, rather than from outside the target state's territory.²³

The hallmark of hybrid warfare is the blurring of the traditional dividing line between war and peace. International law plays a critical, albeit imperfect, role

²² Aurel Sari, "Hybrid Warfare, Law and the Fulda Gap," *In Complex Battle Spaces*, Christopher Ford and Winston Williams (eds), (Oxford University Press, 2019), 161–190.

²³ International Court of Justice, "Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory," Advisory Opinion, (July 9, 2004), <https://www.icj-cij.org/public/files/case-related/131/131-20040709-ADV-01-00-EN.pdf>.

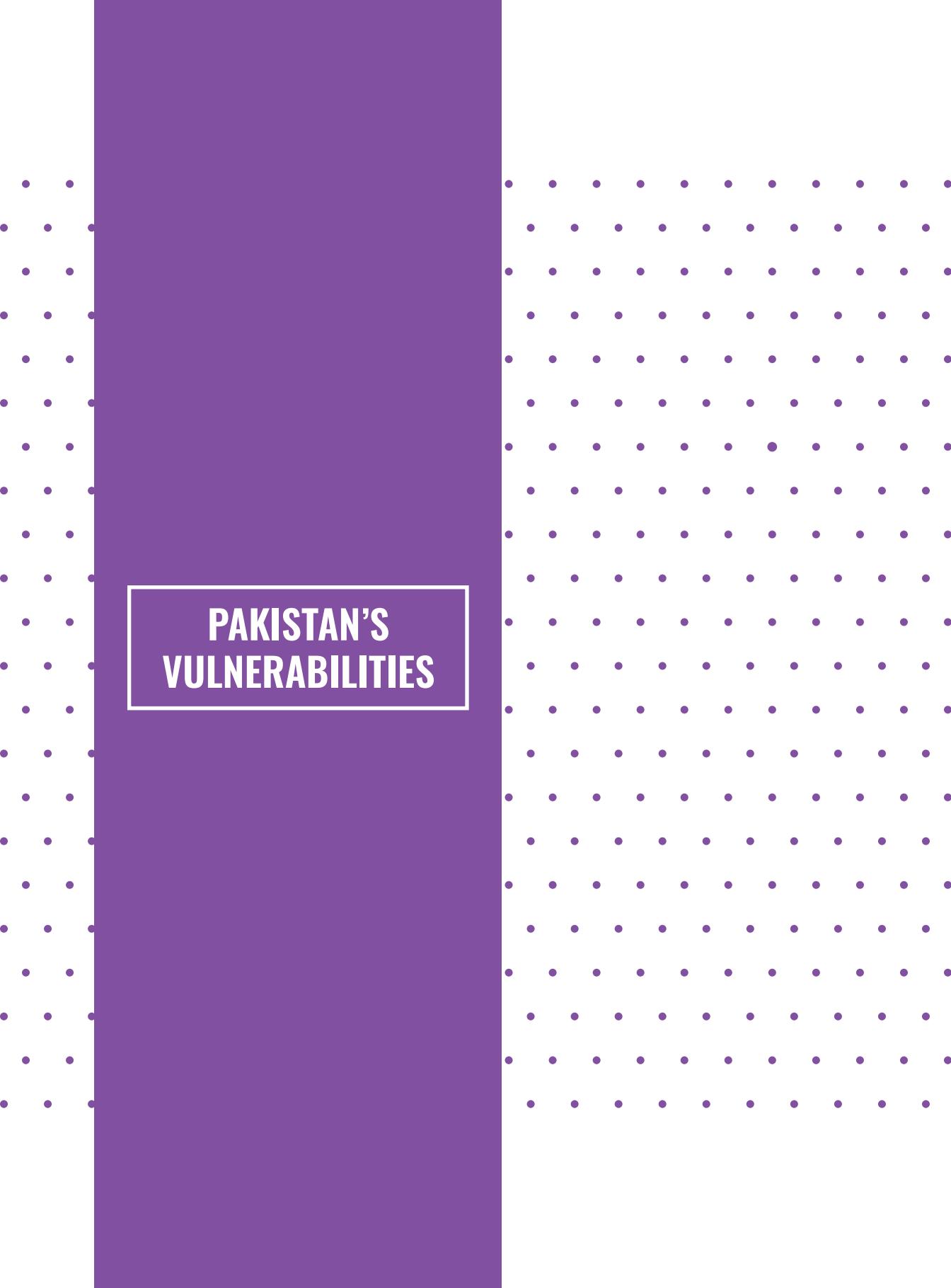
in preserving this divide. Aided by technological progress and military innovation, hybrid adversaries are exploiting this feature of the law to their military advantage.

Legal thresholds, normative boundaries and conceptual dichotomies provide abundant opportunities for hybrid adversaries to employ force in pursuit of their strategic objectives, whilst seemingly leaving their opponents bereft of opportunities to respond in kind. In operational terms, the dividing line between war and peace appears to favor hybrid adversaries who do not shy away from breaking the law and to penalize their law-abiding victims. Law, it seems, is part of the problem as it is an integral and critical element of hybrid warfare. Hybrid adversaries rely on law as an enabler and force-multiplier at all levels of warfare.

Without accepting that law constitutes a contested operating environment, the prospects of overcoming the legal challenges posed by hybrid warfare are slim. However, admitting that law constitutes an operating environment also implies that it is part of the solution.

Nations facing hybrid threats must formulate a strategy to work out legal options against hybrid adversaries. This requires a clear understanding of the legal mechanics of hybrid threats, cognizance of legal weaknesses and strengthened legal preparedness, deterrence, and defense.²⁴

²⁴ Sari, "Hybrid Warfare, Law and the Fulda Gap."



**PAKISTAN'S
VULNERABILITIES**

Pakistan's Vulnerabilities

Like all other post-colonial states, Pakistan has to deal with both, internal as well as external threats. Like other similar states, lack adaptability of the concept of "state" because of ethnic, sectarian, and intra-state conflicts is causing problems. In Pakistan, poor governance by successive governments, corruption, and inability to provide justice to citizens has expanded the ethnic, religious, political, and economic divide and social injustice. These divisions are easily exploitable by adversaries who then promote some real and other perceived grievances. This section discusses Pakistan's major vulnerabilities that are being exploited by its adversaries:

Sectarian Divide

The conflict among various sects has been present since independence of the country, which was promoted by regional and political trends in the 1970s and 1980s, bringing it to the level of activism. Iran's Islamic Revolution, Jihad in Afghanistan and General Zia-ul-Haq's regime were the driving features that shifted Pakistan from secular concepts to Islamization.

In the recent past, expanding sectarian strife in Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon where proxy wars are being fought, has also adversely impacted Pakistan. As a consequence, divisions into major sects and sub-sects and foreign influence have resulted in serious violence due to sectarianism. This has resulted in empowerment of Islamic groups with extremism-related consequences in society.

Attacks on religious gatherings and places of worship, including mosques, are examples of sectarian violence in Pakistan. Intolerance has been on the increase ever since and every religious festival / activity has become a point of discord. Over the years, political, and religious elite have used religion as an effective tool to grab power.

While major religious groups receive foreign funding, they also maintain militant wings. This has not only caused polarization in society but has also made religious groups strong enough to challenge government writ on many issues of national significance. This weakness is easily exploited by Pakistan's adversaries through interest groups.

Ethnic Divide

Conflict, based on ethnic divisions, is one of the more common sources of insecurity. Movements based on ethnic and linguistic origins have multitude objectives, usually for political autonomy, self-governance, better access to resources and respect for group identity and culture.

Ethnic disputes emerge in times of sweeping political, economic, and social change(s). Grievances and polarizing leadership lead to mobilization, ranging from political action to violent acts such as terrorism, armed uprisings, and guerrilla and civil wars.

Modern history is replete with examples of crises arising out of ethnic conflict. Following World War II, European empires like Britain started decolonizing. Since new states were created by dividing land without any consideration of local ethnicities living there, there was no concept of unity or nationalism. Therefore, as the Cold War progressed, end of colonization was marked with the start of ethnic conflicts in the new countries. Clashes in Rwanda, Chechnya, Iraq, the Balkans, Serbia, Kosovo, Darfur, Sri Lanka, as well as in the Gaza Strip and West Bank are some of the most lethal examples from the end of the 20th Century and the early part of 21st Century. Pakistan, being a post-colonial state comprising diverse ethnicities, is no exception, and thus faces similar challenges.²⁵

While all ethnicities are patriotic Pakistanis, they have been alienated from each other through propaganda, some perceived grievances and some genuine issues due poor or ill-intentioned government policies. Over the past seven decades, Balochistan, interior Sindh and South Punjab have remained underdeveloped due to studied neglect. Successive governments, for political exigencies continued supporting and funding *sardars / waderas* without any accountability. While *sardars* continued to enjoy riches, the public at large suffered and blamed the state. When not funded, *sardars* blackmailed the governments and incited citizens to protest the lack of development. Therefore, peoples' anger is historic and not totally unfounded. For example, creation of the Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) to counter *Jeeay Sindh* was one such blunder as it gave rise to another hitherto unknown problem.

While Balochistan and interior Sindh reeled under poverty and exploitation, Punjab continued to develop due to comparatively better governance. Instead of competing, development in Punjab has been exploited by opportunist elite from smaller provinces / underdeveloped areas to create identity conflict. With the

²⁵ Raza Khan, "Dynamics of Ethnic Conflicts in Pakistan," *The Express Tribune*, July 21, 2017.

passage of time, Baloch, Pashtun and Sindhis have developed grievances against the largest group, Punjabis. External actors have been exploiting and even fuelling these grievances. Successive government policies of appeasing the *sardars* and *waderas* has further alienated the public. This was further fuelled by external forces which gave rise to many sub-national and separatist groups. Using this opportunity, the perpetrators of hybrid war aim to establish a so-called “alliance of discontented minorities” among the Sindhis, Pashtuns and Baloch which could challenge the writ of the state and ultimately extract political concessions, weakening the overall structure.

Political Divide

Since its independence, Pakistan has experienced economic difficulties and political instability, however, the recent past has seen an increase in both creating an atmosphere of uncertainty. Though necessary, the process of accountability to curb corruption has been accused of selectivity and political victimization, making it highly controversial. While the political leadership has been inefficient in many areas, the military’s role has been less than helpful in curbing corruption and ineptitude. Involvement of various institutions in repeated political engineering have resulted in persistent economic, social, and political problems, causing failure in effectively and professionally dealing with basic issues for the well-being of the country. Experiments with four military governments validated by the superior judiciary, have repeatedly disrupted the democratic process, undermined political evolution, sowed the seeds of separatism, and undermined the rule of law. Such issues have made sub-nationalism, ethnic distinctions, and religious divide dangerously strong. Such divisions are likely to become more dangerous during situations of political uncertainty and economic collapse.²⁶ External forces can exploit these weaknesses through hybrid warfare.

Weak Economy

Political instability, frequently changing policies, and nepotism amongst other things, have ruined Pakistan’s economy. Political appointments in public sector enterprises have made them non-performing and a burden on the economic system. Despite attempts by successive governments, tax collection has not shown any improvements, thus increasing reliance on foreign loans and resultant debt. The accountability process, though very necessary to root out corruption, has become controversial. The National Accountability Bureau (NAB)’s harsh behavior and failure to prove most cases in court not only make the organization’s methods questionable, but they also discourage bold decision-making by senior

²⁶ Khan, R. “Dynamics of Ethnic Conflicts in Pakistan.”

government officials.²⁷

Poor Governance

Pakistan has been a victim of poor governance from the very beginning and continues in the same state to date. While many political and military governments have endeavored to reform the system, they have ended up making the state more dysfunctional each successive time. Poor governance in Pakistan can be attributed to weaknesses in the political system, interference by non-elected power centers and total disregard for merit-based appointments.

Bureaucracy, in most government departments, is unable to deliver due to frequent changes in policy; disempowerment due to political interference; and appointment of incompetent people due to political/peer pressures/ cronyism. Such appointees work to please their masters instead of betterment of the organizations, or in self-interest. This has not only led to poor decision-making but also increased the sufferings of the masses. As a consequence, some institutions have weakened over time and others have gained power beyond their constitutional and legal mandate.

Incompetent and inefficient governance has greatly affected the state's ability to provide basic necessities to its people as it has repeatedly failed to effectively mobilize existing resources and utilize them effectively. A poorly developed democratic structure, weak state institutions, rampant corruption, disregard of merit, a lax tax system, centralised power structure and interference by some institutions beyond their mandate lie at the heart of the problem; and have over time made people lose faith in the government and state institutions, leading to exploitation by the interest groups or foreign forces.

Human Vs National Security

Over the past seven decades, emphasis has always been on national security based on external challenges to Pakistan's sovereignty, which translates to geographical integrity. Overtime, it has overwhelmed and marginalized all other critical human-centric securities including shelter, food, healthcare, education for all, availability of public utilities, safety from violence and freedom from persistent threats to people's rights and ability to live a life free of fear. While these parameters actually determine the state of human as well as national security, stress on territorial security only has resulted in underdevelopment and ultimately led to conflict among the people. Such a situation is easily exploited by interest groups and foreign forces.

²⁷ Javaid Hasan, "Pakistan's Fundamental Issues," *The Nation*, January 1, 2019.

Rule of Law & Dispensation of Justice

Essentials for rule of law to exist include not only making laws but also their universal enforcement and regulation for equal treatment of rulers and citizens. This necessitates indiscriminate application on all with no immunity for any individual regardless of his or her legal status. This, however, is not true in Pakistan, where powerful people remain beyond the grip of law. Essentials for rule of law to exist include not only making laws but also their universal enforcement and regulation for equal treatment of rulers and citizens. This necessitates indiscriminate application on all with no immunity for any individual regardless of his or her legal status. This, however, is not true in Pakistan, where powerful people remain beyond the grip of law.

The primary reasons for poor rule of law and inefficient judicial system include political interference, corruption, and a non-merit-based system of appointments to both, important positions in Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) and selection of judges in superior courts. The independence provided to the judiciary has also been misused to secure privileges for judicial personnel and gain unchallenged interpretations of the law.

Poor rule of law in the country has negatively impacted the lives of the people of lower strata of society with reduced accessibility to the legal process and services for their rights, which in turn has increased their vulnerability to various threats and crime. The poor are also being subjected to intimidation, threats, victimization, and bribery. This also indirectly impacts them through wasted resources and reduced economic opportunities.

As a consequence of poor rule of law and inefficient dispensation of justice, very frequently one hears of financial fraud and scams depriving citizens of their hard-earned money. As a result, they are reluctant to invest in business and industry, consequently, real estate prices continue to rise depriving other sectors of investment, adversely affecting economic growth.

Susceptibility to Information Warfare / Propaganda

Pakistan's population is exceedingly vulnerable to exploitation. Owing to naivety, citizens are ready to believe and spread any negative information about the internal systems of governance without verification. The government is also complacent about online content and social media, leading a vast majority into believing all the content they come across online. This translates into various nefarious websites spreading false news according to their agenda with a favorable response. The disastrous misuse of "freedom of speech" allowed to the public in a democratic

society is becoming a cause of hate, violence, and discontent between various segments of society. This has also led to negative impact on the government's image, the electoral system, and all state institutions.

Added to this is the opportunistic nature of today's advanced and technologically aware violent NSAs and terrorist organizations who see social media as a means of both, funding and recruiting for their own agendas.

While repeated military interventions have frayed civil-military relations, foreign instigators and local groups with vested interests are exploiting the situation by constant criticism of the military for their political and commercial activities, thus further widening societal divisions. In Pakistan, constant maligning of the Armed Forces is aimed at demoralizing military personnel and instigating the civilian populace against their own forces. While social media has contributed to this problem, it has more to do with the national temperament, which needs to be changed.



**INDIA'S HYBRID
WARFARE AGAINST
PAKISTAN**

India's Hybrid Warfare against Pakistan

Ever since partition of the subcontinent, India's leadership has not reconciled with the idea of a divided Bharat. Additionally, it considers a strong Pakistan a challenge to its hegemonic designs and regional leadership role. The follies of Pakistan's leadership, exploited by India, resulted in the creation of Bangladesh. The jolt of losing erstwhile East Pakistan closely followed by India's nuclear test in 1974 resulted in Pakistan's successful acquisition of nuclear capability. Understanding the constraints of a war between two nuclear rivals, India introduced its "Cold Start Doctrine", which was effectively countered through Pakistan's "Full Spectrum Deterrence."²⁸

India's military has repeatedly failed to support her country's aspiration of regional dominance. Indian military's performance against China in 1962, against Pakistan in 1965, and of late in February 2019 has been embarrassing to say the least. Realizing the incompetence of her military, India's leadership has for a long time relied on other means to achieve her national objectives against Pakistan. Creation of Bangladesh through instigation and fuelling insurgency further strengthened Indian policymakers' belief. After consistently failing to coerce Pakistan due to her inability to successfully materialize its warfighting strategy "Cold Start Doctrine" as the latter developed tactical nuclear weapons and other response options, India has been consistently conducting hybrid warfare evident in a number of incidents between the two countries. India, under the fear of escalation to nuclear exchange or a conflict which could adversely affect her economic ambitions, avoids direct military conflict with Pakistan.

While India has historically been instigating insurgencies and discontent in Pakistan, its leadership has now moved on to fully rely on hybrid war to destabilize Islamabad using all its constituent elements. The variety of irregular forces being applied against Pakistan have been carefully selected to target the state's vulnerabilities such as governance institutions and social, political, ethnic, sectarian, and economic fault lines.

Subsequent sections briefly discuss historical as well as present day endeavors by India to destabilize Pakistan.

²⁸ Moiz Khan, "Understanding Pakistan's Full Spectrum Deterrence," *Journal of Strategic Affairs* (2018), pp. 109-153, <https://ssii.com.pk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Understanding-Pakistans-full-spectrum-deterrence-moiz-khan.pdf>.

Agartala Conspiracy Case

This conspiracy was hatched in the Indian city of Agartala located in the state of Tripura, between Awami League leaders, Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) and India's Armed Forces with the explicit aim to destabilize East Pakistan. In 2010, and later on 22 February 2011, one of the conspirators and later Deputy Speaker of the Bangladesh Parliament, Shawkat Ali while responding to a point of order, confessed that the charges against them were accurate.²⁹

According to a US diplomat Archer Blood, who happened to be the last American Consul General to Dacca, "Indian soil was made available to training camps, hospitals and supply depots for the Mukti Bahini."

India's Prime Minister Modi, during his visit to Bangladesh in June 2015, confirmed his country's support for Mukti Bahini movement in the creation of Bangladesh.³⁰ The case, subsequent events and confessions of the individuals involved prove beyond doubt India's hybrid warfare tactics and involvement.

Ganga Hijacking Incident

An Indian Airline passenger aircraft "Ganga" while flying from Srinagar to Jammu on 30 January 1971 was hijacked. The hijackers included two Kashmiri separatists belonging to the National Liberation Front (NLF), the antecedent of Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front. After landing in Lahore, the crew and passengers were released after which the aircraft was burned. In retaliation, India banned Pakistan's aircraft from flying through Indian airspace. The ban, just ahead of the December 1971 war between India and Pakistan, disrupted Pakistani troop movement into the erstwhile East Pakistan, now Bangladesh.³¹

Subsequent revelations indicated that the hijacking drama was a planned move by the Indian government to stop Pakistani aircraft overflight via Indian airspace. The hijacked aircraft was one of the oldest aircraft of the Indian Airlines fleet, which had been taken off from service. It was re-inducted days before the hijacking. Additionally, it was hijacked by citizens of Indian-held Kashmir and not by any Pakistani national. An Indian intelligence officer BM Sinha in his book "Samba Spy Case" called the hijacking a master stroke which greatly benefited India and put the blame squarely on Pakistan. According to him, the incident was used as a pretext to close the airspace for Pakistan.

²⁹ Various news reports in Bangladesh media. "Agartala Conspiracy Case was not False," *bdnews24.com*, February 23, 2011. "Textbook 'incorrectly' describes Agartala Case: Shawkat," *The Daily Star*, June 12, 2010.

³⁰ "Indian forces fought along Mukti Bahini: Modi," *The News International*, June 8, 2015, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/12923-indian-forces-fought-along-mukti-bahini-modi>.

³¹ Arif Jamal, *Shadow War: The Untold Story of Jihad in Kashmir* (New York: Melville House, 2009).

Indian Diplomats' Involvement in Subversive Activities

According to November 2016 revelations by Pakistan's Foreign Office, Indian diplomats and other staff members belonging to RAW and the Intelligence Bureau working in the garb of diplomatic assignments were found involved in organizing terrorist and other subversive activities in the country.³² Incidentally, this was not the only time that Indian diplomats were found guilty of involvement in subversive activities in Pakistan.

Kulbhushan Yadav

Kulbhushan Yadav, an active service Indian Navy officer was captured in Pakistan's Balochistan province on 3 March 2016. During interrogation, it was found that Yadav had joined the National Defence Academy in 1987 and was commissioned in the Indian Navy in 1991. In 2001, Yadav voluntarily joined India's intelligence agency RAW. Incidentally, Ajit Doval, the current Indian National Security Adviser, a relative of Yadav was Director Intelligence Bureau who sent him to "Balochistan Wing" for a two-year training, where he learnt Balochi and Persian languages. He later came to Iran's port city of Chabahar under the fake name of Hussain Mubarak Patel with an Indian passport issued from Pune.³³ Subsequently, an Indian intelligence base was established in Chabahar with a dual purpose of hurting both Pakistan and Iran.

Yadav confessed masterminding terrorist activities in Balochistan and Sindh. He had travelled to major cities in both provinces to establish contacts with Baloch separatists, MQM members and other terror groups for orchestrating terrorist activities. Instability in Balochistan as well as attacks on the Iranian and Pakistani border forces were also planned by Yadav. Support to Baloch separatist movement was aimed at destroying peace in the province leading to an independent country. The attacks on Iranian and Pakistani border forces were aimed at creating confusion as well as rift between the two countries. The Indian government provided him funds to the tune of USD 400 million.

Using information extracted from Yadav, a large number of people were arrested, and huge cache of arms and ammunition were recovered. This also helped Pakistan's intelligence agencies to learn about RAW officials who were directly involved in the activities. This is possibly the biggest ever disclosure of state sponsored terrorism in any neighboring country. Peace in Karachi and weakening

³² "Foreign Office Reveals List of 8 Indian Cover Agents Involved in Subversive Activities," *The News International*, November 3, 2016.

³³ "Who is Kalbhshan Jhadav?" *Dawn*, July 17, 2019, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1326117>.

of MQM, the Aman Committee Baloch separatist groups are result of Yadav's arrest and disclosures.

Support to BLA and other Separatist Groups

India is known for supporting the separatist movements in Balochistan, especially the Balochistan Liberation Army, also known as the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA). For a long time, India has been working to destabilize Balochistan using Afghan soil to sponsor terrorism and also by provoking Baloch dissidents living outside Pakistan to undertake movements for the province's separation from Pakistan. The Balochistan Chief Minister has been on record regarding proof of BLA leadership contacts with Indian agencies. In July 2019, *The Hindu* in an article on BLA confirmed:

"It is established that BLA commanders, in the past, had sought medical treatment in India's hospitals, often under disguise or with fake identity."³⁴

Baloch separatist leaders including Mama Qadeer, Aslam Baluch and many others travelled to India in disguise. Former Indian Army Chief, General Vijay Kumar Singh, after his retirement, admitted that India had been sponsoring bomb blasts in Pakistan and provided financial support to separatist elements in Balochistan.³⁵ The Indian establishment also funded and supported BLA protests and rallies in Geneva and other capital cities. Ever since *Operation Zarb-e-Azb* was initiated, RAW consistently provided weapons and financial support to militants, terrorists and insurgents operating out of Kunar, Nangarhar, Nuristan and Badakhshan in Afghanistan, to undertake terrorism in Pakistan. Yadav, the captured RAW operative, in his six-minute video revealed that:

"RAW is involved in some activities related to the Baloch liberation movement within Pakistan and the region around it."

As discussed earlier, India's involvement in Balochistan was proven beyond any doubt, during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Bangladesh in June 2015 where he admitted his country's involvement in various activities to destabilize Pakistan.³⁶

³⁴ Kallol Bhattacharjee, "Explained: The Baluch Liberation Army," *The Hindu*, July 3, 2019.

³⁵ "Ex-Indian Army Chief Admits Sponsoring Terrorism in Balochistan," *The News International*, October 21, 2013, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/archive/print/461946-ex-indian-army-chief-admits-sponsoring-terrorism-in-balochistan>.

³⁶ Ansar Abasi, "BLA has known Indian Connection," *The News International*, July 1, 2020.

Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM)

Connections between MQM leadership and the Indian establishment are well known. MQM has been receiving funding and training from India on a regular basis. During formal recorded interviews of senior MQM leaders, the British authorities learnt that the party was receiving funds from India.³⁷ In an interview with a private channel Muhammad Anwar, a member of the Coordination Committee of MQM and former head of the Diplomatic Wing exposed the party's instructions to receive funding from Indian contacts.³⁸ Even the Indian newspaper, *Indian Express* confirmed money being provided by India to MQM. Kulbhushan Yadav confessed to having travelled to Karachi repeatedly for meetings for terrorist activities. The claim was confirmed following the arrest of a number of people and resultant peace in the city.

Support to Terrorist Groups

As a reaction to Pakistan's role in the US led War on Terror, Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) was created. India used this willing ally to undertake attacks against military and civilian targets to cause breakdown of the state structure from within. Chuck Hagel, former US Secretary of Defense also highlighted India's role in creating and supporting proxy terrorist groups in Pakistan.³⁹

The Balochistan Liberation Front (BLF), another group based in Afghanistan, has been helping India accomplish her hybrid warfare aims in Pakistan. The same terrorist outfit engaged in the execution of laborers from other provinces working in Balochistan.

Both Pakistan's Foreign Office as well as other senior leadership have repeatedly confirmed involvement of Indian intelligence agencies RAW and IB personnel, working under the guise of diplomatic assignments in coordinating subversive and terrorist activities in the country.

Information Warfare (IW)

India, in close coordination with Western media and Israel, has been undertaking information warfare against Pakistan for a long time. Indian academics and think-

³⁷ Owen Bennett-Jones, "Pakistan's MQM 'received Indian funding,'" *BBC News*, June 24, 2015.

³⁸ "MQM collected funds from India: Anwar," *The Nation*, June 22, 2020, <https://nation.com.pk/22-Jun-2020/mqm-collected-funds-from-india-anwar>.

³⁹ "India Financed Problems for Pakistan' from Afghanistan: Chuck Hagel," *Express Tribune*, February 26, 2013, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/512867/india-financed-problems-for-pakistan-from-afghanistan-chuck-hagel>.

tanks with the media's support continue to present a very bleak and pessimistic view of Pakistan's governance system, law and order and economy. In their propaganda campaign, they have also been consistently targeting Pakistan's Armed Forces and intelligence agencies. Some Pakistani media houses, individuals and groups sponsored by foreign actors also echo Indian views on mainstream media as well as social media. New Delhi also uses its print and electronic media to influence Pakistani culture and society. Similar narratives are also followed by its film industry to fuel hatred against Pakistan. An EU-based think-tank, EU DisinfoLab recently disclosed that, for the last 15 years, almost 265 websites related to an Indian company Srivastava Group, using names of non-operational newspapers and media outlets were being operated out of 65 countries. They were deliberately projecting negative perceptions about Pakistan to discredit it at international fora on one pretext or the other.⁴⁰ As a result of these activities, Pakistan was being labelled as a failing state and a breeding ground for nuclear proliferation and terrorist activities. Such disinformation campaigns, through numerous platforms, have been damaging the country's image and deterring those who work to project Pakistan's true image.

India also widely uses social media platforms to misinform the general public in Pakistan, create unnecessary debate on issues of national importance.

Available literature suggests that India uses local activists or influencers to conduct information operations in Pakistan. These local conduits are used to create public debate, spread panic, stoke public fear and uncertainty through social media trends, blogs, posts, tweets, videos, and fake news. With these means, Pakistan is continuously subjected to relentless internal and external propaganda. The 2019 Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F) Azadi March and information warfare during the same period very effectively put the Kashmir issue on the back burner.

Another example of India's information operations is the "Free Balochistan" advertisements that were displayed on billboards and buses in the US and Europe in 2017. According to political analyst Agha Haroon, the Indian government spent over INR 7 billion to undertake anti-Pakistan campaigns utilizing self-exiled dissident elements, including the World Baloch Organization and others. The operations were conducted with the aim of shifting the focus from India's atrocities in Indian-Held Kashmir and malign Pakistan to serve its geopolitical desires. India, in addition to providing asylum to Baloch dissidents, also provides them the opportunity to project their false narrative on the media. In 2005, the self-

⁴⁰ "265 Indian Fake News Sites Caught Pushing Anti-Pakistan Propaganda," *TNW News*, November 14, 2019, <https://thenextweb.com/security/2019/11/14/265-indian-fake-news-sites-caught-pushing-anti-pakistan-propaganda/>.

exiled MQM leader Altaf Hussain was invited to speak at the Hindustan Times' Leadership Conclave in New Delhi. At the time, RAW sponsored display of Altaf Hussain's posters in New Delhi, an unprecedented act, not practiced even during visits of Heads of States of US, Russia, and France.

Almost all English language newspapers in India regularly dedicate at least one page on anti-Pakistan propaganda articles and news items. This consistent behavior suggests both government funding as well as direction of the IW campaign.

Propaganda

Pakistan had no links with the 9/11 attacks as none of the terrorists involved in the attack belonged to this country, nor al-Qaeda leadership was operating from Pakistani territory. However, India recognized 9/11 as an opportunity to internationally malign Pakistan on baseless allegations and projected the country as the epicenter of terrorism.⁴¹ For this, it blamed Pakistan for almost all acts of violence on her territory. These incidents included (amongst others):

- Massacre of 36 Sikhs in Chittisinghpura on 20 March 2000 just before US President Clinton's visit to India and Pakistan.
- On 13 December 2001, a terrorist attack took place on the Indian Parliament while the US was creating a coalition to punish the Taliban government in Afghanistan.
- On 23 March 2003, 24 people were slaughtered by terrorists wearing Indian Army uniform in Nadimarg in Indian Held Kashmir (IHK) just days ahead of President of Pakistan's visit to Russia, which was expected to thaw the long spell of rather frozen bilateral relations.
- Another significant and more recent in the 'opportune time' series, was the Uri attack in 2016 that came just ahead of the UN General Assembly session where Indian atrocities in IHK were expected to be discussed.
- The terrorist attack by a Kashmiri youth killing 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel in February 2019 helped Prime Minister Narendra Modi in achieving overwhelming success in the national elections.

Since most of the incidents coincided with Pakistani leadership's official visits abroad to important capitals or any major power's leadership visit to the subcontinent, even a cursory look reveals that while India stood to benefit from these incidents of violence, Pakistan was always put in an embarrassing situation. All these acts of terrorism negatively affected Pakistan and projected India as a victim.

⁴¹ GS Aditya, "Use Coercive Diplomacy on Pakistan," *Statesman*, July 9, 2020, <https://www.thestatesman.com/opinion/use-coercive-diplomacy-pakistan-1502884862.html>.

While New Delhi is clearly a beneficiary of such incidents, the timings also reveal a pattern. Three aspects are noticeable – whenever there is some positive diplomatic or political development between Pakistan and another state of significance; or whenever India’s government comes under domestic pressure because of her inability to deliver, or just before elections; or whenever the international community starts to take notice of Indian atrocities in IHK – a terrorist act takes place somewhere in India.

Such incidents also help India shield its involvement in terrorism-related activities in Pakistan. They also help to satisfy the ruling party’s extremist elements and hawks in the establishment.

Economics

India does not want to see Pakistan progress and has adopted multiple courses to strain the country economically. The economic aspect is a core pillar of India’s hybrid warfare strategy. The paralysis of Pakistan’s economy would have ripple effects on its defense, politics, and society, thus, easing the way for other traditional and non-traditional forms of attacks. Such ongoing endeavours by India are discussed below:

CPEC: The Ultimate Target

India unnecessarily deems the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Gwadar Port competitive and obstructive to the Indian-funded Chabahar Port.

New Delhi has invested millions of dollars in the construction and upgrading of the Chabahar Port to augment its trade with Iran, Afghanistan, and the Central Asian Republics (CARs). India apprehends that the Gwadar Port and future expansion of CPEC would overshadow Chabahar Port, and help Pakistan and China to dominate the Iranian, Afghan and Central Asian markets.

India’s intentions regarding CPEC became clear from the statement by its premier Narendra Modi in China, where he vehemently criticized CPEC and termed the project as “unacceptable” to India.⁴² The Modi government has assigned RAW with the task to scuttle timely completion of the project. For subverting CPEC, a special cell has been established at RAW’s headquarters in New Delhi which has been entrusted with the task to sponsor terrorism and fuel insurgency in Pakistan to slow down its progress. Kulbhushan Yadav also disclosed that the main clandestine objective of his mission was to fully revive the separatist insurgency in Balochistan and disrupt CPEC.

⁴² “Modi Spoke India’s Mind Over CPEC,” *Express Tribune*, August 20, 2016.

Influencing International Bodies

During the past few years, India has worked extensively to subvert and corrupt specific international bodies in an attempt to sanction Pakistan to weaken its economic growth trajectory. The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and its mirror body, the Asia-Pacific Group (APG) have been the main target institutions. India has lobbied proactively at the FATF to pursue sanctions against Pakistan by putting it on FATF's "Black List" by alleging Islamabad's support of certain small groups that threaten New Delhi, including Jaish-e-Mohammed.⁴³

FATF is not an international treaty organization, rather a voluntary inter-ministerial body making it easy to manipulate and politicize. The premise of FATF sanctioning an entire country for collective guilt is itself morally dubious, as are its selective decisions to penalize a country such as Pakistan, when India's black economy is far larger in absolute terms and comparable in relative terms to its own economy; while there is not even a mention of Afghanistan, whose entire economy is black.

The manipulation of international bodies also includes the International Monetary Fund (IMF), where the US and India (along with a few collaborators) have been working to pressurize Pakistan by tying its lending agreements to conforming to FATF. In this manner, the IMF legitimizes the FATF.

Lobbying

Connected to the notion of corrupting international bodies is the direct lobbying of India and its citizens in world capitals against Pakistan. The most vulnerable in this regard is the US, where the disproportionate economic clout of Indian Americans diverts considerable congressional and executive efforts towards trying to prop up India, both as a supposed counterweight to China, but also as a preferential partner against Pakistan.⁴⁴ The economic element in this stems from government machinery in world capitals (particularly, the US) creating disincentives for investment in Pakistan.

Bilateral Trade

Despite low levels of trade, India extended the status of Most Favoured Nation (MFN) to Pakistan in 1996. Since the intensification of hostilities under a Hindu-

⁴³ Jan Achakzai, "FATF: International lobbying by India may retain Pakistan in Grey list," *Global Village Space*, October 14, 2019, <https://www.globalvillagespace.com/fatf-international-lobbying-by-india-might-retain-pakistan-in-greylis/>.

⁴⁴ "Powerful Indian Lobby in America Strengthening Narrative against Pakistan," Imran Khan," *Business Standard*, December 28, 2019.

nationalist government, MFN status was revoked in 2019. Given that Pakistan and India do not depend on each other for trade, the impact of this was, if anything, symbolic. The practical consequences of MFN revocation were embarrassingly small for India, however, sealing of the borders for trade with Pakistan was a natural extension of that policy.

The Indian government, as well as the private sector, have sought punitive measures against third party entities doing business with Pakistan or sharing their stance on Indian violations in IHK. A noteworthy example of this is the palm oil importing community in India, which sought to boycott Malaysian palm oil exports due to Malaysia's agreement with Pakistan's stance on IHK.⁴⁵ Malaysia has nevertheless maintained that stance.

Violation of Maritime Boundaries

India frequently violates the maritime boundaries of Pakistan and captures and tortures Pakistani fishermen who accidentally stray into its sea lanes.⁴⁶ The violent torture of innocent fishermen, whose bodies are recovered with ample evidence of brutality, has a psychological aspect to it. Since fisheries is an important sector in coastal areas of Pakistan, the small-scale fishing industry is dissuaded from working too close to waters near the maritime boundary where marine catch can be large.

Water

India has been diverting river waters and constructing dams in violation of the Indus Waters Treaty signed in 1960.⁴⁷ This will not only allow India to control water flowing into Pakistan and affect its agriculture sector but can also be used as a weapon during military conflict. While India already uses a larger percentage of these waters, it is gradually moving ahead with projects to utilize what remains rather than let those waters flow into Pakistan. Reduction of water supply is a grave matter for any country, but especially for one like Pakistan. Experts warn that Pakistan is on the brink of an era of water scarcity caused by a combination of factors such as population growth, climate change and poor water management. India's efforts to cut off water flow into Pakistan would be devastating to say the least. Drying of rivers flowing into Pakistan will have devastating economic effects and can be termed as "water terrorism."

⁴⁵ Rajendra Jadhav, "Exclusive: India Urges Boycott of Malaysian Palm Oil after Diplomatic Row – Sources," *Reuters*, January 13, 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-india-malaysia-palmoil-exclusive/exclusive-india-urges-boycott-of-malaysian-palm-oil-after-diplomatic-row-sources-idUSKBN1ZCOT6>.

⁴⁶ "Fisherman Beaten to Death in Indian Jail laid to Rest," *Dawn*, April 6, 2019.

⁴⁷ "Violation of Indus Waters Treaty," *Frontier Post*, November 24, 2019.

Cyber Warfare for Economic Disruption

India's cyber warfare tactics include attacks on Pakistan's economy in terms of striking at the banking sector. This includes not just disruptions to banking institutions but also the theft of customer data. Anecdotal evidence from bankers suggests that these attacks are quite common, and that many Pakistani citizens have had their financial data compromised. This tactic represents a combination of cyber and economic disruption in the hybrid warfare repertoire.

Coercive Diplomacy

Policymakers, for a long time, have considered coercive diplomacy as a useful alternative to war. India has also been following the same concept by refusing dialogue with Pakistan and instead, has endeavored to use a number of counterproductive coercive tactics. The so-called surgical strike in Balakot, Operation Parakram after an attack on the Indian Parliament and the escalation after Mumbai attacks were endeavors at coercive diplomacy. India's attempts at employment of coercive diplomatic efforts have always failed because of Pakistan's strong conventional forces, possession of nuclear weapons, and certain geopolitical realities that strongly favor the country. Indian endeavors have, however, complicated relations between the two countries by increasing tensions.

Cyber Warfare

India has been conducting cyber warfare against Pakistan in all its manifestations. Following escalation in February 2019 in the aftermath of the Pulwama attack, Indian-state sponsored agencies launched a covert cyberattack against the country's military, commercial and government assets. Pakistan's Foreign Office website was attacked by hackers.⁴⁸

Political Warfare

Political warfare is a vital component of hybrid warfare strategy employing a mix of diplomatic warfare, legal warfare (Lawfare) and other political tools to weaken the adversary. Lobbying, a critical component, weakens the diplomatic position of the opponent. Indian diplomatic efforts against Pakistan at different international fora, subversive political maneuvers in Kabul, and use of her economic and political influence to brand Pakistan as a sponsor of terrorism are all aimed at weakening the country's standing. In 2010-11, as a result of Indian lobbying in the US, Pakistan Navy was denied 6X Oliver Hazard Perry-class frigates. Similarly, during the Kargil conflict, under Indian pressure, the French government stopped ferry of ROSE

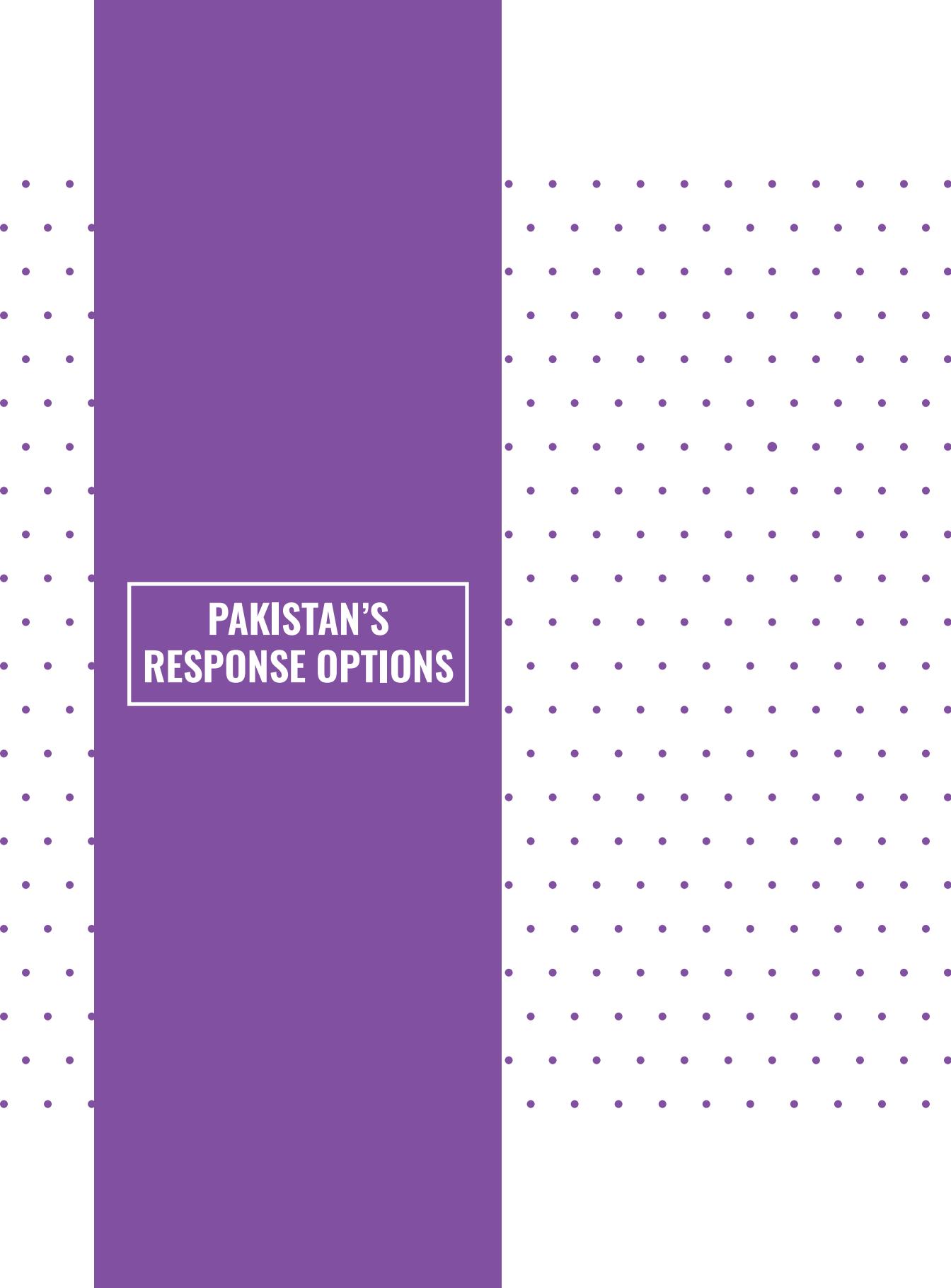
⁴⁸ "Indian Hackers Attack Pakistan's Foreign Ministry Website," *Pakistan Today*, February 16, 2019.

(Retrofit Of Strike Element) modified Mirage aircraft to Pakistan.

Sports

India has even been using sports for political gains and maligning / pressurizing Pakistan. Its decision of not playing cricket with Pakistan was aimed at weakening a strong rival team. Similarly, the terrorist attack on Sri Lanka's cricket team was used as an excuse to prevent international cricket events in Pakistan.⁴⁹ Non-issuance of visas to Pakistani players in events such as Kabbadi tournaments, also shows India's mindset.

⁴⁹ "Pakistan Hands over Proofs of RAW Involvement in Sri Lankan Team Attack, other Terror Attacks," *Asian Tribune*, July 23, 2009.



**PAKISTAN'S
RESPONSE OPTIONS**

Pakistan's Response Options

Since hybrid warfare is seriously threatening Pakistan's national security, economic progress, social cohesion and political stability, policymakers need to understand the dynamics and implications of this type of warfare. It is necessary for all organs of the state to come up with a workable strategy to counter its adversary and collaborators in the internal rank and file. The Armed Forces need to understand the evolving threat and work out strategies in line with the national strategy to counter the threat in their respective domains. The policies, thus, formulated must aim to protect national interests while remaining globally relevant in the evolving geopolitical environment. Countering potential threats would require formulation of policy plans to effectively respond to the entire spectrum of hybrid warfare in the following areas:

Economy

In order to effectively respond to potential hybrid threats, it is extremely important to overcome existing economic constraints. Since the economy has strong linkages with national cohesion, diplomatic clout and other aspects of national security, it remains the most vital factor and must be given top priority. Pakistan's poor economic condition and dependence on external financial support is the biggest hurdle in exploiting the country's potential.

With economic dependence on other countries, Pakistan will not be able to exercise its political and diplomatic choices. Additionally, a strong economy will not only strengthen national defense, it will also bring disgruntled elements into the national fold by increasing their stakes.

First, there is the need for formulation of policies for long-term sustained development with incentives for tax paying and law-abiding citizens as well as foreign investors. Pakistani diaspora settled overseas should be considered an asset and utilized accordingly. There is a need to engage the diaspora settled abroad to bring back capable people and utilize this talented and educated human resource. Similarly, overseas Pakistani businessmen should be facilitated to invest in their native country.

It is also important to exploit natural resources to improve the economy. The agricultural sector must be helped to work on modern lines to create surplus in food, fruits, and vegetables. An effort must be made to promote tourism and facilitate tourists. Industries bringing in value-addition must be supported. Since the security situation in the country directly impacts investors' confidence, industrial growth

and flight of critical capital, the government must ensure improvement in all types of securities. To expand the tax net, while formulation of policies is necessary, there is also the need for curtailing powers of income tax officials. Citizens should be incentivized and supported to focus on self-employment through small and medium-sized enterprises and start-ups.

Foreign Office / Pakistan's Missions Abroad

The global order is in a flux, changing from unipolar to a multipolar system. Therefore, Pakistan's foreign policy needs to be revamped on priority basis to place the country in a position of relevance in the emerging global order.

To achieve foreign policy objectives, an assessment must be made to re-align Pakistan's interests with leading world powers and adjust to their divergent interests. Pakistan must make positive use of its geostrategic location to take advantage of the emergent global order.

In the regional context, Pakistan must formulate a policy to balance between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Failure to do this will provide India with strategic advantage to work against Pakistan's interests. Additionally, poor relations with Iran will help India exploit the situation to her advantage. Such a situation may lead to sectarian crises, detrimental to Pakistan and Iran. There is a need to work together with Iran to root out India's covert operations in the region. This is more applicable in the context of hybrid war, as unilateral actions on the part of two allies against a common threat may complicate the relationship.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and missions abroad have a huge responsibility of projecting Pakistan's narrative and building a positive image of the country.

There is a need to formulate a comprehensive strategy to make Pakistan's diplomatic procedures around the globe compatible with international practices of engagement and service. Diplomatic staff posted abroad must be equipped and trained to use social media platforms to effectively communicate Pakistan's message to the populations of host countries.

They must also be trained and equipped to promote Pakistan's culture, heritage, traditions, and sports to build a soft image. Pakistan's tourism and trade interests must also be pursued actively. Overseas Pakistanis must be encouraged to support Pakistan's interests wherever they can.

It is vital to conduct a three or four-yearly formal foreign policy review with inputs

from all stakeholders to reset priorities and direction if necessary. Additionally, event-related random reviews should be held according to emergent environment to decide the future course of action. Change in governments should, however, not impact long-term policy goals.

Creating Religious Harmony

Religious intolerance has seeped deep into Pakistan's society. While the foundation of this problem was laid decades ago, successive governments tolerated and facilitated it for political exigencies. To create religious harmony, the government must reform the *Madrassah* (religious school) system and bring it under government supervision. Additionally, there is a need to control religious leaders who exploit the public and challenge writ of the state. Flow of foreign funding to religious parties must be controlled to stop open for business religious enterprises.

Ethnic Divide / Inter-Provincial Harmony

The deprivation / alienation of underdeveloped regions and populations must be compensated by initiating effective and lasting compensatory initiatives for reformation. Economic development, education, health, and job opportunities should be given priority. This will be a daunting task as interest groups, elite and external actors would not want to lose their hold. Other issues creating discord among the provinces also need be resolved amicably to the satisfaction of all stakeholders.

Education

There is a dire need to reform the education curriculum as a priority to offset remnants of the colonial system. Teaching techniques and training systems in educational institutions should be redesigned to produce productive human capital with sense of patriotism, civic duty, and nationalism. University-level students must be exposed to fundamentals of international relations to give them understanding about future challenges.

Leadership / Public Awareness & Partnership

From a tactical and operational perspective, it is often difficult for leaders / commanders at all levels to see beyond their training and theoretical understanding of war and how it should be fought. From a strategic point of view, it is often difficult to recognize the peril that exists and differentiate it from the normal clutter of day-

to-day “political” life.⁵⁰

As a first step, it is important that the national security infrastructure, as well as political leadership and society as a whole comprehend the nature of hybrid warfare, its characteristics, means and political objectives. While there is general understanding, efforts are required to impart clear understanding of hybrid warfare to civilian leaders, military officers, diplomats, and other government functionaries holding mid to senior appointments. Concurrently, increasing public awareness is also essential to effectively combat the menace of hybrid warfare and defeat adversarial designs against national identity and integrity.

Such efforts would help ensure that adversaries do not succeed in their efforts of creating a “coalition of malcontent minorities” and forever weakening national unity. For these reasons, it is important to develop clear national strategy using all elements of national power for countering hybrid warfare. As such, this will require strong political leadership and a government that is credible and transparent. This requirement entails information sharing and a cooperative relationship between the government, private sector, and the media.

Human Vs National Security

While significance of national security cannot be ignored, the government must focus on critical human-centric basic necessities such as food, shelter, healthcare, education, public utilities and security of life and property. Improved human security will greatly enhance national security.

Rule of Law & Justice

Rule of law and justice in the country requires immediate focus as without these, citizens can neither feel secure nor any systems would work. Universal and equitable enforcement of law would make the masses confident and deter exploiters. This will also help attract foreign investment as well as locals investing in industry and business. To make this happen, the judiciary as well as the police and other law enforcement agencies should be subjected to the same standards of accountability and effectiveness in public service provision as other public sector agencies.

⁵⁰ “Bernd Horn, “On Hybrid Warfare,” Government of Canada (2016), <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.814723/publication.html>

Cyber Warfare

Cyberattacks, being an important element of hybrid warfare, necessitate more vigilance. Competent professionals specializing in IT and high-tech software should be employed to secure important websites, avoid disruption of essential services, and to safeguard financial systems against potential risks. Laws must be enacted for thoroughly testing and certifying all imported equipment and devices according to laid down cyber and information security standards prior to use in the country.

Intelligence Gathering & Cooperation

Pakistan must enhance intelligence coordination with friendly neighboring countries to completely neutralize RAW and other hostile agencies. Inclusion of Iran in CPEC should be used as an opportunity. Pakistan must also endeavor to break the RAW and Afghan NDS nexus. This can be achieved by improving the country's economic and political relations with Afghanistan. Additionally, to effectively counter Indian proxy war efforts in Pakistan, there is a need for civil and military intelligence agencies to focus on national security and not the internal political system.

Battle of Narratives

Another key component in defense against hybrid threats is the battle of narratives, or in other words, strategic communications. A robust, well-informed, aggressive effort must be made for disseminating information that lays out a narrative explaining national intentions and actions, as well as challenging disinformation and competing storylines. This sharing of information is extremely difficult and does not guarantee people always accepting what is being said. For that reason, truth, transparency, and credibility must always be paramount. False narrative is dealt a mortal blow when the state does not respond to events in a manner a progressive, democratic state is supposed to do, like in case of crimes or excesses against the weak or minorities. Or when the religious extremists hold the government hostage over a minor religious issue and the government ends up yielding to illegal and unjustified demands. Thus, the writ of the government is compromised.

An understanding of the audience is the key to ensuring that proper messages are formulated, and correct media utilized to reach the intended "targets" with proper effect. In essence, it is absolutely critical to align strategic narrative to the desired objectives.⁵¹ Power of media, social media and cyberspace should be used as a tool in both, offensive as well as defensive hybrid war.

⁵¹ Ibid.

Media

Media plays a pivotal role in projecting the national image as well as creating harmony among the citizenry. Pakistan's media policy needs to be formulated to project the national narrative.

- National broadcasters, television and radio need to be restructured and financed to compete with internationally renowned media houses.
- Operations should be based out of strong geographic locations with a professionally competent work force to broadcast in all major international and regional languages.
- Additionally, the role of media should be utilized to promote national interests instead of using it as a tool for political blame game for castrating opponents.
- PEMRA should become proactive to maintain a balance in media industry operations. Instead of exploitation of information and using sensational tactics, media must be molded into a national asset to enhance the soft image of the country.
- Since misinformation campaigns are not mature operations, there would be a need for continuous adaptation to the changing environment.
- The media must also be motivated and prepared to effectively counter anti-state narratives.
- Necessary legislation must be undertaken to cover all loopholes within the system.

Social Media

Hybrid warfare depends a great deal on the war of narratives. In Pakistan, there is a general tendency of believing in, and spreading conspiracy theories.

Since the Internet and social media platforms are an outstanding source for information as well as disinformation, policies must be formed and steps taken to avoid its exploitation and use it to one's own benefit especially, during politically sensitive times such as elections, public protests, or at times of pronounced political upheaval and instability.

There needs to be a system to check / block or counter fake information being fed from external websites. Strict actions should be taken against social media setups found guilty of spreading fake news, rumors, hate content or any other narrative against state interests. However, dissent should not be suppressed, rather dissidents should be engaged. Disaffected people make the maximum contribution

to anti-Pakistan propaganda. Pro-government trolls should refrain from abuse and vulgar insinuations. More importantly, there is a need to differentiate between criticism on the government for its failures and anti-state narrative, and the two should not be mixed.

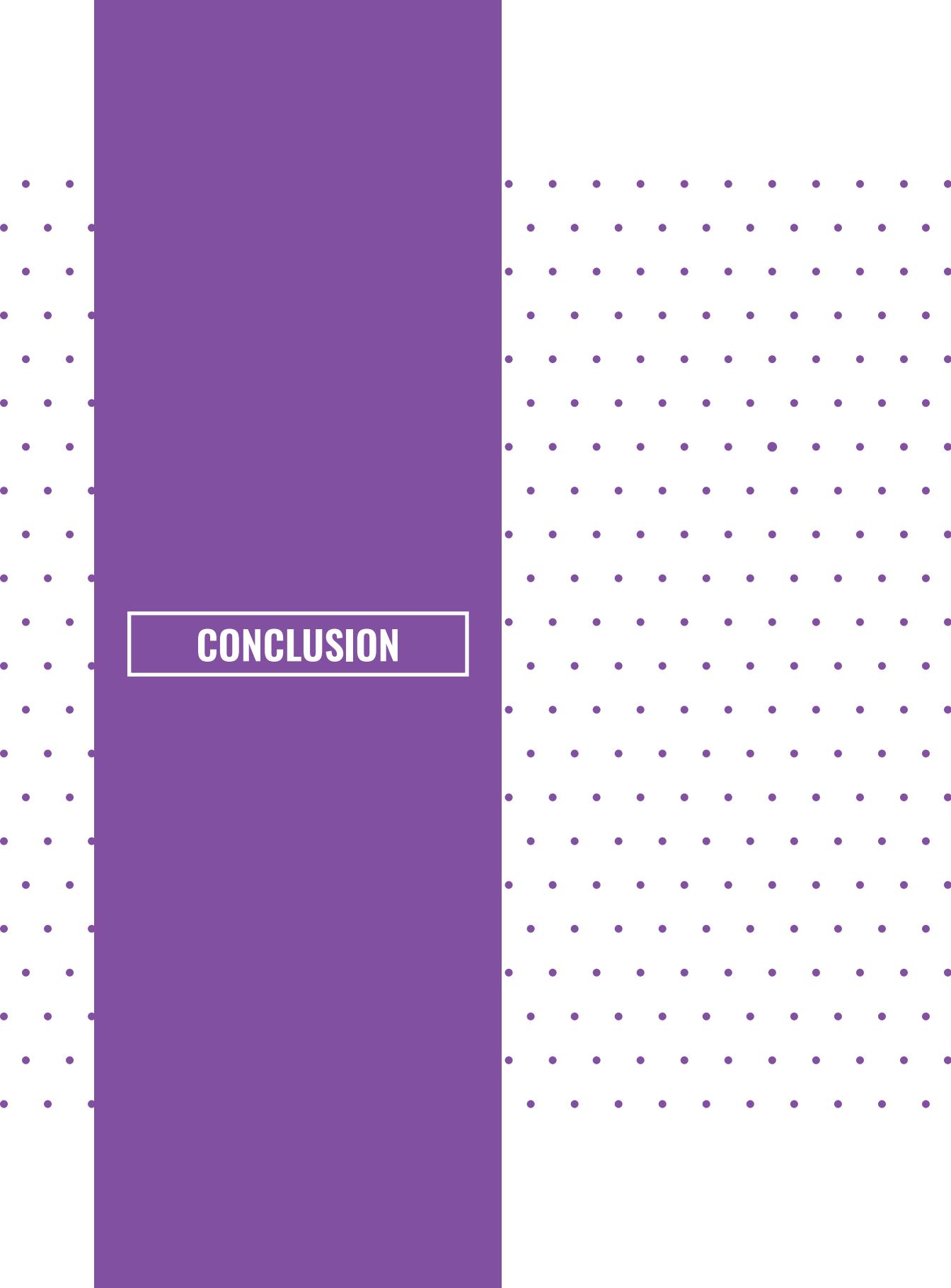
Role of Academia & Think-Tanks

Despite availability of numerous write-ups on Pakistan's security problems, indigenous discourse on important elements of national security are rare. Mostly, the analysis of Pakistan's complex dynamics has been done by regional or Western analysts who either lack nuanced understanding or have inherent biases. Academia and think-tanks should undertake in-depth analysis of the country's security problems and provide inputs for policy formulation and implementation.

While the Foreign Office and other stakeholders can provide inputs, academia and think-tanks should have the freedom of expression, as without constructive criticism, no analysis would be taken seriously at the international level.

Legal Options

While legal options are usually limited against hybrid threats due reasons of undeniable proof, with concerted efforts, a focused team can always lead to success. Capture of RAW operative Kulbhushan Yadav has provided a perfect opportunity. On Kashmir, after Indian actions of 5 August 2019, the military option was discarded, yet apparently, there has not been any consideration of a legal option on human rights' grounds. Indian violations of the Indus Waters Treaty can also be challenged legally. However, there is a need for putting together a team of competent lawyers with expertise in related fields from within the country or abroad, with all the information and funds to fight such cases.

The image features a central purple vertical bar. On either side of this bar, there are white background areas filled with a grid of small purple dots. The dots are arranged in a regular pattern, with a slight offset between the left and right sides. In the center of the purple bar, the word "CONCLUSION" is written in white, uppercase letters, enclosed within a thin white rectangular border.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Pakistan is presently facing hybrid threats, the most common elements of which include economic and political blackmail, terrorist attacks, fake news, false propaganda, spreading disappointment in the masses to create anarchy and cyberattacks, all aimed at creating political instability, fuelling social unrest to weaken the state. India has been employing all possible means to destabilize Pakistan economically and politically by creating security threats inside the country. It also connives with other countries inimical to Pakistan to succeed in her designs.

Since such threats are not likely to fade away, rather likely to increase in intensity and impact in times to come, there is a serious need to realize the dangers in its entirety as early as possible and put in resolute efforts to act against all perceivable challenges. This challenge to Pakistan's security must be given top priority in policy formulation regardless of political differences. All political parties must be made part of policy formulation to fight this menace.

There is a need to co-relate national identity and state security with focus on the existing as well as future security predicaments of Pakistan. The relationship between national identity, security as well as all elements of national power must be considered in entirety. The focus should be on state-centric security by considering issues such as state identity, economy, governance, civil-military relations for policy formulation with consideration to regional and extra-regional developments. Most importantly, evidence of India's hybrid warfare has to be collected, collated, and presented to the world persistently and continuously. It may not yield immediate results but would pay off in the long run, especially in the evolving global geostrategic environment.

Pakistan needs to develop a comprehensive policy and efficient strategy to develop strong deterrence capability to ward off these multidimensional threats to its sovereignty. For this, a comprehensive security strategy with a synchronized framework of action should be formulated with inputs from academia, intelligentsia, political entities, and strategists and in consultation with other stakeholders. Policy formulation should also be followed by enhancing law enforcement capacity. However, such policies cannot be implemented successfully unless all political parties and state institutions wholeheartedly support the government.

Pakistanis are a resilient and battle-hardened people. We need to polish our capabilities to overcome our vulnerabilities while focusing on education and socioeconomic development. Additionally, there is need to promote unity and harmony among the provinces, minorities, ethnicities and other divided segments of society. This unity will help in effectively tackling hybrid threats.

The political leadership needs to communicate with and convince the public of the looming dangers and the role citizens are expected to play. As a nation, citizens should be proactive rather than being reactive and show our adversaries that we are one of the most resilient people in the world, who always unite to face any threat to the sovereignty of the country.

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His research expertise includes India-Pakistan relations, strategic defense and security, nuclear deterrence, air power employment, and unconventional warfare.

In recognition of his meritorious services, the Air Marshal was awarded Tamgha-i-Imtiaz (Military), Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military), Hilal-i-Imtiaz (Military) and Sitara-i-Basalat.



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