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Hybrid Warfare Means and Challenges

Outline

1. Introduction

"The evil phenomenon of hybrid warfare through various means of exploitation of domestic, diplomatic and institutional faultlines has been posing a multi-faceted threat to the ideology, sovereignty and the existence of states; however, with the adoption of a hybrid strategy, the threats of hybrid warfare can be mitigated."

2. Declassifying The Term Hybrid Warfare: A Historical Perspective

3. Means of Hybrid Warfare: An Overlapping Phenomenon of Different Domains

3.1 The domain of tangible means;

a- Warfare through conventional military forces

b- Asymmetric warfare through irregular forces

c- Cyber warfare disrupting communication networks and military infrastructure

3.2 The domain of intangible means;

- a- The use of propaganda and disinformation to trigger civil war or unrest in the enemy territory
- b- Economic and diplomatic pressure to isolate the enemy state at international level
- c- Through intelligence and subversion to exert information deterrance and exploit strategic weakpoints
- d- By proxy ways to weaken the enemy state and fortification of self-power in an indirect manner

case study: Multiple proxy wars between USA and USSR during the cold-war era

- e- By spreading false information at national and international media to distort the repute of enemy state

case study: EU Disinfo lab case

3.3 The complementary role of tangible and intangible means in hybrid warfare

4- Challenges Of Hybrid Warfare IN the Form of Exploitation of:

4.1 Ethical faultlines and grey areas to disrupt the peaceful co-existence of diverse communities

case study: The mohajir community of Karachi and the originality of their concerns

4.2 Socio-economic faultlines in the under-developed and under-privileged areas of the state

case study: The rise of militant and insurgent movements in the area of Balochistan

4.3 Institutional imbalances to widen the cleavage and dent the confidence of the masses

case study: The civil-military

education in Pakistan and the Indian involvement through fake social media accounts

4.4 Socio-political processes and data stealing to influence the democratic procedures

case study: US allegations on Russia of influencing the election results through data infringement

4.5 Diplomatic and foreign policy strategies to minimize investment opportunities and reduce strategic importance

5. Mitigation Of Threats of Hybrid Warfare: The Need Of a Hybrid Strategy

5.1 Point, accept and resolve the ethical grey areas through an increased focus towards good governance

5.2 Giving proper attention towards human development in the under-developed regions to eliminate any space of external

②

involvement

a- The success story of merger of FATA imparting the sense of identity, belonging and unity

5.3 Communal level interaction of military to increase the confidence of masses and a consensus-based civil-military decision-making through meetings and conferences

5.4 Developing a strong cyber-defense, fortification of the infrastructure and resilient media resistant to the effects of influence of hybrid warfare

5.5 Deterrence with information gathering in turn helping in carving out a well-informed foreign policy

6- Conclusion

Since the dawn of civilization, competition has been a constant phenomenon in the human societies. It has been the basis of progress as well as the conflicts. Among the tools of competition, war has been the most lethal one. The purpose of war has been either to ensure defense and security or to capture the resources for better financial and economic conditions. With the advent of technology, the modes and means of war have also undergone many changes. They have now become complex and unpredictable and hybrid warfare is considered as the zenith of that complexity and unpredictability. Hybrid warfare is a military strategy that aims at weakening the enemy state at every front through various tangible and intangible means. It encompasses both the conventional and non-conventional military, non-military and informal methodologies. It has been present in history in various

forms but with the increased use of cyberspace in every field, it has aggravated the security and sovereignty concerns of the states. The use of false information and propaganda are the core features of hybrid warfare. Through various other means of the exploitation of domestic, diplomatic and institutional faultlines, hybrid warfare posits a multifaceted threat to the ideology, sovereignty and the existence of the state; however, with the adoption of a hybrid and a holistic strategy, the threats of the hybrid warfare can be mitigated.

The hybrid warfare is not a new phenomenon. It has been present in the history in various forms. The main purpose of the hybrid warfare is exploitation of military and non-military ^{vulnerabilities} strategies to strengthen self-power and weaken the ideological and political hold of the enemy state over their individuals. Hybrid warfare can be differentiated

from the conventional modes of warfare in terms of its untraceable means, unlimited scope, unpredictable consequences and absence of any footprints on the field. It attacks at the brain and backbone of the society by weakening the bond of ideology and discrediting the vitality and significance of institutions.

The war of American Revolution in late eighteenth century against the British forces had a reflection of hybrid warfare where the irregular warfare tactics and the tools of propaganda were used by the American side. Similarly, in the examples of Boer war (1899-1902) by the group of settlers of Dutch in South Africa against the British forces, the Vietnam war (1955-1973), the proxy wars during the cold-war era (US versus USSR) and the Gulf War (1990-91), all had the shades of hybrid warfare tactics. However, in the present era, the phenomenon

3

of hybrid warfare has become more evil, encompassing and destructive.

There are various means of hybrid warfare that overlap with each other to generate synergistic effects. The means are more specific to the goals in view. They range from tangible to intangible in terms of tools used and the goals identified.

The first and foremost among the tangible means of the hybrid warfare is the use of conventional military power. It has been very common in traditional warfare where the physical capacity of military of one state was placed confronting the military capacity of the enemy state. The mode of war is direct and the decisive factors are modernized weaponry and an invincible infantry motivated by a common and indivisible ideology.

The other means include the sponsorship of asymmetric warfare

through the use of irregular forces. The tactics of guerrilla warfare and deceiving strategies are the mode of this warfare. The forces opposing each other are not equal in size and the capacity and this pushes the weaker opponent towards asymmetric and irregular use of intense and coercive use of power. The example includes instigation of militant and extremist groups in the enemy state to challenge the writ of the state ultimately weakening the centrifugal hold of the state over the masses, resources and binding ideology.

Another means of the hybrid warfare includes the wrong, illegal and malicious use of the cyberspace to disrupt communication networks and the military infrastructure. False and fake information circulation, the hacking of official websites, the intrusion

into the communication networks for espionage and pushing fabricated rhetoric to discourage the nationalist narrative of the state are some of the examples of use of the cyberspace for hybrid warfare.

Moving forward, the other domain, intangible domain, preferably uses the soft digital space through propaganda and disinformation to wage hybrid warfare.

The tools of propaganda and disinformation have the potential to influence the public opinion and exploit the already existing grey areas in the demography of a state. The civil unrest can be triggered through flaming the sectarian differences, highlighting the unequal distribution of resources with false link to the sub-nationalist identities or stimulating an ethnic rift. All of these incidents may have the hybrid warfare tactics of propaganda and disinformation behind them.

Secondly, the developing and under-developed countries are always more vulnerable at economic front and the international diplomatic manoeuvring at the various forums can isolate such states in terms of investment and trade. This hampers the flow of resources and blocks the jugular vein of states. The unsuitable economic atmosphere is communicated through fake surveys and manipulated predictions that reduce investment. The resource rich states and the big-markets use their intrinsic vitality in global supply chains to diplomatically isolate their enemies through various backdoor diplomatic tricks.

Moreover, the information gathering about the strategic weak-points and intelligence about the geographical landscape, population density, cultural practices and human development situation are other means of hybrid warfare. Through these methods,

4

the grey areas and chokepoints are located to exploit by injecting divisive catalysts. In this era of war of data and information, the intelligence gathering and record maintenance are no less than the nuclear weapons.

The other method of hybrid warfare is proxy wars. This has been the practice in history where the geography of one state became an indirect battleground for other powers to achieve their own goals. Through the hybrid warfare methodology, this phenomenon has become even deadly. The regional security and the global peace remain at stake in the wake of any proxy war as it involves the interests of various states in the form of domino effect. The worst case-study is the cold war fight of capitalist and communist ideologies in various states having US and USSR as the leading opponents. With the rise of

China at the global space, the security analysts again worry the inception of a new cold war - with proxy wars around the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) - in a more intense and hybrid manner.

The most conspicuous and visible means of modern hybrid warfare is the use of media by spreading fabricated, concocted and false version of information. It not only causes the domestic unrest in the victim state but also distorts the international image of the state that in-turn becomes a reason for poor performance at various international indicators. The unfortunate and a disgusting story of Indian chronicles has been rightly exposed by the EU Disinfo Lab that aimed at injuring the narrative of Pakistan regarding illegally occupied region of Kashmir by India and the struggle of Pakistan against terrorism.

The hybrid warfare has various means and the combination of these means complementing each other is the exclusive feature of this evil phenomenon making it more ruinous and inhumane. The tangible and intangible means have a symbiotic relationship and they produce a combined effect to the envisaged goals.

The challenges and threats of hybrid warfare are multi-faceted. They range from political to economic, social to diplomatic and ethnic to cultural domains.

The first and foremost challenge is the exploitation of ethnic faultlines and grey areas of any society. The beauty of diversity becomes a vulnerability and weakness when there is an external intrusion in the form of hatred and division. The bond of nationalism becomes weak and there arises the danger of rivalry on the ethnic and the cultural basis. It puts the peace and existence

of a state at stake. The case study of Mohajir community in Sindh, Pakistan is the perfect match of the disastrous effects of use of hybrid warfare tools to sow the seeds of extremism and polarization. The concept of 'other' in Mohajir community is the result of infusion of evil catalysts.

The second challenge is the exploitation of socio-economic faultlines of a state. The unprivileged and the under-developed communities are accessed through various means and brainwashed to stand-up against the state on the basis of various forms of discrimination. The perfection is not possible to be achieved and team of improvement always exists in every society but the provocation on the basis of malicious ideology is not allowed in any moral and legal code. On the contrary, the hybrid warfare adopts it as a primary tool. The grave concerns of the people of Balochistan, Pakistan are actual, genuine and admittable but the Indian

5
involvement to flame the tide of separatism and discredit the authority of federation is a big challenge for Pakistan. The presence of the Indian spy Kalbushan Yadav is a practical example of Indian hybrid war tactics in Balochistan.

The other challenge of hybrid warfare is exploitation of institutional imbalance in nascent democracies. The prime case is the unequal civil-military equation in various developing countries. The elected representatives are bypassed to shift the center of power towards more organized military or the confidence of the masses is snatched by the false propaganda against any institution such as judiciary or military. This hampers the growth and trust deficit divorces the state of its institutional unity, consensus and agreement. For example, in Pakistan, the military is strong with a tainted history of martial laws, any vicious campaign

based upon the past mistakes can be triggered to disturb the present moment. For this sake, the fake accounts are operated. So, the grey areas of institutions are vulnerable through hybrid warfare.

Furthermore, the democratic procedures such as the elections can be manipulated that influence the actuality of mandate in parliaments. The rigging allegations then divide the state on the most important political event and causes unrest. The most recent example is of allegations put forward by US against USSR of data stealing and then influencing the results of the elections. This is a great threat to not only the democratic norms and culture but also to the essence of the social contract that binds various federations and come-together confederations in the world. So, the manipulation of democratic processes is another threat/challenge of hybrid warfare.

In addition to it; at international level, through diplomatic manoeuvring and various evil foreign policy objectives that involve the use of markets and natural resources to earn immoral and unjustified benefits against the enemy state are also the challenges of hybrid warfare. In the international treaties and agreements, the concerted version of compulsions and sanctions are introduced, either directly or indirectly, that cause the reduction in investment and reduced ~~the~~ geo-strategic plus geo-economic importance because of isolation.

The multi-faceted challenges and threats of the hybrid warfare can be mitigated through a hybrid strategy. The strategy should address all the vulnerability either that are military or non-military.

First of all, location, acceptance and resolution of ethical faultlines is necessary. It will reduce the external involvement and the acceptance of

sugar-coated
any incentive. This can be achieved
only through good governance and
the equitable participation of all
groups in policy-making. Moreover, the
proper attention towards human
development in the under-developed
regions can be of great service. More
the prosperity, less the grievances and
more strong federation. For example,
the merger of Federally Administered
Tribal Areas (FATA) through twenty-
fifth amendment in the constitution
of Pakistan imparts the sense of
identity, belonging and unity to
them. In return, there will be
development and prosperity that will
help the state fight militant and
separatist groups in a locally supported
atmosphere and resilient motivation.

Moreover, the military needs
a communal interaction to develop
the sense of belonging and intimacy.
This will be helpful in imparting
the strategic thinking at the
masses level and will also increase

the confidence of the masses in military. Furthermore, the consensus of civil-military institutions will improve the strategic coherence and present a fortified defense against the menace of hybrid warfare.

In addition to it, there is the need of a strong cyber defense and the fortification of military infrastructure through the promising and responsible use of media as the fourth pillar of the state. This will produce resistance against the potential of cyber warfare. Furthermore, the intelligence deterrence through repetitive engagement at the various diplomatic levels can also serve a better cause to combat hybrid warfare in its own cobweb. This can, in turn, be a foundation of a well-informed and well-calculated foreign policy that is ahead of time and secures the national interests and integration in a best possible way.

To sum up the whole discussion, it can be argued that there is no way to root out the evil tendency of human beings and that is why the reality of hybrid warfare is a new and accepted truth in the modern world of warfare. This can only be tackled through various inclusive and hybrid strategies that aim at reducing the points of conflict and discrimination on any basis, the development of camaraderie and cooperation between institutions and establishing an atmosphere of strategic and diplomatic thinking. If these measures and initiatives are materialized into a well-crafted strategy, then the menace of hybrid warfare will be cast aside in its intensity and severity. It will be easy to be located, predicted and tackled. This will not only secure the domestic security and the sovereignty of the states but will also prove to

security of
be helpful in the changing
global paradigm towards a
multi-polar world.