The ascending potency of hybrid warfare being foisted on the State of Pakistan is adding to the security woes of the country. Explain

Introduction.

Hybrid warfare is defined as a military strategy that combines conventional & unconventional methods of warfare & influence. It employs political warfare, cyber warfare, fake news, diplomacy, lawfare & foreign electoral intervention to exploit vulnerabilities of an adversary and achieve synergistic effects.

Analysing the concept of hybrid warfare.

In this new era of hybrid warfare, adversaries are able to threaten each other's security interests without resorting to direct military action. Hybrid warfare blurs the lines between peacetime & active wartime. The concept of hybrid warfare has been criticized by some academics and practitioners due to its alleged vagueness, disputed constitutive elements, and alleged historical distortions. That being said; the reality of hybrid warfare cannot be ignored or undermined.

Hybrid warfare combines conventional and unconventional methods, including military operations, cyber warfare, disinformation campaigns and economic pressure. Hybrid warfare relies on provoking historical, ethnic, religious, socio-economic and geographically different fault lines in society.

Its tools include information warfare, proxy warfare, propoganda, terrorist activities, political and diplomatic coercion, economic strangulation etc

Security woes of Pakistan and increasing potency of Hybrid warfa

Like many other countries, Pakistan has several vulnerabilitie identity conflicts, ethnic & sectarian divide, unequal economic opportunities, political instability, weak or non-functional institutions etc. These have been further aggravated by poor governance and failure to implement rule of law and provide justice to the aggrieved. These vulnerabilities have been exploited by Enemy States & Non State Actors further dismantling our infrastructure.

In 2022 a string of cyber attacks on different industries, let it be Sindh High Court, FBR, PTV Sports or commercial Banks left the country rattled and worried for the state of Cyber Secu in Pakistan. According to Federal Minister for Information Technology Syed Aminul Haque, over 900,000 hacking incidents take place in Pakistan daily. Global Cyber Security Inden showed Pakistan ranking at 23 in 2013/2014 in Cyber-securit 66 in 2016 and 94 in 2018. This lack of cyber security despite creating by laws to tackle the issue is evident in the hackin of FBR (Federal Board of Revenue) and National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) putting at risk ~~information~~ private information of millions of citizents (FBR).

In 2020 EU DISINFO Lab exposed India in its investigativ study called 'the Indian Chronicles' which claimed that India has used 750 websites in 119 states to defame Pakistan globally. India openly used diplomatic maneuvering to put Pakistan on the FATF blacklist in 2022. Foreign Minister Shah mehmood Qureshi linked India to seprati st movment Baloch Liberation Army and ~~its~~ said the government had irrefutable evidence linking India to terror attacks in Pakistan.

The Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) & Tehreek-e-Talibaan Pakistan (TTP) are two terrorist organizations that are continually financially supported by India further aggravat socio-religious fabrics. For example, Balochistan & KPK have seen an ongoing cycles of terrorism and enternally spurred identity conflicts such as the Jamuary Mosque Bombings which was claimed by TTP and the grievances of the Baloch Hazara Tribe.

Afghanistan is also providing safe havens to TTP terrorist outfit to gainer leverage over Pakistan according to the official stance of Pakistani Government

According to the Ex-Prime Minister Imran Khan, reports showed that he was also made a target of Israeil made Pegasus spyware program. In July 2021, a joint investigation conducted by 17 media Organizations, revealed that pegasus spyware was used to target on heads of States, activists, journalists, and dissidents, enabling human rights around the world on a massive scale.

How Pakistan is dealing with this new wave of hybrid warfare

Pakistan has put forth legislature to hamper terrorist financing within the country with the creation of the FIU (Financial Intelligence Unit). Center for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI) has marked out a protective security methodology that aims to counter the atrocious cyber attacks on State Institutions and National Assets. The de-radicalization program by the name of "Sabaoon Center for Rehabilitation and Monitoring" in conflict ridden areas of the country was a huge success in Swat in terms of imparting corrective religious education to former violent extremists & meticulously reintigrating them into society.

Way Forward.

Pakistan must quicken its response against cyber attacks by training law enforcment agencies to deal with such threats specifically. This can be achieved through incorporating programs like "Virtual Reality Training Simulator" in law enforcments training programs. The Government should also strive to be inclusive of all ethnicities considering the diversity of our nation so that groups like BIA do not have strong footholds with undermined groups. Cybersecurity programs like the Mandiant can be used as a firewall against Cyberattacks. Platforms should be given to IT specialists to work on better ways to Deter, Deflect, Delay and Respond to such attacks.

Conclusion.

Over the past two decades Pakistan has faced almost all facets of Hybrid warfare. It has dealt with both internal and external exploitation of its vulnerabilities both in socio-religious framework as well as attacks of sovereign institutions putting at risk not just state & private information but also the lives of innocent civilians, as hybrid warfare does not differentiate between soldiers & civilian, war & peace. It is imperative that we update our security to meet with the current demands of ~~the~~ threats being faced. Though legislative has been passed in the form of FIA and CPNI but enforcment of ~~its practally~~ it practically is found lacking. De-radicalization of extremists with the renowned Sabaoon program is a promising initiative against Hybrid warfare.