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ESSAY NO. 9

ARE MODERN WARS NOT HOLY WARS?

OUTLINE:

I. INTRODUCTION:

II. Modern wars are not holy wars:

- 1) Genocide as a new normal
- 2) Mass starvation as the new strategy of war
- 3) Deliberate destruction of opponent's infrastructure
- 4) Compromising the opponent's energy resources for compulsion
- 5) No care for the burgeoning climate condition due to war
- 6) Using economic sanctions to break the opponent
- 7) Frequent weaponization of water resources
- 8) Frequent misinformation

use in the 5th generation warfare

- 9) Use of technology including AI to commit warcrimes and cyber warfare
- 10) Use of disproportional lethal autonomous weapons
- 11) Invading a country for its natural resources and compromising its sovereignty
- 12) Overall disregard for the international law

III. Confronting the unholy nature of modern warfare:

- 1) Binding Powers for ICC and ICJ
- 2) Increased peacekeeping missions by UN
- 3) Middle powers to promote regionalism to confront and defend aggression

IV. CONCLUSION:

In the changing global dynamics, conventional means of doing things have changed and so has the conduct of warfare. In the contemporary world, wars are not restricted to the borders only. They are proving to be detrimental to the global peace and security.

Genocide in wars has become a new normal in the modern ^{era} wars. New strategies are adopted to win the war including mass starvation of the opponents population, deliberate destruction of the opponents crucial infrastructure, and damaging the energy resources to cause blackouts. Moreover, in the wars, there is no care for the burgeoning climate condition owing to destruction. Economic sanctions are used to compel and break the opponent. Weaponization of water resources is frequent

by the upper riparians. Furthermore, use of misinformation in the narrative war has become a new strategy. Therefore, it is apt to assert that modern wars are not holy wars.

To start with, genocide has become a new normal in the modern wars. Genocide is the most inhumane and brutal strategy an aggressor adopts to win the war. It means the mass massacre of the opponent's population. This strategy has not been restricted to world wars only. It has re-emerged owing to the failure of post-world war 2 international institutions. The classic example of genocide is Israel's genocide in Gaza as confirmed by an international committee on genocide. Thus, genocide

has again emerged as a dangerous trend in the modern wars.

Similarly, mass starvation has also emerged as a strategy in the modern wars. It means the deliberate starvation of the opponent's population by restricting and blocking the aid that contain basic food and health packages. This strategy is adopted so that the weaker player bow to the aggressor's wishes and war goals.

For example, Israel continues to block food supplies for Gazans at the Rafah crossing. It is also blocking humanitarian missions including UNRWA to reach Gazans. Hence, dangerous strategies such as mass starvation have been adopted in the modern wars.

Similar to that, the strategy of deliberate destruction of crucial infrastructure is

adopted by the aggressors. This mainly includes the civilian infrastructure including educational institutions and hospitals. As per international law, damaging the civilian infrastructure is a war crime. However, countries have shown utter disregard for the international law. Whether it be RSF destroying hospitals and dispensaries in Sudan, or Israel annihilating educational institutions in Gaza, all are manifestations of this disregard. Therefore, aggressors are destroying civilian infrastructure in modern wars.

In addition, compromising the energy supplies of the weaker nation has been another strategy adopted to cripple the opponent by law violating countries. Energy supplies are crucial to sustain daily life and keep

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The life moving in the war-like situations. However, energy supplies are deliberately targeted to hurt civilians, let alone the military of the opponent. For example, Russia's central strategy has remained to target energy grids of Ukraine. As a result, heating systems are not working and civilians have to bear freezing cold. This clearly reflects how unholy strategies are adopted in modern warfare.

Moreover, in modern wars, climate remains the primary victim. Advanced technologies are used to destroy cities and assets.

Environmental assets become the collateral damage in these wars.

The world is already navigating through worsening and human life

threatening climate change conditions:

These wars further add to the

looming climate by destroying

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forests and procurement of massive weaponry. As per CSIS, 'Carbon boot print' could be responsible for 5.12% of global emissions. This clearly shows how climate condition is worsening due to wars.

Furthermore, economic sanctions are used to cripple the opponent's economy. This is a classic example of unconventional warfare where no guns are used and yet a great amount of damage is done. This strategy was normalized in the cold war. Currently, the International Financial Institutions are dominated by west and particularly, the United States. The US has utilized this monopoly to enforce its will upon others. It has sanctioned many countries and most common are Iran, Russia, and

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North Korea. Even EU countries were sanctioned after they opposed US' will to annex Greenland. Hence, economic sanctions are used as a weapon in the modern wars.

Additionally, countries are using their monopoly over water resources in wars. Weaponization of water has emerged as a new trend owing to burgeoning water crisis in the world. Water remains the basic need to sustain life and yet the unholy nature of modern wars has compelled the countries to capitalise on it. The suspension of Andus Waters Treaty by India is an example. It used the treaty to hurt Pakistan. As Ismail Serageldin, former secretary general of UN, said that modern wars will be fought over water. Therefore, water is used as a weapon in the modern wars.

Moreover, misinformation is used to promote the narrative in the modern wars. In the modern wars, narrative is the only thing that matters. No matter who is right or wrong, one who has control over the narrative is the right one. A classical example of this is Israel's use of narrative in its genocide in Gaza. From years, it continued its war crimes unquestioned due to its control and backing by the western media. As per an analysis by Al-Jazeera, in Hamas-Israel war, western media used panmic voice in reporting Israel's attacks. Hence, misinformation has become a new normal in the modern wars.

To add on, countries are using advance technologies to dominate the wars. In

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today's era, one who has monopoly over advanced technology can easily win the wars. However, ethical concerns follow. Cyber warfare is used to hack the opponents key institutions including economic ones. Similarly, Artificial Intelligence is used to guide weapons. For example, Israel used Lavender - an AI system - to track enemies. Lavender flagged civilians that resulted in mass massacre in the Jabalia camp Gaza. Thus, new technologies are unethically used in the modern wars.

Furthermore, countries are using lethal autonomous weapons in the modern wars. While Article 51 of the UN Charter gives countries the right to self-defense with a proportional use of force, no such protocol is followed by the aggressors. Countries are invading the weaker peripheries

just to advance their expansionist policies, let alone defending themselves. As a result, civilians suffer the consequences. As per a UN report, Israel's bombardment in Gaza is more than the NATO's invasion in Iraq and Afghanistan combined. This clearly shows how lethal weapons are used disproportionately in the modern wars.

Additionally, powerful countries are invading the countries that contain natural resources. The former give same excuses to justify their invasion. Whether it be NATO's invasion of Iraq in the cover of 'weapons of mass destruction', or United States quest to annex Greenland for 'security purposes', all are all examples of how rich and powerful countries exploit the weaker ones. Both Iraq and

Greenland are rich in oil and rare earth materials respectively. The invaders, in doing so, show no regard and respect for the sovereignty of other nations. Therefore, modern wars also consist of invading resource rich countries.

Moreover, in modern wars, the players show an utter disregard for the international law. They break all the laws including Geneva conventions, ICJ and ICC's rulings, and the law of the treaties by Vienna convention. As a result, an environment of uncertainty has been created in the current world order. Middle powers and weaker countries are rendered unsecured and they are bullied at the hands of powerful countries. Whether it be Russia-Ukraine war, or Israel -

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Palestine war, international laws are nowhere to be seen. Thus, international laws are ignored in the modern wars.

While the implications of the modern wars are alarming, they can be confronted by taking certain strategic steps. The first and foremost is to make the rulings of ICC and ICJ binding on the parties. These international courts maintain their credibility.

They rule in favour of the oppressed. Whether it be Vladimir Putin of Russia, or Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel, ICC has convicted all the aggressors for war crimes. However, it is unable to enforce its decisions.

Therefore, binding powers should be given to international courts to confront the unholy nature of the modern wars.

Second, UNSC should regain its credibility by enforcement. In the recent times, the credibility of UNSC has been questioned due to its ineffectiveness in maintaining the world peace. It continues to pass mere resolutions, while enforcement is nowhere to be seen. As a result, parallel institutions are gaining momentum such as Donald Trump's 'Board of Peace'. UN must increase its peace-keeping missions in the war-torn areas to ensure peace. Thus, UNSC's enforcement is crucial to confront the unholy nature of the modern wars.

last but not least, middle powers should promote regionalism and form alliances to survive in this era of uncertainty. It has been observed that countries having least military

capabilities and less technological advancements are more prone to the aggressors. Palestine, Iraq, and Greenland are few of the examples.

To confront this issue, they should form regional alliances to sustain economic sanctions, military aggression, and cyber attacks. Therefore, regionalism is key in confronting the unholy modern wars.

In conclusion, modern wars are indeed unholy wars due to their utter disregard for the international law and evil strategies. Frequent use of misinformation has become a norm in modern wars. Advance technological and Artificial Intelligence is used to commit war crimes.

Disproportionate use of lethal autonomous weapons has become frequent. Moreover, powerful countries are invading research

rich countries showing no regard for their sovereignty and international law. To confront this unholy nature of modern wars, binding powers should be given to international courts. Peace keeping missions by United Nations should be increased.

Furthermore, middle powers should adopt a strategy of regionalism for the protection in this uncertain era.

To sum up, modern wars have become a menace for the world.

If this trend continues, the world is destined to be doomed. Therefore, these wars should be dealt with immediately through an international consensus for a safe and secure world.