

Answer:

Hybrid warfare refers to the combination of conventional military actions with unconventional military practices such as terrorism, cyberattacks, spreading fake news, economic and political manipulation. Pakistan has been facing security challenges from internal as well as external fronts. Hybrid warfare can be used by state as well as non-state actors to create instability in the country. The aim of these tactics is to create confusion, limit the economic growth, destabilizing the government and to exploit vulnerabilities. Following are some hybrid warfare elements that have been observed in Pakistan:

Terrorism:

In the last two decades, the insurgent groups has risen which carried out thousands of attacks in Pakistan. The attacks were against army, government institutions and installations as well as civilians.

The prominent Terrorist groups of Pakistan include Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad, Baloch Insurgents etc. These groups launched several suicidal bombs targeting military and civilians. The attack on army public school in Peshawar in 2014 was launched by Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan which killed 140 students and teachers.

Beside this Attack on Marriott Hotel in Islamabad, attack on shrine of Lal Shehbaz Qalandar, attack on Dera Dargah Lahore and many more. The intensity of the attacks increased specially after 9/11 when

Pakistan became ally of US-led coalition in war on terror against terrorism. War on terror ended after 2 decades but these insurgencies never ended. It also raised the security concerns of Pakistan because major western regions of Pakistan are providing safe havens to these groups.

Proxy war

Proxy war is a notable feature of Pakistan's hybrid warfare which involve the use of non-state actors to fulfill the goals of countries without the involvement of conventional warfare. During soviet union war with afghanistan Pakistan and US were major supporters of afghan mujahideen fighters against soviet union. Pakistan has also been accused of supporting various militant groups in indian occupied kashmir. The groups such as Jash-e-Mohammad and Lashkar-e-Taiba have been involved in insurgency in these regions. Contrarily, there have been allegations of foreign involvements that some foreign actors are supporting Baloch separatist groups. These groups are struggling for independence from Pakistan.

Cyber Attacks:

Hacking and cyber attacks which target the government institutions, military infrastructure and critical systems to steal information. These attacks are used to achieve various objectives for spreading propaganda and creating chaos. Pakistani financial institutions and government websites have been targeted to spread misinformation, stealing money or compromising the customer's security. In 2018 a group of hackers known "Silence" attacked several Pakistan's Banks. Similarly,

many official websites of Government of Pakistan had been hacked by Indians who left different messages related to Kashmir and Balochistan. Hackers also replaced the official content with their own message. Government do not always definitively know the source of these attacks. But it is a sign that some game is happening behind the visible activity which uplifts us to remain alert and improve our cyber security measures.

Economic Manipulation:

The reduction of financial aid and trade restrictions imposed by countries to pressurize Pakistan's economy are affecting the stability of the country. An example of economic pressure and sanctions of Pakistan is the withholding of financial assistance of US in aftermath of 9/11 attack. Pakistan was the key ally of US in war on terror and was receiving financial assistance from US and other countries.

However, over some concerns of Pakistan's commitment to fully combating terrorism and its alleged support to militant groups has resulted in withheld of US aid to Pakistan. Similarly, after 1998 nuclear attacks by Pakistan encouraged many countries to apply economic sanctions on Pakistan which hindered the economic growth of country.

Misinformation and fake News:

Circulation of misinformation or fake news through social media platforms can increase tension between several ethnic groups. For example, from some days a news is circulating on social media that Pakistan's government has banned the

recruitment for all kind of Government job. This news has raised concern of all educated people who could be from any part of the country. The unemployment rate of Pakistan is already very high so that news is making people angry and more stressed about their future. These kinds of news can result in the negative reactions and can lead to clashes, destructions and domestic disorders.

Border Tension

Borders of Pakistan especially Pak-India border has been a front of skirmishes since 1947. This is due to the unresolved issue of Kashmir or it could be the result of any insurgency in the country claimed by others. This issue always distract the attention of country from internal conflicts and also country uses a huge part of its budget in security related material like explosives, communication equipment, drones, ammunition etc. The western border is also a serious security issue for country. This is because several terrorists are present near Pak-Afghan border which can infiltrate in the tribal areas of Pakistan and cause insurgency.