

Hybrid Warfare in A Post-Truth Era: A Case Study of Pakistan

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Abstract

Hybrid warfare is an age-old concept of struggle. The tool-kit in vogue includes narratives, lawfare, viruses, gradual expansion, proxies, surveillance, drones, 5G technologies, economic blackmailing, assassinations, sabotage, subversion, secrecy, surprise, ethnic nationalism, sectarianism, manipulation of intolerance, coercive diplomacy, artificial intelligence, big-data, algorithms and the digital blitzkriegs in the cyber-space. The present context is a post-truth era where emotions prevail creating alternative facts, as opposed to inductive facts. The cognitive process of reasoning revolves around one's beliefs and not truths. A narcissist control of truth-narrative is central to a crisis of legitimacy. This makes fact-free the contemporary post-truth strategic environment of hybrid warfare, a mixture of conventional and unconventional, plus an analytical construct too. The technological innovations have revolutionized this in an unfamiliar way. The integration of technologies remains. The concept of hybrid warfare resides in a grey-zone between black and white i.e., neither war nor peace. The distinction is blurred. The grey-zone is layered with disinformation, deception, false-narratives and fake-news. The success depends on a cold and logical mind-set in a low-intensity fifth-generation conflict to keep the other off-balance. Operational aims are harmonized with political goals and escalation is avoided. Hybrid warfare is sub-conventional geo-politics that is ambiguous and keeps the targeted perplexed. No response results in tactical defeats, while overplaying a hand ends-up as an irresponsible escalation. Also, information wars have structures that are part of hybrid warfare. Influence operations are directed to influence opinions in a post-truth era. The quality of these is on the rise. Holding one or the other responsible is difficult, not to mention deterring an opponent from playing a hard-ball. For one can escalate or deescalate without being part of it. Hybrid war does not take place in a given time-frame, yet long-term objectives are reached by keeping the pot boiling. Winning it is like winning a marathon that requires grit and resilience. It has emerged as an operational foreign policy instrument among nuclear powers in Eurasia. And an extended South Asia is no exception. Besides, creative imagination acts like a key in the conduct and countering of a hybrid war in a post-truth era. Likewise, a conductor has to be highly imaginative and impersonal to be a winner. Lastly, there is quite an unexplored academic

space for the scarcity of literature on the theme. No inductive research has been carried out on the subject as to why Pakistan is not winning and how to win it. Hopefully, this study will be of an academic value for Pakistan which is the target of a hybrid war by India in a post-truth era. The non-experts can take whatever makes them happy, as opposed to a disinterested specialist.

Keywords: *Hybrid Warfare, Fifth Generation Conflict, Operational Foreign Policy, Narratives, Counter-Narratives, Lawfare, Technological Diffusion, Creative Imagination.*

Introduction

“To win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill and that, those skilled in war subdue the enemy’s army without battle.”

Sun Tzu

The concept of hybrid warfare stretches back to ancient times. An old game that is still being played. Today, it is an analytical and operational construct comprising of kinetic and non-kinetic applications. The application of this construct in the various regions of Eurasia and within that South Asia is part of reality. Hybrid warfare is the norm for human conflict rather than the exception (Murray & Mansoor, 2012, p.290). The state and non-state actors are involved to achieve political objectives including superiority at critical points. The target is one, or one targeting the other. The events which happened in the past and which will, at some time or the other and much the same ways, be repeated in the future (Thucydides, 1954, p.48). Hybrid warfare is also a popular strategy with nuclear powers against one another. Since there are ultimate equalizers involved, so the hybrid wars. The levels are strategic, operational and tactical in a geo-political framework. A kinetic hybrid war is a mixture of regular and irregular warfare, though the division is vague and abstract. Still, the cognition abstracts it out first and singles it out next, before an application. The modern advances in precision weaponry, surveillance systems, computer processing, information technology, sensors and satellites have failed in the kinetic backdrop of hybrid warfare. The technological domination is unsuccessful to counter the tactical level conventional and guerrilla attacks, let alone tunnels, foxholes, bunkers and fortified positions (Murray & Mansoor, p.290). Aristotelian logic is broken at the tactical level.

A successful kinetic hybrid strategy by the weaker side blends the discipline of conventional warfare and the fanaticism of unconventional. The mixture has proved deadly. Intuition is central to it, as opposed to the rationality of conventional warfare. The knowledge of how enemy fights is important, both for weaker and stronger sides. The conduct of kinetic hybrid war is different and not the nature of war. It is a difficult situation to handle for stronger side that involves time, space and correlation of forces. Moreover, the non-kinetic soft-power context of hybrid warfare primarily involves war of competing-narratives and counter-narratives. If we look back throughout history, we realize that the rich and powerful have always had an interest (and usually a means) for getting the little people to think what they wanted (Mcintyre, 2018, p.103). By involving people in a hybrid war, time and space dimensions are extended and perceptions are made, magnified and altered through narratives, also the political will. Any countering involves a very high-level of commitment, for strategic patience always has limits. The commitments and priorities of decision makers are central to the struggle of nation-states, especially in the hybrid

war against Pakistan. It is already caught up in the destabilization web and has been for some time already (Korybko, 2017, pp.207-228). A modern-day hybrid war achieves goals without ever allowing enemy to know what exactly is happening. The secrecy and surprise are critical. The political outcomes remain vital.

A hybrid war can be extreme kinetic or it can be an intense non-kinetic, or both. The kinetic and non-kinetic spaces in Pakistan indicate both alongside. There are hostile forces which are waiting to exploit any opportunity that naturally or artificially arises in order to destabilize Pakistan, and that they usually begin by using the seemingly subtle methods of perception management techniques in order to open the door to unleashing a hybrid war later on (Korybko, pp.207-228). In this connection, the sway of the intolerance is an institutional and political failure. The predictable becomes manipulated. And an exploitation of an intolerant perception too is hybrid war that is already within. Though “cyber terrorism” and “hate-speech” are deterred by the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act, 2016, yet the challenge is in the realm of *procedural criminal law* and *criminal evidence law*. *Lawfare* is an operational foreign policy instrument, as also a declaratory one. Its operation in the region is historical. The East India Company under Lord Dalhousie successfully deployed law to annex territories in the subcontinent. The hybrid war is a kinetic and non-kinetic complexity at its most sophisticated. The strategic response has to be equally elegant, besides ruthless at the same time. How to differentiate between a deliberate effort and the evolution taking place within Pakistan?

The beauty is in the bringing together of the physical and the virtual and turning it into a hybrid strategy. The conduct or countering of a hybrid war in its present form is a new art. It is art and an artist. For example, a kinetic system includes armed and trained cadres, but then these cadres are made available through non-kinetic soft applications and systems. Social, electronic, print media and cyber-spaces are the platforms. It is no secret that one of the recent facilitators of the information silo—which has fed our built-in predilection for confirmation bias—is the rise of social media (Lee McIntyre, p.63). The newly opened Indian *Directorate of Information Warfare* is a challenge. Indians are reorganizing their kinetic and non-kinetic echelons to be in an advantageous position. Also, there are universities, colleges, schools, students and academia while reaching-out to the targeted. For the educators of the human mind now take sides (Banda, 2014, p.73). The worldly means involved to reach-out are being successfully applied in the coloured and black and white spaces of Pakistan. The penetration and planting is just not difficult. What is important is the game of the narratives and the narratives are different for the different segments of society. It is a digital blitzkrieg.

The non-kinetic mixing of fact with fiction is creative imagination. It is aimed at feelings and emotions. The emotional resonance and feelings generated by statements matter more than factual basis (Sismondo, 2018, p.73). The prefrontal-cortex (a small brain-region behind our forehead) processing intuitions and emotions continues to be central to the cultural and strategic processes of the 21st century and is the centre of gravity. It is the seat of genius, the engine of choice, flexibility, decision making, and foresight, and this puts it at the heart of our humanity (Branan, 2007, p.84). Importantly, this is the core of hybrid war against Pakistan, especially in the narratives and counter-narratives in the non-kinetic realm. Pakistan must extrapolate what needs to be done. This paper attempts to answer two questions with empiric-analytic reason (Wilber,

1999) as a method: Why is it that Pakistan is not winning despite being aware of the hybrid war? How to reorganize to win the hybrid war? The understanding of strategic environment is to begin with preceded by an inductive methodology.

Methodology

The objective findings in this study are analyzed towards the conclusion through the process of empiric-analytic reasoning. When further raised to the level of philosophy, an inductive interpretation employing both monological and dialogical science is used in probing the subject. The process of data collection and analysis includes the science of sensory experience; implying monological or modern science. However, since mind is central to an interpretation and whereas the meaning of a sentence can be grasped; the meaning of a text requires a more comprehensive cognitive process for understanding, an inductive attitude based on the modes and methods of dialogical science i.e., hermeneutic cultural sciences, is followed in the process of interpretation. An effort is made to conduct an integral-aperspectival analysis. Based on the principles and methods of inductive basic-research, the findings of this research are applicable to a practical situation that affirms this work as practical research.

The strategic environment of hybrid warfare

The strategic environment of a hybrid war is a mixture of kinetic and non-kinetic, plus an evolution. And imagination is to a strategic environment, what soul is to a body. Imagination is all in one in a hybrid strategic environment. Creativity as an act of imagination becomes a force-multiplier in the arena of narratives and counter-narratives. Pakistan has some of the beautiful minds in the world, despite all the *ladies* and *gentlemen* (Mason, 1922). Pakistan's imagination and creativity needs to be marshaled to explore the hybrid strategic environment. What to do is the most prized and confidential area of research. The strategic environment dictates that the hybrid war is now a key aspect of Pakistan's national security for a foreseeable future. The long-term hybrid policy needs to be integrated in the national security policy. The stake-holders will have to have unanimity of view, purpose and objectives. There should be no disconnect between the political and the military objectives, let alone the objectivity in judicial interpretations. Everything in war is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult (Clausewitz, 1976, p.119). An inductive lesson of science is that simplicity is highest complexity. The success is in the longevity of vision, policy and execution. Leadership is about an execution of a policy. And an execution requires, a comprehensive understanding of people and *environment* (italics added) and a leader is the person in a position to that understanding (Bossidy, 2011, p.24), that is why, the leader. The hybrid strategic environment demands a strategy that is coherent and integrated with a focused decentralization. The winning is in structural-organizational strengths and political legitimacy. One knows it when one is winning, otherwise too. The strategic environment is god-fatherly.

The crisis of liberal international order continues. The institutional mechanism and the rules governing these institutions are faced with methodological, ideological, political, strategic, technological and trade challenges, e.g., 'all countries bend the rules of international trade, if they can get away with it' (Luttwak, 2012, p.46). However, arch is the methodological challenge of post-truth politics and geo-politics that has altered the global and regional strategic environments. The international security environment has begun another major shift (Lovelace, 2016, p.3). Rather, there are strategic paradigm shifts. The shift of focus is from traditional symmetric to

non-traditional asymmetric warfare. In a hybrid war, there is a capability asymmetry between adversaries (Lovelace, p.50). The emergence of post-truth hybrid world speaks for itself. The rules and tools have changed. Means and instrumentalities change, motives and ends remain the same (Durant & Durant, 1968, p.34). Narratives and counter-narrative are the newest means aimed at the building of perceptions or an exploitation of perceptions. In this respect, an intolerant perception is an easy prey for manipulation. A range of secessionist, ethnic, and sectarian narratives are deployed and remain operational. The narratives of rampant lawlessness are self-evident. In this era of post-truth politics, it is easy to cherry-pick data and come to whatever conclusion you desire (Fuller, 2018, p.1). The developing states are the main targets. Pakistan is no exception. After two decades of War on Terror and the major military operations in the erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), the centre of gravity has shifted from FATA to Balochistan (Nihad, 2021).

Nevertheless, the ethnic factor of the hybrid warfare swings back and forth between Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). Still, the main focus of Indian directed hybrid war against Pakistan is Balochistan (Khalil-ur-Rehman, 2011), not to mention the global ‘lawfare’ (Kittrie, 2016) background. Pakistani mind is the main focus of the effort. The two main battlefields in the non-kinetic soft component are the lower and higher mental functions, especially of the youth. The twin realms are the targeted realms in the setting of narratives and counter narratives. This impacts the strategic environment. The lower mental functions comprise of will, attention, memory and perception, as opposed to higher mental functions comprising of gesture, language, sign system, mnemonic signs and decision making (Vygotsky, 1986, p.xxv). The important thing is that mental functions are quantifiable qualitatively and are supposed to be functional at each level of developmental growth (Wilber, 1993, p. 109), as perceptions grow either in harmony or disharmony. The transition from lower to higher mental functions is equally critical. Any higher form of intellectual activity is not a quantitative overgrowth of the lower associated activity but a qualitatively new type (Wilber, p.109). If one is a prisoner in the prison of lower mental functions, then decision making as part of higher mental functions is questionable qualitatively. The development of concepts pre-supposes the development of intellectual functions including the deliberate attention (Vygotsky, p.149). An example of the *lack of attention* in the theme of lawfare is the transformation of Jhadav’s case from the state-sponsored terrorism to diplomatic etiquettes under Article-36 of the Vienna Convention (Shah & Kayani, 2019). The lack of attention to amend or enact new laws in the subject of lawfare is a failure too. The plugging in of legal loopholes is an imaginative and dynamic process. The functionality or dysfunctionality of mental functions in the face of a digital blitzkrieg is critical in a given strategic environment.

Also, the external becomes internal and snow-balls because of the *attention* of all on the domestic politics. This allows the adversarial forces to transition from kinetic to non-kinetic at will, be those state or non-state actors. Besides, the insurrectional war lingers on as a difficult challenge, because of the diffusion of technology and ensured logistics by the hostile agencies. The geographic connection between the spaces, as also the connection between the entities and their handlers has resulted in a multidimensional threat that has also created kinetic and non-kinetic operational and strategic environments. Significantly, hybrid threats employing terrorism as part of their armoury often seeks a debilitating master stroke that will convince an adversary to accede to the hybrid force’s demands (Lovelace, p. 50). Moreover, the false narratives and the strategy

behind it has compounded the ethnic, sectarian and secessionist tendencies while creating a breeding ground for the potential plans. The mixture above makes the strategic environment a dangerous challenge. The post-truth hybrid strategy works because it allows people to forgo critical thinking in favour of having their feelings reinforced by sound bite truthiness (McComiskey, 2017, p. 29). A judicial mind too is not an exception. And the good for nothing Pakistani universities are producing anything, but critical thinkers. The psycho-social aspect of the strategic environment is important. The cooks in the broth are many. The shadowy strategic environment is from the Real World, however objectively manageable.

The Objective Reality of Hybrid War

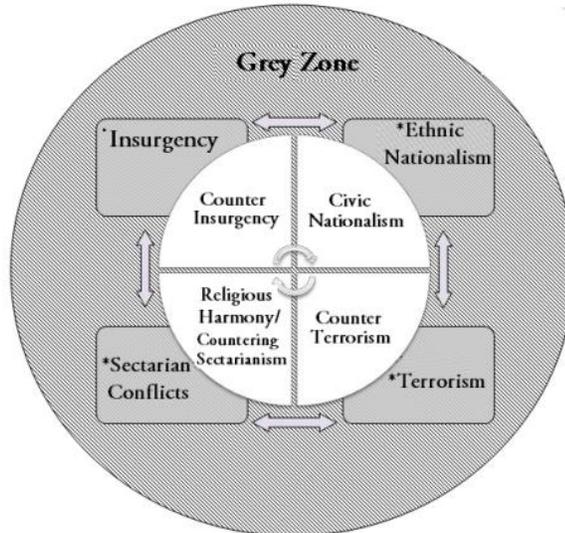
The first act of orientation is to establish where you are, then the bigger questions come in like where you want to go, how you want to go is the next question (Khalil-ur-Rehman, 2014). To begin with, conversation in its original sense means turning towards each other harmoniously. Pakistan needs a domestic conversation i.e., whether short, mid and long-term structural processes of the Pakistani state and statecraft are harmonious to counter a hybrid war in the decades ahead. For the lack of conversation is magnifying the chaos. The problem is that of the reach, not grasp. Pakistan's Machiavellian domestic politics reflects it in an unprecedented way. All the actors involved are magnifying the chaos in the midst of a hybrid war within Pakistan. The countering of this hybrid war is a trans-frontier phenomenon, both in the east and west. Nonetheless, since the *attention* is on the domestic politics, this brings home the hybrid war at the cost of national security and harmony. The domestically focused *attention* creates time and space for the adversarial state and non-state actors to cause instability through false narratives, fake news, organized violence and urban criminality. The threat can escalate into an operational and beyond, if not attended to. This may be more important than usual, make no mistake. For the game is that of socializing false narratives, organized violence and urban criminality. The non-kinetic is targeting the youth of Pakistan.

Today, Pakistan has the largest population of young people ever recorded in its history (United Nations Development Programme, 2017). By any inductive measure of the modern world, the youth of Pakistan is the future of Pakistan in the 21st century. The toxicity of the domestic environment makes them an easy target. They are to be cushioned from the non-kinetic aspect of the hybrid war, as opposed to the decades old continuing *Hamlet*. Metaphorically, the Shakespearian tragedy continues, despite the serious threat of a hybrid war. In this context, the kinetic component too is alarming, especially in KP and Balochistan. The killing of Samiullah Baloch, a student of the University of Balochistan, by the drug smugglers in Noshki, Balochistan, had put the youth of the province in a terrible agony (Barrech, 2020). The symbiosis of organized crime with the extremist organizations in Balochistan and KP is a dangerous mix. It is time for the *attention(s)* to shift the focus towards unity and national interest, as opposed to personal and business interests becoming a driving force. This is a contradiction in the conduct of statecraft. This is cognitive dissonance, especially when the decades old economic and political failures are so obvious. And commercial activity on the part of the ruler is harmful to his subjects and ruinous to the tax revenue (Ibn Khaldun, 1967, p.232). Statesmen have been aware of it over the centuries. The culture of personal and business interests has to be reversed and businessmen everywhere are vulnerable. The only thing dirtier than politics is business.

The brew of the above two is now lethal. This makes one susceptible, thereby, impacting the decision making. The impact on the decision making is enormous not only in the professional milieu, but also in the political realm. The cupboard skeletons are noisy. The finger pointing and manipulation make it worse. All are fixated with internal politics. Instead of working as an integrated harmonious orchestra, each one is pulling in a different direction creating a disharmonious discord. Friction is inefficiency (Khalil-ur-Rehman, 2011). The countering of the hybrid war against Pakistan has to be channelized. All state organs will have to be an integrated unit and synchronised. There should be one institutional fountain-head of the intelligence power in Pakistan. Leadership is about doing right things (Khalil-ur-Rehman, 2011). The earlier it is done, the better it is. It will add to the gravitas. Why to wait for a tragedy to catch-up? Hybrid war is a total war concept to seam-apart a society. There are tangible and intangible battlefields.

The application of the total war concept against Pakistan is an operational reality in the kinetic and non-kinetic spheres. Pakistan is faced with a threat from India since decades, especially in Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJ&K) (Top brass vows to thwart misadventure by India, 2020, p.1). The Indian involvement in the erstwhile FATA is an empirically evident fact too, since decades. The idea had always been to implode Pakistan from within. The threat has grown exponentially. More recently, the term ‘hybrid war’ as a concept was added to the lexicon of Strategic Studies and International Relations. The debate around the world is happening both in its theoretical and operational sense to adjust to the reality accordingly, e.g., Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) and the ‘Basic Exchange and Communication Agreement (BECA)’ (India, US sign military data pact; China slams Pompeo visit, 2020, p.1). The Indian threat towards Pakistan too has transformed from a conventional to a hybrid one under the nuclear umbrella. Pakistan is conscious of the application and going through it. It will have to rise to the Indian challenge. No amount of appeasement will work with India striving for South Asian hegemony since day one. The inheritance of imperial hegemony remains attractive (Embree, 1978). Other than the feeding of the secessionist ethnic nationalism and sectarianism, the Indian hybrid war in Balochistan impacts Pakistan’s energy and trade cooperation with China, Iran and Russia.

The hybrid war also effects the extraction of oil, gas, minerals and metals in Balochistan and FATA, besides, obstructing the testing of new weapons and missile systems. Pakistan’s political economy is an economy of national security (Khalil-ur-Rehman, 2005), that requires long-range and nuclear testing sites. The response as yet has not matched the threat. Instead, domestic power struggle between various centres of power continues to be the norm since Pakistan’s creation. This allows all types of chickens to come home to roost. Pakistan is surviving not because of the vision of its leaders, but because of its nuclear weapon capability and strategic partnership with China. Still, the challenge of hybrid threat will have to be met and countered. An understanding of a hybrid war is a difficult task, but fighting it out and winning it is far more difficult. The hands-on non-kinetic approach is important, as also the kinetic restraint. So far, the approach has been reactive and not proactive. This needs to end. However, Pakistan has strengths too against the Indian hybrid war. It is winnable both internally and externally. The diagram below illustrates the challenge.



Kinetic & Non-Kinetic components of hybrid war in Pakistan

The challenge

The hybrid war in Pakistan continues to change its forms from one to another as time goes by. It has emerged as a threatening trans-geographic process that metamorphosis from kinetic to non-kinetic and inversely. The diagram above depicts the connectivity between the kinetic and the non-kinetic components of the hybrid war moving interchangeably between various regions of Pakistan. Pakistan’s counter strategy is the rationale behind this adversarial transformation from kinetic to non-kinetic and vice versa. The hybrid war lingers on for all the wrong responses and the manipulative domestic political attitudes. Take for example the counter-terror strategy in the erstwhile FATA that has transformed militancy into an ethnic problem. And ethnicities fall in the realm of the non-kinetic soft-component of hybrid warfare, especially in case of Pakistan. The ethnic problems in Balochistan, Sindh and KP are decades old for the reasons of political reductionism. Simultaneously, the thrust of militancy has also shifted from the erstwhile FATA to the most sensitive Balochistan where insurgency goes hand in hand with criminality, especially the trans-geographic drug cartels. This indicates the shift between the kinetic and the non-kinetic mechanics of the hybrid war. Likewise, the sectarian element of the non-kinetic too moves back and forth between Balochistan, Karachi, GB and KP. The setting is reinforced with all types of false narratives and fake news. The linear strategy is not working despite all the strategic, operational and tactical effort. It is lack of understanding and capacity.

The strategy needed is transformative that transforms with the transformation of the threat from the kinetic to the non-kinetic and the other way around. What needs to be understood is that once an ethnic antagonism has crossed a certain threshold of violence, maintaining the rival groups within a single polity becomes far more difficult (Muller, 2008, p.34). An operational analogy can be drawn with Balochistan and the militants reorganizing in the erstwhile FATA. This also involves Iran and Afghanistan because of India. Besides, the terror-finance in Pakistan also involves drug-trafficking. This crime-terror nexus too is global. Out of the nine drug-trafficking routes into Pakistan via Afghanistan, six routes pass through Balochistan (The Global Afghan Opium Trade, 2011). The hybrid war against Pakistan is trans-geographic, trans-cultural and

trans-ethnic, not to mention the unscrupulous politics in the mainland Pakistan. A centripetal force is required for a central strategy to counter the hybrid threat. There is no operational central-point between the various intelligence organizations in the existing framework. Not to mention the law-enforcement agencies and prosecution. What exists is in the most elementary and theoretical form with no impact at all. Legal issues related to military courts set up after the 2014 Peshawar Army Public School carnage are still far from over (Shah, 2020). The mode of arrest, lack of admissible evidence, and poor prosecution contributed to complete lack of coordination. Historically, all have been operating as independent entities with no operational coordination. There is this distrust of each other. An undermining and leg-pulling are part of it. Also, the same set of people are dealing with the internal and the external, whereas, internal should not be at the cost of external and vice versa. Mind is designed to do few things, not many. The coloured and black and white partition is an additional problem. A sense of professionalism should be the driving spirit. How to infer what is happening? The required response will have to be innovative and creative. The reorganization of the intelligence organizations and a new national judicial policy to improve the capacity and performance of justice system is key to it.

Pakistan's intelligence agencies and judicial institutions must come out of the uniformed mind-set. There are times when strategic adjustments and acts of reorganization become essential in the face of new geo-strategic and geo-political challenges. The Indian hybrid war against Pakistan is one such challenge. Hybrid warfare is beyond the service and uniform domains e.g., the 'Internet Research Agency' in Russia. The tenured officers are failing in the hybrid frame of reference, because, they are not trained to fight a hybrid war. How many of them can speak Sanskrit, Hindi, Persian or Arabic? The less said about the English language, the better it is. It all starts with a language and the quality of thoughts e.g., the nearest word for corruption in Arabic language is *fasaad*. The awareness acquired is of a different kind. Hybrid war is a game of specialised people. Take for example the idea of hybrid war technology that comes from Brain Technology. And to make someone anyone, technology along with techniques is available. The changing of minds is a fine-science. It may not be a felt need, but an opting for self-denial is the answer to the inadequacies of tenured officers. The fragmented analysis has not worked. Action without knowledge is a dangerous business (Weiner, 2007, p.513). Pakistan needs 'to find men and women with the discipline and self-sacrifice of the nation's best military officers, the cultural awareness and historical knowledge of the nation's best diplomats, and the sense of curiosity and adventure possessed by the nation's best foreign correspondents' (Weiner, p.501). In Pakistan 'finding, hiring, and keeping such exceptional minds had been a job that never was done' (Weiner, p.471). It is time to upgrade the induction qualitatively right from the start. This is so true in the midst of a hybrid war. Pakistan needs an inductive merit, before the plot is lost.

The merit of meritocracy

The intelligence game is about an adequate and timely all-source strategic assessment, whereas, in the legal realm, it is the "objective methodology". The discretionary placement has proved inadequate and outdated. Now the game is about intellectual and academic capacities, plus meritocracy. The exercise of discretion is already problematic. The problems will snowball if the practices continue. The trans-frontier is already cis-frontier. The claim that 'the army will win the hybrid war with nation's help (Yasin, 2020, p.1), requires hard work. Spoken mind is not a deed done. It will not be a one. The commitments and priorities speak for themselves, as these do in

the reverse direction. Pakistan's intelligence agencies should be led by professional intelligence officers. The same stands true for the nationwide judicial academies to be headed by the tenured judicial officers. Do they have a reach to understand a hybrid policy, to say nothing of framing a hybrid strategy? What's more the separation of the operations and the decision making is especially slippery. It cannot go on. It has to change for professional reasons. Service excellence is not only a mantra, but also an objective figuring in the performance (Bossidy, p.53). The Cardinals will have to absorb new ideas and vacate space. Putting the right people in the right jobs requires emotional fortitude (Bossidy, p.80). The hybrid war is a real and present danger and a foreboding one. There is a situation that requires a focused *attention*, before there are many situations. The political regime must provide leadership to reorganize.

One will have to be cautious and careful. Nothing short of total dedication will work. The ability to convey is more real if it is cold and logical. The countering of a hybrid war requires an integrated hybrid power. This further needs to be synchronised with the national power to facilitate framing of a new hybrid policy and strategy. A hybrid strategy to counter is supposed to be a national power multiplier, a force multiplier that tilts the balance of power in Pakistan's favour. There has to be a national centre from which the hybrid policy shall reach all the sub-grids of national power. Also, there has to be a gestalt thinking backing the central grid of power. Gestalt thinking is whole thinking. It is grand thinking. The power grid will collapse, if not backed by an intellect. Unity is key to winning a hybrid war. Hybrid war also needs psychological resilience. Those who get carried away are not reliable. Pakistani leaders do get carried away with red carpet welcomes and 21-gun salutes. Americans have been practicing it in an art form for decades. The consultant has been doing a good job.

Pakistani divisions and polarisations are classic examples of a hybrid war that is increasingly chaotic, both in the virtual and objective world. The idea is to sow distrust and discord. The compartmentalization of operations of various agencies makes this worse. The partitioning of the operations hides failures too, not to mention the massive waste of potential. Pakistan has to place itself advantageously to successfully fight back and win the hybrid war. It is for the leader to place the steered in an advantageous position. This demands reorganization of the intelligence agencies and an objective legal system. A reorganized integrated intelligence setup is the reality to win the hybrid war. There is already a hybrid culture (Canclini, 1995) posing a non-kinetic challenge. There is this need for a broad counter non-kinetic hybrid culture too. It is time for a shift of focus towards an integrated kinetic and non-kinetic hybrid policy with an associated strategy and infrastructure under one power grid from which hybrid power shall flow down all the ladder(s). This needs to be operational under one central grid, as opposed to professional jealousies. And lockstep conformists in an organization are professional hazards, especially in a leadership role. Plus, any discord creates cognitive dissonance too. No wonder 'objectivity allows us to decontextualize things as objects in our world' (Sun-Tzu, 1993, p.50).

Conclusion

On 23rd November 2020, Pakistan's premier approved the setting up of the National Intelligence Coordination Committee (NICC) to coordinate and collectively strategize the over two dozen intelligence agencies led by the director general of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) (PM okays creation of liaison body for spy agencies, 2020, p.1). This was yet another political statement. The

big question is: different measures may give you time, but what will you do with that time? Likewise, the National Judicial Policy Making Committee (NJPC) emboldened by the “mini-revolution” of 2009, formulated a national judicial policy that failed to achieve the desired results. Kissinger in his memoirs on a sarcastic note pointed-out that ‘a camel is a horse designed by a committee’. Whether a camel or a horse, the NICC will not be able to live up to the challenge of the Indian directed hybrid threat, both structurally and qualitatively. It will wither on the vine. Earlier National Counter Terrorism Authority (Nacta) too failed and withered away. Truthfulness has never been counted among the political virtues (Block, 2019, p.69), but then this is beyond politics and personal interests. Facts are important, but there is nothing like interpretations and analysis when faced with a kinetic and non-kinetic blitzkrieg. The crisis in Pakistan is that of a qualitative understanding resulting in lack of creative assessments and interpretations. Formalism has haunted interpretations. The functionaries are persecuted by the weight of precedents. They see the world through the prism of past practices. They cannot seek truth for themselves. The only way out is *Humanism* and originality which is missing. The whole thing seems cosmetic and non-serious. The environment of dehumanization, hatred and intolerance is already a powder keg, let alone the severest blow of terrorism. The increase in intolerance increases dehumanization and criminality. The brain structure and function changes. The psychological function changes too. Hopelessness is a mental attribute that destroys nations and systems. Inductively, the longitudinal effects prevail.

Besides, whether the NICC, or for that matter the NJPC, are commanded by straight-jacketed skilled in formalism, whereas, ‘following orders is two-third of the equation, one third is the unsaid part of it’ (Saeeda & Khalil-ur-Rehman, 2020, p.24). And that is where initiative and creativity resides (Saeeda & Khalil-ur-Rehman, p.24). They are trained in the British tradition of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), as opposed to the German, French and Russian traditions rooted in initiatives and creativity. The central problem is the rationalization of conceptual frameworks. The existing strategic and operational paradigm is behaviourism where conditioning regulates behaviours. The stimuli are a simulated reality in a hybrid strategic environment. Cognition as opposed to behaviourism is the scarlet thread. Pakistan can learn a lot from Russia in hybrid warfare. Russians in the contemporary hybrid strategic environment are best in the world. Besides, the hybrid war against Pakistan is a question of strategic management. A botched-up affair is a failure of assessment, management and decision making. The heart of Management Science is decision making. The common variable throughout a management chain is ‘decision making’. The same is true for an intelligence management chain. Decision making is woven into it. What to do with the compartmentalization within and without, plus the separation of operations and decision making in the management of the intelligence chain?

In the field of law, there also exists a series of decisions—a string of holdings i.e., precedents. However, precedents narrow down the scope of decision making and limit initiative and creativity. The realistic approach of the higher judiciary has commended an epistemological respite with formalism. However, the frame of reference did not follow successful devolution. The concomitant developments resulted in the emergence of a two-fold truth. The realization of the two-fold truth is inferring cognitive dissonance. The conflict is still awaiting discovery. Consonance is transcendental as both are partial truths. What needs to be understood is that tactical brilliance is no substitute for strategic genius in the conduct of statecraft (Saeeda &

Khalil-ur-Rehman, p.23). It is about striking upon an idea in a display of genius stroke. An original idea creates a new reality to the strategic advantage of an initiator in the management of a strategic struggle. An idea based advantage is a victory without battle. Leadership is leading by giving an idea. The absence of leadership means defective leadership, though the sheer magnitude of the challenge is sobering. It is substantive (UN, EU urged to probe Indian bid to malign Pakistan, 2020, p.1). The reorganization and reforms required are substantive plus, whether one likes it or not. The defensive mechanism is activated as a feeling of being responsible for whatever is happening, perhaps more. The studying of which way the trends are going should not be a problem.

Misapprehensions and miscalculations are dangerous. The dismissive attitude is devoid of wisdom for a lack of understanding, while the oversimplification is a threat. It is complex and complicated. The failed expectations can result in cognitive dissonance that can be dangerous for the decision making. For the deductive guessing as opposed to an inductive understanding is dicey. The countering of a hybrid war is an expert's job. The leadership of an intelligence agency requires an expertise, a rare one too. Pakistan needs a Director General National Intelligence (DGNI), notwithstanding the intelligence coordination committee. Also, exceptional judicial minds are inevitable for the legally plural judicial system of Pakistan. For, the quality of any legal system depends on judicial decisions. At times, all options are bad options. The denial amounts to reinforcing the structural contradiction of countering the hybrid war against Pakistan. And why is it that the role of the intelligence agencies and the functioning of the judiciary still need to be clarified even after seven decades of Pakistan's creation. Are we still at that stage? Pakistan needs a reorganized national intelligence setup with a unity of command at the operational and decision-making levels to turn it into a force multiplier against the Indian designs. Keep your fingers crossed, the Indo-Pak reality is going nowhere in the foreseeable future, nor the Indian hybrid war against Pakistan. Pakistani and Indian national interests diverged sharply even before achieving independence (Sirrs, 2018). Pakistan also needs an objective judicial methodology for its mixed legal system. In this context, a pragmatically oriented interpretive approach is also crucial to turn around the adversarial use of law as an asymmetrical non-kinetic component of hybrid warfare.

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