

WEAPONISATION OF HYBRID AND 5TH GENERATION WARFARE BY INDIA AGAINST PAKISTAN: ITS IMPLICATIONS ON NATIONAL SECURITY AND WAY FORWARD

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Abstract

This paper examines the scale and evolving nature of hybrid and fifth-generation warfare in the context of Pakistan. It analyses how adversarial states and their affiliated actors employ a combination of military, diplomatic, informational, and economic instruments to undermine Pakistan's stability, and it assesses the implications for national security and response planning. The study argues that although "hybrid" and "fifth-generation" warfare remain conceptually contested and difficult to define, these frameworks help explain contemporary conflict environments in which state forces operate alongside—and against—multiple non-state actors across overlapping domains. The findings suggest that Pakistan is facing an intensified hybrid and fifth-generation challenge emanating from India across four key dimensions: conventional military pressure, diplomatic confrontation, disinformation and influence operations, and economic coercion. These insights can inform the development of a coherent strategic policy to mitigate hybrid and fifth-generation threats. By identifying central issues and operational challenges, the paper concludes with recommendations to strengthen Pakistan's counter-strategies in this domain.

Keywords: Hybrid Threats, Security, Cyberwar, India, Conventional war, Technological Development, Regional war zone, USA

Introduction

Tracing back through the annals of history, the global landscape has been persistently confronted with traditional warfare. The escalation of an arms race and subsequent occurrences in the contemporary epoch across various nations have transitioned the paradigm from conventional warfare to non-conventional warfare, from state-centric conflicts to engagements involving non-state actors, and from regular to irregular warfare, thereby transforming conflicts from a state of cold engagement to an active hot phase.

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Numerous ambiguous and luminous zones now characterise the threats posed by modern hybrid warfare, necessitating the maintenance of resources for conventional warfare alongside a balance in the armament race within the region. These minor conflicts, frequently referred to as niggling wars or non-linear wars, have emerged as a predominant phenomenon for armed forces to navigate across diverse domains. Hybrid warfare, along with the concept of fifth-generation warfare (5GW), entails a dynamic and evolving conflict landscape at the national level, accompanied by significant implications and escalating threats to national security stemming from both domestic and cross-border antagonistic elements. The term 5th generation warfare encompasses contemporary advancements in nanotechnology, which have been significantly magnified within both social and political contexts, particularly in relation to cyber warfare and irregular warfare patterns. Warfare, as a concept, embodies military strategic security terminology aimed at addressing the threats posed by the evolving nature of contemporary conflicts. The twenty-first century has heralded the onset of unprecedented advancements across social, political, economic, and technological spheres. The significance of the internet is increasingly pronounced within the context of military conflict. The internet has emerged as the primary instrument utilised in contemporary generational warfare. This latest iteration of warfare is fundamentally a contest of perception and information. It is engaged when a state finds it untenable to incapacitate its adversary through direct military means. Consequently, strategies involving propaganda, disinformation, the employment of non-governmental entities, and strategically designed electronic media campaigns are systematically employed to incite disorder, turmoil, and animosity. The electron medium channels often exceed proportionality and elude state control. The ascendance of social media has engendered novel trends within the dominion of warfare conflicts. Social networks and online communities, especially X, WhatsApp, Instagram, and TikTok, have evolved into pivotal mechanisms of 5th-generation warfare-conflict. Misinformation, deceptive delineations with fabricated agitprop that were disseminated throughout those contemporary modernistic media channels.

The security landscape of the 21st century that distinctly attributes by gray-zone hybrid war. An asymmetric-hybrid war denotes an armed paradigm which integrates traditional battle with so-called ostensible 'unconventional war-conflict', digital attacks and cyber threats, alongside additional ascendancy methodologies like that of disinformation, diplomatic affairs, and political coercion interventionism from other countries.¹

In 2007, Hoffman posited that the inaugural depiction of hybrid war, stating: 'Non-conventional hybrid conflicts encompass a diverse array of war modalities, which include traditional military capabilities, unconventional tactics and formations, acts of terrorism characterised by indiscriminate brutality and enforcement compulsion, as well as delinquent chaos'.² The evolution of technology has transformed the modalities of warfare. The media has emerged as the paramount instrument in the sphere of hybrid warfare. The media is strategically employed as a weapon against rival states to achieve specific strategic objectives. Hybrid warfare is strategically employed to erode a state's peace and stability. In recent developments, India, Pakistan's principal adversary, has adeptly leveraged hybrid warfare strategies to exploit the internal fissures within Pakistan's domestic framework, including political, social, and economic vulnerabilities, thereby undermining the country's stability from within. Fifth-generation warfare, alternatively referred to as hybrid warfare, can be conceptualised as a progressive evolution in contemporary military strategy, wherein cultural conflicts and information supremacy are deemed more pivotal than the application of conventional military force that characterised the third and fourth generations of warfare. This paper hypothesises that India is employing fifth-generation warfare strategies against Pakistan with the intention of fostering animosity and disseminating disinformation to obstruct Pakistan's trajectory towards economic and social advancement. In its endeavours to undermine various sectors within Pakistan, India has strategically mobilised all facets of its national capabilities. This paper addresses how, in its endeavour to undermine the stability of Pakistan, India has systematically focused on specific sectors within Pakistan, including information systems, international reputation, economic stability, and military capabilities. Hybrid warfare encompasses a combination of both kinetic and non-kinetic strategies employed against a nation to achieve strategic objectives. Hybrid tactics involve the deployment of a variety of mechanisms such as disinformation, misinformation, the backing of proxy militias, cyber assaults, legal warfare, and propaganda.

Theoretical Framework

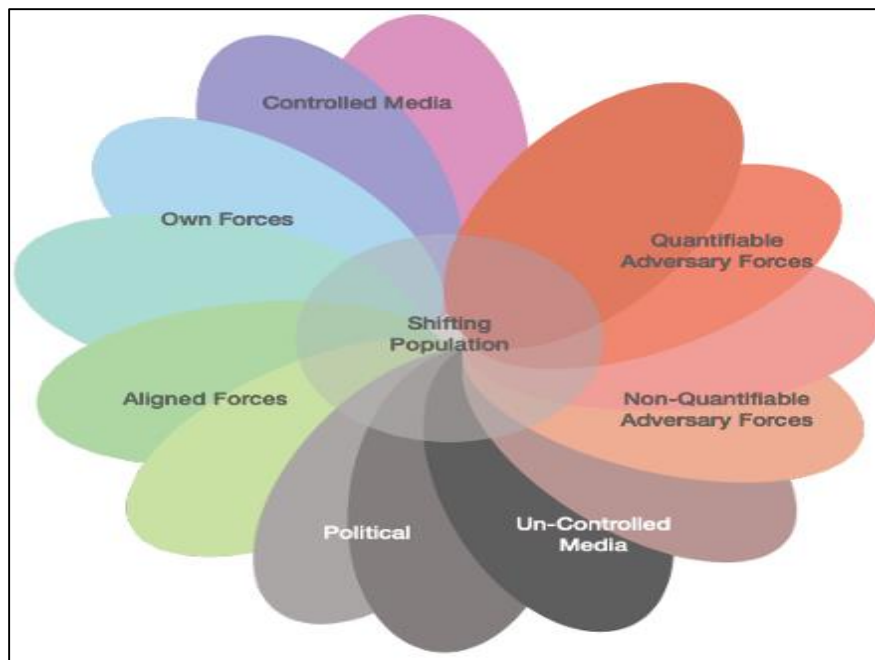
This research paper incorporated the theory of securitisation and social constructivism in the context of Fifth Generation Warfare to examine the dangers emanating from the abuse or harmful use of social media and its implications for Pakistan's national security.

The securitisation theory postulates that a society or nation securitises itself through the speech acts of leaders who disseminate information that involves threats. Thus, this should be securitised to secure both the masses and the state. Moreover, Ole Weaver argues that the start and development of securitisation are the consequence of the dynamics of social construction that are proliferated to generate a specific type of frame of reference to achieve a particular perception.³ Since social media plays a critical role in generating and constructing the perception of a phenomenon to further embed in collective social behaviour, the construction of threat perception through the manipulation of narratives and discourses by social media algorithms. Accordingly, anti-state elements are heavily using social media platforms to malign and target the state through an increasingly negative perception.⁴ On the other hand, from Pakistan's perspective, an equal or more excellent social construction is necessary to deal with the issue. Since social media occupies a pivotal position in the formation and articulation of perceptions regarding various phenomena, it further solidifies these perceptions within collective societal behaviours; thus, the fabrication of threat perception is facilitated by the strategic manipulation of narratives and discourses orchestrated by social media algorithms. Consequently, anti-state factions are extensively utilising social media platforms to defame and target the state by fostering an increasingly negative public perception.

Challenges of Hybrid and 5th Generation Warfare

Pakistan is currently contending with fifth-generation warfare and hybrid threats originating from both internal and external sources. Externally, Pakistan is confronting the hybrid warfare instigated by its traditional eastern adversary. India is opposing Pakistan at various international platforms, including the United Nations and the Financial Action Task Force. India is also attempting to undermine Pakistan diplomatically by depicting it as a nucleus of terrorism, while in reality, India itself functions as a state that sponsors terrorism. Hostile nations are similarly endeavouring to subvert the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor as it yields significant economic benefits for Pakistan and is poised to act as a transformative element for the nation. Internally, violent movements such as Baloch separatist factions and the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement could be classified as components of 5GW and hybrid warfare.

There is also significant role of 5GW and hybrid warfare within the country is currently occurring as political parties to their own created narratives (regardless of that false or true) to spread out into nation especially targeting youth.



Source⁵

Digital Terrorism and Forged Propaganda Communiqué Contra towards Armed Forces

The state of Pakistan has consistently encountered surveillance defence concerns emanating from its borders with both sides on India and Afghanistan. Pakistan and India engaged in significant conventional conflicts in the years 1965 and 1971, subsequently undertaking Operation Bunyan um Marsoos, along with a multitude of insurgent movements and military initiatives aimed at countering India's state-sponsored terrorist activities within the territory of Pakistan. The military institution of Pakistan has consistently exemplified superior management, discipline, and dedication as a pivotal entity for the nation. Beyond its primary function of preserving Pakistan's territorial sovereignty, the military institution is distinguished by a notable legacy of self-sacrifices and contributions to the progress of statecraft.

DG ISPR Statement on Digital Terrorism

The DG ISPR, Lt. General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, articulated that⁶:

'Individuals engaged in extremist activities aimed at law enforcement agencies, alongside digital terrorists—who he asserted operate on various social media platforms—pursue a unified objective of undermining the military and its command structure. He elaborated that digital terrorism is actively manifested on social media against the military and its leadership. Just as a conventional terrorist endeavors to impose his will through the use of weaponry, a digital terrorist similarly seeks to exert influence by disseminating fear via mobile devices, computers, misinformation, disinformation, and propaganda, he further remarked. The military spokesperson indicated that there exists a paucity of information regarding any specific digital terrorist; however, it is evident that both extremists and digital terrorists converge in their objective of targeting the military. Digital terrorists are engaged in assaults on the military, its leadership, and the relationship between the military and the civilian populace, utilizing fabricated narratives. He asserted that only legislation and punitive measures possess the capacity to mitigate the activities of digital terrorists. He further indicated that incessant dissemination of inappropriate discourse and fabricated information directed against military and institutional leadership persists. He cautioned that failure to impede digital terrorists would result in their proliferation. It is imperative that we do not permit these unlawful factions, which seek to transform this nation into a vulnerable state.'

DG ISPR further stated in another press conference that⁷ :

'The spokesperson for the military articulated that the primary line of defense against "digital terrorism" resides within the framework of national law. It is incumbent upon the nation's legal system to regulate and suppress digital terrorism [however], regrettably, one can observe that falsehoods, propaganda—especially on social media—fabricated narratives and manipulated imagery continue to proliferate, thereby engendering confusion within the public consciousness. Nevertheless, the legal system is not executing its responsibilities regarding [digital terrorism] with the efficacy that is requisite. Conversely, he articulated that the Pakistan Army was addressing the issue with utmost gravity.

Consequently, whomever — regardless of their location, whether within Pakistan or internationally, and irrespective of their status — is discovered disseminating propaganda against the Pakistan Army, fostering a rift between the military and the populace, or is identified as participating in the perpetuation of misinformation, the army will pursue appropriate legal proceedings against them, and there exists a comprehensive protocol for such actions'.

India has consistently forged propaganda against Pakistan to divert global attention from its own human rights abuses in Indian Illegally Occupied Kashmir and its subversive actions in the Balochistan province of Pakistan. India tried to engage the Pakistan Army in hybrid warfare in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and is also implicated in the turmoil in Balochistan.

While such endeavours to defame esteemed institutions of the state have become increasingly prevalent. Negative perceptions disseminated through the media are amplifying material, which consequently leads towards misconceptions in the context of Pakistan's army and security organisations. The Pakistan military and security organisations have been adeptly resisting all conspiratorial narratives. India aims to undermine Pakistan's military institutions to obscure its malevolent intentions towards the country. It is striving to tarnish Pakistan's reputation on the global stage, attributing blame for the hindrance of state tranquillity and amalgamation. Evidently, India is undertaking endeavours aimed at eroding the state's social-communal connection to instigating splitting and uncertainties in the societal fabric. Indeed, the Pakistan military has proficiently addressed anarchy and has adeptly confronted and vanquished insurrections in Balochistan while tackling terrorists' activities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Pakistan's military comprehensively discerns the concealed motives and objectives underlying the defamation campaigns orchestrated by India.

Social Media as a Fake Facts Building Tool in Hybrid and 5GW

Digital platforms, including Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram, are increasingly recognised as preferred sources of information for individuals. These digital media channels are exploited by anti-state entities against Pakistan that disseminate disinformation; a substantial segment of the Indian populace utilises these platforms to propagate false narratives against Pakistan. For example, the Indian government disseminated fabricated reports concerning the incident of Pulwama in February 2019. Moreover, India's administration asserted that it had successfully downed a Pakistan Air Force F-16 fighter jet, a claim that remains unsubstantiated.⁸ According to available statistics, there are relatively 71.7 million Pakistan's digital media activists, with a significant portion of the populace depending on these platforms for information. Amidst various online platforms, 46% of the population is utilising Facebook, followed by YouTube at 42%, WhatsApp at 23.5%, TikTok at 17.3%, and a mere 2.3% engaging with X (Twitter).⁹ The emergence of social media in the 21st century has engendered a novel arena for warfare. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, and YouTube serve as principal instruments of fifth-generation warfare. Balochistan has historically attracted the consciousness of various superpowers, due to its strategic position and rich mineral deposits.

India employs diverse strategies that spread forged news and fake fabricated misleading campaigns, often false information narratives that bolster violent narratives through Indian sponsored terrorist groups in Balochistan. There are certain media outlets such as 'The Hindu, Hindustan Times, News Intervention' and many YouTube channels including 'WION' and 'Study IQ', those channels have propagated fake news in collaboration with anti-state Pakistan factions. Consequently, these entities instigate disorder within the country.¹⁰ Pakistan Telecommunication Authority formally urged Twitter to implement stringent measures against those perpetuating anti-state fake narratives. Instantaneously, the digital medium assumed a critical contribution in the proliferation of political government uncertainty within the country, contributing to an atmosphere of insecurity. X(Twitter) serves as a powerful platform for shaping public discourse; it also functions as a conduit for information dissemination among political groups, social activists. Additionally, digital media is employed by anti-establishment factions to disseminate radicalism, terrorism, and instigate fifth-generation war against state. The digital media occupies pivotal position within the societal framework of a nation. The youth of Pakistan is confronting a challenging predicament due to the prevailing political instability within the country. Anti-state entities are exploiting the young generation to further for their agendas. The anti-state groups disseminate deceptive fake material via digital channels, inciting public outrage and disorder. It is imperative to examine the factors that have facilitated the infiltration of fifth-generation warfare into the Pakistani political system. External influences exert substantial effects on the construction of political narratives.

Main Stream Media and False Narrative Indoctrination

The opponents of Pakistan engage in information warfare in the strategic manipulation of perception and data to influence public sentiment, undermine trust, and advance specific strategic objectives. This encompasses a diverse array of methodologies, including disinformation initiatives, psychological operations, and propaganda, all designed to manipulate public opinion and achieve tactical objectives. Information warfare has been utilised by non-state actors within Pakistan to propagate misleading narratives and create societal divisions. This phenomenon has been exacerbated by the proliferation of social media platforms, wherein misinformation campaigns and fabricated news are deployed to distort public perception and propagate instability. The ramifications of information warfare on public opinion can significantly influence national security and societal solidity.

The few mainstream media crusades are actively underway targeting Pakistan. Adversarial forces have initiated media initiatives aimed at undermining Pakistan's global image. In the preceding decade, notable trends in anti-state agitprop have been observed. The progress plan for achieving economic stability in Pakistan is encountering significant hurdles. Adversarial forces consistently endeavour to impede the nation's advancement and undermine its favourable reputation within the international arena.

India's Hybrid and 5WG as Weaponisation against Pakistan's Defence System

India is endeavouring to marginalise Pakistan not solely within South Asia but also on a global scale. Nevertheless, despite numerous international mechanisms designed to maintain equilibrium, India has engaged in hybrid and 5GW against Pakistan. India is regarded as one of the largest markets globally, which serves to obscure its transgressions in Kashmir and other regions of India against minority populations. Leveraging this strategic advantage, India has employed various forms of warfare against Pakistan over the past fifteen years. Indian entities have persistently disseminated fabricated research to tarnish Pakistan's reputation in the international arena. These publications have been linked to deceased international figures to enhance their prominence.¹¹ Prior to unveiling the deceptive narratives propagated by India, the Pakistan Army had highlighted these Indian propaganda efforts. Additionally, there exist other covert strategies under the Modi administration.



Source: IPRI¹²

The main purpose of India under Prime Minister Modi seems to secure electoral support through anti-Muslim policies. This approach undermines India's secular image, as the Hindus are prioritised under Modi's Hindutva ideology. The contrived reports are generated to divert the global community's attention from the Modi administration's brutalities in Kashmir.¹³ The Indian army under the Modi administration routinely violates the Line of Control. The fifth-generation warfare is particularly linked to the Kashmir issue and Pakistan, serving to distract from its atrocities. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations of Pakistan, the nation is currently grappling with the repercussions of hybrid warfare. The principal motivation behind India's fifth-generation strategy against Pakistan is the CPEC. Consequently, India seeks to instigate turmoil within Pakistan through its fifth-generation warfare strategy.¹⁴ The Pakistani defence apparatus is acutely aware of the 5GW threat and possesses the requisite capabilities to counter such attacks. The role of ISPR is pivotal in addressing the challenges posed by hybrid warfare and in raising awareness among the general populace regarding this matter.

India has pursued multiple avenues in the hybrid warfare context, ranging from isolating Pakistan on the international stage to fostering internal destabilisation by supporting violent extremist factions. Such activities have also been acknowledged by Indian military and security advisers. India is employing a dual strategy involving both modern and conventional forms of warfare.

- **Propaganda Through NGOs**

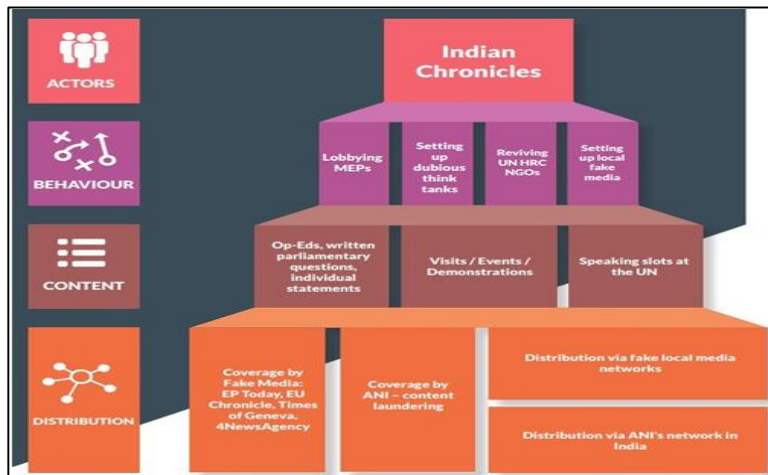
Non-kinetic resources are strategically employed against Pakistan. In 2019, the connections between fictitious Non-Governmental Organizations and think tanks linked to India were unveiled, disseminating disinformation against Pakistan.¹⁵ Within the framework of fifth-generation warfare, the primary focus is directed towards the younger demographic. In the contemporary epoch, the youth demographic, particularly students, predominantly utilise Android devices for internet access. Applications accessible to this demographic include Facebook, WhatsApp, and X, which facilitate rapid dissemination of information within minutes.

India employs fifth-generation warfare methodologies aimed at undermining Pakistan through systematic propaganda initiatives. In 2004, the European Union formally accused Pakistan of engaging in proliferation activities. Concurrently, international

media outlets began disseminating reports suggesting that the country would suspend and retract its nuclear program in response to escalating global oppression. The efforts in war of terrorism has not garnered adequate recognition or acknowledgment of the sacrifices made by Pakistan.¹⁶ For adversarial actors, engaging in a conventional military confrontation with Pakistan remains a formidable challenge. As a result, they have initiated an aggressive propaganda campaign against the nation.

- **Cyber Warfare Technology as a Tool Weapon of Hybrid and 5th Generation warfare**

Pakistan is currently grappling with a multitude of domestic challenges, regional proxies, and international pressures. It encounters novel mechanisms such as news projection, promoting dissemination, and online dredging, which enable adversaries that undermine the favourable image at global stage. India has initiated a campaign against journalism pertaining to Pakistan, bolstered by advancements in cyberwarfare technology and social media strategies. Numerous elements, in addition to other countries' interference, that significantly alter those perceptions about the nation and political leadership, fostering the development of an anti-state narrative within their consciousness.



Chart¹⁷

This has precipitated detrimental propaganda efforts and the dissemination of misinformation, aimed at exploiting ethnic and political groups discord. The antagonists have financially supported the sectarian discord between Shia and Sunni

factions, as well as various other ethnic-religious conflicts, such as the independence movements in Sindh and Balochistan. Leaders of the TTP, namely Ehsanullah Ehsan and Latif Mehsud both have admitted the involvement of India's strategies in the dissemination of anti-Pakistan narratives.¹⁸ In 2019 the Indian media a propaganda initiative was launched in opposition of Pakistan that concerning the Pulwama assault on an army convoy located in the Indian-administered region of Jammu and Kashmir. Subsequently, the India Air Force executed an airstrike in proximity to Balakot, asserting a successful attack on a militant camp and claiming the elimination of over 300 militants. However, there exists no substantiated evidence to support the presence of militant training camps in that area; rather, the operation resulted in the destruction of a number of trees. The Indian Air Force and various media outlets asserted that a Pakistan Air Force F-16 aircraft was downed by a MiG-21, a claim that has also been thoroughly discredited. In May 2025, India once more levied unfounded accusations concerning the Pahalgam incident against Pakistan, subsequently breaching international borders and launching an incursion into Pakistani territory, which prompted the Pakistan Army to initiate Operation Bunyan um Marsoos. The Pakistan Air Force successfully shot down seven Indian fighter jets, as well as Rafales, too, while the Pakistan Army executed deep strikes across 26 locations within India utilising Fateh missiles, alongside numerous drone assaults, thereby achieving a substantial victory over India. Mearsheimer and Walt elucidated the endeavours of pro-Israel organisations to influence academic discourse, mass media, and think tanks, as these institutions play a pivotal role in shaping public sentiment.¹⁹

- **Special case investigation by EU Disinfo Lab**

In 2019, the European Union Disinfo Lab initiated a comprehensive investigation into an online network orchestrated by Indian entities, revealing a substantial operation aimed at targeting global institutions. This initiative is also referred to as 'the Indian Chronicles'. This operation scrutinises the revival of defunct media outlets, think tanks, non-governmental organisations, and even individuals who were previously deceased. The primary purpose of the framework was to subvert Pakistan through the production and dissemination of points within Brussels and Geneva. The perusal unveiled a framework comprising over 550 website domains and almost 750 fabricated media across 116 countries operating in opposition to Pakistan.²⁰ The report presented by the EU Disinfo Lab

delineates a comprehensive account of a multitude of individuals under whose names various website domains have been registered, with the notable peculiarity that these domains remain untraceable or incapable of identification. Furthermore, there exists a plausible conjecture that these individuals may be employing fictitious identities originating from Canada and Europe. The South Asia Democratic Forum has been impanelled using the email address csopus@yahoo.com; this particular email address has been used for the registration of several fraudulent NGOs. The Srivastava Group constitutes an enterprise based in India, supported by the governmental apparatus of Delhi.

The investigative research reveals that this entity operates 265 Indian websites distributed across 65 nations. The Srivastava Group specifically directed its efforts towards targeting officials within the United Nations and the European Union Parliament. This specific non-governmental organisation, as recognised by the investigator conducting this investigation, is the Commission to Study Peace, which was established in 1930 and ceased operations in the 1970s. The originator of the Commission Study of Peace was Professor Louis B. Sohn, who served as a faculty member at Harvard University for 39 years. The instigator expressed astonishment upon discovering that Professor Sohn participated in the session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in 2007, despite having passed away in 2006.²¹ The Baluchistan House was inaugurated in Canada by Tarek Fatah in 2013, a prominent media figure in Canada. He has publicly identified himself as an individual of Indian origin, born in Pakistan, and subsequently immigrating to Canada. He maintains a cordial relationship with Ankit Srivastava, who has been recognised for compensating him for reproducing opinion articles from the Toronto Sun op-eds and subsequently publishing them in his own New Delhi Times. Members of the Baluchistan House, including Tarek Fatah and Mehran Mani, both have orchestrated protest, seminars, and various events in opposition to Pakistan in Geneva.²²

The Indian Chronicles report reveals compelling evidence regarding the mainstream media agency, namely ANI, which has been implicated in disseminating fabricated news intended to undermine Pakistan's reputation on the global stage. They have selectively engaged prominent politicians and

journalists who harbour personal grievances against the Pakistani establishment. These individuals serve as convenient instruments for Indian intelligence agencies to exploit in order to propagate anti-state narratives among the populace and further the anti-state manifesto.

- **India's Hybrid warfare strategies and FATF**

Pakistan is presently under the scrutiny of certain adversarial nations, which have initiated a comprehensive diplomatic campaign designed to destabilise the nation. This situation has engendered significant challenges for the country, necessitating the implementation of germane manoeuvres to safeguard integrity and sustain the strength of the parliamentary system. Notwithstanding all obstacles, the state continues steadfast in its commitment to preserving its sovereignty and protecting the welfare of its citizenry. India is actively pursuing attempts to add Pakistan to the blacklist of FATF and to classify it as a sponsor of terrorism. This manoeuvre represents a distinct form of economic coercion aimed at achieving strategic objectives. The military establishment of Pakistan is acutely aware of the underlying motives driving these global defamation campaigns. The Pakistan Army, along with paramilitary forces, has effectively addressed and extricated Pakistan's name from the FATF grey list, thereby securing a significant victory on economic grounds.

- **India's State-Terrorism Policy and Funding BLA**

Foreign hostile entities are providing financial support for insurgent activities that bolster terrorism, thereby obstructing development initiatives and disseminating deceptive media narratives to shape the context of the nation. The multiple separatist movements exist in Baluchistan, with the addition of the Baloch Liberation Army and the Baloch Liberation Front. Those organisations seek to foster a diffuse predisposition with disenchanting individuals toward the existing socio-political framework. Those groups align with 5WG practitioners who contribute to all goals; the consequences could be catastrophic to the state. The amalgamation presents profound security challenges, as Baluchistan presently evidenced. USA, USSR, and UK, Israel and India, have engaged in conspiratorial activities against Pakistan within the province of Baluchistan. Russia extended

its support to the "Great Baluchistan" movement during its military incursion into Afghanistan in 1979. In contemporary geopolitical dynamics, Pakistan has made subtle adjustments to its foreign policy, demonstrating a shift towards China, particularly evident in its commitments to the CPEC, a development that has not been favourably received by the USA and India. Both nations are actively participating in Fifth Generation Warfare within the context of Pakistan. Presently, the United States and India find themselves aligned in their strategic interests, particularly in response to the burgeoning influence of China in this area. This alteration in policy may potentially exacerbate the threats posed by 5GW in Pakistan.

On the 11th of August, 2025, the Department of State is formally designating the BLA and its associated entity, the terrorist organisation Majeed Brigade, while concurrently incorporating the Majeed Brigade as an alias declared a Global Terrorist designation.

On the 11th of August, 2025, the Department of State is formally designating the Baluchistan Liberation Army and its associated entity, the Majeed Brigade, as a Foreign Terrorist Organization, while concurrently incorporating the Majeed Brigade as an alias under the BLA's previously established Specially Designated Global Terrorist designation. The BLA was categorized as Specially Designated Global Terrorist in 2019 subsequent to a series of terrorist incidents. Since the year 2019, the BLA has asserted accountability for further assaults, inclusive of those perpetrated by the Majeed Brigade. In 2024, the BLA proclaimed its involvement in suicide attacks conducted in proximity to the airport in Karachi and the Gwadar Port Authority Complex. In 2025, the BLA took responsibility for the hijacking of the Jaffar Express train in March, which was en route from Quetta to Peshawar, resulting in the fatalities of 31 civilians and security personnel, as well as the hostage-taking of over 300 train passengers. The recent measures undertaken by the Department of State signify the Trump Administration's dedication to combating terrorism. The designation of terrorist organizations serves an essential function in our efforts against this global menace and constitutes an effective mechanism to diminish support for terrorist operations. The aforementioned actions are executed in accordance with section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended, alongside Executive Order 13224, as amended. The designations of Foreign Terrorist Organizations become effective immediately upon their publication in the Federal Register.

Source: US State Department²³

- **RAW Attacks Against Pakistan Through 5GW**

The Indian intelligence agency, RAW, engages in numerous clandestine terrorist activities in Baluchistan throughout various networks of terrorist groups, including extremist activists and minority groups, financing them to undermine the stability of Pakistan. In 2016, RAW operative and Indian Navy commander Kulbushan Jadhav was apprehended by Pakistan's security agencies in Baluchistan. Kulbushan Jadhav is implicated in various terrorist activities inside Pakistan. Jadhav confessed, "The objective was to

have convened meetings with Baloch insurgent groups and execute operations in collaboration with them. These operations have been of a criminal nature, resulting in the death or injury of Pakistan's citizens." His admissions openly indicate that RAW orchestrates with BLA, that "it comes to understand through this procedure that the Indian-RAW agency is engaged in collaborations with the Baloch liberation movements inside Pakistan and its adjacent regions.²⁴ The Indian intelligence agency RAW has incited the Baloch community to resist the state of Pakistan. Furthermore, a television news outlet named "Zed Salam" has been established in India for this purpose. DG ISPR, Maj General Asif Ghafoor, articulated the necessity of adopting a conciliatory approach towards the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement, despite the possibility that their grievances may not be entirely legitimate, in light of the historical suffering endured by the Pashtun community during counter-terrorism operations. He expressed his concerns regarding the PTM leaders, Manzoor Pashteen and National Assembly members Mohsin Dawar and Ali Wazir, questioning their whereabouts during moments when terrorists perpetrated violence against the Pashtun populace. "Now they are advocating for the safety of Pashtuns," he remarked, casting doubt on the PTM leadership regarding the volume of donations they have accrued from abroad and whether the amount retained is commensurate with what has been publicly disclosed. He further interrogated the PTM concerning the extent of financial support received from the Indian intelligence agency, RAW, for orchestrating sit-ins in Islamabad in March of the previous year, as well as the identity of Manzoor Pashteen's party members who visited the India's consulate in Kandahar and the financial incentives provided to him during investigations. Through collaboration with intelligence agencies, it has been ascertained that the social media platforms utilised by the PTM are also orchestrated from Afghanistan and India, indicating a network of interconnected operations. He clarified that while he does not assert that every activist of the party is complicit and aware of these terrorist activities, he does contend that anti-Pakistan entities are exploiting the grievances of the Pashtun community, particularly its youth and student demographic.²⁵ It constituted a critical issue regarding national cohesion, as all

individuals involved were Pakistani nationals and members of the Pakhtoon community, yet they were exploited by Indian forces. Consequently, fifth-generation warfare poses a substantial threat to Pakistan's security and engenders challenges pertaining to national integration.

- **Psychological Brainwashing as a Tool of 5GW**

In lieu of executing traditional military offensives against Pakistan, the adversarial forces are engaging in psychological warfare through the strategic utilisation of media and literary resources.²⁶ The antagonists exploit the vulnerability of Pakistani youth in the realm of fifth-generation warfare against the nation. They endeavour to manipulate cognitive frameworks through literature and media, ostensibly portraying a facade of solidarity while simultaneously instigating blame towards the Pakistani administration. Furthermore, they propagate notions of socioeconomic disparities, emphasising how the affluent enjoy extensive privileges while marginalised youth face considerable challenges within the country. Pakistan and India have transitioned from traditional territorial conflicts, allowing India greater latitude to initiate fifth-generation warfare against Pakistan. As articulated by former Director General of Inter-Services Public Relations, Major General Babar Iftikhar, Pakistan was significantly subjected to 5GW; however, the state remain cognizant of the inherent security challenges. India had engaged with a substantial crusade of '5GW' aimed at obstructing state's trajectory towards opulence primarily throughout the targeting of the CPEC as well as Pakistan's impression at global level.²⁷ Historically, Pakistani institutions have encountered challenges in effectively countering the dissemination of fake material and the circulation of false narratives orchestrated against the country. Administrative executives are urged to safeguard social cohesion and ideological integrity through dual strategies: restricting the glide of fake material and formulating panacea measures. Contemporary tidings indicate that the India's security agency, RAW executing cyber espionage campaigns that disseminating significant and security material through digital counting figures of data. In pursuit of those objectives, it revealed that they had established

numerous fictitious websites on widely used digital media platforms. All those digital websites fabricate and sway unsuspecting civilians while perpetuating propaganda with fake narratives. Consequently, these malevolent activities have rendered the situation in Pakistan exceedingly disordered and destabilised. Anti-establishment propaganda conducted through non-state players to explicit intent to manufacture administered system rift between state and nation that mobilising people in opposition with country's institutions. The significant purpose of this propaganda is to undermine the anarchism in Pakistan and instigate discord within the nation concerning ethnicity among groups and violence promotion inside country.

Way Forward

The Pakistani government must undertake resolute measures to mitigate the threats posed by 5GW.

- The state should utilise different electronic media to enhance national consciousness regarding digital challenges. The comprehensive multi-factor verification mechanism ought to institute the protect tactful information. Investments in modern technology, like the Artificial-Intelligence-mechanism and Information technology, should prioritise the safeguard of the nation and official material. The dynamic measures that obstruct medium applications and online data should enact the avert digital incursions.
- In addition, the government must ensure comprehensive public awareness regarding junk mail and different probable risks which could jeopardise Pakistan. The 'national action plan mechanism' necessitates full implementation. A thorough reassessment of Pakistan's international relations is essential to grasp the prevailing global threats. Pakistan must expeditiously establish a multilateral intelligence framework. Additionally, Pakistan should advocate for the formation of a unified cybersecurity coalition among China, Russia, the Central Asian states, and the State of Afghanistan to dismantle terrorist networks operating within the region.

- In a nation such as Pakistan, it is imperative to enhance cybersecurity measures to safeguard the critical systems of the country, including the official cyber system, banking entities, and as well as private networks, from potential cyber assaults. The government of Pakistan must allocate additional resources towards advanced technological solutions and establish a systematic approach for effectively responding to cyber threats. Furthermore, it is essential to foster cybersecurity awareness and prioritise the education of the populace regarding its significance.
- Regulatory authorities are also required to devise and enforce a comprehensive legislative framework governing the utilisation of the digital medium within the state. The parliamentary executive apparatus must address pertinent challenges such as violent hate content and speeches, misinformation and the improper use of personal data. Moreover, the government should facilitate user-friendly reporting mechanisms on digital medium, including the Facebook, X, and TikTok, to validate the reporting of false information, hate speech, misleading imagery, and deceptive content. In addition, it is imperative for the government to take decisive practice in elimination from dangerous material and to reveal false news and agitprop efforts.
- It is crucial for authorities to effectively counter campaigns of misinformation and propaganda targeting Pakistan. The establishment of specialised units within armed forces and security agencies is necessary to praepostor and combat fabricated narratives, and the stories disseminated across the digital medium. Like on YouTube, Facebook, TikTok, and X.
- Moreover, it is necessary to raise public consciousness through electronic media in order to alleviate the impact of fake information. It makes essential to guarantee verification that foster an authentic governing framework within nation while simultaneously reinforcing its democratic institutions to cultivate public trust and confidence.

Conclusion

Hybrid and Fifth-generation warfare represent a conflict characterised by misinformation and propaganda, waged through advanced automation machinery

technology. Telecommunication and digital Technological progress practice the pivotal function in 5GW. The advent of rapid communication applications such as Facebook, Skype, IMO, and WhatsApp has enabled adversaries to exploit these platforms for communication, data sharing, and the dissemination of false information in other nations to further their political agendas. Additionally, the technologies employed to propagate misinformation and propaganda are particularly challenging to counteract. Fake narrative and forged information war proves deleterious fosters of disarray, fright, and nihilism within country. The challenges posed by hybrid and 5GW for the state to encompass civic disorder, communal, societal, financial, and ethnic dimensions. Since inception CPEC, external stratagem has been initiated to undermine its economic and social advancement. Effective inter-governmental coordination and collaboration among local and national institutions are imperative for addressing and mitigating the threats associated with hybrid warfare.

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