

Beyond the Gunboats; India's Asymmetrical Naval Strategy and the Security Dilemmas for Pakistan

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Received: 20-12-2025 **Revised:** 04-01-2026 **Accepted:** 18-01-2026 **Published:** 01-02-2026

ABSTRACT

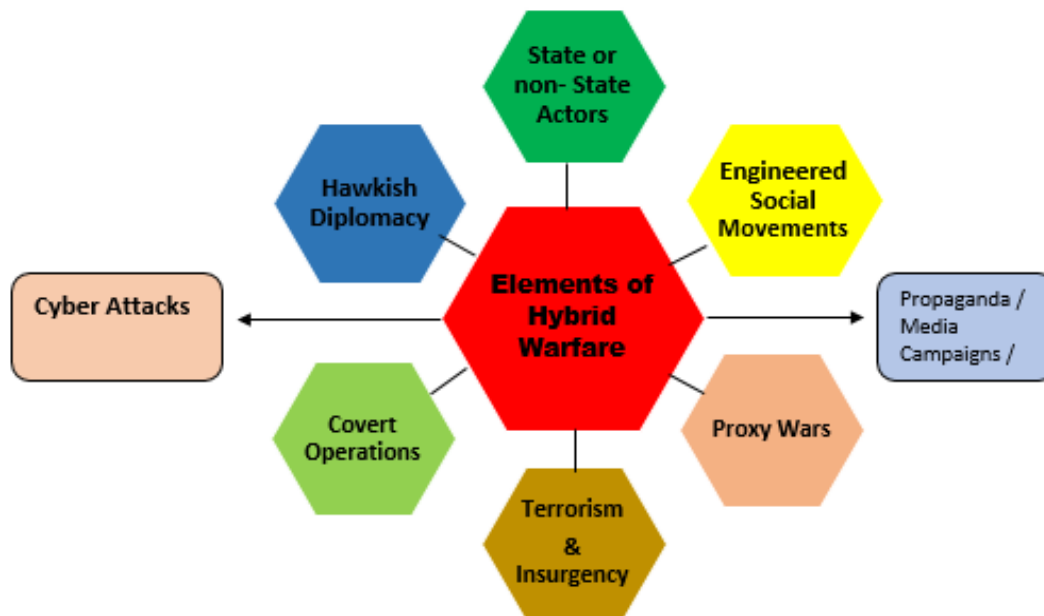
The evolving geopolitical dynamics in the South Asian region have posed new challenges and threats to Pakistan's security and stability. The country's security environment is not solely defined by traditional military threats. The non-traditional security challenges also pose multidimensional threats to the country's security and increase its internal vulnerabilities. India has developed a strong and formidable blue-water navy equipped with advanced aircraft carriers, nuclear submarines, long-range surveillance systems, and a vast intelligence network to expand its security nexus. Today's Indian naval strategy is not confined to its coastal areas and to guarding its waters with traditional gunboats; rather, it aims to neutralize threats well before they can affect it. In this regard, India has also employed asymmetrical tactics against Pakistan by exploiting its internal vulnerabilities. The Indian hybrid war strategy against Pakistan has adversely affected Pakistan's internal socio-political environment, especially in Karachi and Balochistan. India has activated three faultlines in Pakistan, i.e., sectarian, ethnic, and subethnic faultlines, by backing the banned terrorist organization. 90% of Pakistan's trade, economic activity, and energy needs are met through its seaports. India knows that any traditional naval encirclement or asymmetrical engagement in the coastal cities, including Karachi and Gwadar in particular, or in other parts of the country in general, can cause strategic vulnerability. Therefore, India has waged a hybrid war against Pakistan by activating sectarian, ethnic, and sub-ethnic faultiness. RAW is backing non-state actors in Pakistan to stage insurgency, sabotage, and terrorism, especially in Balochistan and Karachi. These asymmetrical and hybrid strategies pose existential threats to Pakistan's national security. This research explains and helps clarify the non-traditional security challenges Pakistan faces today due to India's asymmetrical naval strategy.

Keywords: Hybrid Warfare, terrorism, RAW, Proxy Wars, TSD & LeJ

INTRODUCTION

In modern times, political and strategic objectives are achieved not only through traditional means of kinetic warfare, such as weapons and tactics, but also through other means, including asymmetric tactics like intelligence gathering, propaganda, proxy wars, aggressive diplomacy, and economic coercion. The deployment of all these tools is crucial for a nation to prevail against an adversary and protect its vital national interests. Over time, advances in war-fighting strategy and the modernization of weapons have dramatically changed the strategic discourse of war. Likewise, this transformation has changed traditional battlefields, and now the war has expanded from the ground to the nation's mind. The war is decisively waged and fought in the minds of the enemy nation through propaganda and in the minds of its own nation by motivating their will to achieve victory. Hybrid warfare is one of the most lethal non-traditional strategies. It employs other military capabilities, including protracted insurgency using proxy armies, ambushes, improvised explosive devices, and assassination (Hoffman, 2007).

Source:



Author's own explanation of Hybrid Warfare

The Hybrid warfare combines many irregular tactics which work side by side with the conventional strategy, i.e.,

- i. **State & non-state actors:** The state actor is the regular military, intelligence agencies, and other institutions that can play a role in engaging in war against enemies, whereas sometimes the non-state actors, including terrorist organizations, criminals, Cyber criminals, militias, and paramilitary groups, are sponsored for terrorist activities against enemies.
- ii. **Engineered Social Movements:** Sometimes countries back insurgencies and stage protests against the enemy states by engineering social movements through Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) or media platforms. The social movements can lead to a smooth transition of power (Sharp, 1993).
- iii. **Proxy Wars:** It is a main tool of any state to achieve strategic objectives by minimizing direct engagement in war. It helps in avoiding direct escalation and accountability. The strategy is effective in today's geopolitical environment against a powerful enemy.
- iv. **Terrorism & Insurgency:** The act of terrorism is an effective tool of modern hybrid warfare employed by both state and non-state actors. It helps achieve high results at low operating costs and with minimal loss. It creates fear, weakens enemy morale, and disrupts proper governance amid separation.
- v. **Covert Operation:** The covert operation is a core tactic in hybrid warfare to achieve the maximum strategic objective. The intelligence agencies and special military units secretly carry out such operations to neutralize high-value targets. Sometimes the proxy groups are backed, trained, and funded to stage an insurgency or sabotage an adversary while maintaining plausible deniability.
- vi. **Hawkish Diplomacy:** It can also be an important tool of hybrid warfare. It is, in fact, a strategy involving aggressive, uncompromising tactics for engaging with the enemy state. It is a

confrontational style that coincides with military threats and lobbying at the regional and international levels to isolate the enemy state diplomatically.

- vii. **Cyber Attacks:** Cyber-attacks are considered the most versatile tools in hybrid warfare. The primary aims of employing this tactic are to disrupt, degrade, and dominate the enemy in the political, economic, and military arenas. The country with such ability achieves the most valued national interests without pointing a gun or firing a single bullet at its enemy.
- viii. **Propaganda / Media Campaigns / Fake News:** Propaganda and fake news are used to manipulate the perception and create confusion among the masses. It helps disrupt people's minds against their institutions, armed forces, and political regime. It is an effective tactic of weakening the government and the institutions without engaging directly in information warfare, a key component of hybrid warfare.

According to the scholar, it is debatable which types of threats qualify as hybrid threats and which do not. Moreover, there is very little substantial agreement on its nature and existence. Otherwise, there is an enormous diversity in the tactical strategies of hybrid war. The states deploy certain hybrid war tactics to advance their political and economic interests. Frank Hoffman was the first to explain the term Hybrid Warfare, describing the use of conventional war strategy alongside asymmetrical, psychological, and non-conventional methods.

The Russian incursion in Ukraine and Crimea during the last decade and Hezbollah's guerrilla fighting against the Zionist regime in South Lebanon during the Lebanon-Israel war (2006) and their role in the Syrian Civil War are examples of hybrid war and non-linear warfare in modern times. Hezbollah is considered one of the most formidable and punitive forces trained in irregular and non-linear warfare that has effectively resisted Israel's incursions in the region since 2000. Hybrid warfare is one of the most viable and formidable strategies for achieving certain objectives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The author *Harsh V. Pant* (2016), in his book titled *The Rise of the Indian Navy*, argues that India is using its military power, especially its naval capabilities, as an important tool for regional and international diplomacy. Indian strategists and naval thinkers have begun to consider the navy an important tool of India's modern diplomacy and foreign policy decision-making. In recent years, they have developed strong and formidable naval muscle to influence countries regionally and globally for economic and geostrategic integration. Maritime security has become an important tradition in India's border security paradigm. This book provides a detailed account of issues related to India's security and maritime domain; furthermore, it examines the causes and impact of India's naval capabilities in the region. Harsh V. Pant has a deep analytical understanding of India's strategic thinking and its implications in the security politics of this region (Pant, 2016).

Shuja Nawaz, in his famous book titled "The Battle for Pakistan: The Bitter US Friendship and a Tough Neighbourhood," tries to highlight and elaborate on the convergences and conjunctions of two inadequate partners of modern times, i.e., the United States and Pakistan (Nawaz, 2020). The two countries have maintained a diplomatic and strategic partnership since 1950. However, relations between the two countries have been both celebrated and opposed due to numerous regional and international factors, with the Afghan factor always at the forefront. Pakistan has been compelled and constrained by several regional and international factors, which have directly affected its economy and development and posed existential threats to its security and survival. Externally, it has been affected due to its porous border with Afghanistan, and internally, several militant factions have been funded by its arch-rival, India.

The book titled "Hybrid Warfare and Its Impact on Pakistan's Security," authored by Saghir Iqbal, focuses on different strategies employed by Pakistan's enemies to weaken Pakistan internally and

externally. The regional conflicts in Afghanistan, the Middle East, Ukraine, and other South Asian countries coincided with the volatility in Baluchistan and FATA. All these conflicts are directly or indirectly affecting the countries. Moreover, India and other regional forces have deliberately employed hybrid and asymmetric war strategies against Pakistan. They are trying to weaken Pakistan internally by activating sectarian, ethnic, and sub-ethnic fault lines and spreading venomous propaganda among the masses (Iqbal S. , 2018).

The author Khurram Siddiqui, in his famous book titled “Security of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): Counterinsurgency in Balochistan,” deliberated on the strategic significance of Balochistan with respect to the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Since Balochistan is an important region with respect to this project, and Gwadar port, which will provide the sea outlet, is situated in the province. However, since the project was initiated, the province's security situation has deteriorated due to internal and regional factors. The terrorist organizations, including BLA, TTP, and other ethnically and religiously motivated banned groups, started carrying out terrorist activities. It also analyzes the army’s counterinsurgency practices and strategies to neutralize the situation (Siddiqui, 2024).

The book titled “Pakistan's Drift into Extremism: Allah, the Army, and America's War on Terror” is a famous book published by Hassan Abbas. The author in this book has thoroughly discussed and analyzed Pakistan’s causes of tilt toward religious fundamentalism. The book has deliberated on the root causes of frequent military interventions in Pakistan’s political realm and the development of Islamist thought in the socio-political affairs of the country. These developments and the establishment of the madrassah system were aimed at fighting the Soviet Union and also bringing regime change in Kabul. However, the Talibanization and military forces have, in one way or another, affected the national harmony and cohesion of the country. Pakistan suffered a huge loss caused by sectarian violence, religious intolerance, and abhorrence, which was later manipulated by India (Abbas, 2004).

The author *Siraj Nizamani* (2014), in his research article titled India’s Emerging Indian Ocean Strategy, argues that India is pursuing an increase in its role in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). The 2015 maritime doctrine reflects India's intent to increase its naval capabilities, peace and rescue operations, maritime policing, and control of illegal trafficking in the Indian Ocean and the Indo-Pacific. In this connection, India is placing special emphasis on modernizing its naval capabilities. It will give India a leadership role in the region and the capability to counter China’s growing influence (Nizamani S., 2014).

The author *David Brewster* (2010), in the research article titled *An Indian Sphere of Influence in the Indian Ocean* sheds light on India’s strategic ambitions in the Indian Ocean Region. It also explains the maritime perspectives on Indian strategic thinking in the post-9/11 era. The main driving force for the review of India’s maritime strategy is its security from Chinese dominance. However, beyond this official stance, there are many untold facts about India’s modernization campaign, including its expansionist designs for regional dominance. New Delhi seeks to establish a new Indian sphere of influence across the Indian Ocean Region from a futuristic perspective (Brewster D., 2010).

The author *Sufianullah* (2019), in a research article titled *Analyzing India’s Naval Development Strategy* argues that India is eager to attain great-power status in international politics and that a strong and formidable maritime strategy is a prerequisite to achieving this status. The growing naval power aims to flex its muscles in the Indian Ocean and the Indo-Pacific to dominate the region. In pursuit of this objective, India is engaging with regional countries through trade and military diplomacy. The offensive naval doctrine reflects India's desire to be the regional policeman. The modernization and weaponization of the Indian Navy will not only disrupt the current regional balance of power but also lead to escalation and intensification. The constant increase in naval power, offensive doctrines, modern equipment, and naval exercises with regional countries poses a threat to Pakistan’s maritime security. (Sufianullah, 2019).

The author Sidra Khan (2016), in the famous research article titled *India's Quest for Hegemony in the Indian Ocean*, argues that India's military doctrines, in general and recent Indian naval doctrine in particular, reflect that India's military leadership and strategists do not consider India a major power of the Indo-Pacific; rather, they want to project India as an international power. India is a power aspiring to manage China's rise in the region and globally. The Indian naval doctrine is often described as Modi's doctrine for the Indo-Pacific region (Khan S., 2016).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research article is academically based on the theory of Offensive Realism expounded by the famous American Scholar Professor John Mearsheimer. Offensive realism assumes that the international system is anarchic and lawless. Moreover, the great powers possess offensive military capabilities, and states' intentions can never be certain. Every country seeks to secure its own national interests to maximize its own chances of survival. In this regard, the offensive military doctrines adopted by states enable them to perpetrate harm against other states. This capability not only varies with respect to the deterrence capabilities of belligerent states but also changes over time; deterrence policy prescribes preventive measures (Schweller, 2010). Furthermore, under these assumptions, the great powers are driven to maximize their powers by any means and are always unpredictable. The state can use force to alter the balance of power in its national interest.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is based on a qualitative investigation that employs discourse analysis to understand the asymmetric tactics of the imposed hybrid war against Pakistan. India has activated the fault lines in Karachi, Balochistan, and other parts of the country. This research article is based on secondary resources, including published books, research publications, and news articles. Only the most authentic and reliable sources are used for research.

Execution of Hybrid War by India after 2008

Hybrid warfare is a contemporary military strategy that has obscured the traditional distinctions of armed conflict by integrating conventional military operations with irregular and non-traditional methods. It has blurred the lines of war, blending conventional military tactics with irregular warfare strategies, including cyberattacks, guerrilla warfare, disinformation, and other unconventional tactics. The strategy is aimed at engaging in a war executed by state and non-state actors working together. A country's internal and external vulnerabilities are exploited to execute a hybrid war.

The South Asian region constitutes one of the most significant geopolitical spaces in the contemporary international system. It is because of its unique geostrategic architecture, and associated security and political landscape. The reason for concern is due to the geo-strategic proximity of three nuclear powers of the region, i.e., China, India, and Pakistan, and their longstanding territorial conflicts and claims. The persistent territorial disputes pose existential threats and undermine the region's security. These are the region's sincere apprehensions that can pose strategic challenges. The concurrent situations have resulted in deep divisions among the countries over their vital national interests and foreign policy objectives.

Pakistan faces a complex mix of internal and external vulnerabilities. They stem from a variety of factors, including governance issues, economic uncertainty, the energy crisis, and corruption, which are major evils in the country and are exacerbated by the activation of fault lines in Pakistan. There are three fault-lines in Pakistan, i.e., sectarian, ethnic, and sub-ethnic faultiness. India has activated them, especially after 2008, by sponsoring non-state actors and sectarian groups in the country. However, Pakistan has focused mainly on external challenges and has tried to concentrate more on conventional threats and disparities.

The Implication of Indian Hybrid Warfare on Pakistan

The post-May 1998 era has changed the strategic dynamics of the South Asian region, as India and Pakistan both went nuclear, and Pakistan's conventional disparity was overcome by its nuclear capabilities. Moreover, the threat of direct intervention between the two neighbours facing a long-lasting unresolved territorial conflict was reduced. However, it led to new dimensions of conflict because India has successfully employed all the available elements of non-kinetic warfare to destabilize Pakistan (Nisar, 2022). Moreover, the nature and dynamics of Pakistan's hybrid war challenges are entirely different from those of other countries, and the country has been exposed to several asymmetrical challenges for the last twenty years. The security challenges that posed existential threats to the integrity of the country came from a broad spectrum of elements, including sectarian, ethnic, sub-ethnic, and private socio-political organizations funded by foreign donors for their political ends. The Indian backed insurgent groups of local origin, including Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), are activating different ethno-religious fault-lines in the country to destabilize Pakistan. The former Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, has openly warned Pakistan that it announced the CPEC, a project for regional economic integration. India started taking steps to sabotage and halt the project by several means (Rashid, 2017).

The evolving landscape of hybrid warfare now merges conventional military tactics with terrorism, cyberattacks, proxy operations, and targeted propaganda to foster anti-state narratives. Adversarial actors increasingly employ information warfare, particularly coordinated propaganda, to erode public confidence in Pakistan's armed forces and state institutions. Deliberate manipulation and dissemination of false information further weaken societal trust and institutional credibility.

Cyber-attacks pose an especially severe threat, as breaches of military databases can compromise classified information, disrupt critical systems, and damage essential infrastructure. Pakistan has already faced multiple Cyber intrusions against key installations. Simultaneously, the use of proxy groups through training, financing, and arming insurgent elements remains a persistent dimension of hybrid conflict. Diplomatic isolation, political pressure, and economic coercion also form part of this multifaceted strategy aimed at constraining the state's stability and resilience. India has employed these strategies against Pakistan, especially proxy war and the spread of propaganda and misinformation globally, and some political parties have created this environment against the armed forces (Nisar M. H., 2023).

The Establishment of the Technical Support Division (TSD) since 2008

In the post 1998 era, India has adopted the Cold Start Doctrine (CSD), a strategy to launch offensive operations against Pakistan with the help of its Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs) aimed at paralyzing the entire country. The idea of CSD was borrowed from Germany's Blitzkrieg, or "the lightning war," strategy introduced by Hitler, which was a swift and overwhelming concentration of forces to completely paralyze the enemy country, preventing it from responding or striking back (Citino, 1999). However, due to India's inability to functionalize the Cold Start Doctrine. India adopted a covert strategy to retaliate and avenge the 2008 Mumbai attacks by Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT) militants. India placed the responsibility on Pakistan and decided to avenge the LeT leadership by terrorist attacks inside Pakistan.

In response to the 26/11 Mumbai attacks, the Indian defence minister gave instructions to create covert capabilities in the inner circle of LeT to execute shallow operations deep inside Pakistan to take high-value targets. The Unit had operational authorization from the Chief of the Army Staff, General V.K. Singh, the Vice Chief, and the RAW Chief. Furthermore, an Indian Army officer has admitted that the main task of the Indian intelligence agency was to counter ISI by establishing connections and infiltrating the inner circles of Hafiz Saeed to carry out his assassination (Baweja, 2013). TSD carried out several operations in IH Kashmir and inside Pakistan, including *Operation Rehber I, II & III* in IHK, *Operation Seven Sisters* in the Northeast, and *Operation Deep Strike* (Pakistan). These operations

were highly secretive, and their details remained classified and inaccessible to the public. However, the allegations remained in the media for provoking militancy in the country, and India countered the contention with the same blame.

The operationalization of these actions increased with their alleged sustenance, financing, and training of the militant groups in Baluchistan. India activated sectarian and ethnic faultiness in Baluchistan by financing Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), Sipah-e-Sahaba (SSP), and Baluchistan Liberation Army (BLA). The apprehension of Kulbhushan Yadav unveiled new dynamics of hybrid war and Indian covert operations inside Pakistan. Kulbhushan Yadav confessed that he was an officer in the Indian Naval Intelligence and that, before departing for Chabahar, he had apparently joined TSD in 2011. In Chabahar, he was living with the code name Hussain Mubarak Patel. His deployment in Baluchistan was proposed to sabotage CPEC and sow mayhem there. His presence unleashed a new wave of violence and target killings in Karachi and Balochistan.

General V. K. Sing, after retiring from military service, contested the election from Ghaziabad and won by a majority (Dinda, 2014). General Sing is believed to be a hawkish figure in the Indian military, and his entry into the political corridors reflects a new era of decision-making.

Doval Doctrine – a Defensive-Offensive Doctrine of Ajit Doval

Ajit Doval served as National Security Advisor (NSA) in the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government and was tasked with curbing insurgency in Kashmir and neutralizing its alleged support from Pakistan. He served as the Intelligence Bureau (IB) chief and in the police service. He had a strategically radical approach to dealing with violence. He introduced a full band of strategy, the “fourth generation warfare,” in which the civil society could be “subverted, sub-normed, divided and manipulated by the enemy state (Subramanian, 2021). Ajit Doval is an experienced spy and a trusted officer of Narendra Modi, tasked with executing his hawkish strategy inside Pakistan. Moreover, he has three very imperative operations in his profile: The Operation Black Thunder (1988), the Rescue of 46 Indian Nationals in Iraq (2015), and Operation Hot Pursuit (2015) in Myanmar (Joshi, 2015).

Ajit Doval described his security strategy in dealing with the security threats at the following three levels. Firstly, in **Defensive mode**, in which he said, “We will work at the domestic level and make India internally strong enough to cope with external threats. Secondly, in **Defensive-offense mode**, in which “India has to go to the place from where the threat is coming from and neutralize it there. Thirdly, by **Offensive mode**, in which “you go for direct intervention with force but rightly and timely”. However, when it comes to China and Pakistan, the Offensive Mode is not applicable due to nuclear capabilities, and it prevents India from using extreme force. Therefore, according to the Doval doctrine, the **Defensive-Offense Mode** aims to exploit Pakistan's vulnerabilities by activating fault lines within the country. The fault-lines activated by India include the sectarian, ethnic, and sub-ethnic. Moreover, it includes other strategies, such as diplomatic, political, and economic isolation at the regional and international levels.

India does not necessarily adhere to the moral principles of war, as evidenced even in its ancient scriptures. Morality or ethics plays a very circumscribed role in the political thought of Indian strategic thinkers. At several instances in history, the fingerprints of Indian secret war strategies are found, which emphasize that India is involved in employing covert strategies to create political instability in Pakistan. In 1971, Indian intervention created an impossible strategic situation that ultimately led to the fall of Dhaka. RAW secretly trained Makti Bahini for six months with guerrilla fighting skills and fomented an insurgency in East Pakistan. It further started border skirmishes that gradually turned into bloody attacks on Pakistani troops (Fakhar-e-Alam, 2021). India has opened a full theatre of war on Pakistan until it ended up with the instrument of surrender signed between Lt. General Niazi and Lt. General Jagjit Singh Arora, GOC of Eastern Command.

The policies of the Indian government, their political statements, reflect that they are committed to practicing what Ajit Doval has prescribed as sustenance of national interest through terrorism in the region. Moreover, it raised Pakistan's distress and apprehension about India's involvement in cross-border terrorism. Subsequently, it is a proven fact that India is backing separatist elements to execute radical actions in the country to weaken it internally. Manohar Parrikar, the Indian Defense Minister and National Security Advisor to Narendra Modi, has recently given remarks that "terrorists have to be neutralized only through terrorists" (Hussain S., 2015). The statement in itself is a matter of great apprehension not only for Pakistan but for the entire region. It proved that India would never miss a chance to manipulate any opportunity that could help India to internally destabilize Pakistan. India's strategic adventurism against Pakistan can unleash a huge conflict in the region since the two countries possess a huge amount of firepower. These arms' capabilities and the presence of nuclear weapons have diminished the threat of a full-fledged war. Therefore, the bilateral conflict will not remain confined to their borders, but it will engulf and consume the entire region.

During Narendra Modi's state visit to Dhaka in 2015, the PM addressed the students and said that "Pakistan constantly disturbs India, creates nuisances, and stokes terrorism... terror incidents keep on happening" (Yousaf, 2015). He further vowed to work jointly for defence and security cooperation between the two countries. India's urging of Bangladesh for defense cooperation and counter terrorism reflects that India is still working on isolating Pakistan diplomatically by portraying it as a country that exports terrorism abroad. Modi diverted the world's attention from their atrocities in Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK) and their alleged support in Balochistan. Consequently, during the Independence Day speech in 2016, they threatened Pakistan that if it continued its policies, India would be compelled to expose Islamabad's wrongdoings in the region (Razdan & Shukla, 2016).

Although the induction of nuclear weapons in the two countries has diminished the threat of full-scale war between the two countries. However, the modernization of India's weapons and strategy is dramatically altering the region's deterrence stability. This is because India is increasing the number of long-endurance UAVs, IAF Rafale, Su-30MKI, P8-Orion surveillance aircraft, advanced helicopters, very sophisticated missiles, and air defence systems. Moreover, the adoption of the Cold Start Doctrine and the Joint Doctrine of the Indian Armed Forces reflects that India is preparing for limited, low-yield operations against Pakistan. It will help achieve its national interests through swift operations by deploying Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs). However, Pakistan's economic vulnerability and the unavailability of such sophistication in arms may lead to a full-fledged war and expand its scope. Because it will defend its national interest by any means, and it may escalate the war to the nuclear level.

Political ideologies (theories) and international geopolitical frameworks are considered central constructs in a country's strategic paradigm. The ideological construct often plays a pivotal role in the formulation and execution of strategies. Moreover, the development and modernization of political and military strategies have complicated the geo-strategy. They have made the policies more complex and multilayered. Thus, the theoretical grounds for the hybrid war can be traced to the ancient scriptures of the Arthashastra, in which even offensive diplomacy and alliances are considered part of war. India's intervention with an offensive diplomacy with its immediate neighbours is a foundation of disruptive geopolitics in the region. India is providing substantive military aid, counterinsurgency training, and financial assistance to Afghanistan. In October 2011, India signed a comprehensive Strategic Partnership (SPA) with the Afghan government, representing another shift. The SPA indicated New Delhi's willingness to depart from its traditional policy of boycotting the Afghan Taliban (Paliwal, 2017). On the other side, India's diplomatic engagement with Iran, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia is a true manifestation of Kautilya's "**Raj Mandala Theory**". The theory explains that the state is always encircled by enemy states, which hinder its expansion, and that this can be neutralized by another circle of national friends. The states that encircle the enemy state can be manipulated for their own national interests.

India has also changed its foreign policy towards Sri Lanka in fighting against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). A seeming change of heart, this was to keep Pakistan and China from getting too close to Sri Lanka militarily (Liebenberg, Kruijt, & Paranjpe, 2020). India is also providing technical support to Iran in developing the Chahbahar port, which will give India access and a naval presence in the Arabian Sea.

An Analytical Inquiry into India's Alleged US\$ 500 Million CPEC Cell to Sabotage the Bilateral Project

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is designed to connect the two countries through a robust infrastructure of roads, railways, and an energy corridor. On one side, the corridor will facilitate the flow of energy resources from the Middle East, especially Iran, to China; on the other, it will connect the rest of the world to China. China needs access to the Arabian Sea to export and trade with the rest of the world. It is a worthy project with mammoth potential and immensely beneficial for the entire region

Pakistan's engagement with China on the said project is strategically imperative, as it will provide China with access to the Arabian Sea and, simultaneously, bring financial stability to Pakistan. The CPEC passes through Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan, a strategically important region and a significant cause of disagreement between India and Pakistan. To sabotage the project and keep Pakistan away from the material benefits of the project, India has employed a strategy of hybrid war. India is pursuing internal weakening to sabotage the CPEC project. The issue was already deliberated earlier in India's Hybrid War strategy against Pakistan.

India is indirectly intervening in Pakistan through its funded banned organizations, including BLA, TTP, and other sub-national and sectarian organizations, including Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ). To operationally organize and manage these activities, India has set up a Baluchistan operation cell under RAW to devise a radical force for subversion and terrorist activities in the province (Report, 2017). India is aiming to develop strong military power by adding Pakistan-centric force potential by conventional and non-conventional means. They are sponsoring terrorist groups to stage violence in the strategically important parts of Baluchistan to sabotage the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Moreover, they are also targeting Chinese engineers in Karachi and Balochistan. The Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC), General Zubair Mehmood Hayat, said that India is aiming to sabotage the multi-billion-dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project through its premier intelligence agency, RAW (Desk, 2017).

In pursuit of the vital targets, RAW has not only established a separate CPEC Cell but has also tasked deep-cover RAW Operators, including Kulbhushan Jadhav, to operationalize the strategy in its true spirit. India, in collaboration with the Afghan NDS, has established three consulates in Afghanistan in Jalalabad, Kandahar, and Mazar Sharif, which are backing and providing other logistical support to carry out subversive activities in FATA, Baluchistan, and Karachi (Haider, 2016). This is because the hostile intelligence agencies of neighbouring countries are opposed to CPEC, and they are actively involved in destabilizing Pakistan. The CPEC increases Chinese influence in the region and frustrates India, which also seeks to expand its hegemonic role. Secondly, the CPEC passes through the disputed region of Kashmir, and India expressed its antagonism because the project hinders Indian ambitions in the region. They know that Gwadar is not only important for CPEC but also vital for Afghanistan and Central Asia, as they have been connected to the traditional Silk Route. Now, India fears that if it did not engage Afghanistan in strategic relations, it might get close to Pakistan.

Attack on P3 Orion at PNS Mehran Base

On 22nd May, 2011, a small group of terrorists associated with Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan sneaked into the Pakistan Navy's Airbase PNS Mehran and destroyed two P3 Orion surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft, and one was partially damaged. The terrorist attack was swift and deadly, which had held off

the entire base for 15 hours and ended with a deadly gun battle at early dawn. At least 10 military personnel were killed in the line of duty. The investigations revealed that four terrorists were involved in the attack, and they carried out a surveillance operation near the base for many months. The base was heavily guarded and well defended, and this attack was not possible without help from inside the base. It was also reported that during the attack, the base's closed-circuit cameras were not functioning.

Each P3 Orion anti-submarine aircraft cost US\$ 36 million and was commissioned into the Pakistan Navy for anti-submarine warfare. The aircraft is equipped with an upgraded version of maritime surveillance radar and the FLIR System Star SAFIRE II thermal imager (Ghosh, 2021). India is gradually increasing naval presence near Pakistan's waters. Moreover, India is illicitly perpetuating its naval exercises, patrols, and surveillance operations in the region with nuclear submarines having long endurance. On several occasions, Indian submarines were observed in the waters near Gwadar and Pasni. Scorpene-class submarine INS Kalvari was "detected and localized" in Pakistan's Exclusive Economic Zone, some 86 nautical miles from Gwadar, and the detection was done by P-3 Orion aircraft in the Pakistan Navy's fleet (Syed B. S., 2019).

Consequently, the deployment of P3 Orion aircraft enabled the Pakistan Navy to cope with any threat of submarine warfare. The submarine intervention could have been intercepted and neutralized; Pakistan's policy of restraint, aimed at giving peace another chance, prevented it from carrying out such an operation.

The major cause of the Mehran base attack was described as retaliation for *Operation Neptune Spear*, the target killing operation carried out for the assassination of the Al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden (Cooper, 2011). It was one of the most extensive and infuriating manhunts that changed the entire strategic discourse of the region with its strategic implications for the "War on Terror". The incident showed that Karachi is a staging point for terrorism and the terrorists' organization and their handlers have stepped into maritime terrorism. Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) commander Ehsanullah Ehsan assumed responsibility for the attack in retaliation for targeting al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, and almost 15-20 terrorists ambushed the base with advanced weapons (Jung, Khan, & Haque, 2011). Although the attack was carried out by the local terrorist organization based in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), the technical and financial support was eventually provided by RAW or the CIA. The stimulant for both can be testified that India has allegedly supported TTP to target P3 Orion, which poses a serious threat to its submarines in blue waters. Secondly, the US support can also prove that Pakistan is essentially an inept and weak state in terms of security.

The INS Mehran base attack was not the first attack of its type. In 2002, another incident of maritime terrorism took place when a car bomb exploded, killing 14 people, including 11 French Naval engineers, and 23 others were injured. The bomb was detonated near the Sheraton hotel, where a car was rammed into a 46-seater Pakistan Navy bus (Vick, 2002).

Volatility in Baluchistan

Baluchistan province spans Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, and the Persian Gulf region. Due to its unique geostrategic position, socio-political and economic grievances, and governance issues, the province has been the center of instability, mayhem, and havoc since 1947. The main cause of this uncertainty and conflict is the province's multiethnic composition. It reflects the precarious and unpredictable nature of the province's internal situation. Due to the unprecedented situation, the province has suffered from insurgency and violence between the federal government and locals. It caused economic uncertainty, political chaos, and many other social evils in the province.

Geostrategic Significance of Baluchistan

Baluchistan is indeed the largest province of Pakistan by land area, comprising 44 percent of the country's land area. It is not only the largest province in land area but also the largest in the number of

crises. The energy-starved country's Baluchistan province is immensely rich in natural resources, including oil, gas, copper, gold, and other minerals, and is strategically located. It is connected to the Arabian Sea and the Strait of Hormuz via the port of Gwadar. The Strait of Hormuz is a significant waterway situated between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman and is one of the most important strategic chokepoints. It is believed to be the world's most important transit chokepoint because a third of the world's total liquefied natural gas and almost 25 percent of global oil consumption pass through this strait (Ward, 2019). The US Navy's Fifth Fleet is stationed in Bahrain to control the waves. Now China's \$55 billion project, the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), is underway and will soon bear fruit.

Although the province is important in exceptional geostrategic terms and rich with natural resources, it is subject to instability and insurgency due to many factors. Baluchistan's vulnerabilities include marginalization, bad governance, religious extremism, ethnic problems, underdevelopment, and socio-economic uncertainties. These evils have made Baluchistan the most impoverished and penurious province of Pakistan, with the largest number of underdeveloped districts.

Baluch Nationalist Struggle is Different from the Past

The insurgency in Baluchistan has been ongoing since the creation of Pakistan. The first Baluch movement began over the issue of annexation in 1948. The second nationalist insurgency (1962-69) started during Ayub Khan's era. The Marri and Bugti Sardars emerged during this period as a result of their political struggle against Ayub Khan's martial regime. The third Baluch insurgency resulted from Bhutto's suspension of a coalition government formed by the National Awami Party and Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam, and later led to the start of security operations in Baluchistan (1974-77). The government cracked down in Baluchistan due to the alleged funding of Iraq to stage an insurgency in Baluchistan. The fourth wave of insurgency started after the assassination of Nawab Akbar Bugti in 2006 by the Musharraf regime.

The Baloch nationalist movements resulted in various political developments and had consequences in Balochistan that are relatively distinct from those elsewhere in the country. The Pashtuns and Sindhis have been co-opted into mainstream politics, whereas the Baluch have remained marginalized. The nationalist struggles of Sindhis, Muhajirs, and Pashtuns have led to distinct political discourses, unlike those of the Baluch. They managed to turn the strategic struggle into a political movement and gain access to the country's corridors of power. The seven-decade-long political struggle failed to forge a political movement that enabled marginalized people to participate in political decision-making. The Baluch people do show their discontent on the matter that their movements have been brutally exterminated and were not given a platform to address their grievances and were labeled as 'miscreants', 'separatists', and 'anti-state' (Ahmer, 2016).

Ethnocentricity and Sardari System: Socio-Political Framework of Baluchistan

Ethnic and tribal affiliations are important factors in major developing societies, shaping and reshaping society and serving as sources of intimacy and segregation. The opposing behaviour of these ethnic and sectarian segments of society sometimes becomes a source of violence and ferocity. Ethnocentrism's worldview is to look at the world primarily from the perspective of one's own race; this is the major cause of social segregation and political fragmentation. The one aspect of ethnocentrism is that it believes that one particular ethnic culture or race is superior to all other groups; it deserves more prominence and is required to dominate others. This particular point of view often leads to deceitful and biased assumptions about the norms, values, and socio-political identity. In a particular situation, one ethnic group can often see, observe, and believe other ethnic identities as wrong or immoral due to their variance from others. Ethnocentricity works sometimes as a centripetal force by uniting the people on similar grounds, and sometimes it works as a centrifugal force in some societies by creating segregation and apartheid like situations. Forcibly compelling other groups to a particular code of life or adopting a specific culture or ideology leads to oppression and manipulation. Cultural relativism can reduce such

a situation to some extent by emphasizing the importance of tolerating other cultures. It can help develop an understanding of other cultures and thwart rigidity among societies.

Pakistan is a multiethnic and multicultural society that has already suffered a lot from this ethnic diversity. In 1971, India activated the ethnic fault in East Pakistan by manipulating their political deprivation and cultural emotions. It led to the country's disintegration. The likely situation has later been created in other parts of Pakistan, for instance, by starting ethnic politics in Karachi, Baluchistan, and other parts of the country. The longest discourteous episode of ethnic violence has been observed in the case of Balochistan. The political and military institutions of Pakistan have been stigmatized, resulting in the distrust of the people. Political decision-making has raised warm suspicions among the people.

The precedents of separatist elements have evolved strategically by allying with the other armed groups of other provinces, like Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and sectarian groups, for increased exploitation and resurgence. Although the separatist struggle of Baluch nationalists' dates back to the creation of Pakistan in 1947, the modern struggle, which began after 2000, has rapidly reshaped the strategic discourse. During the military rule of Pervez Musharraf and the assassination of Nawab Akbar Bugti, the pulse of events has transformed into a new pace. The separatist groups became more organized, equipped, and calculated in their operations. The year 2015 observed the peak of terrorist events by Baloch insurgents; this number came down from 194 in 2015 to 51 in 2019 (Pervez, 2020).

The socio-political structure of Balochistan is based on the Sardari System. The Sardars (tribal chiefs) have great influence on the political affairs of the people. The government's support for Sardars is an inherited practice dating back to the colonial period. The British Raj has legalized the authority of Sardars over their subjects loyal to their colonial masters. The British colonial system provided full support to the tribal ruling class under the Frontier Crimes Regulations Act (1901) and backed the Sardars loyal to the Raj (Fazl-e-Haider, 2012). Pakistan's political elites inherited the same system after partition, and it remained unchanged and unchallenged. This Sardari system is one of the major causes of the prevailing backwardness, underdevelopment, and ethnocentrism of Balochistan. The fate of the common people remained in the hands of Sardars, who have exploited and facilitated the exploitation of the different changing Sarkars (political and military governments) of the country. This helped in the imposition of discriminatory and exploitative policies by the government, as well as by regional and international factors. They marginalized the people and deprived the common people of the fruits of sustainable development, education, and prosperity. The only objective of the ruling elites was to perpetuate their authority at the cost of their own people. Although the Sardari system was abolished by the System of Sardari (Abolition) Act, 1976. However, ironically, the Sardari system is also present in other parts of the country, and the feudal system is exploiting their rights. However, in Baluchistan, it is at its worst.

The Foreign Intervention in Baluchistan Insurgency

The political instability in Baluchistan is due to the political segregation and violence; however, the mayhem in Baluchistan is augmented due to the foreign intervention. Major regional and international countries are involved in disrupting peace in Baluchistan. The foreign involvement in Baluchistan is intensifying the situation and adding fuel to the fire. The regional countries are backing the separatist elements by financing, training, arming, and providing them with safe extractions. These foreign involvements are hindering the peace process in the province and halting national integration. This has resulted in the country suffering so grievously since 2001, and over the past decade, the nature of the strikes has also changed drastically. Their weapons, strategy, and hybrid tactics are causing grave and strategic harm to the country. These terrorist elements mainly get aid from India and Afghanistan; other regional and international countries are also involved in the operations.

India

India is in a state of conflict with each other on Kashmir, and the Line of Control (LoC) is one of the heavily armed conflict zones of the world. Kashmir is the central point of conflict between the two countries and has triggered hot pursuits amid ceasefire violations. This clash has never remained restricted to Kashmir; rather, India has exploited every occasion by activating the faultlines in other parts of Pakistan by backing *Makti Bahini* in East Pakistan during the 1970s, separatist elements in Baluchistan, Karachi, and FATA. Indian intelligence agencies are patronizing terrorist organizations like BLA, TTP, and Jamaat ul Ahrar (JuA). The organizations were neutralized and flushed out of Pakistan, and their terrorist activities were considerably reduced during the period from 2015 to 2020; however, the increased Indian funding and backing have brought them back to the forefront. It has usurped the violence in the entire region for its strategic gains.

India is a major sponsor of terrorism in Baluchistan. In 2020, an amount of \$28,000 from the Indian Bank of Punjab was received, while in the second instance, a transaction of \$55,851 was made by Mr. Manmeet (an Indian national) from the Indian Bank, New Delhi, and was received at the Afghanistan International Bank (Syed S. B., 2020). India has collectively spent \$820,000 on TTP and \$60 million on sabotaging CPEC. The primary objective of spending such a huge amount of funding in Pakistan is to stage an insurgency in Balochistan. The geopolitical instability will sabotage CPEC, which has exceptional geo-economics and geostrategic importance to both Pakistan and China. This huge funding has rapidly elevated a new wave of terrorism in the country. RAW has sponsored, funded, and backed a group of terrorists who were involved in terrorist activities in Karachi Stock Exchange, Chinese engineers, and law enforcement agencies in FATA and Baluchistan.

Indian funded Tehreek-e-Taliban (TTP) and Baluchistan Liberation Army (BLA) carried out most of the bloodiest terrorist attacks. The Indian Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) is responsible for terrorist activities in Pakistan. They are providing diplomatic support from the Indian consulates in Afghanistan. Most of the post-incident inquiries have led the investigations to the fact that India has been directly or indirectly involved in the attack or facilitated the attackers to carry out those attacks. The most recent terrorist attack targeting the 12th Rabiul Awal procession in Mastung, claiming the lives of 55 people, was carried out by Tehreek-e-Taliban (TTP), a banned terrorist organization funded by RAW. The Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti stated that this incident and before this – all major incidents that occurred in Baluchistan – and the RAW’s involvement have been behind all those, and the forces that want to destabilize Pakistan.” (Zehri, Guramani, & Shirazi, 2023).

India’s National Security Advisor (NSA) to PM Narendra Modi has outlined a hawkish military doctrine against Pakistan, “Defensive Offense,” and introduced it in a 2016 speech at a conference. His strategy has brought a paradigm shift in India’s traditional defence strategy to a comparatively proactive stance. He adopted psychological pressure, surgical strikes, strategic deterrence, sponsoring separatist elements in the country, and funding terrorism. Doval said, “Pakistan’s vulnerability is many times higher than that of India. Once they know India has shifted to a defensive offense, they will find it is affordable for them. You can do one Mumbai; you may lose Baluchistan.” (Neelakantan, 2016).

The Technical Support Division (TSD) is a covert wing operationally active under the Indian Intelligence Agency, RAW, which has allegedly been involved in infiltrating the inner circles of Hafiz Saeed and carrying out high-profile operations against him. This was in response to the 26/11 Mumbai attacks, which were allegedly carried out by Lashkar-e-Taiba. The Indian Military Intelligence Chief, Gen Rakesh Kumar Loomba, sought permission from the then military Chief, Gen V.K. Singh (Sarin, 2021). However, the group was disbanded immediately after successfully executing eight operations abroad, including Operation Seven Sisters.

In 2016, Kulbhushan Jadhav, a high-ranking Indian Naval officer associated with the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), was arrested in Baluchistan. He has confessed to being involved in terrorism, espionage, and sabotage, and backing the BLA militants in Baluchistan. He confessed to his

involvement in RAW in their alleged support to separatist elements, Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), sectarianism, ethnic cleansing, and volatility in Baluchistan, chaos, and mayhem in Karachi (Ahmad, 2016).

The recent hostage crisis of Jaffar Express in Baluchistan has also shown India's notorious role in the event. The BLA terrorists ambushed the Peshawar-bound train carrying 440 passengers. While alleging that India is the mastermind behind the terrorist activities carried out by BLA, DG (ISPR) Lt Gen Chaudhry stated, "We must understand that in this terrorist incident in Baluchistan, and others before, the main sponsor is your eastern neighbour (India)." (Hussain A. , 2025). During the entire event, Indian media have covered the narrative of BLA and aired the videos shared by the terrorists' sources, and additionally, they also shared old videos upgraded with AI tools for narrative building.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan is the second most important supporter of terrorism and violence in Baluchistan due to its geographical proximity to Baluchistan and FATA. Afghanistan has long been providing its territory to train, arm, and strategize attacks on high-value targets in Pakistan. The outlawed organizations like TTP, BLA, and Tehreekul Ahraar have safe havens in Afghanistan, and the Indian embassy is providing sustenance to them. These radical organizations have been actively operating in Pakistan during the US occupation of Afghanistan, and India enjoyed influence in the country. However, after the US withdrawal, the Taliban managed to control Kabul and formed their government, which has continued TTP's influence in the country. TTP, which is commonly known as the Pakistani Taliban, has adopted a new trajectory in Pakistan to terrorize the country and achieve its targets. The targets and path are prescribed by India, regional, and other international entities. Although Pakistan has managed to overcome the threat by breaking its networks after the implementation of the National Action Plan. The strong military operations have compelled them to retreat and relocate to Afghanistan. The rise of the Taliban in Kabul has not only turned these organizations back to Pakistan with more sophisticated weapons, strategy, policy, and organizational structure.

The deteriorating political situation in Afghanistan during the past two decades and the rise of the Taliban after a twenty-year struggle have changed the political discourse from the previous time. Their changed political strategy has formed new inroads in their foreign policy towards Pakistan. They continued to retain the terrorist sanctuaries in the country with Indian sponsorship. The Afghan support has intensified the terrorist attacks in Karachi, Lahore, and Peshawar. TTP and BLA instigate the young people of Baluchistan and tribal areas to get military training from Afghanistan, and also spread hatred against the state of Pakistan.

In 2021, the Indian ambassador to Afghanistan and an Indian army general visited a Baloch militant training camp in Haji Gak in Afghanistan that housed more than 150 Baloch militants of the BLA and paid \$30 million to establish a separate militant camp in Kandahar (Marwat, 2021). It has been confessed by high-profile Indian military leadership that they are sponsoring the separatist elements in close collaboration with Afghanistan to carry out terrorist activities, including bombing and target killing. During the night of the 30th and 31st of December 2023, five hardcore militants were killed in an intelligence-based operation carried out in Avaran, Baluchistan. The intelligence reported that they were infiltrated from Afghanistan (Shirazi, 2023). Their primary objective was to carry out terrorist attempts on the law enforcement agencies and disrupt peace in Baluchistan.

Gulf Countries

Baluchistan, and especially Gwadar, is of great strategic significance. The port is located on the mouth of the Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf through which one-third of the world's total oil passes. The region is strategically positioned in the world's most important region, connecting the Gulf, Central, and Southwest Asia. Despite these benefits, the region is unable to flourish economically because it is

located on the region's most active fault lines. The tectonic plates of major powers collide, resulting in the strategic crumpling of the entire region.

Dubai is one of the most strategically significant ports in the southeastern Persian Gulf. It is the largest, most populous, and the trade center of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The country has few remarkable natural resources aside from some oil reserves, and, significantly, it has modernized its infrastructure to attract investment. It has installed the world's most advanced infrastructure and port, turning the country into a focal point of global trade, tourism, and business. This distinct geostrategic advantage and modernized outlook in the traditional Middle East are the major causes of its booming economy. This is why any other significant development in their vicinity is taken seriously. The Director General of Military Operations claimed that India has established nine military training camps across the Afghan border to train BLA and TTP insurgents. He further stated that the UAE, in collaboration with India, is backing insurgency in Baluchistan by arming and funding the Baloch due to the rapid progress of CPEC (Imtiaz S., 2010). The developments at Gwadar port are perceived as a grave threat to the economic interests of Dubai port.

Chabahar also enjoys tremendous significance due to its geostrategic positioning in the oil-rich Persian Gulf region. The two rising powers in Asia are pursuing the development of strategically important deep-water ports in the Persian Gulf to bolster their presence in the region. Although the two countries deny any competition, they aspire to increase bilateral cooperation for the greater good. However, underneath an antagonism exists. Since 2003, India and Iran have been developing the Chabahar port to expand their trade opportunities in close collaboration. During the past few years, the Afghan government has also shown up their interests in signing a tripartite trade agreement to use Chabahar as an easier alternative route for its economic interests (Shah S. A., 2015). Modi's urgency to sign trade and economic agreements with Iran, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and other Gulf countries is intended to disrupt the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Although all the regional countries are under severe diplomatic pressure from the United States to avoid signing any trade or business agreement with Iran.

United States

The United States has had its longstanding strategic interests in South Asia and the Middle East. China's rapidly increasing strategic role in the South China Sea and the Persian Gulf region has raised concerns for the United States. The United States is backing India to contain China in South Asia and Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, and ASEAN countries to impede China in the South China Sea. On the other hand, China has begun to influence the entire region as its economic strategy expands. CPEC has become China's symbol of economic ambition, and China perceives the West as a hostile camp towards this program. The Donald Trump administration has taken a critical stance on the CPEC, stating that it passes through disputed territory and that there are certain areas where the United States should confront China (Akhtar, 2018). The United States tense stance on CPEC has directly affected Pakistan's diplomatic relations. The issue is more acute, especially when Washington is strategically aligned with New Delhi in its efforts to contain China in the region. This development provides India with a strategic edge and advantage to freely stage an insurgency in Baluchistan.

The United States and India are trying to maneuver Pakistan out of China's Belt and Road Initiative, an infrastructural plan in which China is heavily financing in more than 70 countries of the world, including Pakistan (Alam, 2021). Pakistan has severely burned its fingers in plans proposed by the Western powers. The West has secured its national interests at the cost of other countries. Pakistan was alone to suffer and pay the cost. It would undoubtedly be true to say that the United States is taking stock of the economic and political consequences as it plans to withdraw from the region. China is expanding its economic, trade, and political influence; however, the increased Chinese economic engagement in either the South China Sea, the Indian Ocean, or the Persian Gulf can counter US influence in the region.

Major Terrorist Organizations Active in Baluchistan

The major cause of the presence of terrorism in Pakistan, especially in Balochistan and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), is due to the Afghan War. In the early 1980s, this part had played its role as a backyard of the Afghan war, and after 9/11, the US War on Terror, Pakistan, willy-nilly, has become the frontline state. Secondly, due to foreign intervention, Afghanistan and India have also been set ablaze. India established five consulates in Afghanistan near the Pakistan border and started backing TTP and other terrorist organizations to attack Pakistani forces deployed in the tribal areas. It resulted in Pakistan's drawn-out conflict with the Taliban in FATA. The conflict that began in Waziristan and the Bajaur Agency has gradually spread to Baluchistan and other parts of the country. The main source of money for these terrorist organizations is extortion.

The key terrorist organizations active in the Baluchistan region have played a vicious role with the help of foreign funding to stage noxious operations against law enforcement agencies, civilians, and people from other ethnic groups like Hazaras. These organizations include:

Baluch Separatist Groups

Baloch separatist groups are terrorist and political organizations that advocate for the greater autonomy of the province of Balochistan. They have sometimes led an insurgency in Balochistan in several phases. There are several Baluch separatist groups and organizations active in Baluchistan, Pakistan's southwestern province, Iran's southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchistan, and one province of Afghanistan, seeking to establish an independent country. These groups are motivated by different objectives, political agendas, methods, and strategies that they adopted to carry out their operations. Some of the notable Baluch separatist groups, their history, agendas, foreign connections, and activity are briefly referred to as under:

Baluchistan Liberation Army (BLA)

Baluchistan Liberation Army (BLA) is a Baluchistan-based terrorist organization, spanning primarily in the regions including Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan. The group advocates the separation and independence of Baluchistan as a separate country from Pakistan on ethnic grounds. It was founded in 2000 and was preceded by the Baluchistan Liberation Front (1964). It has its headquarters in Kandahar, Afghanistan (Shah, Mashal, & Rehman, 2018). BLA is fully funded by the Indian intelligence agency RAW for carrying out terrorist activities against the Pakistan army. An Indian newspaper reported that the BLA Commanders had sought medical treatment in Indian hospitals under disguise and fake identities (Bhattacharjee, 2019). BLA carried out several bloody attacks on the civilians and armed forces in the bordering areas of Afghanistan and in the cities as well. Aslam Alias Achu, the BLA Commander and mastermind responsible for the Chinese consulate attack, was provided with medical treatment in Max Hospital in New Delhi (Saeed, 2018). Achu was wounded in an encounter with Pakistani forces, and several BLA terrorists were gunned down in the operation. Indian consulates in Afghanistan have also added their share by training, hosting, and providing financial support to the BLA terrorists in Afghanistan (Baabar, 2022). RAW has significant influence in Afghanistan's Ministry of Tribal Affairs, and it influences the Afghan government to carry out its covert strategies in FATA and Baluchistan.

Baluchistan Liberation Front (BLF)

The Baluchistan Liberation Front (BLF) is a Baluchistan-based terrorist organization that was founded in 1964 by Jummah Khan in Damascus, Syria. The organization is based on an ideology of Baloch nationalism and Marxism. The organization played a strategic role in the insurgency in Sistan-Baluchistan province of Iran and in Baluchistan, Pakistan, from 1973 to 1977. Iraq has also provided huge funding to this group to carry out terrorist activities during the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988).

The group disappeared from the spotlight until its reemergence in 2004 in the spotlight. Allah Nazer Baloch took the command of the group and started reactivating the terrorist operations, mostly in Pakistan and Iran, by targeting civilian and military personnel (Abid, 2013).

Baluchistan Students Organization (BSO)

Baloch Students Organization (BSO) is an organization formed by students from Balochistan province to struggle for the rights and interests of Baloch students. In 1967, the organization was founded in Karachi and, throughout its history, remained ethnically Baloch-centric, gradually becoming the largest Baloch student organization in Pakistan's history. The primary aim of this organization was to advocate for the rights of underprivileged people in Balochistan. The organization was later divided into two groups on ideological grounds: one group remained committed to continuing to struggle within the parliamentary framework, whereas the other became pro-independence. Dr. Allah Nazar Baloch, the founder of the pro-independence wing, formed BSO-Azad, which advocated restoring Baluchistan to its pre-partition colonial-era status. In 2013, the organization was declared a terrorist organization by the government of Pakistan due to its anti-state activities and separatist agendas.

Baluch Nationalist Army

The Baloch Nationalist Army is an umbrella group formed by the union of two groups: the Baloch Republican Army and the United Baloch Army. This group was formed in January 2022 when the leaders of these organizations agreed to carry out more deadly operations after the dissolution of their respective groups. BRA is ideologically based on ethno-nationalism, Baloch Nationalism, and Separatism that fight for the independence of Balochistan. Gulzar Imam Shambay is the commander and key militant of this group, who surrendered along with 70 hardcore militants in Pakistan in April 2023 (Shah S., 2023). After his arrest, Sarfraz Bangulzai led the command of this group and continued its militant operations across Pakistan (Latif, 2023). The groups are involved in the 2022 Lahore bombing in a busy market chowk in Anarkali that took the lives of three people and injured more than 20 people (Gablo, 2022). It has also taken responsibility for the 2022 raids on the Pakistani Frontier Corps in Panjgur and Naushki in Balochistan. On February 02, BNA attacked Frontier Corps base in Naushki and an outpost in Panjgur with advanced weapons, including US-made M-16s, M4 Carbines, Bullet Proof Vests, Snipers, and advanced pistols, which are allegedly obtained from abandoned US military (Aamir, 2022). The groups are operationally active in three regions: Pakistan's Baluchistan, Afghanistan's Kandahar, and Iran's Sistan-Baluchistan province.

Lashkar-e-Baluchistan (LeB)

Lashkar-e-Baluchistan (LeB) is also a Baluch separatist organization based in Baluchistan. This group is ideologically nationalist, Marxist, and claims to be secularist. The group is involved in bombing and terrorist activities in Lahore, Quetta, and Karachi. In 2022, they claimed responsibility for a terrorist attack in front of the Chinese Consulate in Karachi (Hussain, 2012). The group was involved in many terrorist activities and target killings; however, now operationally inactive.

Sectarian Organizations

Besides the radical activities of ethnically motivated terrorist organizations in Baluchistan, there have been instances when organizations carried out terrorist activities, target killings, bombings, and suicide attacks on sectarian grounds. The region is targeted, and a victim of religiously motivated banned outfits that carry out terrorist activities against other sectarian groups. Baluchistan is among the most volatile landscapes in terms of sectarian scuffles. The geostrategic location of this region is the primary cause of these volatilities. India is at the top of those foreign sponsors who are allegedly activating this fault line in close collaboration with Afghanistan and funding those banned outfits to stage an insurgency in the country and sabotage development projects in the region. The few important sectarian organizations actively participating in terrorist activities in Baluchistan are as follows:

Jundullah

Jundullah is an Iran-based terrorist organization that also has a presence in Baluchistan. Jundullah means “soldiers of God”; the organization is also known as *Jonbesh-i-Moqavemat-i-Mardom-i-Iran*, or “People’s Resistance Movement of Iran (PMRI)”. The organization is ideologically based on Baloch nationalism, Sunni Salafi, anti-Shia, and Salafi Jihadism. The estimated size of this organization counts around 700 to 2000 hardcore militants who are involved in carrying out terrorism in both countries (Shahzad, 2010). The Jundullah commander, Abdul Malik Rigi, was arrested in February 2010 while traveling from the United Arab Emirates to Kyrgyzstan (Worth, 2010). He was judicially tried and sentenced by the Tehran revolutionary tribunal and later on executed in June 2010 at Evin Prison. The organization was created in 2003 as a proxy to fight the Iranian military, and later it started operating in the province of Baluchistan. The organization is closely connected with Pakistani-based ethnic and sectarian organizations; it mainly remained operationally active in the Sistan-Baluchistan province. The Iraqi government, during the Saddam era, backed the Mujahideen-e-Khalq to activate the ethnic fault line against Iran and funded Jundullah to create sectarian strikes in the country (Merat, 2018). In the beginning, they fought for the Iranian Revolution and later for Saddam Hussein, and this political standpoint has made them their most favourite organization in the eyes of the Trump administration and White House. The organization has targeted several high-profile military and civilian personalities during its attacks. It took responsibility for a series of bombings in Zahedan during 2007-10, and the 2009 Pishin bombing. In July 2010, a suicide bombing in the Iranian strategic port of Chahbahar killed 38 people. After the execution of Abdul Malik Rigi, Muhammad Dhahir Baloch became the new commander of this organization and is the main suspect in the 2010 bombings.

Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)

Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is officially designated as a terrorist organization in Pakistan that is involved in violent activities across the country, especially active in FATA and Balochistan. The ideological motives of TTP are based on Islamic fundamentalism, Sectarianism, and influenced by the Salafi school of thought. The headquarters and main training camps are mostly based in eastern Afghanistan. In 2014, the US Department of Defence revealed the estimated size in numbers, which counts around 25000 (Khattak D. , 2021), whereas Pakistan has estimated its number between 7000 and 10000 (Haq, 2022). The organization is trained, funded, and backed by Afghanistan and India to carry out their national interests inside Pakistan; moreover, it is also associated with other terrorist organizations, including BLA, Al-Qaeda, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, and Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan. Baitullah Mehsud was one of the founders and a leading member of TTP from 2007 to 2009. It was commanded by Hakimullah Mehsud (2009-13) and Fazal Hayat (2013-2018); since 2018, Noor Wali Mehsud has commanded this group (Boone, 2014). This group is involved in several terrorist activities in Pakistan, including the beheading of three Sikhs in 2010, the attack on Malala Yousafzai, the Lahore Church bombing, the 2016 Lahore bombing on Christians celebrating Easter, and the INS Mehran Base attack in Karachi. The organization is connected to separatist elements in Baluchistan and is carrying out insurgency operations there.

Lashkar-e-Jhangvi Alami

The Lashkar-e-Jhangvi Alami espouses a rigid militant organization actively responsible for insurgency in Baluchistan. It has an exclusionary interpretation of Sunni Islam. It is an offshoot of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), which was formed in the 1980s to carry out Shia killings in Pakistan. It is a banned terrorist group responsible for carrying out sectarian terrorism in the country and legitimizing the killing of Shia Muslims in their doctrinal foundations. The ideological orientation reflects a more Takfiri outlook. The group is associated with TTP, BLA, Jundullah, and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. The organization has its sanctuaries and training camps in southern Afghanistan (Sarwar, 2017). It is ideologically based on Takfirism and anti-Shiism. The organization was founded by Riaz Basra, Malik Ishaq, Akram Lahori, and Ghulam Rasool Shah for the extermination of Shiism from Pakistan. The organization has been involved in a series of deadly terrorist attacks on civilians, sacred places, security

forces, and military installations, and is involved in publishing content to spread hatred and violence. LeJ's notable terrorist attacks include the 2009 attack on the Sri Lankan national cricket team, the 2011 Afghanistan Ashura bombing, the 2016 Quetta police training college attack, and it claimed responsibility for hundreds of target killings and terror attacks on law enforcement agencies across the country. The organization ambitiously aimed to transform Pakistan into a Sunni caliphate, an ideology similar to ISIS. This common objective led to the formation of an alliance with ISIS, and in 2017, the two organizations jointly took responsibility for the terror attacks carried out in Pakistan (Zahid, 2017). This new development has taken place under the leadership of Yusuf Mansoor Khorasani, a militant leader who is associated with several Pakistan and Afghanistan-based terrorist organizations. The organization is funded and backed by RAW through other regional militant groups and handlers to stage sectarian insurgency in the country.

Jaish ul-Adl

Jaish ul-Adl is a Balochistan-based terrorist organization ideologically based on Baloch Nationalism, Separatism, anti-Pakistan, and anti-Iranian sentiments. The organization was founded by Salahuddin Farooqui and later led by Amir Naroui and Hashem Nokri (Dorson, 2021). The organization is operationally active in the Southeastern province of Iran and in parts of Pakistan, including Baluchistan, a predominantly Baloch region. The group started carrying out its activities after the execution of Abdul Malik Rigi and other key terrorist leaders of Jundullah by Iran. The execution of top leaders of Jundullah made the group operationally vulnerable, hindering its ability to continue its activities. Additionally, this group emerged, and members of the Jundullah group joined Jaish ul-Adl because their leaders were executed. It carried out its first terrorist attack inside Iran's Sistan-Baluchistan province in October 2013 and killed 14 Iranian border guards (Esfandiari, 2013). The organization has its association with BLA, Kurdish Separatist groups of Iran, Al-Qaeda, and other regional terrorist organizations funded and sponsored by foreign hands.

Islamic State – Khorasan Province (ISIS-K)

The Islamic State – Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) is an offshoot of ISIS that has terrorized the entire Middle East in the past decade. The organization is established to expand the agenda of ISIS and establish a government in the Khorasan region based on the Caliphate. This group is ideologically based on Islamic fundamentalism, Salafism, and separatism. The group emerged in 2012, when Hafiz Saeed Khan aspired to follow the footsteps of Abu Bakar Al-Baghdadi and started Jihadism in this region. It started connecting its militants to Al-Nusra Front, Afghan Taliban, and other local militant groups active in FATA and Baluchistan. ISIS allied with the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Jundullah, the banned Islamic Renaissance party of Tajikistan, and later Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al-Alami, which was also associated with them. On one side, they have been working to establish an Islamist regime by fighting a proxy war in the region, and on the other hand, they have been recruiting militants for the reinforcements to ISIS in Syria. Consequently, from 2012 to 2014, in collaboration with TTP, they sent around 1,000 volunteers to fight alongside ISIS and paid them US\$800 per month (Giustozzi, 2018). The emergence of the Islamic State in the region has changed the strategic discourse of the region because it has started to establish a strong foothold. In 2015, almost three major Taliban groups merged into the Islamic State, including the Pakistani Taliban (TTP), the Afghan Taliban (Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan), and the Haqqani Network, and pronounced Hafiz Saeed Khan as their 'Wali' and 'Amir' (Firdous, 2023).

Ansar ul Furqan

Ansar al-Furqan is a prescribed militant organization ideologically rooted in Salafi-Jihadism, Baluch nationalism, and separatism. The group is operationally active in Iran's Sistan-Baluchistan and Khuzestan provinces. Its founding leader, Hashem Azizi, led the organization from 2013 until he died in 2015. After his death, Jalil Qanbarzahi (2015–2017). The organization is allied with other regional terrorist groups, including Jaish-e-Muhammad in Iraq, Al-Nusra in Syria, the Islamic State in

Afghanistan, Jaish al-Adl in Iran, and Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan. Its close ties to other banned organizations across the region give it greater maneuverability and operational flexibility.

Although the terrorist organizations like Ansar al-Furqan and Jaish ul-Adl are not directly carrying out terrorist activities in Pakistan. They are operationally confined to their terror acts in the Sistan-Baluchistan province of Iran; however, due to their alliance with Pakistan-based terrorist groups. They have aligned themselves with other regional organizations to broaden the scope of their influence; for instance, with Lashkar-e-Jhanvi al-Alami, which is not directly involved in Iran. However, their alliance with TTP, Islamic State, Jundullah, and Jaish ul-Adl has expanded their operational range from Pakistan to Afghanistan and Iran. Consequently, due to the volatile situation in Baluchistan, local people are compelled to migrate with their families to other places to escape the war. Trade and business are affected, schools are closed, hospitals cannot provide adequate medical care, and the living environment is severely affected by the province's volatile situation. The local Baloch are migrating from the districts of Turbat, Panjgur, Gwadar, Awaran, Khuzdar, and Kharan (Baloch, 2014).

CHAOS AND MAYHEM IN KARACHI: FINANCIAL HUB

Karachi, Pakistan's largest city, financial hub, and economic backbone, faces challenges, chaos, volatility, and mayhem, which are among its top trials today. The complex dynamics of the city, the heterogeneous socio-political and ethnic environment, and administrative maladministration are major hindrances to maintaining the state's jurisdiction.

Karachi, a fishing village of the eighteenth century, has grown into a magnificent economic hub of the twenty-first century. Today, it has become not only the largest city in Pakistan but also the backbone of its economy. The city is exceptionally significant due to the Bin Qasim port and is an important trade point with the world. Most of the trade with the Gulf countries and with the rest of the world flows through Karachi. The city is the economic backbone of the country and is often referred to as the 'Glory of the East', 'City of Lights', and the Liverpool of India and Pakistan (Kazmi, Mehdi, & Arsalan, 2013). It is true to say that if Karachi observes heavy downpour, sinks in flood, falls victim to terrorism, or suffers political upheaval, the entire country will bleed economically. This big city is home to 20 million people, a heavy industrial sector, extensive trade, a large economy, and gigantic infrastructure and industrial installations. Moreover, the city oversees the country's extensive maritime security, trade, and transport; it also hosts offices of almost all major business enterprises. The city has the main offices of major airlines, including Emirates, Qatar, Etihad, Turkish Airlines, British Airways, and Philippine Airlines. The city also hosts the offices of major mobile companies; moreover, it includes plants and service stations of major automobile manufacturers. It is true to call Karachi a 'Jewel in the Crown', more than just an economic hub (Ahmar D., 2019).

Determinants of Violence, Carnage, and Mayhem

The socio-political environment in Karachi has changed since the early 90s, and the post 9/11 era has increased the security dilemma for Pakistan. Although the entire country has suffered from the new wave of terrorism, Karachi remained at the top of the list of violent incidents. Pakistan is one of the worst victims of bomb and terrorist attacks, especially during the period from 2008 to 2018, which reported the highest number of terrorist activities reported in the newspaper. Since Pakistan served as a frontline state in the US-led war on terror in the region, Karachi was the city that suffered the most. In 2012, as per the statistical data, the terrorism-related deaths were around 1,553, followed by Baluchistan at 957, KPK at 656, and Punjab at 104 (Khan I., 2023). This death record escalated to a new record of 2,700 in 2013. This target killing was not confined to one type or activity; it was a result of suicide attacks, bombing, targeted killing, political, and other types of assassinations to challenge the writ of the state. It was aimed at creating mayhem in the country. Initially, the attacks targeted law enforcement agencies, including security forces, their installations, and strategic positions. Afterward, the targets were changed to political and religious personalities. The religious scholars, lawyers, doctors, professors, and other renowned and public figures from different professional backgrounds were

targeted on sectarian grounds. The drivers of these kill squads were different; some incidents were carried out by political parties, some by jihadist elements, some by criminal gangs and mafia, and some were based on ethnic or sectarian terrorists. The attack on Karachi airport in 2014 has drastically changed the general discourse of terrorist activities in Pakistan. In this terrorist attack, ten Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan militants stormed Jinnah International Airport, Karachi, and attempted to hijack a plane. The primary aim of this attack was to sabotage the government's ongoing peace talks with the local Taliban. TTP claimed responsibility. The attack showed a tactical shift in the Taliban's attack and terrorist activities within Pakistan (Hassan, 2014).

Karachi is one of the fastest-growing cities in the world. In the early 1940's, its population was around 435,000; now it has surpassed 25 million. This rapid and uncontrolled growth has gradually changed the city's demographic, cultural, and ethnic composition. Once it was a Sindhi-majority city, and now only 15% of its inhabitants are Sindhi-speaking. The population of the city is increasing by 5% annually. These rapid changes are not affecting its demography, but they are also affecting sustainable economic development, the urbanization process, and good governance, resulting in instability and violence.

Due to its huge textile sector, industries, and other businesses, it manages to generate more than 60% of Pakistan's total revenue and 90% of the provincial revenue of Sindh (Tariq, 2015). Karachi is the backbone of Pakistan's economy, as it handles 95% of Pakistan's foreign trade, and almost all major banks, mobile companies, and automobile companies have their head offices in the city. The Karachi Stock Exchange is ranked fifth among 28 stock exchanges worldwide (Al-Nahyan, 2016).

When we observe the wave of terrorism during the past decade, in addition to these perspectives, several other factors are also observed that contribute to the terrorist activities in Karachi. The economic deprivation, excessive state intervention, nationalist politicians, and ethnically-oriented political parties. The negative aspects of political struggle and the illegal distribution of wealth or economic opportunities have had a drastic impact on the city's social cohesion.

The ethnically biased political parties have indulged in the excessive use of violence and extremism in Karachi. They are an imperative force in activism, even to the point of viciousness. The period from 2002 to 2013 witnessed a wave of political violence that peaked after 2007. The political rivalries and contentions resulted in the death of more than 7000 people (Malik & Siddiqui, 2019). This law-and-order situation has challenged the city's overall peace and stability. The government is required to ensure the implementation of the government's writ, carry out crackdowns, judicial trials, and executions of terrorists, and promote reconciliation among all factions of society.

Political Parties, Criminal Groups, and Illegal Economies

Since the 1980s, the strategic instrumentation of violence has been embedded in the political culture of Pakistan and has manifested its particular intensity in the economic hub of Pakistan. During the martial law regime of General Zia ul Haq, the state fostered a new policy of political mobilization based on violence by creating ethnically-based political parties, contributing to the legitimization of violence in the political culture of Pakistan. It promoted the emergence of ethnically oriented political parties and communally motivated political leaders. Zia backed the Mohajir Qomi Movement (MQM), later renamed the Mutahida Qomi Movement (MQM), to counter the Pakistan People's Party in the urban areas of Sindh. During the late 2000s and from 2002 to 2013, political opponents from different parties in Karachi engaged in violent clashes against each other. The violent activity took the lives of more than 7000 people. The conflict in Karachi did not remain confined to Muhajirs and Sindhis; on several occasions, it escalated into clashes between Muhajirs and Pashtuns, and at times between Muhajirs and Baloch. These illicit deadly conflicts not only resulted in huge economic damage and political instability, but also harmed the lives of innocent people. It is also observed that in Karachi, several political parties have armed wings that become operational when needed. Moreover, in Karachi, almost all political parties exert influence over the government machinery by inducting people based on

favoritism. However, it is predicted that by 2025, the Pashtuns will outnumber the Muhajirs in Karachi (Report 255, 2014).

Jihadist Militancy and Sectarian Violence

Militancy and sectarian violence are another frightening chapter that has been haunting Karachi since the Zia era. Since 1980, militants have been raised and armed for political ends, although initially it was for the containment of communism in Afghanistan; however, the militancy and Kalashnikov culture have affected the internal security situation of Pakistan. The local Jihadi organizations and sectarian terrorist groups. In the past decades, these groups have had some strategic support from the military establishment due to Pakistan's Afghan and Kashmir policy. They are occasionally used to confront India or other enemies to secure Pakistan's strategic objectives. These active Jihadi organizations include Lashkar-e-Tayyaba, Jamaat-ud-Dawa, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, and Sipah-e-Sahaba. These organizations were created during the Zia regime in the pursuit of his Islamization policies and also to establish a strong military presence internally and regionally. The Islamic Revolution in Iran has unleashed a strategic rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia, which has affected Pakistan as well. Militancy in Pakistan has reportedly intensified amid efforts to curb the spread of the Islamic Revolution and the political ideology of Imam Khomeini. Therefore, Karachi has become an important theatre of this target killing.

The post 9/11 era has raised a new era of Jihadi terrorism in Pakistan, especially in Karachi. TTP started operating in Karachi to take revenge for the Pakistan army's operation in the Tribal areas by attacking strategic installations in Karachi and by targeting prominent personalities. On October 18, 2007, the Karsaz bombing occurred, which resulted in at least 187 deaths and more than 500 injuries (Sahoutara, 2022). A huge mob gathered to welcome Benazir Bhutto, the former Prime Minister of Pakistan, who returned to Pakistan after an eight-year self-imposed exile. Besides that, TTP also focused on targeting the anti-Taliban liberal Pashtun party, the Awami National Party (ANP). The swift increase in the ferocious and vehement terrorist operations has compelled the ANP to close 70 percent of its political offices in Karachi and limit its political gatherings as a political practice. The MQM terrorist Ajmal Pahari confessed after its arrest that India is running four militant camps for training and arming the Altaf-led Group in Deradhun, Haryana, in North and North-East India (Syed S. B., 2020). He confessed that 40 terrorists of his group have received hardcore training from those camps.

CONCLUSION

The new Indian hybrid war strategy since 2008 has hampered Pakistan's internal security. The policy advisors of the Indian establishment are sure that Pakistan's nuclear and conventional capabilities can never allow India to achieve its military objectives in Pakistan. Therefore, only hybrid and proxy military doctrine can serve the cause. India's hybrid military capabilities are contributing to emerging non-traditional security challenges for Pakistan. India has activated sectarian, ethnic, and sub-ethnic fault-lines in Pakistan by financing extremist elements. India is sponsoring terrorism and creating mayhem in Baluchistan and in Karachi, the financial hub of the country. This is what the Indian top-tier military and civilian bureaucracies admit in public and in the media. India has established several secret cells in the tribal areas of Pakistan and in Afghanistan as well to stage an insurgency in Baluchistan and FATA. The terrorist organizations, including BLA, TTP, LeJ, some NGOs, and media groups, are financed to act adversely against the national interest of Pakistan and also to build an anti-state narrative among the youth. The pseudo-intellectuals and certain people are engaged in disseminating propaganda against the state, institutions, the army, and Intelligence agencies. These activities are part of India's grand strategy of hybrid warfare and Ajit Doval's strategy of offensive defense. This strategy aimed to exploit the internal vulnerabilities of Pakistan by supporting and backing the non-state actors and terrorist organizations. Pakistan should take special steps for the sustainable socio-economic development in Karachi, Balochistan, and FATA. Besides security-driven operations, economic projects for sustainable development and job creation will be highly beneficial for improving living standards and advancing sustainable development in Baluchistan.

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