

Countering disinformation warfare

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Pakistan is the only country on planet earth that lost half its part i.e. former East Pakistan due to a well-crafted Indian disinformation warfare launched to exploit the then existing political fault lines. It did not stop there in 1971, but continues to date to keep the created illusions and propaganda based odium simmering. Unfortunately, Pakistan remained oblivious to the hostile disinformation warfare supplemented with a comprehensive subversion and sabotage strategy by India, which coincided with the creation of RAW, recruitment, training, funding and equipping of Mujib-ur-Rehman's Mukti Bahni; which ultimately backstabbed the Pakistan Army and operated hand in glove with Indian RAW and their Army for dismemberment of the country. Indian prime minister Indira Gandhi then announced on the floor of the parliament, "We have taken the revenge for thousand years of slavery".

Whether we like it or hate it, India continues to take a lot of pride in her classic political, intelligence, psychological and military victory; besides, Indian efforts to play the same malicious game in Pakistan carry on unabated. Pakistan's response as a counter strategy to India's disinformation warfare and subversion expressed as 5th generation warfare or hybrid warfare needs to be significantly improved by putting to use all globally available means as a priority rather than as a cursory subject. Pakistan not only needs to cover its sensitivities, but instead exploit India's many more fault lines as a quid pro quo.

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It is well established that in the given milieu, disinformation warfare is a global phenomenon and even superpowers are finding it hard to contest and contain it due to the multiplicity of the associated challenges. Even American experts feel that if the US government wants to win information wars, Cold War-era tactics won't cut it anymore. On October 7, 2020, the US Justice Department announced that it had seized nearly 100 websites linked to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).

In recent years, private and public actors alike have had to ramp up their efforts against botnets, troll farms, and artificial intelligence systems that seek to manipulate the online information environment and advance certain strategic objectives. These actors came under unprecedented scrutiny in the aftermath of the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Some professionals believe that the United States and Europe are ill-prepared for the coming wave of "deep fakes" that artificial intelligence could unleash. According to a CIA expert Brian Raymond, "while cyberspace may be a new front in the fight against disinformation, disinformation in and of itself—as well as the societal discord it can sow—has been a national security concern for decades; the Cold War was largely waged by propagating competing versions of the truth. And much as the threat of "fake news" is nothing new, so too is the way policy makers deal with it—or try to. Therein lies the

real problem. In countering disinformation emanating from the Kremlin, Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and IRGC, among others, the United States continues to rely on the same dated playbook that led to success against Soviet propaganda operations, known as “active measures,” in the 1980s. But this anti-disinformation strategy, like most else developed in the 1980s, has been rendered largely obsolete by an evolving media landscape and emerging technology. Since then, the gulf between Silicon Valley and the U.S. national security community has only widened—but there are signs that the tide may be shifting: Companies like Facebook, Twitter, and Google are increasingly working with U.S. defense agencies to teach future software engineers, cyber security experts, and scientists”.

[Pakistan reports 847 coronavirus cases in one day](#)

The debate on the required counter strategy against disinformation warfare within America and Europe has a lot of pointers for Pakistan to emulate with available and essential-to-be-acquired means. As per specialists, the United States can be a viable competitor in the global information wars by developing a comprehensive counter-disinformation strategy that is predicated on three different pillars. Before any decisive counter-disinformation strategy can be formulated, key constituencies will need to come to some sort of consensus about data ethics. A commission staffed by leaders from the executive branch and media organisations must first draft a set of first principles for how data should be treated in an open and fair society. Any effective campaign in pursuit of the truth requires a set of guiding principles to inform the types of speech should be permitted in digital town squares and when speech should be fact-checked—or, in extreme cases, removed entirely. An effective counter-disinformation strategy will require a holistic government approach, likely anchored by the Foreign Office and supported by the Ministry of Defence, JS HQ and Services HQ, the intelligence community, and other key stakeholders. Thus, it’s important to nest government-led counter-disinformation activities within a broader set of actions driven by the private sector. Playing the role of coordinator, the government should encourage the creation of a fact-checking clearing house among social media platforms to rapidly counter suspected disinformation. This should be encouraged and expanded to operate at the speed and scale with which content is generated and disseminated across social media.

[OIC slams French incitement against Islam, prophet](#)

In Pakistan, our intelligence agencies need to significantly realign resources and personnel to meet the challenge that India poses, quickly and across almost every single agency. As the intelligence community prioritises analytic questions related to India in intelligence, military, technological, economic, political, psychological, cultural, health, religious and environment domains, it must focus on the areas of competition that will facilitate Pakistan to be successful. Addressing these dimensions of the challenge will require a significant realignment of the types of individuals and skill sets we recruit, retain, invest in, and grant security clearances to, including through hiring analysts with nontraditional backgrounds in technology and science. The intelligence community should expand its practice of hiring technical experts, such as trained health professionals, economists, and technologists, to serve throughout its analytic corps. Our intelligence agencies must do a better job of adapting to the sheer amount of open-source data available to them about direct, indirect, regional and global threats and competitors and to quickly get the resulting intelligence to decision-makers. Given the increasing pace of

global events, driven partly by social media and mobile communications, we need to quickly adapt and modernise. That means properly utilising artificial intelligence and machine learning to analyse data to find what we need to make decisions quickly. Similarly, the intelligence community should prioritise transferring successful start-up initiatives to long-term sustainment at the earliest possible date, protecting dedicated funding for future innovation whenever possible.

[18 Kashmiris killed by India in October: Zahid Hafeez](#)

According to an Indian, Dr Amit Ray, “In this era of fake news and paid news artificial intelligence (AI) is more and more used as a political tool to manipulate and dictate common people, through big data, biometric data, and AI analysis of online profiles and behaviours in social media and smartphones. But the days are not far when AI will also control the politicians and the media too.” Since early 70s, Pakistan has been subjected to an Indian cultural invasion through Indian movies, TV plays which today thrives on all available means of print, electronic, social media and cyber means and target all segments of Pakistani society including Pakistani social media, TV channels and politicians that are often heard shamelessly expressing Indian propaganda themes. The recent surge in targeting the Pakistan Army by under-trial corrupt politicians is too dangerous to be ignored nevertheless. Before it is too late, the Government of Pakistan has to wake up to the call of the duty to safeguard hearts, minds and souls of people of Pakistan from Indian disinformation onslaught by putting in place a comprehensive counter disinformation strategy as pointed out and by ruthlessly dealing with the incorrigible traitors and Trojan Horses by existing or new quickly implementable laws of the land. “Misinformation destroys trust. When you destroy trust, you destroy the bonds that hold society together.”

[Libya ceasefire effective immediately after signing: UN](#)