**Economy and fifth generation warfare**

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Let be clear, fifth generation warfare (FGW) is not only use of media or social media. It is war of narratives supported by hard facts and data. Social media hype can divert attention for time being, but it is not sustainable without the hard facts and figures. The evidence-based logic is key to develop narrative and to defeat the narrative of the opponents. The evidence and logic must be prime, otherwise you become laughingstock. We can quote example of “India-Chronicle” which miserably failed and became source of embracement for India. Despite the huge investment and involving multiple countries India could not succeed because it lacks evidence and facts. The second important element to fight the FGW is that country should also be aware of its fault lines and try to cover it.

There is consensus among experts that the most fatal fault line is economic status, more specifically the welfare of people. The welfare is measured through distribution of resources and equality among segments of society. In the absence of resource distribution,the inequality would be on rise and welfare of people would be compromised. Economically compromised people would be ready to accept the narratives, which target their needs or problems nothing else. Theethnicity, class, nationality, language or any other identity will be tagged with their miseries and it will pave the way for their exploitation. History is full of such incidents.

Unfortunately,the global system is ignorant of the fact and welfare has become subject of lip service or designing fancy slogans or programs with limited practical application. The race for GDP is on but the better living of people has been compromised. The economic power notion is disturbing the social and development fabric of world. In nutshell the economy has been presented as source of strength of a nation and people welfare has been put on back burner. Trickle-down theory was advocated,and it was propagated that it will ensure distribution of resources among masses as an automatic mechanism. It will lead to welfare of people. Hence, rich or business should be facilitated through tax cuts and incentives. However, a recent study by researchers of London Scholl of Economics and King’s College London pointed in other direction.Study analyzed the 50 years of data of most advanced economies. They figured out that the tax cuts for rich could not create desired growth and employment opportunities and there were no signs of trickle down.

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The blind believes in trickle-down led to food insecurity, inequality, poverty and health problems across the world. Even the most advanced economies are suffering from these problems leave alone the poor economies. If we delete contribution of China on these fronts the statistics will tell us a horrible story.These economically comprised people become fodder of FGW at national and international levels. Nationally, opposition parties use it for unsettling the government. Internationally, the enemies of state use them to fulfill their objectives.

Pakistan is no exception to such realities. Although, fifth-generation war or hybrid war is favorite subject to talk about but the real elements of FGW are being missed from the debate. The elite of the country, either in power or opposition, they use these facts just to undermine the opponents and secure the power. For example, corruption, poverty, bad governance, food insecurity etc. are being used to criticize others and secure points but in term of practical actions the story is different. This is reallya bad strategy and gravely harmful for country.Building narrative against each other is not success of any party, it is weakness of everyone, and ultimate loser would be country. It is contributing to propaganda against country. We have seen recently that enemies are using statements of our leaders for their own benefit.

In fact, this strategy is strengthening the hands of the enemies of the state and they use it to spin their doctrine. It is also strengthening the enemy’s narrative and they have accelerated their hybrid war to undermine the national interests of Pakistan. For example, the statements on pace of CPEC were picked by international players and they used these statements to undermine the CPEC.

The situation dictate that Pakistani ruling elite needs to adopt a WISE (welfare, intelligent, smart, enabler) strategy instead of misdirected and tit for tat strategy. The wise strategy demands that ruling elite analyze the current situation and try to underneath reasons of problems. They need to find out what are reasons of poverty, food insecurity and other ills. They must come out of blame game mentality and try to seek the answers not problems.  Unfortunately, at present it does not seem possible due to personal enmity and grudges among power players.

Hence, it is suggested that Pakistani ruling elite needs to talk to, rational,wise and optimistic mindsin country. They should identify and create a group of people and let them work out the political economy of problems, decision making, resource sharing and wellbeing of people. The group also be given task to present a viable solution.

Second, ruling elite should come out of mentality of credit taking and self-praise. What they are doing, it is their duty, it is not favor to nation or anyone. They are merely fulfilling their job. The credit game always hurt, as to claim credit you need to prove failure of others. It is basic ingredient of division and conflict, which hurt the country. Thus, it must be adopted by all players that they will only highlight their work not the weaknesses of others.

Third, there should be a consensus-based agenda for the development of country. The agenda should be developed on the economic and development rational not political preferences. Power players can develop “Agenda 2047” in a phase wise manner. For example, for next 5 years the agenda should be to bring the economy on take off stage. The target should to double the economic size of economy and create jobs for common people.The second phase should be designed to start the transformation of economy from agriculture to industrial base and redesign the share of services sector in economy. The target should be to reach the US$ 1.5 trillion in next 15 years. The third and last phase should be designed to be completed in 2047, at the 100 years of country. The targets should be to reach at US$ 3 trillion and moderately developed and prosper country.

Lastly, the agenda should be made part of the constitution and make it obligatory for all parties to adopt it and implement it without any delay. The agenda should not be changed or twisted according to political and other interests. Then the party performance should be measured on the basis of delivery of set target and there should be no blame or credit game. Parties should only share the comparison of their achievement in comparison with the set targets and let the people decide. It would be a win-win situation and it will also help to fight the fifth-generation war.