

Threat of Extremism & Terrorist Syndicate beyond FATA

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Abstract

The extremism in FATA has been shaped by historical events of the recent and distant past. In the aftermath of 9/11, it facilitated in the formation of transnational terrorist syndicate, which has severe internal and external repercussions for Pakistan's national interest. The law enforcement agencies have been failing to combat the menace of terrorism effectively due to local and foreign Taliban; Al Qaeda, the Islamic Jihad Union, etc, radicalized recruits popular, political and physical sanctuaries in FATA. This necessitates that Islamabad ought to revise its counterterrorism strategy according to the demands of the asymmetrical warfare

Key Words: Extremism, terrorist syndicate, FATA, sanctuaries, repercussions

The increasing extremism inside Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) has serious repercussions for the Pakistani state and society in particular and global security in general. Ideological motivation through biased interpretation of Islamic norms; ability to freely move across countries; financial backing through illicit trade; adept in use of communication technology; and above all the protracted global war on terrorism are important sustaining and enduring constituent of extremism in the area. The extremists' strategy is not limited by theological moral scruples—inhibition in killing of the innocent, unarmed, civilians and non-combatants. There is no compunction against killing of the innocent, women, children and the unarmed civilians.

The aim of terrorist residing in FATA is to disorganize, demoralize and dehumanize by creating an ambiance of terror and intimidation in Pakistan. They have succeeded to some extent in achieving their objectives by frequent bomb blasts, suicide attacks and assassination attempts against leading personalities, including President and Prime Minister. Despite the series of military and dialogue initiatives, Pakistan remains at risk from extremists' element in FATA. Islamabad has been facing immense difficulty in eliminating the sanctuaries of transnational terrorist in FATA, curbing the extremism in the area and restricting cross-border militant activity—including

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resurgent Taliban and Al Qaeda cadres—between Pakistan's tribal belt and Afghanistan.

The Americans and Europeans have consensus that Pakistan's FATA provides sanctuary to local and foreign Taliban; Al Qaeda central leadership; and the Islamic Jihad Union (IJU).¹ The Western intelligence agencies claim that since the demise of Taliban government in Afghanistan, much of the command, control and inspiration for planning attacks came from Al Qaeda's remaining core leadership residing in the tribal areas of Pakistan. On May 10, 2008 Admiral Michael Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff United States armed forces claimed, "I believe fundamentally if the United States is going to get hit, it is going to come out of the planning of the leadership in FATA—Al Qaeda specifically."² The foiled attacks in Germany and Denmark in 2007 and London terrorists' acts in July 2005 manifested that presence of Al Qaeda-affiliated groups, which has been fanning extremism in Pakistan-Afghanistan adjacent region are not a threat for Pakistan alone, but equally undermine the security of Western countries.

The extremism in FATA as it exists today did not develop overnight but has been shaped by historical events of the recent and distant past and also Muslims role in the international politics. Therefore, any objective discussion about FATA necessitates not only understanding of the area, but also requires the knowledge of the rise of Islamic militancy in the recent decades. The study is structured into five sections: The first section deals with the geo-political and social structure of FATA. The second section focuses on the religious extremism in the Muslim world and rise of Al Qaeda. The third section spells out the causes of extremism in FATA. It is followed by discussion on the repercussions of extremism in FATA for Pakistan, and final section highlights the connection between international extremism and FATA.

Brief Overview of FATA

Since the partition of sub-continent, FATA enjoyed a special political and administrative status within Pakistan. The Article 1 of the 1973 constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan separates FATA from the province within which it lies. It treats FATA as a separate entity, to be administered by the Federal Government of Pakistan as prescribed in Article 247 of the Constitution. Accordingly, FATA is outside the executive authority of the Province of North West Frontier (NWFP) and the Governor of NWFP in his capacity as an Agent to the President of Pakistan regulates its affairs. The jurisdiction of the superior courts is very limited in its applicability to matters related to the region. Justice is dispensed, and disputes settled, under the provisions of the Frontier Crimes Regulation of 1901.

FATA lies along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border about 2500 km long, right from Wakhan to the Iranian border,³ and 130 km widest or 3.4 percent of Pakistan's land area. The official estimate indicates that its population is 3.176 million, while unofficial sources claim it to be around five million. The FATA belt is a tangle of difficult mountains intersected by long narrow valleys, innumerable gorges and torrent beds interspersed with patches of cultivable land. The region does not suit industrialization due to its topography and the mineral wealth remains unexplored. It remained underdeveloped because it did not possess a natural potential to give a return on the economic investment made. Administratively, FATA is divided into seven political agencies: Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Kurram, Orakzai, North Waziristan and South Waziristan, and six Frontier Regions: Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Tank and D.I Khan and Tank. There are a number of border passes between Pakistan and Afghanistan but seven are well-known which run through its territory, i.e. Malakand, Khyber, Gandab route through Mohmand territory, Kohat route through Parachinar, Bangash or Paiwar route by Kurram, Gomal and Tochi routes through Waziristan; and Bolan route in South.

The people living in FATA are called Pashtuns or Pathans, whose culture is martial, their folklore of wars and distinguished by dance, which were originally war dances that became cultural phenomenon. Pashtun tribes have experienced, but have always resisted, the invasions by Aryans, Persians, Greeks, Kushans, Huns, Mongols, Mughals, Durranis, Sikhs, and British. In the background of these historical facts, the people of FATA take pride in their legacy of struggle, adversity and war.

The Pathans share ethnicity with Pakistani North Western Frontier Province and Baluchistan. In addition, Pathans also inhabit in the major cities of Pakistan, especially Karachi, where the Pathans labor force constitutes a large presence.⁴ These tribesmen have cultural, ethnic, and historical links with Afghanistan and are ethnically and ideologically close to Taliban and Pashtuns. Various Pashtun tribes inhabit FATA, but the more famous ones are: Yusufzais in Malakand and Bajaur Agency; Mohmands in Mohmand Agency; Afridis and Shinwaris in Kyber Agency, Peshawar and Kohat; Orakzai in Orakzai Agency; Turis and Bangash in Kurram Agency; Khattaks in east and southeast of Kohat; Wazirs in North Waziristan Agency; and Mahsuds in South Waziristan Agency.

These tribes follow the ancient code of Pukhtunwali or Pukhto—the Tribal Honour Code—sometimes called “Nang-i-Pukhtun” or The Pukhtun code or the way of the Pathan, in their day-to-day affairs. This code has numerous unwritten laws and traditions, which in one way or the other are interrelated. The main maxims are those of mediation or protection (Nanawati), retaliation or reciprocity (Badal), and hospitality (Mailmastia). Nanawati is the law of

asylum, according to which asylum must be given to all fugitives, and even to bitter enemies if they come as supplicants. The Badal imposes upon the tribe man the responsibility of wiping out insult with insult: i.e. 'an eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth'.

For the prevalent situation in FATA the most important one is 'Mailmastia: it means the showing of hospitality to all visitors without hope of remuneration or favor. It is the hallmark of tribal social customs and traditions. 'Maillmastia enjoins the obligation of protection. Anyone who can gain the access to the house of a Pathan, can claim asylum from the house, regardless of the previous relationship between them. Incidents have occurred where innocent men have died defending strangers or even their own personal enemies who demanded refuge while being pursued by hostile forces. Tribal society's obligations of Mailmastia frequently led to difficulties under the British rule. A classic case in point is Mailmastia for Osama Bin Laden by the Taliban.

Pakistan accepted the autonomous character of FATA through the famous Instrument of Accession signed by the Father of the Nation Quaid-I-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, at the Bannu Tribal Jirga in January 1948. The Instrument of Accession makes the tribesmen citizens of Pakistan without changing the administrative system that was introduced by the British government. Presently, therefore, FATA is governed by the Frontier Crime Regulation Act (1901), which was enforced by the British colonial rulers. The government efforts to bring the tribal areas within the folds of the normal law of land have achieved some results, but the tribal culture and customs have strongly resisted any change in the systems. The Act recognizes sardars, maliks and other functionaries in the tribal hierarchy, and allows local customary laws to prevail.⁵ The Government of Pakistan does not interfere with the local system as a council of elders (Jirga) settles dispute. This system seems very friendly, but in reality, it is draconian and oppressive because it confers the ultimate authority, on the political agent, the representative of government of Pakistan.⁶ Presently, the situation is different. The writ of the government representatives has been deteriorated. The local tribesmen commonly referred as Local Taliban took the law into their hands. They punished people who were allegedly involved in criminal offenses like murders, extortion, liquor and narcotic business.

During the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan FATA became a war zone. The Durand Line had practically ceased to exist with the free movement of refugees, fighters, arms and ammunition. The whole area became heavily armed with weapons supplied by the United States to the Afghan mujahideen to fight against the Soviet forces. Under the impact of the jihad, the local administration was rendered totally ineffective. Even after the Soviets withdrawal, FATA continued to be the center of activity of various Afghan mujahdeen groups. FATA was also exploited by Islamabad to

influence the political process in Afghanistan for more than a decade. Importantly, during the Taliban rule a number of local Wazirs joined the Taliban forces and fought against the Northern Alliance where they came in contact with Arabs, Central Asians and other foreign militants in different training camps thus, the local government failed to establish its writ because the mujahideen groups were heavily armed and enjoyed the support of higher authorities in Islamabad. As a result not only illegal activities like heroin smuggling, and gun-running thrived in FATA, the region also witnesses the rise of extremist religious movements like Sufi Mohammad's Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi. The Taliban government in Kabul also had very close links with FATA people. Under Taliban rule in Afghanistan, the writ of the Government of Pakistan became further ineffective as the people from FATA joined the Taliban in fight against the Northern Alliance led by Ahmed Shah Masud. When government of Pakistan tried to check the unregulated movement of people across the Durand Line, the Taliban government resisted.⁷

9/11: Fall of Taliban

After the fall of Taliban government in Afghanistan in 2001, a number of Al Qaeda/Taliban fighters fled to some of the rugged and highly inaccessible area like Birmal, Khamrand, Santoi, Mantoi, Shakal and Shawal and Bush mountains in South and North Waziristan Agencies. South Waziristan, with nearly 300 kms of border with Afghanistan, became the hub of Al Qaeda and Taliban elements. In the words of Syed Iftikhar Hussain: "They mostly consisted of Uzbeks, Chechens, Arabs and some Chinese. Slowly and steadily they developed linkages with Ahmadzai Wazirs of Wana. Due to economic reasons (these foreign elements appear to have brought a lot of money and the people in the Agency are very poor), ideological leanings and in some cases went into the supporting these elements with a tendency to terrorism."⁸ Most of the Al Qaeda suspects, nearly 500 were captured from this region and handed over to the US authorities.⁹ One of the major reasons for survival of Al Qaeda elements in South Waziristan Agency was their ability to play in the overall worsening of the security situation. Precisely, besides the religious fervor, the flow of heavy funds motivated the locals to facilitate the stay of the foreigners in FATA. While securing their sanctuaries in FATA, these fugitives Afghan Taliban and their foreign friends targeted the US and allied forces in Afghanistan from Pakistani side. The people of neighboring Swat, Dir, Bajaur, Mardan went over to fight with the Taliban.¹⁰

The exploitation of tribal areas by Al Qaeda and Taliban for their advantage forced the government of Pakistan to alter its Tribal Areas policies, which was in place since 1947. The extremists, Taliban and Al Qaeda activities in the FATA compelled the government of Pakistan to start a military operation—Operation Almizan—against these forces in December 2001. It

was after nearly a hundred years that Pakistan government had decided its troops into the tribal region—hitherto a ‘no go area’.¹¹ Islamabad deployed troops in all the seven tribal regions to eliminate the foreign militants hideouts. Pakistan army launched numerous military operations in FATA and arrested more than 700 militants since the 9/11 attacks.¹² In addition, the pro-government tribal elders formed a 1200-man laskhar (armed force) to hunt Al Qaeda suspects in South Waziristan Agency.¹³ Conversely, many civilians in FATA viewed this operation for the sake of American. The anti-American forces boosted in the post 9/11 in these areas because of the Operation ending Freedom’s brutality in Pusthun areas. Nevertheless, it is too early to drive a conclusion about the negative and positive impact of the military operations. Though the government sources claims that it was a successful move, yet one could not ignore that government of Pakistan has continuously increasing the number of troops in tribal areas. For instance, in 2006 figures were around eighty thousand troops, whereas in 2007, despite the September 2006 peace agreement, their strength was around ninety thousands.¹⁴

Post 2008 general elections

Pakistan remains the frontline state in the fight against terrorism, despite the change of guards in Islamabad. Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani, while articulating his resolute to eliminate the threat of terrorism, stated, “We intend to vigorously continue the war against terrorism with the support of the people. Pakistan must fight terrorism for Pakistan’s sake. Past efforts have suffered because of the view that Pakistan sought to combat terrorism only in response to international pressure.”¹⁵ The new government has been wrestling with a tough question, i.e. how to fight extremism in FATA? Nonetheless, it has spelled out a balanced approach—multifaceted strategy against extremism and global terrorism—to accommodate the concerns of both internal and external stakeholders in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). The government multi-dimensional or five point strategy to deal with terrorism include political, military, intelligence, socio-economic development and ideological.

In fact, domestically the government was under pressure to accelerate the political and development process at the troubled FATA, so that military operation gives a way to a peaceful situation. In this context, PM Gilani announced that his government will start a dialogue with those who withdrawal their support to the terrorist. On the other hand, the Washington and its like-minded states pressurized for continuity of sever military operation in FATA. To satisfy these states concern PM Gilani categorically stated that Pakistan would not negotiate with terrorists and continue military force against them. David Miliband, the Foreign Secretary of United Kingdom wrote in April 2008, “Prime Minister Gilani told me that fighting terrorism

would be his government's top priority."¹⁶ Importantly, the government believed that without the support of people along the border areas an effective war against terrorism could not be waged. Hence, the people have to be brought onboard to support the war against terrorism.

The Gilani government has initiated a process to negotiate a peace agreement with the Tehrik-e-Taliban (TeT) in South Waziristan. The Taliban state that under the terms of this agreement the military will withdraw from FATA, imprisoned Taliban will be released and the government will award compensation for losses suffered by TeT members. The TeT also claims that the draft agreement did not prevent them from Jihad in Afghanistan.¹⁷ But the government has maintained a very clear stance on the negotiations criteria, i.e. the peace agreement government will have would be with tribesmen and not with terrorists and that it would ensure an end to attacks inside Pakistan, across the border in Afghanistan or anywhere else.¹⁸

Theological Extremism

The extremists preach and convince others to follow their thoughts. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary describes extremism as "political, religious etc. ideas or actions that are extreme and not normal, reasonable or acceptable to most people." Extremism is related to the state of mind that gives rise to terrorism—a physical violent act for accomplishing objectives. Extremism is a state of mind, whereas terrorism is a physical act. Presently, the Muslim religious extremists interpret jihad primarily in terms of the use of force to impose their version of Islam on others and to fight infidels to conquer the world. In the words of Hassan Abbas, "one can call them by any name one desires, but they consider themselves the elite in the cause of Allah, and they have developed the infectious pride to inspire thousands of others into following them."¹⁹

The Muslims political consciousness and activism have intensifies in recent decades. The chronic disputes—Palestine and Kashmir—and conflicts in many countries such as Afghanistan, Russian Federation, Egypt, Lebanon, Algeria, Indonesia, Balkans, etc have deepened Islamic identities, encouraged extremists transnational Islamic loyalties, and incited Muslims to fight in foreign lands. The rise of Muslim extremism and trend of fighting in foreign land owes much to events in Afghanistan during last decades of the Cold War, especially during the Soviet invasion of 1979 and the long and successful resistance by Islamic fighters, including many non-Afghans. Many Muslims, including Arabs like Osama bin Laden, were transformed into extremists and trained to fight in the Afghan resistance to Soviet occupation of that country. In this struggle they were generously aided and armed by Muslim and Western states, particularly Saudi-Arab, United Arab Emirate, Pakistan, and United States.²⁰

After the formal Soviet Union withdrawal from Afghanistan, these indoctrinated Islamic fighters were let loose without rehabilitation. Consequently, they directed their efforts toward overturning secular or pro-Western governments and opposing Western influences in their respective countries. Some prominent individuals having failed to realize their goals within the national context switched their overall strategy to a more globally directed one. Most notable among the leading figures of such individuals are Osama Bin Laden and Ayyman al-Zawairi. Osama failed to achieve his objectives in Saudi Arabia. Similarly, Zawairi who had initially concentrated his activities against the Sadat regime by attacking tourists visiting Egypt preferred to move Afghanistan for his survival. The journey or escape of Islamist activists from their countries of origin to Afghanistan, Sudan, Chechnya and now Iraq was a radicalizing experience which would move them further away from their commitment to change in a single state to change for the 'Umma' at large.

These individuals' methodologies to attain their objectives resulted in the foundation of transnational militant organizations, which launched asymmetrical warfare and used terrorism as a mean to accomplish their desired objectives. At the furthest end of the spectrum, some extremists espouse a global insurgency aimed at subverting the existing political and social order of both the world of Islam and the broader world. They aim to undermine Western influence, redefine the global balance of power, and establish a global pan-Islamist Caliphate. Rather than simply seeking to overthrow a particular government in the traditional sense of the term insurgency, these extremists aim to fundamentally change the nature of the world order. More precisely, the Global Islamic militancy is the culmination of trends where terrorism is becoming increasingly more irrational in its logic, fanatical in its ideological manifestation, global in its reach, and mass-casualty-causing in its modus operandi. In June 2001, President Pervez Musharraf, while addressing the leading religious scholars and clerics declared: "Is there any doubt that we have been left behind altogether we claim Islam will carry us forward in every age, every circumstances and every land.... How does the world judge our claim? It looks upon us as terrorists. We have been killing each other. And now we want to spread violence and terror abroad. Naturally, the world regards us as terrorists. Our claim of tolerance is pony."²¹

The 9/11 terrorist attacks provoked a massive United States military response, which have been portrayed by the militant Islamists as an assault on Islam. The US Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom have been depicted, as war against Islam and utilized to justify Jihad against the West. The Al Qaeda leadership systematically exploited Huntington's Clash of Civilization theory and military reaction of the Bush

Administration and initiated an armed struggle against the unbelievers—the US and its like-minded Western and Muslim governments. Samina Yasmeen pointed out; “Significantly, by not declaring a War on Al Qaeda and Taliban but using the generic term of ‘Terror’, the US Government introduced another sub-text in the language: the War on Terror came to mean the War on Islamic Militants. As such, it implicitly and inadvertently reinforced Huntington’s idea of civilizational clash between Islam and the West.”²² By juxtaposing War on Terror and linking it to Muslim militancy created a space which was exploited by extremists and their likeminded religious scholars issued fatwas in favor of their terrorist acts to inspire the entire Islamic world to rise up against the West.

Technology and globalization has made it easier for extremist leaders in pursuing their agenda by attracting well educated recruits to serve as leaders and foot soldiers, fueling the frustration of disaffected and unemployed youth, increasing global sympathy, move operatives to points of destination throughout the world very quickly, provide financial support, and exchange data to coordinate attacks. Aspects of the current strategic environment contribute to and enable the spread of terrorist extremism, such as globalization and the existence of opportunists. Globalization complicated warfare exponentially owing to the dense intertwining of the systems that make countries and organizations strong or weak -financial, economic, political, social, military, and information among many others. Dense patterns of telecommunications allow the worldwide dissemination of data, information, and knowledge in real time. It is through the combination of television, radio, telephony, Internet, computers, and an oral society that people are able rapidly to learn or to seize upon bits of data as truth with no facts or critical analysis or explanation of context.

Indeed, the U.S. and its allies adopted a counter strategy to portray and defend their military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq and hunt of the Al Qaeda fugitives as a tactic in the war on terrorism rather than a war against Islam. Regional crises fuel the Global Islamic Extremism as a whole and create a new impetus for its activities and recruitment. The global extremist agenda is to oppose the U.S. and its allies regionally and globally. The links between Islamist terrorism in the U.S., Europe, South-East Asia and Middle East are rooted in a shared anger and frustration that could be channeled through violent acts to inflict damage on a militarily and technologically superior enemy. Committed Muslims, both moderate and radical, tend to see connections between struggles as far apart as Palestine, Chechnya, Kashmir and Philippines.

Al Qaeda

The Al Qaeda is a transnational movement of extremist organizations, networks, and individuals. Its global terrorist network adheres to the cellular, or cluster, model in which many cells exist, but the members of any particular cell do not necessarily know one another, or those in other cells. If one member is caught, the other members and other cells are not in danger.²³ Counterterrorism officials describe it more as an organic structure that adapts to changing circumstances, including the loss of some senior leaders. Moreover, there is a great deal that remains unknown or debatable about the specific nature, size, structure and reach of the organization, despite many years of studying it. For example, Western experts are not exactly sure how many members it has now or has had in the past. Estimates are often based upon an approximation of how many people trained in Al Qaeda camps in Afghanistan. The estimates range as high as 60,000 and as low as 20,000. These assessments are inexact in part because the total number of camps that operated is not firmly agreed.²⁴

Al Qaeda has turned itself into an ideological weapon that evidently excels in the generation of propaganda to support its cause. It utilizes Islam and terrorism for political ends. It has produced its own group of spokespersons who attempt to provide religious legitimacy to the nihilism or radicalism they preach. Many frequently quote from the Holy Quran and hadith (the Prophet Muhammad's sayings and deeds) in a biased manner to draw justification for their cause. Al Qaeda's influence on the radicalization of Islamist political action has occurred on two levels. First, in terms tactics, specifically the use of terror in order to inflict maximum collateral damage; and second, through Zawahiri's theory, in carrying out an assault on traditional Islam, specifically by asserting the right of any individual to reinterpret religious doctrine in accordance with his own conscience and without regard to academic training or scholastic precedent. Since 9/11 Al Qaeda cells have placed less emphasis on the need to for justification on Islamic grounds for acts of terrorism. It may be that once the precedent is set, the need for justification becomes less pressing for those resorting to terrorism.

Al Qaeda had managed to distill the radicalism of various groups and individuals into a more aggressive assault and attract recruits globally. Various groups and individuals were propelled into action by the success of 9/11, willing to carry out acts of terror in the name of Al Qaeda and to assume its name and tactics. The war on terrorism has provided it legitimacy among the global Jihadis. While, the Operation Enduing Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom have provided Al Qaeda both a territorial base for action and an active training ground.

Extremism in FATA

During the occupation of Afghanistan by former Soviet Union from 1979 to 1989, FATA had served as the firm base for Jihad and latter used as sanctuary by various warring Afghan warlords for their power struggle. The seeds of extremism were sworn in FATA nearly three decades earlier by President Zia ul Haq with the active support of Saudi Arabia and United States.²⁵ The tribesmen actively participated in the Afghan Jihad and latter assisted Taliban government against its adversaries in conquering Kabul. On June 4, 2007, the then Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz stated, "The causes of violence and terrorism in Afghanistan are distinct shaped by the Cold War strategy of enlisting mujahideen and madressah in a campaign to rollback the Soviet invasion."²⁶ The Islamisation process by General Zia-ul-Haq in the late 1970s and 1980s and his Afghan policy had also contributed in increasing the religious extremism in FATA. In fact, FATA became the training and staging ground of Afghan mujahideen, who also used the areas for the purpose of providing medical aid to the wounded Afghan fighters. Since war of resistance was the top priority, every thing was subservient to its objectives. In 1980s, General Zia used a few madaris (religious schools) for the sake of Afghan Jihad. In these selected madaris young Muslims from different nationalities were indoctrinated and prepared for Afghan Jihad. Farhana Ali wrote, "For decades, the Pakistani government managed Islamist groups to advance its political and foreign policy goals. The United States also courted jihadis for their national security interests. Both Pakistan (under Zia-ul-Haq legacy) and the US exploited the mujahideen during the Cold War era without much consideration to the impact of the Afghan jihad on their countries."²⁷ As soon as the Soviets left Afghanistan, the Americans left Pakistan. Hassan Abbas pointed out, "The abandonment of Pakistan by America left it more than 3 million Afghan refugees to care for; thousands of Madrasa (religious seminaries) funded by Saudi money to militarize the youth and convert them to the intolerant brand of Wahhabi Islam; a Kalashnikov culture such that one could rent an automatic gun in Karachi at less than two dollars an hour; and last but not least—the drug trade."²⁸

Since the Afghan Jihad, extremists have been using madaris for the sake of their political agenda. These extremists intelligently pursue their political objectives by generating an impression that they have been working for the Islamic cause. Even after the Soviets withdrawal, the government of Pakistan had failed to counter this theological argument of the transnational terrorist organizations operating in FATA. Therefore, a few madaris in Pakistan are posited both to be incubators of militants in Pakistan and to be responsible for creating communities of support for militancy in Pakistan. Importantly, all madaris desires and support the enforcement of Sharia in Pakistan, but they do not advocate militancy and terrorism. Moreover, the extremism attributed with madaris comes from state policies of arming them

and using them to fight proxy wars. In short, the Afghan war and Zia's policies brought about the decline of the traditional elite (the Pashtun aristocracy of tribal origin) and the rise of a new elite: Mullahs inside the FATA. These Mullahs have become heroes of tribal people. The most prominent have been Faqir of Ipi, Mullah Malang, Mullah Mastan of Swat, Sar Tore Mullah of Swat, Haji Sahib of Turangzai, Ajab Khan Afridi, Ajab Khan Yusufzai. This shift in FATA had spill over affects on the other parts of Pakistan.

The anarchy in Afghanistan, porous nature of Afghan-Pakistan border, strong ethnic linkages among the people living on both sides of the borders, collateral damage, increasing hatred against the international forces in general and West in particular and poverty in the region all contributed in the extremism and lawless situation in FATA, which suited to the designs of Al Qaida and undermine the government of Pakistan's writ in these areas. Significantly, Al-Qaeda and affiliated pro-Taliban groups in FATA and Afghanistan are recognized as one of the main drivers of Islamist extremism and terrorism in Pakistan. Since 9/11, the Pakistani law enforcing agencies had arrested hundreds of radical extremists and their sympathizers. Islamabad launched military operation—Almizan, Operation-Rah-Nijat in South Waziristan, etc—in FATA to purge Al Qaida and Taliban forces. Despite the continuity of the operation, Al Qaeda-linked forces—Uzbeks, Uighurs, Arabs and Chechens—retain sanctuaries and operating mobile training camps for their recruits. It is because for the tribesmen these peoples are staunch Muslims, and Pashtoonwali demands that these brothers must be protected. In the words of Imtiaz Gul, "Most of these people (residents of Wana and Miranshah), staunch believers in Islam with strong commitment to the tradition of shelter, and a propensity to side with all those who oppose the Americans, have been unable to reconcile with the new situation in which yesterday's Mujahideen and Taliban are being chased as terrorists."²⁹

The poverty of the region provides opportunity to the transnational terrorist organizations to recruit the youngsters. The terrorist organizations have been able to develop their own sources of financing, which range from NGO's and charities to illegal enterprises such as narcotics, extortions, and kidnapping. Bin Laden's Al Qaeda depends on a formidable array of fund-raising operations including Muslim charities and wealthy well-wishers, legitimate-seeming business, and banking connections in the Persian Gulf, as well as various smuggling and fraud activities.³⁰ Thus, Al Qaida has lots of cash at its disposal, which helps it purchasing the loyalties of the unemployed and underemployed tribals. The United Nations Report released on September 9, 2007 also documented that young boys are persuaded for the terrorist attacks that would survive and earn rewards, such as cash, a motorcycle, or a cell phone. In January 2008 Pakistan Army's 14 Division

conducted a full-fledged security operation—Operation Zalzalā—to flush out Baitullah Mehsud's Taliban militants from Spinkai. The security forces reported that in the town there was a huge compound with several small rooms, and a small mosque. This compound was in fact a nursery for preparing suicide bombers. According to Major-General Tariq Khan, who commands the 14 Division, "it was like a factory that had been recruiting 9- to 12-year-old boys, and turning them into suicide bombers."³¹ This suicide nursery was being run by one Qari Hussain who is regarded as the man leading the campaign of suicide bombings in Pakistan. He was someone who specializes in indoctrinating teenagers in violence in the name of Islam. He is still at large and it is not clear where he has established his new nursery of young bombers.³²

The military operation by Pakistani security agencies and occasional military strikes by the United States/NATO led ISAF in Tribal areas have counterproductive outcomes. The majority of the victims of these military maneuvers have been innocent civilians. The collateral damage increases the civilians' grievances, which is in the advantage of the radical militants. The Taliban and Al-Qaeda sympathizers in the area exploit these grievances for their extremist agenda, recruiting recruits; intelligence gathering; and ensuring safe hideouts in the Tribal Area. In addition to foreign militants, the local religious groups under the banner of MMA exploited the FATA people anti-American and pro-Al Qaeda and Afghan Taliban sentiments for maximizing its electoral success in 2002 general elections. MMA formed its government in North West Frontier Province and a coalition government in Baluchistan. In the center MMA sat on the opposition benches, but in practice it supported General Musharraf. The overwhelming influence of the MMA in the affairs of state contributed in the durability of extremism in FATA.

Terrorist's sanctuaries in FATA

Nevertheless, the government of Pakistan has been doing its' best to clear its territory from foreign militants and rehabilitate its own nationals, but has not been achieving the desired objectives because of the following factors:

First, FATA's topography and location at the Pakistan-Afghan border has made it immune for guest fighters in Afghanistan and current terrorist organizations. It was a launching pad for an Islamic Jihad sponsored by the US and its like-minded states against the Soviets invasion in Afghanistan in the eighties. Both North and South Waziristan were used as bases for training and launching operations against the Russian forces. The young Muslims from Islamic countries were recruited and brought in these areas with the complicity of Islamabad for the sake of training and fighting a war against the Soviets in Afghanistan. The foreign nationalists, during their stay in this area had developed affinity with the locals and won local sympathizers

by intelligently utilizing the concept of Islamic brotherhood. In addition, in the aftermath of Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, FATA was also exploited by Islamabad to influence the political process in Afghanistan for more than a decade. Importantly, during the Taliban rule a number of local Wazirs joined the Taliban forces and fought against the Northern Alliance where they came in contact with Arabs, Central Asians and other foreign militants in different training camps. Importantly, the Al Qaida and Taliban members in Pakistan's tribal areas are being sheltered and protected by local tribals because they exploit the code of "Pukhtunwali"—the Tribal Honour Code—and their close association with the locals developed in two decades, i.e. 1980s and 1990s.³³ Thus the radicals have not only familiarity with terrain, but they are capable to exploit the political, social, and economic setup of the region. Precisely, the tribal areas are vulnerable to the influx of terrorists, spread of militant culture and rise of local Taliban. This led to an altered ethnic balance, weapons proliferation, in flow of narcotics, stoppage of development works, a worsened law and order situation and de-sanctification of Durand Line. This anarchical situation in the region has been exploited by the Al Qaida trainers.

Secondly, the poverty of the region provides the opportunity to the terrorist organizations to recruit the youngsters. The terrorist organizations have been able to develop their own sources of financing, which range from NGO's and charities to illegal enterprises such as narcotics, extortions, and kidnapping. Bin Laden's Al Qaeda depends on a formidable array of fund-raising operations including Muslim charities and wealthy well-wishers, legitimate-seeming business, and banking connections in the Persian Gulf, as well as various smuggling and fraud activities.³⁴ Thus, Al Qaida has lots of cash at its disposal, which helps it purchasing the loyalties of the unemployed and underemployed tribals. The United Nations Report released on September 9, 2007 also documented that young boys are persuaded for the terrorist attacks that would survive and earn rewards, such as cash, a motorcycle, or a cell phone.

Third the delineation of the Afghan-Pakistani border remains a major problem in securing the area and controlling cross border illegal crossings and permanently finishing mobile training camps. Afghanistan does not recognize the approximately 2500-kilometer Durand Line drawn up by Britain in the 1890s, which divides the Pashtuns. Pakistan's Director General Military Operations Lt General Ahmad Shujaa Pasha stated on November 14, 2007 that Pakistan proposed the closure of border with Afghanistan, but the Kabul government rejected the proposal. The Pak-Afghan border is highly porous and the Afghan refugees damaged the biometric system installed at the border. There are hundreds of routes and ways to allow people pass through in the mountainous terrain between Pakistan and Afghanistan. There are some 14 crossing points in the border, falling in the

areas of NWFP that are being used by illegal migrants of both the countries. There are also some 111 other routes, which are commonly used for traveling between the two countries.³⁵ It was reported that Islamabad established 761 posts over a stretch of 600 kilometers sensitive part of the border. To plug gaps within posts, troops undertake patrolling all along the border. But these posts are not enough to control effectively the border crossing of the militants. Therefore, there is a need for border fencing and mining.

The border fencing prospects are limited. The Karazai Administration rejected Pakistan's proposal to construct a fence along the border between the two countries saying Islamabad should first determine boundaries in accordance with international laws. Secondly, identical tribes live on both sides of the border. The Waziris and Mohmands have family connections and feel free in crossing borders. They would resent such a barrier being placed in their area. Thirdly, the border is a rugged, and in some places difficult terrain, with peaks rising above 20,000 feet, which requires enormous resources for constructing fence. Though the President of Pakistan indicated that barriers could be put up in areas where crossings are alleged to be taking place as a first step in this direction, yet it's a costly venture.

Fourth, the US forces launched attacks in Pakistan's tribal regions without taking the latter into confidence, which not only undermine the trusts between the two allies, but also strengthen the anti-government forces in these areas, intensify Anti-Americanism feelings and above all the collateral damage gives more recruits to the radical militants in the shape of local Taliban and sanctuaries to the foreign militants. It was reported that some suicidal attackers appeared driven by anger at the presence of the international forces and civilians being killed in their anti-Taliban operations. In short, lack of concrete and actionable information and intelligence sharing among the stakeholders is advantageous for the radicals.

Fifthly, the political instability in Afghanistan has continues negative spill over influence on FATA. The Operation Enduring Freedom has failed to establish political stability in Afghanistan. The change of guards in Kabul and dislodging of Al Qaeda has not established rule of law in Afghanistan and thereby the situation out of Kabul is deplorable. With the passage of time, Karazai government has been becoming unpopular and ineffective. This degenerating situation in the country has been causing apathy between the rulers and people. Consequently, Taliban like dissidents groups have been gaining strength and legitimacy.

Sixthly, the local Taliban phenomenon is not only present but also effective in a few parts of FATA. The connection between the local Taliban and

transnational radicals has three decade history. The area was used as a base for transnational jihadis during the Afghan war against the Soviets. These transnational jihadis activities influenced, inspired and motivated the young tribesmen. The success of resistance against the Soviet and the establishment of Talibans government encouraged the local madras students to purify their societies fro evils.

Seventhly, the government of Pakistan FATA Strategy included multiple prongs: military, political, and development; however, all three prongs did not work at the same time; particularly development, which came to a halt due to the security situation. Thus, this strategy has failed to win the hearts and minds of the local people, who have been providing popular and physical sanctuaries to the transnational terrorists in Afghanistan-Pakistan border area.

Repercussions for Pakistan

The transnational terrorists' organizations, having safe hideouts in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border area, main goals are to destabilize the political system; subvert economic infrastructure; and disintegrate social harmony within Pakistan. Ayman al-Zawahiri stated: "Muslims of Pakistan ... you must now back the mujahideen in Afghanistan with your persons, wealth, opinion and expertise, because the jihad in Afghanistan is the door to salvation for Afghanistan, Pakistan and the rest of the region. Die honorably in the fields of jihad."³⁶ Mr. Zawahiri was rightly targeting a community in which religious extremism was progressing. In 2001-2002 Pakistan was home to fifty-eight religious political parties and twenty-four armed religious militias, the latter category also popularly known as jihadi groups.³⁷ On January 12, 2002 President Musharraf while condemning extremist menace stated, "Look at what this extremist minority is doing. They are indulged in fratricidal killings.... Mosques are being misused for propagating and inciting hatred against each other's sect and beliefs... The extremist minority must realize that Pakistan is not responsible for waging armed Jihad in the world."

Since 9/11, Islamabad has been actively involved in war against terrorism and paying a heavy cost of being a frontline state in the war. In October 2007, it was reported that more than 1000 Pakistani soldiers had lost their lives in military operations against terrorists residing in FATA since 2001.³⁸ More precisely, the longevity of war has been contributing in the growing extremism in FATA, which bring about socio-economic instability and political anarchy in Pakistan. President Pervez Musharraf stated: "We have to win otherwise it has already corrupted the national fabric of Pakistan. This is a complex battle that we are fighting on the borders of Afghanistan and within our society.... We have suffered the most and are victims of terrorism and we certainly do not want Talibanization in Pakistan."³⁹

The government of Pakistan, presently, is facing immense difficulty in maintaining rule of law in the tribal belt, especially in North and South Waziristan Agencies, which are dominated by pro-Taliban extremists. The transnational terrorists organizations presence in FATA had added a dangerous trend in the extremist terrorists act. Therefore, the people in Pakistan have been experiencing an alarming change in these trends, which cause extraordinary maim. New adversaries, new motivations and new rationales, which have emerged in recent years, could couple with today's increased opportunities and capabilities to launch terrorism on a trajectory towards higher levels of lethality, mass destruction and mass killing, and to challenge the conventional knowledge about it.⁴⁰ Pakistani military and paramilitary forces have been doing their best to combat this menace effectively, but terrorists' activities have been increasing in the country. For instance, Pakistan suffered over 60 deadly suicide attacks with over 1,500 of civilian citizens and 600 law enforcement officials killed in 2007.⁴¹ Teresita C. Schaffer wrote, " A string of suicide bombings largely directed against army targets reinforced the impression that the state itself was under attack."⁴²

The increasing extremism in the North Western part of Pakistan has also undermined the writ of the state in other parts of the country. In the words of Husain Haqqani: "Pakistan's involvement with the jihadi groups and its tolerance of armed extremist religious groups has contributed to generally ineffective law enforcement in the country."⁴³ President Musharraf had himself acknowledged; "Pakistan has become a soft state where law means little, if anything."⁴⁴

Though the militants have been targeting law enforcing agencies and innocent people in all the major cities of Pakistan, but militants and law enforcing agencies showdown in Islamabad and Swat valley in 2007 resulted in colossal devastation. The Special Forces were successful in flushing out militants from Islamabad after a pitch battle in the Red Mosque compound, Swat valley and South Waziristan. Nonetheless, Army has been facing a severe resistance from the militants in Federally Administrative Tribal Areas.

The preceding pessimism gave a way to the optimism on October 16, 2009 when the country's top civil and military command and most of the major opposition parties' leaders gathered for in-camera meeting at the Prime Minister house. Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani presided this historic four-and-a-half-hour meeting. The Chief of Army Staff, General Ashfaq Pervez Kayani, gave a detailed briefing on the prevailing national security situation, particularly about Waziristan and increasing terrorist acts in the mainland. The participants of the meeting had agreed that it was imperative to eliminate terrorism and extremism from the country and restore

the writ of the government in the entire country. In this context, they decided in principle to launch a military operation in South Waziristan.

The armed forces had launched military operation in South Waziristan in mid October 2009. Forces conducted sporadic air-strikes on the terrorist hide-outs in the area. Deputed two divisions of Army (28000 men) to the area and were monitoring all the routes of the agency. Finally, on mid-night on October 16-17, 2009 the military launched its long awaited three-pronged Operation Rah-e-Nijat (Path of Salvation) to combat the Hakeemullah Mehsud-led Pakistani Taliban in South Waziristan and transnational terrorists. It was reported that thousands of troops, backed by jet fighters and gunship-helicopters had started advancing on the Mehsud tribe's heartland at Makin from three points. Major General Athar Abbas, military spokesperson stated: "The ground offensive had started. The headquarters of the defunct Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan would be surgically targeted to dismantle the network of the terror outfit." In the military operation the terrain was toughest for the troops, but the burden of IDP for government was lesser as compare to the Mlakand division. The South Waziristan population is barely half a million compared to Malakand where it is three million. Though the terrain was too hostile, but the burden IDP from South Waziristan was bearable.

Red Mosque siege and consequent killing

The extremism that had restricted to FATA spread beyond this region to Islamabad in 2007. The burqa-clad, baton-wielding female students of a seminary associated with the Red Mosque protested against obscenities like music and movies and in favor of imposing Islamic law in January 2007.⁴⁵ After this demonstration, both men and women associated with clerics of the Red Mosque tried to impose new rules of morality in Islamabad by forcibly shutting down video and music shops and by abducting women they believed to be of "immoral character". They raided private homes, attacked shops, and kidnapped not only police officials but also visiting foreigners in a campaign of social purification.⁴⁶ On July 10, 2007, in response to increasing disruptive criminal activities of the clerics and madrisa students, President Musharraf ordered a military operation against the Red Mosque to flush out the extremists holed up in the complex.⁴⁷ On July 11, 2007 the pro- Taliban militants inside the complex were defeated.

In reaction to military operation against Red Mosque, Al-Qaeda called for jihad against the Pakistani government as a response to the siege of Lal Masjid. While criticizing Operation Silence, Commander Maulvi Abdul Khaliq Haqqani on July 21, 2007 stated, "Mujahideen of the North and South Waziristan agencies will avenge the martyred brothers, sisters and sons. Praise be to Allah, Mujahideen have launched activities and have been

conducting guerilla and suicide attacks against the army and paramilitary forces. They will take revenge of the Lal Masjid and Jamia Hafsa operation.”⁴⁸

Immediately afterwards, an unprecedented wave of suicide bombings struck the capital and other parts of the country, mainly targeting the Pakistani armed forces and intelligence services. The militants' wave of suicide attacks against the Pakistan security forces and roadside bombs explosion had created a sense of fear in the entire country including the Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Karachi and Lahore. These acts had terrorized the entire nation. Even People seemed scared to send their children to schools in these cities.

Militancy in Swat

The Militants under leadership of Maulana Fazlullah, had virtually taken over the functions of the state in the Swat district in 2007, which negatively influenced the social, economic and political harmony of the area. Maulana Fazlullah spread his message over the airwaves, recruits militants, kidnap and kill government officials and civilians to browbeat them into submission. He spread his ideology of hate and even opposed the polio vaccination campaign. The militants announced the enforcement of their own brand of Shariah. “We have a one-point agenda and that is the enforcement of Shariah in Swat and the rest of Malakand region in accordance with the assurance given to us by the government,” stated Muslim Khan, the deputy of Maulana Fazlullah.

The Federal government deployed Frontier Constabulary and Frontier Corps troops in the Matta, Sangota, and Khawazkhela sub-districts of Swat for combating the increasing the extremism and restoring the writ of the state. The extremists reacted with guerilla war tactics against the security forces and opted strategy to terrorize the common man in the area. On October 26, 2007 the extremists publicly executed four law-enforcement personnel in a village, 16 km west of Mingora. One of them announced that “Let this serves as a warning to all those who spy for the government or help the government.”⁴⁹ For several days curfew was imposed. This was followed by heavy bombardment and shelling of selected areas to flush out the extremists and many were reportedly killed and arrested. The radicals' insurgency in the Swat district manifested that the influence of pro-Taliban forces had been spreading outwards from the tribal areas along the Afghan border.

The government refrained from opting strict measures to combat the menace of Talibanization in Swat. It opted appeasement approach to restore peace in Swat in early 2009. On February 16, 2009 the Provincial Government, with

the approval of President of Pakistan, signed a peace deal with the Tehreeka Nifaze Shariate Mohammadi in Peshawar. The provincial government announced the replacement of existing judicial system with Nizame Adle Regulation, the Qazi courts in Swat and the rest of Malakand Division. These courts decisions would be appealed in the High Court and the Supreme Court. On the other hand the Tehreek's leadership had renounced militancy. Though they renounced militancy, yet the peace deal had multiplied Taliban arrogance and viciousness. This necessitated a change in the Islamabad's strategy for dealing with the Taliban and their sympathizers in the area. The government launched Swat military operation and within a few months the armed forces purged Taliban militants and restored the natives' confidence that the law enforcement agencies were capable to establish the writ of the government.

Endeavor for theocratic socio-political system in adjacent areas

The collateral damage due to military operation resulted in large-scale displacement of tribesmen from Mirali and Miranshah. Hundreds of families are forced to live with relatives in Bannu, Karak, Peshawar and Dera Ismail Khan districts. Moreover, in the adjacent districts like Banu, Dera Ismail Khan some groups have distributed pamphlets asking people not to deal in un-Islamic electronics gadgets and CDs, otherwise the responsibility lies with the violators of their orders. The extremists also force men to grow beards.

The religious extremism in FATA instigated advocacy for Tehreek-e-Nafaza-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi (Movement for the enforcement of Islamic Laws-TNSM) in Masjid, Madrisas, Maktabs. It created conscious among the Mullahs and religious students to capture political power. The TNSM rejected and challenged the state laws and authority in Pakistan. For instance, it rejected Pakistani legal system and established its own courts, opposed female education, elections and democracy in Malakand area.

The extremists attacked at schools for girls. For instance, in June 2008 extremists attacked at least four schools in the Upper and Lower Dir districts. On June 13, 2008 a school in Lower Dir was blown up. At least 12 schools in Darra Adam Khel, Swat and other areas have been targeted in similar ways since January 2008. The extremists circulated a pamphlet in mosques that stated that if local tribal leaders opposed such actions, they would be seen as 'enemies of God; and that the extremists had the ability to punish them.⁵⁰

Sanctuary for ban religious organizations killers

The religious-cum-militant groups in Pakistan desire that the country should have an Islamic system on the pattern of Afghanistan's Taliban. Some of these groups have been involved in sectarian killings. They openly

challenged state writ. In a reaction, President Musharraf in a nationwide telecasted speech banned two sectarian outfits, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Sipah-i-Muhammad on August 14, 2001. The former represented extremist Sunni/Wahhabi and latter represented Shia communities. He also placed Sipah-i-Sahaba and Tehrika-i-Jafaria on the watch list.⁵¹ On January 12, 2002 President Musharraf banned Jaish-i-Mohammad, Lashkar-i-Mohammed, Laskar-i-Taiba, Sipah-i-Sahaba, Tehrika-I- Jafaria and Tanzim Nifaz-i-Shariat-i-Mohammadi. Majority of these ban organizations belong to sunni sect of Islam, which had close links with the Afghans. The ban outfits' of these organizations rushed to FATA for protection from law enforcing agencies persecution. Thus, FATA became a sanctuary for these criminal individuals. Even prior to the ban FATA was a sanctuary for religious and other criminals. For example, Riaz Busra, the killers of Iranian diplomats Sadiq Ghanji (1990) and Mohammed Ali Rahimi (1997) always hide in FATA after his gruesome acts in Lahore, Multan, Sargodha, etc.

Indictment: Irresponsible ally

The United States and its likeminded states always interpret the situation in Afghanistan, according to their national interest and pressurize government of Pakistan to do more without taking into account the severe repercussions of their phony demands. It appears Islamabad's sacrifices in the war against terror failed to change the Western perceptions about Pakistan. The sacrifices of Pakistani thousand troops, hundreds loss of lives in collateral damage and illegal handing over of countless militants to the United States means little or nothing for them. They still believe that Pakistani intelligence agencies have been supporting the Taliban and Al Qaida against the coalition forces in Afghanistan.⁵² On May 10, 2010 Secretary of State Hillary Clinton claimed: "Some Pakistani officials are more informed about al Qaeda and Taliban than they let on." It is a strong reference to the fact that either Pakistani high-ups lack control on their subordinates, or they are not sincere in their dealing with the United States against Al Qaeda and its associates. This statement underscores that sustainability of extremism in FATA would further deteriorate Pakistan-US relations. The American and Europeans believe that terrorists residing in Pakistan were making plan for a new 9/11 in near future. If any such incident takes place, Pakistan would be again at the 9/11 position, but this time Afghanistan would not be the US target.⁵³

Hot pursuit

The extremism in FATA instigates US led forces in Afghanistan to attack inside Pakistani territory. For instance, on June 10, 2008 the United States bomber dropped bombs along the Afghan-Pakistan border, killing 11 Pakistani paramilitary soldiers. Subsequently, the Allied forces' spy planes have also increased movement over the Pakistani territory adjacent to the

border. On June 15, two military helicopters of the US-led allied forces intruded into Khyber region. Ironically, the US has expressed 'regrets' over the June 11 incident but had not apologized to Islamabad. This haughty attitude of the Americans would only increase the anti-American sentiment in the Pakistani society and limits the elected government's effectiveness in the war on terrorism.

President Hamid Karzai also threatened to launch hot pursuit in Pakistan on June 15, 2008. He stated Afghanistan had the right to self-defense, and because militants crossed over from Pakistan 'to come and kill Afghan and coalition troops, it exactly gives us the right to do the same'. He added, "Baitullah Mehsud should know that we will go after him now and hit him in his house." It was also reported in the Western press that that the Special Boat Service (SBS) and the Special Reconnaissance Regiment would take part in the US-led operations to capture Bin Laden in the Tribal Areas.

The US forces launched attacks or intrude in Pakistan's tribal regions without taking the latter into confidence, which not only undermine the trusts between the two allies and violate Pakistan sovereignty, but also strengthen the anti-government forces in these areas, intensify Anti-Americanism feelings and above all the collateral damage gives more recruits to the radical militants in the shape of local Talibans and sanctuaries to the foreign militants. It was reported that some suicidal attackers appeared driven by anger at the presence of the international forces and civilians being killed in their anti-Taliban operations. Moreover, Samad Khurram, a graduate of Roots College International, refused to accept a prestigious Harvard scholarship at the hands of the US Ambassador Anne W. Patterson in protest over the American attack on Mohmand Agency. The notable point is that Mr. Khurram was graduated from an English medium school instead of Madrisa.

Drone Attacks

The Washington seems convinced that without exterminating insurgents sanctuaries located on the Pakistani-side of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, the US, NATO led ISAF forces would not accomplish their strategic objectives in Afghanistan. This strategic understanding has resulted in the increase of drone attacks in the North Waziristan in the last two years. Nevertheless, the high-value targets strikes killed numerous Al Qaeda, Afghan Taliban and Therik-i-Taliban important leaders and fighters.

Though the drone attacks have tactical triumph, yet strategically these attacks do have serious repercussions. Many security observers opine that the collateral damage caused by these drone attacks have been increasing

anti-Americanism in the area and contributing in the recruiting process of the terrorist organizations.

The Government of Pakistan has maintained very confusing stance on the drone attacks. The official-explicit stance is that it does not permit the drone attacks. It means that the continuity of drone attacks is a constant violation of Pakistan's sovereignty by its strategic partner. If it is a violation of Pakistan Sovereignty; why is the government and armed forces of Pakistan have not been resisting to these frequent violations? Conversely, the Americans have been maintaining and articulating a different point of view. They completely disagree with Pakistanis official stance. They have always been arguing that these drone attacks are not the violation of Pakistan's sovereignty. Because, both states are partners in the War on Terrorism and Islamabad has also permitted Washington to carry on its militants hunt and killing strategy on its side of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

The government of Pakistan's vague stance and recent increase in drone attacks highlights a few important dejecting factors in the United States and Pakistan strategic cooperation. The former seems suspicious about latter's willingness to completely destroy the safe-hideouts of Haqqani groups in the area; and also may be having realization about its limitation to launch a successful sustainable military operation against the transnational terrorists groups in the rugged-mountaineering border terrain. Nonetheless, Obama Administration has been continuously recommending Gilani government to launch military operation the North Waziristan.

Economic degradation

The extremism in FATA not only worsened the economic conditions in the Tribal Areas, but has also undermined the economic situation in entire Pakistan. Being a developing state, Pakistan requires foreign direct investment (FDI). The international investors are reluctant to invest in Pakistan because of the law and order situation. The recent State Bank of Pakistan reports indicate that even the domestic investors are reluctant to invest their capital in Pakistan. This trend further degrades the economic situation in Pakistan.

Klashnikov culture

The extremism in FATA directly influenced the tribes in Baluchistan and Kyber-Puktunkah province. The tribes, which were familiar with traditional warfare and low intensity conflict, soon became familiar with modern weapons and guerrilla training. The Klashnikov culture made the Baluchi tribes more militant and warlike. The display of lethal arms became more common. The use of heavy guns, mortars, rocket launchers, etc became

more common in minor feuds. The ratio of tribal feuds and intensity of conflicts grew.

Dual Military Threat

Since the independence, Pakistan has antagonistic relations with its Eastern neighbor-India. The insecurity at the eastern border dictated Pakistan policies to maintain cordial relations with other neighbors to avoid two military fronts. But the extremism in FATA has spoiled this policy. Today, Pakistan's military troops are deployed and also engaged in low asymmetrical war with transnational terrorists residing in FATA. The economy of Pakistan does not permit it to raise new units for combating this new threat without compromising on its defensive arrangements vis-à-vis its archrival India. More than ninety thousands troops have been shifted from the eastern sector to the western sector. This arrangement obviously is in the interest of Pakistan's military adversary in the region and derails its eastern security fence.

FATA & Global Extremism

Presently, the terrorist activities not only begin and end in a single country, but may also cross national borders. At the start of the 21st century, most terrorists targeted citizens and property in external countries. This exhibit that the terrorist organizations have bases in different countries and have sympathizers from varied nations. The terrorist acts are spread throughout the globe, thereby the risks are widespread. According to the United States, Great Britain, and German counter-terrorism agencies estimates European radicalized nationals traveled to Pakistan for training purposes.⁵⁴ The US National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) report released on July 17, 2007 claimed that Al Qaeda had established a safe haven in Federal Administrative Tribal Areas of Pakistan and was using it to plan attacks inside the United States.⁵⁵ During the last week of April 2008, the US State Department reiterated its earlier stance that Al Qaeda was rebuilding itself in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas and North West Frontier Province.⁵⁶ General Ehsan Ul Haq, the then Chairman of Pakistan's Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, admitted in January 2007 that Taliban were crossing from Pakistan into Afghanistan but denied Pakistani complicity. He stated, "I think as the presence of the Taliban in Pakistan is concerned, one can't vouch for it that they are not there. We have a very large Afghan refugee presence in Pakistan, more than two million of them still, so the possibility of many of them being Taliban or being in contact with Taliban in Afghanistan cannot be ruled out."⁵⁷

The Western analysts opined that although the seeds of radicalism were planted inside their societies, but they were cultivated in Pakistan. Indeed

the country has become the finishing school for transnational terrorism due to the presence of extremists groups in FATA. For instance, the suicide bombers exploded themselves on three trains and a bus in London and killed fifty-two people and injured over seven hundred on July 7, 2005. Three of the bombers were second-generation British citizens of Pakistani origin, who grew up in Britain. It was reported that Mohammed Sidique Khan and Shazad Tanweer visited Pakistan, where they met with Al Qaeda members.⁵⁸ According to James Wither, "Information emerging from investigations into terrorists' activity in the UK suggests that contacts with militants in Pakistan are a significant feature of the planning and indoctrination process, although the extent of Al Qaeda's direct involvement in UK terrorism remains unclear."⁵⁹

On 4 September 2007, the Danish police arrested eight people on suspicion of planning an attack in Denmark.⁶⁰ The arrested individuals were between 19 to 29 years of age. Two of the arrested—a Pakistani-born Danish citizen and an Afghan citizen living in Denmark—are expected to be charged with planning the attack. The Pakistani-born main suspect is alleged to have gone through training in Pakistan. After his return to Denmark, he manufactured and tested tricycloacetone triperoxide (TATP).

In September 2007, the German counter-terrorism agency unearthed a terrorist network stretched from South Germany to Turkey and Pakistan. It arrested three members of this gang on September 4, 2007 and claimed that they were planning major bomb attacks against the American and German targets in Germany. Though, the three arrested militants have no ethnic link with Pakistan, but German interior ministry held that they received training in Pakistan. Fritz Gelowicz and Daniel Martin Schneider are German and Adem Yilmaz is Turk. The German intelligence convinced that Aden Yilmaz, the 28-year-old Turkish suspect in Frankfurt plot received training in Pakistan in March 2006. The training camp was run by the Islamic Jihad Union, a splinter group of a terrorist group organization from Uzbekistan.

In 2004, President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan accused some Uzbek militant groups for March-April 2004 killing of 47 people in Tashkent and Bokhara who belonged to Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), renamed Islamic movement of Turkestan (IMT). He claimed that these Islamic militants had international links and had sought refuge in South Waziristan with ties to the locals.⁶¹

In addition to the Western governments, the United Nations report released on September 9, 2007 revealed that suicide attacks in Afghanistan are often carried out by young Afghan men who pass through religious schools in Pakistan. The report cited a senior Taliban commander as saying that eighty percent of suicide attackers passed through recruitment centers, training

facilities or safe houses in Pakistan's Waziristan area.⁶² General Ehsan Ul Haq, the then Chairman of Pakistan's Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, admitted in January 2007 that Taliban were crossing from Pakistan into Afghanistan but denied Pakistani complicity. He stated, "I think as the presence of the Taliban in Pakistan is concerned, one can't vouch for it that they are not there. We have a very large Afghan refugee presence in Pakistan, more than two million of them still, so the possibility of many of them being Taliban or being in contact with Taliban in Afghanistan cannot be ruled out."⁶³ On June 15, 2008 President Hamid Karzai claimed that most of the militants involved in recent fighting in the Garmser district of Helmand province came from Pakistan.⁶⁴

Faisal Shahzad, a naturalized US citizen, had botched plot to blow up a car-bomb in New York's Times Square on May 1, 2010. Despite his failure to wreck Time Square, Faisal was able to unleash wave of terror within the United States and abroad. The American investigators claimed that in the recent years Faisal visited Pakistan regularly and during his stay in the country he attended a training camp in the troubled North Waziristan, where he learnt how to make improvised explosive devices (IEDs). "We've now developed evidence that shows that the TTP (Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan) was behind the attack," said Attorney General Eric Holder. The TTP had also confirmed his links with it.

Conclusion

Islamabad has been facing a great difficulty in upholding its writ in FATA due to the presence of transnational terrorists syndicate. Conversely, the United States President Barack Obama expressed conscious satisfaction on the progress in Afghanistan and FATA on December 16, 2010. He stated: "Today, al Qaeda's senior leadership in the border region of Afghanistan and Pakistan is under more pressure than at any point since they fled Afghanistan nine years ago. Senior leaders have been killed. It's harder for them to recruit; it's harder for them to travel; it's harder for them to train; it's harder for them to plot and launch attacks. In short, al Qaeda is hunkered down." This optimistic conclusion, however, is debatable.

In reality, the increasing terrorist organizations acts in FATA and subsequent terrorist attacks in the major cities of Pakistan do have pessimistic effects on the people of Pakistan. It exposes and discredits the government and its law enforcement agencies' intelligence failure. Such a failure raises a serious question that why the concern departments fail to preempt and foil the militant attacks? One feels disgusted, when one learns that there were reports about the possible attacks. It is not enough that heads of concerned departments get rid of their irresponsibility or failure by simply saying: 'the initiative lies with terrorists and thereby they have advantage to hit first and

kill guards'. If this is the approach, the militancy instead of ending, would prosper and institutionalized in the state. Therefore comprehensive counterterrorism strategy is imperative for the safety and security of the people of Pakistan.

Islamabad should revise its counterterrorism strategy according to the demands of the asymmetrical warfare. The militant organizations not only banned officially, but should completely be rooted out from the entire country. The law enforcing agencies must be proactive rather than reacting to the militant's attacks. So that, they not only appropriately protect themselves, but also generate a sense of confidence and satisfaction among the people of Pakistan. Thus, the counter-militancy and extremism measures necessitate that government should act simultaneously at both theoretical and practical levels. Presently, the law enforcement agencies or armed forces have a very selective or one dimensional approach in the ongoing war on terrorism in FATA. The problems such as extremism and radicalization need non-military approaches in addition to military tactics for their solution. The intellectual/academic input in the counterterrorism strategy is inevitable because in the asymmetrical warfare, one needs to chalk out innovative counter-strategy(s) for combating the terrorist attacks. More precisely, the strategic military option; open political dialogue; committed social development; and promising political empowerment of the people of FATA must go in tandem with one another.

References

¹ The IJU, which originates from Uzbekistan, was founded in March 2002 by former members of the *Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan* (IMU). It is believed to have close links to al-Qaeda.

² "Pak militants likely to attack US interests: Mullen," *The News International*, May 11, 2008, p. 12.

³ This Pak-Afghan border is also known as Durand Line. This line was demarcated in the light of the Durand Agreement signed between Amir Adur Rehman, the ruler of Afghanistan and British Foreign Security Mortimer Durand on November 12, 1893 in Kabul. Successive Afghan governments have propagated that under this accord, a major portion of Afghanistan had gone into the control of Pakistan.

⁴ And there are Afghan refugees — Pakhtuns and non-Pakhtun — dotting Balochistan, Sindh and major cities; some living as virtually settled migrants, in conditions that range from affluence to destitution.

⁵ The tribal leaders who render services to protect or promote the interests of government, are given titles in the form of *Malikis* and *lungis*, coupled with regular allowances called *mawajib*. *Maliki* allowance is

hereditary and continues to be paid to the successor of malik who dies. But a *lungi* allowance is given in return for services rendered at a particular time and it ends with the death of concerned individual.

⁶ Imtiaz Gul, "Military Operations in FATA Since 2004: Achievements and Backlash," in Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, Maqsoodul Hasan Nuri, Ahmad Rashid Malik, ed. *Political Violence and Terrorism in South Asia*, Islamabad, Asia Printers, 2006, p. 29.

⁷ Dr Noor ul Haq et al., 'Federally Administrative Tribal Areas of Pakistan,' *IPRI Paper*, No 10, 2005, pp. 41-44.

⁸ Lt. Gen. (Retd) Syed Iftikhar Hussain, "Inaugural Address," in Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, Maqsoodul Hasan Nuri, ed. *Tribal Areas of Pakistan: Challenges and Responses* Islamabad, Asia Printers, 2005, p. 11.

⁹ Dr Noor ul Haq et al., 'Federally Administrative Tribal Areas of Pakistan,' *IPRI Paper*, No 10, 2005, p. 49.

¹⁰ Aslam Effendi, "Civilising Waziristan," *The News International*, April 9, 2004.

¹¹ According to the former corps commander, Lt General Orakzai nearly 25 percent territory of FATA was 'no go' area, beyond the control of the government. "Gen Aurakzai says army opened up all of FATA," *The News International*, March 16, 2004.

¹² Khalid Aziz, "Need for a counterinsurgency strategy," *The News International*, June 15, 2008.

¹³ Iqbal Khattak, "Tribal army to hunt militants," *Daily Times*, March 8, 2004.

¹⁴ FATA was declared unsafe for foreign and Pakistani journalists, which limited the sources of authentic information.

¹⁵ Yousaf Raza Gilani, "We will fight terrorism—our way," *The News International*, May 1, 2008. This article of the Prime Minister Gilani first appeared in the Washington Post.

¹⁶ David Miliband, "Listening, learning & working together," *The News International*, April 23, 2008.

¹⁷ Khalid Aziz, "Risks in peace agreements in NWFP and FATA," *The News International*, May 4, 2008.

¹⁸ "Haqqani urges support for Pakistan's anti-terror plan," *The News International*, June 20, 2008.

¹⁹ Hasan Abbas, *Pakistan's Drift into extremism: Allah, the Army, and America's War on Terror*, New Delhi, Pentagon Press, 2005, p. 203.

²⁰ Richard, Kirsten et al., *Introduction to Global Politics* London, Routledge, 2008, pp. 225-228.

²¹ Quoted in Hasan Abbas, *Pakistan's Drift into extremism: Allah, the Army, and America's War on Terror*, New Delhi, Pentagon Press, 2005, p. 195.

²² Samina Yasmeen, "Terrorism and the War on Terror in the New Millennium: Implications for Global Security," in Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema,

Maqsudul Hasan Nuri, Ahmad Rashid Malik, ed. *Political Violence and Terrorism in South Asia* Islamabad, Asia Printers, 2006, p. 12.

²³ LTC Antulio J. Echevarria II, "Globalization and Nature of War," U.S. Strategic Studies Institute.

Retrieved March 2003, p. 17
<<http://www.carlisle.army.mil/ssi/index.html/>>

²⁴ Audrey Kurth Cronin, Al Qaeda after the Iraq Conflict," *CRS Report for Congress*, May 23, 2003, p. 3. Retrieved 15 February 2007 from <<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/21191.pdf/>>

²⁵ Hasan Abbas, *Pakistan's Drift into extremism: Allah, the Army, and America's War on Terror*, New Delhi, Pentagon Press, 2005, p. 201.

²⁶ Text of the address delivered by Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz via video conference, London; June 4, 2007. Reproduced in "Documents," *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 60, No. 3, July 2007, pp. 199-204.

²⁷ Farhana Ali, "Risks and Rewards of a US-Pakistan Alliance," *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 60, No. 3, July 2007, p. 132.

²⁸ Hasan Abbas, *Pakistan's Drift into extremism: Allah, the Army, and America's War on Terror*, New Delhi, Pentagon Press, 2005, p. 11.

²⁹ Imtiaz Gul, "Military Operations in FATA Since 2004: Achievements and Backlash," *Op cit.*, p 35.

³⁰ Raphael F. Perl, "International Terrorism: Threat, Policy, and Response," *Military Technology*, Vol. xxx, Issue 12, 2006, p. 67.

³¹ These militants are well organized in their mission to recruit, indoctrinate and launch suicide bombers. The computers, other equipment and literature seized from the place, some of which were shown to us, give graphic details of the training process in this so-called 'nursery'. There are videos of young boys carrying out executions, a classroom where 10- to 12-year olds are sitting in formations, with white band of Quranic verses wrapped around their forehead, and there are training videos to show how improvised explosive devices are made and detonated.

Zafar Abbas, "Taliban ousted, but Spinkai is now a ghost town," *Dawn*, May 19, 2008.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Various Pasthun tribes inhabit FATA. These tribes follow the ancient code of Pukhtunwali—the Tribal Honour Code—sometimes called "Nang-i-Pukhtun" or The Pukhtun code or the way of the Pathan, in their day-to-day affairs. This code has numerous laws, which in one way or the other are interrelated. For the prevalent situation in FATA the most important one is 'Melmastia (Hospitality): it means the showing of hospitality to all visitors without hope of remuneration or favor. It is the hallmark of tribal social customs and traditions. 'Melmastia enjoins the obligation of protection. Anyone who can gain the access to the house of a Pathan, can claim asylum from the house, regardless of the previous

relationship between them. Incidents have occurred where innocent men have died defending strangers or even their own personal enemies who demanded refuge while being pursued by hostile forces. Tribal society's obligations of Melmastia frequently led to difficulties under the British rule. A classic case in point is Melmastia for Osama Bin Laden by the Taliban.

³⁴ Raphael F. Perl, "International Terrorism: Threat, Policy, and Response," *Military Technology*, Vol. xxx, Issue 12, 2006, p. 67.

³⁵ Haq Nawaz, "Emergency won't affect war on terror," *The Nation*, November 15, 2007.

³⁶ "Vulnerability of Al Qaeda leaders has risen: report," *Dawn*, July 17, 2007.

³⁷ Hasan Abbas, *Pakistan's Drift into extremism: Allah, the Army, and America's War on Terror*, New Delhi, Pentagon Press, 2005., p. 201.

³⁸ Adeel Khan, "Pakistan in 2007: More Violent, More Unstable," *Asian Survey*, Vol. XLVIII, No. 1, January/February 2008, p. 145.

³⁹ President's Address at Institute of Strategic Studies, Retrieved 4February2007 from.

<<http://www.presidentofpakistan.gov.pk/>>.

⁴⁰ Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, "Pakistan's Judicial System: Curbing the menace of Terrorism," *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 60, No.1, January 2007, pp. 41-43.

⁴¹ Chaudhry Shujhaat Hussain, "The Conflict of Fanaticism," *The News International*, February 11, 2008.

⁴² Teresita C. Schaffer, "Pakistan: Transition to What?" *Survival*, Vol. 50, No. 1, February-March 2008, p. 10.

⁴³ Husain Haqqani, *Pakistan Between Mosque and Military*, Lahore, Vanguard Books, 2005, p. 308.

⁴⁴ Quoted in Husain Haqqani, *Pakistan Between Mosque and Military*, Lahore, Vanguard Books, 2005, p. 308.

⁴⁵ The Red Mosque clerics opposed military operation in FATA and called for boycott of funerals of Pakistani soldiers killed while fighting Islamic militants. Zaffar Abbas, "The Creeping Coup," *Dawn*, March 31, 2007.

⁴⁶ "A Gruesome End," *Dawn*, July 11, 2007.

⁴⁷ The government demanded the surrender of Red Mosque leadership and armed activists. Instead of surrendering they barricaded themselves in the mosque compound along with more than 1000 women and children who were supposedly receiving religious education in the Madrisa. The militants used these students as human shield.

⁴⁸ *Dawn*, July 22, 2007.

⁴⁹

⁵⁰ "Schools attacks," *The News International*, June 15, 2008.

⁵¹ Faraz Hashmi, "TJP, SSP Warned: Sipah-i-Muhammad and Lashkar-I-Jhangvi Banned," *The News International*, August 15, 2001.

⁵² An article published in *The New York Times* in May 2007 suggests the Pakistan Army's knowledge and tacit support of the Taliban's attacks against Afghan and the US forces from the Pakistani border. Quoted in Farhana Ali, "Risks and Rewards of a US-Pakistan Alliance," *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. 60, No. 3, July 2007, p. 123.

⁵³ "Musharraf warns of 9/11-like situation," *The News International*, June 20, 2008.

⁵⁴ Mark Landler and Nicholas Kulish, "Turkish connection shakes German," *International Herald Tribune*, September 8-9, 2007. *The Economist*, May 3, 2007.

⁵⁵ "Suicide Attacks in Afghanistan 2001-2007," *United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan*, September 9, 2007, p. 68. Dr. Moonas Ahmar, "Foreign Policy: Pressures and Challenges Ahead," Retrieved 2 February 2007 from

<<http://www.jang.com.pk/thenews/spedition/2007yearend/page6.htm/>>., See also Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, "Safe Hideouts?" *Pulse Weekly*, August 03, 2007.

⁵⁶ "Peace overtures to local Taliban irk Kabul," *The News International*, May 4, 2008.

⁵⁷ Quoted in Nicholas Fiorenza, "Interview: General Ehsan ul Haq," *Jane's Defense Weekly*, Vol. 44, Issue 4, January 24, 2007, p.34.

⁵⁸ James Wither, "A Work in Progress: The United Kingdom's Campaign Against Radicalization," *Connections*, Vol. V, No. 4, Winter Supplement 2006, pp. 82-83.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

⁶⁰ Glasvej case. See the European Police Office based in The Hague, Report on–European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT 2008) presented at the European Parliament in Brussels on April 7, 2008.

⁶¹ Dr Noor ul Haq et al., "Federally Administrative Tribal Areas of Pakistan," *IPRI Paper*, No 10, 2005, p. 64. Mir Jamilur Rahman, "Waziristan operation," *The News International*, February 28, 2004.

⁶² "Suicide Attacks in Afghanistan 2001-2007," *United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan*, September 9, 2007, p. 68.

⁶³ Quoted in Nicholas Fiorenza, "Interview: General Ehsan ul Haq," *Jane's Defense Weekly*, Vol. 44, Issue 4, January 24, 2007, p.34.

⁶⁴ Karzai threatens to hit militants in Pakistan: NATO officials rule out imminent action," *Dawn*, June 16, 2008.