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**Pakistan's Counterterrorism Policy in the Post-9/11 Regional Security**

**Environment: An Analysis**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The terrorism attacks of the September 11 attacks drastically transformed the global security situation and made Pakistan re-strategize its foreign and security policies. Confronted by good diplomatic and strategic compulsion by the United States, Pakistan entered the Global War on Terror with the United States as a frontline partner; a significant change in Pakistani policy in Afghanistan. The Pervez Musharraf administration launched a large-scale counterterrorism program that would counter the terrorist organizations through destruction of militant groups, religious schools, and limiting extremist groups operating in the nation. Pakistan played a role in logistical, military and intelligence support to coalition forces and, in large scale security operations against the local and transnational militant groups. Some of the key al-Qaeda members were also arrested due to collaborative intelligence operations, and this shows that Pakistan was fully operational in counterterror. Simultaneously, reforms in policies were served to control madrassas and integrate them into the national education system to curb the ideological radicalization. Nevertheless, the militant groups restructured and changed their approach and began to attack Pakistani state and society more than ever. Thus, Pakistan had to contend with a complicated domestic security issue as it tried to act on the international and political pressures within the country. This paper examines counterterrorism policies being pursued by Pakistan within the context of the post 9/11 regional security environment and the implications of these policies on domestic stability, regional security processes as well as the overall war on terrorism.*

*Keywords: Pakistan; Counterterrorism Policy; Post-9/11 Security Environment; Militancy and Extremism; Global War on Terror; Madrasa Reforms; Regional Security Dynamics.*

**Introduction**

After September 11, 2001 attacks on world trade center and Pentagon, United States administration left no options for Pakistan except to choose War against terrorism as a US partner. Pakistan took U-turn on its Afghan policy and once again become ally of United

Sates in Global War on Terrorism. Now Pakistan was ready to play a role as a front-line state in GWOT. Pakistan provided full logistic, military and intelligence support to US led allied forces to initiate Global War on Terrorism in Afghanistan. Pakistani administration paid no attention toward anti-American demonstration in country and ignored every kind of internal reaction against Pakistan's new role as a front-line state in GWOT (Hussain S. , 2004).

Pakistan transformed her policy and ready to provide her services in war on terrorism also willing to curb all kinds of domestic expressions of support for terrorism. Since then, Pakistan is taking serious steps to eradicate extremism and militancy from its territory for this regard Pakistani forces are doing effective efforts to restraint extremism and militancy.

President Musharraf was committed to eradicate Extremism, Militancy and intolerance in the country. He made practical efforts to eradicate Extremism, Militancy and to prove his unstrained cooperation to United States in war on terrorism as a front-line ally. In that regard first step he was taken to start crackdown against militants and extremist element operating in Pakistan to peruse the US demand to curb all domestic elements of terrorism.

General Musharraf started crackdown against Madaris considering the source of spreading extremism and militancy. Religious parties and madrassa students were raising the voice against Pakistan role in war on terrorism and widely criticizing Musharraf new policy. Some religious leaders motivating madrassa students for jihad in Afghanistan against United States and allied forces. Sufi Mohammad took over ten thousand young madrasa students from KPK to join fight against US led coalition forces in Afghanistan (Ahmed, 2010). Initially crackdown was started from KPK and Baluchistan because US administration pressurizing Pakistan to restraint all domestic sources of extremism, according to them those madrassas established during Afghan-Soviet war were main source of spreading extremism, militancy and terrorism. United States Secretary of state Colin Powell said *"Madrassa Programs that do nothing but prepare youngsters to be fundamentalists and to be terrorists"* (Kronstadt K. A., 2004).

During Afghan-Soviet war proliferation of madrassa was encouraged in Pakistan approximately 8000 registered Madaris and about 25,000 unregistered Madaris were functioning in Pakistan since then (Murphy & Malik, 2009). The main objective was to establish these Madaris to develop a generation of fighters who can serve American agenda

against communism during that war. For this purpose, really extreme methods were adopted through text books and curriculum design which spread extremism in this region (Ashraf, 2010).

Academic curriculum had intolerance and it was well known to American administration particularly CIA intelligence officers. General Musharraf started crackdown against hardline extremist Madaris and banned all their activities including seized their financial asserts, banned their funding through all channels (Ali R. , 2003). He also announced National Educational Reforms policy (2001-2015) with the objective of bringing madrasa textbook design and curriculum into the mainstream of Pakistan's general education system through the inclusion of subjects such as Science, Social Studies and English in new syllabus (Kronstadt K. A., 2004).

General Musharraf activated State machinery against militant organizations operating in Pakistan. He banned many terrorist organizations in Pakistan. In January, 2002 General Musharraf banned five terrorist organizations including, Jaish-e-Mahammed (JeM), Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), Laskar-e-Tayba (LeT), Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM) and Tehreek-e-Jaferia Pakistan (TJP) (SATP, 2015). Among these organization US characterized Laskir-e-Tayba and Jaish-e-Mahammed as Foreign Terrorist Organizations which had alliance with al-Qaeda and Taliban whereas others characterized as the domestic terrorist groups (Jabeen, 2009)

Many other militant groups whom was already banned in Pakistan due to involvement in terrorism and sectarian violence in different parts of country also came under the scrutiny. General Musharraf started crackdown against this organization considering involvement in spreading terrorism and militancy in a country as a result Over 3,300 militants and terrorists were captured and detained by Pakistan law enforcement agencies from various parts of country in which most of them were released by courts due to insufficient evidence against them. Many of these militants were trained during Afghan-Soviet war in training campus near Pak-Afghan border area (Watson, 2002).

United States asked to hunt down al-Qaeda operatives in Pakistan and assist to hunt down and destroy al-Qaeda network in Afghanistan. The way Pakistan security forces and ISI react

was quite impressive for Americans. They helped United States to hunt down and arrest many hundreds of Taliban and al-Qaeda members in which many of them were very high profile and most wanted to United States. Security forces started to crackdown against all local and foreign militant groups whom operating from Pakistani territory. Pakistani Security forces crackdown against al-Qaeda network all over Pakistan and arrested and killed many high profile and most wanted terrorist in various cities of Pakistan. Included Abu Zubaydah, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, Ahmed Ghailani, Amjad Farooqi, and Abu Faraj Al-Libbi (Gregory, *The ISI and the War On Terrorism*, 2008). Pakistani Security forces raided a two-story house in Faisalabad on 28<sup>th</sup> march 2002 and captured 20 al-Qaeda terrorists among those Abu Zubeida was also arrested. He was a Saudi citizen and believe to be operational director for al-Qaeda and was one of the most wanted terrorists to United States. Pakistani authorities hand over to CIA and now he is in prison in Guantanamo Bay (BURNS, 2002). Another leader of al-Qaeda Ramzi bins al Shibh who was operating vast network of militants from Karachi was captured by Pakistani forces in September 2002 (Mukherjee, *Pakistan's Role in the War on Terror: A Degenerative or a Progressive One?*, 2012). Khalid Sheikh Mohammed who was consider a master mind of 9/11 and high ranked terrorist of al-Qaeda and in the list of most wanted person to America was also captured by Pakistani authorities. He was narrowly escaped arrest in Karachi in September 2002 but finally arrested in Rawalpindi in March 2003 (Gregory, *The ISI and the War On Terrorism*, 2008).

Many other terrorists were arrested by Pakistani security forces and hand them over to United States including Saudi, Egyptian and Tanzanian citizen. Leading al-Qaeda member Ahmed Ghailani was arrested in Gujrat city , Amjad Farooqi captured in Nawabshah, and Abu Faraj Al-Libbi was arrested in Mardan (Gregory, *The ISI and the War On Terrorism*, 2008). Most terrorist were captured or killed were not on the mountains or border areas but they were operating from cities which was really worrying sings for Pakistan. As a result of these actions al-Qaeda presence in Pakistan thinned and Pakistan was not remaining a safe haven for terrorists.

It was a huge demonstration of commitment of Musharraf towards the war against terrorism. US administration saw this development as a positive sign which reveals Musharraf appears to be far more seriously committed to tracking down terrorist of al-Qaeda and domestic

militants operating in this region (Sanger & Schmitt, 2004). General Musharraf wrote in his book we had done more than any country in the world to curb extremism and terrorism. We had captured and killed number of al-Qaeda terrorist and we destroy the infrastructure and complex web of terrorist networks from our cities and mountains (Mushraff, 2006).

After these crackdowns these militant groups reorganized and regroup themselves to operate in Pakistan. Some domestic militant groups also had ties with al-Qaeda and other foreign extremist groups. United Nation listed Jaish-e-Mahammed (JeM) and Laskir-e-Tayba (LeT) with association with al-Qaeda and Taliban. Now these all-militant groups spread all over Pakistan and started armed struggle against state in reaction of Pakistan role in the war on terrorism and responses toward militancy on its soil. Most of these militants were involved in various kind of violence, terrorism and criminal activities in Pakistan. Some of these groups had ties with Taliban and al-Qaeda and they were fighting against US coalition forces in Afghanistan but now after crackdown in Pakistan they came back and started war against “internal enemies” (Hussain Z. , *Frontline Pakistan: The Struggle with Militant Islam*, 2007).

### **Emergence of Terrorism in Pakistan**

Terrorism become great challenge for Pakistan after it emerged as a reaction of Pakistan role as a front-line sate in War on Terrorism. No other country in the world faced threat and terrorism as Pakistan faced after 9/11 for opposing terrorism and standing with the world against militancy and terrorism. Before 9/11 many militant groups of mujahidin’s (shaped during Soviet-Afghan war) were activated in Pakistan due to its strategic policy and support to Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Some of these groups were involved in violence and criminal activities particularly actively involved in sectarian conflict in country but not consider as a direct threat to State. Actually, State was also tolerant to these non-state actors or militants but now State turned against these militants to perform a new role. Counterterrorism policies endured Substantial changes, consequently impelling the outcomes of the war. After changing its policy directions General Musharraf took strong measures to restrict militancy and extremism in Pakistan. He banned many militant organizations and restricted their movement. Due to policy change and crackdown against militancy and terrorism throughout the country. These militant groups now stretched their fight against the State to take revenge to Musharraf for his actions. As a result, these groups spread throughout

the country. And they started armed struggle against the state and started guerilla warfare against security forces.

Initially they targeted high profile officials to put pressure on Government to reframe their policies. They also started to mark soft targets like foreigners working in Pakistan and minorities. Most of the banned organizations also gained support from al-Qaeda and other international terrorist group which provided assistance to function against the State. This complex web of terrorist network activated against Pakistan. And soon chain of terrorist activities was started in Pakistan. In 2002 number of brutal terrorists attacked were observed in Pakistan. In these attacks terrorist targeted mostly foreigners and minorities. Terrorist targeted the worshipers in Protestant International Church on March 17, 2002 in Capital city Islamabad in which six people were killed and forty-two injured including Sri Lankan ambassador. Five-month later in another incident Terrorist targeted students of School run under Cristian missionaries in Murree. After attacking Church and school Terrorist not even left hospitals, they attacked Cristian hospital in Taxila well known hospital in Taxila for its humanitarian work in which one man and four women were killed (Mushraff, 2006, p. 223).

On another attack on May 08, 2002 when a Suicide car bomber rammed his car into the French Navel technician's bus near Sheraton hotel in Karachi. When they were traveling to reach the naval base Karachi working on submarine project. Eleven French engineers and two Pakistani engineers were killed and twenty-four engineers were injured. At that time New Zealand Cricket team was in Sheraton hotel and just about to leave for play. Luckily none of player was hurt but this incident traumatized all the players. New Zealand cricket board called off the tour and decided to went back home (Mushraff, 2006).

United State consulates in Karachi were bombed by al-Qaeda in 2002 in which eleven people were killed. After that incident all US consulate and diplomatic offices were closed in Pakistan (Guardia, 2002). American Journalist and the Wall Street Journal Correspondent Denial Perl was Kidnaped and Murdered in Karachi (Reporter Daniel Pearl Is Dead, Killed by His Captors in Pakistan, 2002) .

General Musharraf himself targeted twice in 2003 and both times narrowly escaped (Rasanayagam, 2007). These were not just ordinary criminal acts it seems to be very planed

attacks. Actually, terrorist wanted to kill head of State for his policies against terrorism. Terrorist also attacked former Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz during his election campaign in July 30, 2004. A suicide bomber exploded himself near to his car, in which his driver dead after explosion due to piece of windshield smash into in his head but Shaukat Aziz was lucky to narrowly escape due to bulletproof car (Mushraff, 2006).

Similarly on December 27, 2007, when Peoples Party Leader Benazir Bhutto was busy in her election campaign two weeks before elections, was unexpectedly assassinated. This was one of the most brutal incidents of Pakistan's history. After finishing her speech to public political gathering in Liaqat Bagh Rawalpindi. She was ready to go back. She was sitting in car when crowd chanting slogans in her favor, she opens the roof of her car and stood up to cheer and answers the slogans of her supporters, all of sudden one terrorist opened fire on her with a hand gun and other terrorist blow himself up near her car. In which Benazir Bhutto was assassinated. In that hash incident 23 people were killed (Bhutto Assassination Sparks Chaos, 2007).

Being a United State partner in War on terrorism, Pakistan suffered a lot. US only experienced one incident of 9/11 whereas Pakistan observed number of such incidents. Which totally destroyed the law an order situation of the country. No part of country, place, and section of Pakistani society is safe due to bombing and suicide attacks. Extremism and terrorism were on its peak after initiation of war on terror in Afghanistan. Internal security challenges were increased due to opening of many fronts at a time. Fragile economy, unstable political system, lack of resources in fighting against terrorism Pakistan facing hard challenges to its national security.

US led allied forces launch Operation Enduring Freedom with aim to eliminate al-Qaeda and their facilitator from Afghanistan. This Operation was basically designed to destroy infrastructure, safe hide outs and training campus of al-Qaeda and Taliban in Afghanistan. Coalition forces with the help of Pakistan successfully captured Kabul within few weeks. After losing power in Kabul and heavy bombardment of coalition forces pushed Taliban and al-Qaeda back to mountains. Some groups of militants also ran to the rugged mountains region near Pak-Afghan border in which some of them flee into Pakistan tribal areas in search of safe place (Griswold, 2004). Due to weak writ of the government in FATA and Pak-Afghan border

area becomes breeding ground for militant and extremist groups. Where they not only hide themselves but also reassemble and reorganized themselves to conduct attacks against Coalition forces. Real trouble was started when Pakistani forces entered in Fata to providing support to US-led coalition forces.

### **FATA – A Troubling Zone!**

The Federally Administered Tribal Areas known as (FATA) is geographically located North West of Pakistan between the Durand line (Pak-Afghan border) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. It covers an estimated area about 27,220 square kilometers in size and sharing about 600 km border with Afghan Durand Line (Sultana, 2012). FATA is basically a mountainous area which is full of complex hills, Ridges passes and different types of mountain peaks and jungles. The officially estimated population according to 1998 censuses is roughly 3.18 million (FATA Population Demography, 2015). Which was now increased to over 3.5 million and adding to this figure about 1.5 million refugees from Afghanistan still living in FATA (Nawaz S. , 2009). Administratively tribal area consists of seven autonomous agencies including Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Orakzai, Kurram, North Waziristan and South Waziristan and six pockets of frontier regions named as FR Peshawar, FR Kohat, FR Bannu, FR Lakki, FR Tank, and FR D.I Khan (Javaid, FATA a Breeding Ground of Extremism in Pakistan, 2011). Each agency had unique physical, economic, and political characteristics dominated by different tribal groups. FATA is Semi-autonomous region having unique social and political setup which remain under the direct executive authority of president of Pakistan.

The tribal areas had rich history of self-governance. No invaders ever ruled on these tribal areas Instead of that local tribal leaders joined neighboring states with mutual agreements and deals during different period of time to get financial assistance but they run there administrative and judicial affairs according to their own customs and tradition through Jirga system. During the colonial period British government faced tough resistance to occupied tribal areas (FATA). They faced hard challenges due to tough resistance from tribesman against them, inhospitable conditions, Ridges Mountains, rugged passes and hills. With all the sources they were unable to keep tribal areas under their control. But they manage to get sympathies of local to provide them financial assistant in return tribal elders provide men for security and they run administration through political agents. They used tribal areas as a

buffer of buffer zone against Russian advancement toward British India. They designed Maliki (elders) system of governance and introduced Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) for tribal areas to administrate and strengthen their colonial area (Shah S. W., 2012).

After partisan of subcontinent in 1947 majority of tribal Elders joined Pakistan. So, the same situation and semi-autonomous status continued. Since then, FATA enjoys the status of a semi-autonomous region of Pakistan. Law framed by National Assembly or parliament do not apply on FATA only president has power to issue regulation for tribal areas on his behalf Governor of KPK use powers to govern FATA. Tribal agencies are basically run through political agents. Frontier regions considered protected areas which are lying under direct control of government whereas agencies are indirectly control through tribes where all cases resolve through their own Jirga system (Altaf-Ullah, 2015).

Majority of the people living in FATA are Muslims and Pashtun. They speak Pashtu language and share the same culture and traditions as follows in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. For centuries no development took place in that area. Infact FATA is remain isolated corner of country that never come under the mainstream of Pakistani society. As a result, this area remained in darkness and backwardness. Socio-economic condition of the people is disquieting. This area remains way behind from rest of state. Majority of people do not have basic necessities of life more than sixty percent people living under poverty line. Literacy rate is only 3 per cent and health facilities almost disused. Unemployment, Illiteracy, Poverty are accumulative trepidations for FATA (Ahmad M. , 2010).

After 9/11 U.S and allied forces launched attack on Taliban and Al-Qaida. Afghanistan once again comes under attack. US led allied forces launched many offensive operations against al-Qaeda and Taliban. US offensive move toward Tora bora was launched in Spinghar in 2001 where as Operation Anaconda was launched in Kunar, and Paktia provinces of Afghanistan adjacent to Pak-Afghan border in 2002 in search of al-Qaeda leadership (Rana A. , 2005). After that offensive attacks some groups of militants ran to the rugged mountains region near Pak-Afghan border in which some of them flee into Pakistan tribal areas in search of safe place. Militants assumed that US will not attack across the border where they will remain quite safe and they were aware about hideouts established during cold war period in that area. Due to religious, and ethnic proximity of tribal people with Taliban, they facilitate

them by providing shelter to carry out their activities, infect local and many other foreign groups joined them in fighting against new foe. According to Pakistani officials about five to six hundred foreign militants of different nationalities mostly Arabs, Uzbeks, Tajik and Chechens joined local militants in FATA (Rana A. , 2005).

Once again tribal areas especially Waziristan became base camp for foreigners, and local militants. FATA was not only hosted Afghan Taliban but also a base and training camp of international terrorist groups like al-Qaeda and its franchises operating in this region. Tribal areas run through Malik's for example about 1600 Malik's in North Waziristan perform the duty of administration of agency. These Malik's are basically political agents officially selected from each agency through process. These political agents are responsible to run the administration of particular agency. But after 2001 activities of militant were radically increased. Many political agents were assassinated by militants about 600 Malik's were killed in FATA (Nawaz S. , 2009).

Three Phases of history make FATA most dangerous place of the world and breeding ground of militancy which poses serious threat to both Afghanistan and Pakistan. First phase was Afghan-Soviet war (1979-1989) era in which United States and Pakistan played a front-line role in war against USSR. That was the period when militant culture started to develop in this area. Actually, Soviet invasion in Afghanistan and Pakistan involvement in that war provided foundations to militancy in FATA and Pakistan. After that a long period of anarchy badly dilapidated that area. In which Pakistan gave no attention toward increasing criminal and militant activities in that area. Pakistan efforts were remained focused on securing her eastern border rivalry with India. And third and most vital phase was begun after 9/11 when US led allied forces launched attack on Afghanistan. In search of safe place many militant face toward FATA and soon FATA become breeding ground of militancy.

Before 9/11 FATA was not consider threat for Pakistan. Challenges started to rise when Pakistan took u-turn on its Afghan policy under extreme pressure. Now Pakistan had to send her forces to cover Afghan border. First time in history Pakistani forces entered in FATA which were considered no go areas where British did not reach during the long colonial period. Pakistan Army entered in all the seven agencies and established 185 check posts along with Pak-Afghan border (Javaid, 2011). General Musharraf also deployed more than eighty

thousand troops in FATA (Rehman & Khan, 2014). He also initiated military operation against local and foreigner militants in tribal areas to support US-led war on terrorism.

### **Military Responses toward Terrorism 2001-2015**

After foreign policy change, Pakistani Administration decided to take actions against rapidly increasing militancy in FATA and adjacent areas. This orientation demands new strategy to face this challenge. For this regard Pakistan security forces were deployed with Afghan border to support US led war on terrorism in Afghanistan with the purpose to stop militant to cross the threshold into Pakistani territory. When Pak army reached in FATA, it faced strong resistance from different militant groups. Foreign and local militant had presence there in large number where they had training camps and safe hideouts. Some groups of militants had strong hold in tribal areas where they not only forcefully control the local population but also involved in various kind of violence, terrorism and criminal activities. Complex web of different foreign and local militant groups was operating in FATA. When Pakistani Army entered in FATA militant saw this development as an action against them. Pakistani forces were attacked several times in FATA. Since then, Pakistani Army was involved in ensuring internal security through military operations against militants. Several Military operations were launched against local and foreign insurgents and terrorists to establish writ of the government in tribal areas.

### **Support to Operation Enduring Freedom :( 2001-2002)**

U.S-led allied forces launched Operation Enduring freedom in Afghanistan on October 7, 2001 with the aim to overthrow the Taliban regime and capture or kill al-Qaeda leadership in Afghanistan. In this operation Pakistan assisted allied forces with every type of logistic support including Air bases, Navel ports and permission of blanket over flights to launch attack in Afghanistan. Pakistan not only provided logistic support but also providing useful intelligence and immigration data to allied forces. Pakistan cut off its diplomatic relations with Afghanistan and stopped logistic support to Taliban. Although Pakistan provided logistic and intelligence support to allied forces but Pakistan role was limited in this operation in terms of offensive operational activities (Woodward, 2002).

United States forced Pakistan to send their security forces to cover its eastern border to stop movement of insurgence across the border. Pakistan deployed Security forces to Pak-Afghan

border including Regular troops, Frontier Corps (FC), Special Services Group (SSG), Quick reaction forces and Units of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) (Khan Z. A., 2014). Pakistan government send their forces in FATA under severe pressure of United States. Pakistan deployed two brigades of regular troops for internal and border security and also deployed couple of units from Special Services Group (SSG) in Wana and Kohan to provide quick backup. About four thousand Frontier Corps were also there to counter militant's cross border movement. FC also conducted targeted operations in FATA to capture al-Qaeda terrorist (Berntsen, Pezzullo, & Jawbreaker, 2005). Pakistan forces conducted several minor operations against al-Qaeda in FATA. In December 2001 U.S led allied forces launched offensive operation at Tora Bora against al-Qaeda during that operation many militants entered in FATA, Pakistan security forces helped allied forces to capture number of foreign militants including al-Qaeda's top leaders (Yusufzai R. , 2002).

In March 2002 allied forces launched another offensive operation "Anaconda" in Paktia province of Afghanistan adjacent to FATA. During that operation Pakistani forces increased their strength in North and South Waziristan to stop militant to cross the border. Pakistani forces not only successfully countered militant movement in Pakistan during that operation but also targeted many foreign insurgents but NATO and Pakistani security forces failed to stop the movement of militant toward Pakistan (Naylor, 2005). Pakistani forces conducted assault Operation at Kazha Punga in South Waziristan with the collaboration of FC, SSG commandos and regular troops against al-Qaeda in June 2002. In July, security forces also get breakthrough in Khyber and Kurram agency. First time security forces succeeded to enter the Tirah Valley in the Khyber Agency and Parachinar in Kurram Agency where they captured number of al-Qaeda operatives. Similarly, in august 2002 targeted operation against al-Qaeda was also conducted in Baluchistan province in which security forces captured many al-Qaeda fighters. Some of them were hand over to Americans which remain temporarily in prisons in Kandahar, Bagram, and other locations and some remain in the custody of ISI (Jones & Fair, 2010).

Operation enduring freedom successfully achieved some of its objectives specially allied forces successfully over thrown the Taliban regime and captured Kabul. Pakistan played a key role in this success. Pakistani security forces captured many "Most Wanted Terrorists"

and handed over to US government. Pakistani forces faced hard resistance in FATA and found it really difficult to establish the writ of the government in tribal areas. Although Pakistan Army is one of the best Army in the world but counterinsurgency or Gruella Warfare was not a main focus of the Pakistan Army. Its preparation and training were mainly geared toward a conventional war. Moreover, operation conducted by Pakistani forces was focused on al-Qaeda and foreign militants rather than on Taliban. U.S and Pakistan ignored the growing of militancy in tribal areas which eventually challenged Pakistan own security. US also fails to capture Osama bin laden and other top leadership of al-Qaeda and fail to control in outside Kabul. Despite these drawbacks overall operation was partially successful in which Pakistan played an important role as front line state (Fair C. C., 2004).

### **Operation Al Mizan: (2002-2006)**

Pakistan conducted first military operation code named as Al Mizan (Justice) in 2002. This operation was combination of several small operations of security forces against different militant groups operating in tribal areas. Operation Al Mizan was conducted in FATA with focus on South Waziristan against foreign militant groups.

After US led allied forces attack on Kabul triggered militants to flow into Pakistan's tribal areas. Pak-Afghan border particularly Waziristan become one of the main junctions for foreign militant to settled in. Pakistan supported US led allied forces and facilitate them to launch attack on Afghanistan. Pakistan also deployed security forces on Pak-Afghan border in support of operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and started to crackdown against al-Qaeda made them angry. Al-Qaeda's deputy leader Ayman al-Zawahiri issued fatwa against Pakistani army and calling for the death of General Musharraf (Rashid, 2008). Several assassination attempts were made against General Musharraf in which he narrowly escaped. Investigation revealed that planers of assignation and other targeted missions was operating from Waziristan where al-Qaeda not only had presence there but also had establish network and command and control centers oprating there (Mushraff, 2006). In June 2002 al-Qaeda militant attacked Pakistani forces in Azam Warsak, near Wana in South Waziristan in which dozens of Pakistani soldiers were martyred (Jones & Fair, 2010).

United States was also pressurizing Pakistan to take action against militant in FATA. All these incidents forced Pakistan to commence Operation against militant. Pakistani security

forces started operation against foreign militants but some local groups had strong ties with al-Qaeda. Pakistan government politically pressurized the local tribes to point out who is harboring and facilitating foreign militants. In that regard several meetings of Shura (tribble parliament) were conducted in FATA. Operation Al mizan was a combination of several military operations launched in FATA. During operation Al Mizan Pakistan deployed 70,000 to 80,000 troops in FATA (Jones & Fair, 2010).

In beginning, it was a small-scale operation initiated with the focus to target only foreign militants in which only Frontier Corps (F.C) units participated during that targeted raid six Uzbek militants were killed and most of militant escaped from South to North Waziristan successfully. Due to alien condition and in experience in counterinsurgency Pakistani forces fail to get desired result (Khan J. , 2014). But Pakistani forces learned that the complex web of militant groups operating in FATA, some local groups had strong ties with foreign militants and they not only facilitating them but also jointly operating against Pakistani security forces. After that Security forces make a setup for full scale operation with the help of army aviation units to assist operations with artillery, transportation, and logistics units to backing forward-deployed units. Then Security forces began to infiltrate South Waziristan agency.

In October 2003 security forces conducted operation in village of Baghar in South Waziristan against foreign militants. In this operation 2500 soldiers participated. On January 8, 2004 similar kind of operation were conducted in South Waziristan. During that operation militant ambush security forces from three sides and launched heavy attack with rockets on military check posts at Wana. Over the next several days militants fired rockets and short-range missiles to army check posts in Wana and Shulama (Jones & Fair, 2010).

On March 2004, operation KalushaII was launched in South Waziristan to rescue Frontier Corps personnel in that area. This operation was concentrated 50 sq.km area near Wana. This area was in control of five different Islamic extremist militant groups led by Nek Mohammed group supposed of sheltering and harboring foreign militants and having connotations with the Afghan Taliban. In this operation Pakistan Army successfully eliminate foreign militants' groups and captured the network of underground tunnels full of electronic system and ammunition and also located the al-Qaeda command and control center. Although Army cleared the targeted area but this operation spread the battle one corner to another corner of

tribal belt. Local militants group with coordination with foreigner militant groups started to attack other border check posts of Pakistani Army in guerilla warfare style in which Pakistani security forces inflicting heavy losses in which 16 troops martyred, 14 official took hostages and destroyed artillery setup, 23 military vehicles and other warfare setup (Yusafzai & Mahsud, 2004). Whereas according to CRS Report for Congress In this operation more than 46 Pakistani troops were killed and no high value al-Qaeda or Taliban fugitives killed or captured most of terrorist escaped to Wana and Pakistani force faced lethal resistance. Pakistan claims that operation as victory but most of observers called that operation complete failure due to poor intelligence and planning (Kronstadt & Vaughn, 2004).

This operation further stretched to several months fighting. Security forces employed 700 troops, but after two months fight roughly 7,000 regular troops and Frontier Corps were battling with the militants at several locations in southwest of Wana. In this operation Air force participated with dozens of cobra helicopters and F17 air jets. Number of local and foreign militants were killed and captured. Security forces destroyed al-Qaeda command and control center also captured network of underground tunnels, military training camps and front-line fortifications and barracks (Khan Z. A., 2014). Pakistani Security forces and Militants both claimed victories against each other however, the battle ended in an oral deal.

#### **a. Shaikai Agreement:**

Public pressure started to develop on government against that army action in South Waziristan. Operation Kulsha end on an Unwritten deal between Pakistan Army and Pro-Taliban militant groups known as Shaikai agreement on 24 April 2004. Government arranged the Jirga with the assistance of political forces in which Islamist political party, JUI (coalition partners of Musharraf government) played a key role. Jirga was conducted at Shaikai in South Waziristan in which 50-members of tribal elders participated.

Pakistani Security forces demanded unconditional surrender of foreign militants and their local supporters. They were also asked to register foreign militants with authorities and Pakistani soil would not use for cross border attacks. Pakistani authorities also pressurized them to release hostages of Pro-Pakistani individuals. Militant also present three counter conditions in front of Jirga (tribal meeting). Pakistani army should go back to their original position and they would not interfere in our internal matters. They also demanded to

compensate 83 plus houses destroyed and release 163 people arrested during operation. (Jones & Fair, 2010) On March 27 Jirga was conducted for final meeting at a Deobandi madrassa the Jamia Arabia Ahsanul near Wana in which 18 members participated including Nek Mohammad Wazir, Haji Mohammad Sharif, The Corps Commander of Peshawar, Lt-Gen Safdar Hussain, JUI Ulmahs and some tribal elders from Zalikhel tribe were present there .

Although both sides were agreed on main points but there were many problems with this deal. First of all, this agreement was based on verbal promises of which conditions were not written or signed. Secondly first time Jirga was held in madrassa before that Jirga was held on public places which shows the growing role of religious actors in that area. Thirdly both side perceived that deal differently. Pakistani authorities believe problem of militancy can be tackled with political influence by using non-military means as was in the past so deal was consider victory. Tribal leadership offer their guns in Jirga to official as a symbolic gesture of peace but they were not ready to surrender themselves. Whereas militant understood as this deal as a tacit acceptance of their victory and they were perceiving as powerful and legitimate as the Army. They had solid reasons to understand this deal as victory, because according to tribal tradition loser tribe or party come to winner's territory to accept its victory and for stopping further conflict. This deal was held on madrasa in South Waziristan which was considered a head courter of militants under the control of Naik Mohammad Wazir group so they perceive it as Pakistani authorities were accepting their defeat and recognizing them as greater force.

After that agreement militancy further increased in that area. The deal not only gave militant chance to consolidate themselves but also boost their confidence. Now they believed, they can challenge Pakistani forces, that may be the reason they soon violated the peace deal. They were not ready to stop cross border violations infact militancy further increased in that area and no foreigner were register to authorities. Triable leader Naik Mohammad Wazir who was a central person in this deal was killed on June 18, 2004 in missile attack. Local suspected that missile come from other side of border or American drone kill him so after his death the deal entirely broke down (Rohde & Khan, 2004).

**b. Military Action and Sraa Rogah Peace Deal:**

After the death of Naik Mohammad, Haji Omar become the new leader of the Wana. He also sheltered Uzbek, Chechen and other foreign militants and involved in various attacks on NATO force and Pakistani security forces but his focus was more on targeting Pakistani security forces. Although militant was not following the conditions of peace deal and violating the agreement even then security forces remain on its position. They started to attack border security forces adjacent to Waziristan and their activities were increasing day by day. But one incident forced security forces to take action against increasing activities of militants. In an attack number of Pakistani security person on border duty were ambushed and heartlessly killed at Sarwakai in July 2004 (Khan H. , 2012). After that battle was started again between militants and security forces. Strong offensive operation was launched in South Waziristan against militant this time operation was stretched to Mashud tribe. This offensive operation pushes foreign militant backward toward Mashud tribe area. Where an ordinary fighter Baitullah Mahsud not only provided shelter to foreign militants but also started to organizing his fellow tribesmen against the security forces in reaction of this operation and soon became a superior militant-leader than Nek Muhammad due to active role in fight against security forces.

After five months, this operation was also ended with a deal known as Sara Rogh Agreement on February 2005. Sara Rogh Peace deal was between security forces and Pro-Taliban militants lead by Baitullah Mahsud. The deal consists of six points; All the points were to a certain extent same as previous deal with militants. JUI-F played a central role to conduct local jirhga and pressurized mashud tribe to do this peace deal. As a result of this deal, Baitullah Mahsud surrendered in Sara Rogh and agreed on several points including would not to an attack to security forces and would not assist and shelter foreign militants on Mahsud area and if they violated the agreement would be punished according to tribal customs. After that agreement government provided amnesty to local militants and remove troops from Mahsud territory (Fair & Jones, 2010).

Despite that agreement situation remained tense in South Waziristan. It was seemed as this deal was on paper, not on ground. Baitullah Mahsud continued his campaign against Pakistani state. During that period, he killed number of Pro-Pakistani tribal leaders, Informer

and many political agents. He also assassinated government officials and two local journalists in South Waziristan. He focused to fight against Pakistani forces rather than in Afghanistan. During that period, he not only assisted foreign militants but also organized local militants and gathered other extremist militant groups to form a joint union against Pakistan.

### **c. Military Action and Peace Agreements in North Waziristan – 2006**

Before 2006, Security forces countered militancy in South Waziristan and their focus was mostly upon foreign militants. Military operations against foreigners push them to North Waziristan, where presence of government was limited that gave militants a chance to regroup and reorganize themselves. They not only established safe hide outs but also used territory for cross border attacks. In that year, Pakistani Security forces faced several attacks. This time militant adopted hit and run strategy. In March 2006, security forces targeted militant hide outs in North Waziristan. Security forces claimed that 45 people including 30 foreigners in which most of them were Chechens killed in an attack on border town of Danday Saidgi in North Waziristan. Security forces faced heavy retaliation as a result fighting extent to Miranshah consider a head quarter of North Waziristan. Both Army and militants used heavy weapons against each other. This fight continues for several weeks. According to different media reports due to increasing violence and ongoing fight between security forces and militants in South and North Waziristan forced locals to migrate adjacent district of KPK (Khan J. , 2014).

When fight was carrying in North Waziristan, administration in Islamabad was analyzing situation and it was felt that use of force in tribal areas was counterproductive and local youth may lean toward militancy. Public opinion was also in favor use of force is not a solution of problem. Local tribes also desperate for return of peace in that area. As a result finally both parties reached to a peace deal known as the North Waziristan Peace Agreement on 5 September 2006 at Miranshah (Waziristan accord signed, 2006).

Militants promised that they would not attack Pakistani forces and would not involve in any kind of anti-state activity. They also promised that they would not impose their life style upon others by force and would not use Pakistani territory for cross border attacks. Senior journalist Rahimullah Yusufzai summaries this deal as a necessity for both sides to reduce loses, destruction and the effective way of applying peacemaking methods through Jirga (Yusufazi,

2007). Although this accord was highly criticized in western media and was considered as Pakistan is trying to save its troops by exposing allied forces in Afghanistan for impairment. In Pakistan some parties and groups criticized this deal as Pakistani administration is indirectly acknowledging militants as a force and authority in Waziristan.

Like many prior efforts militants also used this settlement to regroup themselves. After that deal, they not only increased their power, control and strength, not only in tribal areas but also influenced neighboring districts. Intense increase was observed in robberies, murders, kidnappings and other criminal activities which shows that militant was more assertive than before this agreement (Khan I. , 2006).

Regardless of that deal the sea-saw battle continued in 2007 between militants and security forces. Due to weak writ of the government, militants involved in cross border attacks and other militant practices. They also not hesitated to attack border security forces. North Waziristan become hub of foreign militants. Unfortunately, foreign militant got support of locals mostly due to their tribal customs and respect for foreigners. But soon many foreigners mostly Uzbeks become unpopular due to their criminal nature. Militant take complete control on North Waziristan and they stretch their control to various parts of tribal belt.

In autumn 2007 Baitullah Mehsud assimilated various local militant groups throughout Pakistan to form an organization. In December 2007 dozens of militant groups united under the umbrella of this organization named as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) (Khan Z. A., 2014). The main objective of this organization was to perform defensive (So called) Jihad against Pakistani Security forces and to fight against NATO and US led allied forces in Afghanistan (Abbas H. , A Profile of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan , 2008). TTP rose as a reaction of Pakistan's actions against militant groups in FATA after 9/11. It was initially estimated that TTP consist of about 30,000 to 35000 militants. Although they referred to as "Taliban" but generally these groups of young militants basically originated from Pakistan inspired by various indigenous of tribal code, tribal nationalism and ideology of Afghan Taliban united under TTP (Lian, 2010).

The formation and composition of TTP demonstrated the violence and militancy not only in FATA but also adjacent districts of KPK. TTP presence was observed in all seven agencies of

FATA and also had influence on adjacent districts of KPK including Banu, D.I Khan, Laki Mervat, Deir, Bunair, Swat, and to Shangla was worrying sign for Pakistan.

### **Operation Zalzal**

After the formation of TTP Baitullah Mehsud took control of several parts of FATA. He not only brutally killed many tribal elders in Waziristan but also initiated the suicide bombing campaign in Pakistan with the cooperation of Pashtun and Punjabi extremist militant groups. Some foreigners and local intelligence sources concluded that TTP was responsible for the assassination of Benazir Bhutto (leader of Pakistan People party) during her election campaign and Baitullah Mehsud was the master mind of that murder (Warrick, 2008).

TTP was also involved in many attacks on Pakistani security forces in FATA. In January 2008 militants attacked the Sara Roghar fort in South Waziristan from four side in this attack several members of security forces were killed (Fair & Jones, Pakistan's War Within, 2010). According to different media reports about 200 militants attacked the fort from four sides with rockets and capture the fort in which number of troops were killed. Baitullah Mehsud took the responsibility of that attack (Al Jazeera, 2008). TTP also captured Splitoi, Ladha, and Sarawakai in South Waziristan and began striking a number of additional forts in their neighborhoods.

After the increasing activities of militant's Pakistani security forces launched tri-star operation against militants. The operation Zalzal (Earthquake) was initiated in South Waziristan with the aim to clear the area under the control of Mashud network and to capture or kill leaders of TTP including Baitullah Mehsud and chief operator of suicide bombing Qari Hussain. In this operation security forces only targeted Bahauallah Mahsud network (Taliban Chief Ideologist Survives —Zalzal, 2008). In January 2008 Security forces dropped leaflets and pamphlets urging local to vacate the area as government going to launch operation against militants. After that Army launched attack on several part of South Waziristan on 24 January, 2008. During the battle between militant and security forces heavy weapons were used against each other. Due to conflict in South Waziristan more than 2,00,000 residents were displaced who migrated to adjacent district of KPK. This battle continued for about six weeks in which several Taliban fighters were killed and arrested. Security forces also cleared the vast area of South Waziristan however security forces failed to kill or capture Baitullah Mehsud. Army

also discovered the factory of suicide bombing and training camp where 09 to 12 years children were turning to suicide bombers (Abbas Z. , 2008).

This conflict also ended with peace deal or agreement. Condition was similar to those as adopted in previous deals. Pakistani security forces started to withdraw from Mehsud tribe territory in May 2008. According to different sources after withdrawal of Pakistani forces TTP restore its position in South Waziristan (Mir, 2009). Security forces collectively punished the Mehsud tribe rendering to Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR), tribal code and clauses of previous deal were broken by them. Collective punishment was understood as tribe is collectively responsible for misdeeds of their persons. Army discovered factory of suicide bombing, training campus of militants and local were also involved in harboring and facilitating foreign militants in their area. Security forces destroyed 4000 houses, (Khattak, 2008) number of Shops , Gas stations, Petrol pumps and other private property belongs to Mehsud tribe as a collective punishment (Abbas Z. , 2008) (Ali Z. , 2008). This controversial collective punishment highly criticized in Pakistan which also developed hate and enmity in tribal people against Security forces.

### **Operation Sher Dil**

Security forces launched a military operation in Bajaur Agency on 6 September 2008. This operation was basically launched against Qari Zia Rahman group. They were involved in various attacks on security forces in Bajaur. This group of militants attacked the Pro-Pakistani elders, political agents and National Lashkar whom were performing the duty of security in that area. According to different reports more than 36 check posts were destroyed in that area. This militant group captured the Loe Sham in Bajaur agency. Political and economic control was lost by tribal elders and Lashkar (Lloyd, 2008).

The main object of this operation was to target militant groups whom were operating against Pakistan and involved in attack on security forces. Other objectives were also included i.e. to clear the area, restore economic, political, and communication centers in Bajaur.

During more than six-month operation Security forces discover an interconnected tunnel system with use of technology levelled almost every house joined to a tunnel system in Loe Sham. Security forces also learnt that they were not fighting against ordinary rag tag militia,

they were highly trained and equipped with latest weapons and their defense was also phenomenal (Khan H. , 2012). Security forces and intelligence sources discovered that all the weapons and foreign militant coming from Afghanistan. Although NATO, ISAF and US forces were present there but they were doing nothing to stop militant movement toward Pakistan.

### **Operation Rah-e-Haq**

Due to military offensive in FATA militant spread to others part of country. Every operation was launch against militants end with deal. Peace deals help to establish temporary peace but also gave militant time and opportunity to reorganized themselves may be that was one of the reasons that militancy spread to other parts of country.

Operation Rah-e-Haq was a military operation launched against a militant group known as Tehrik-e-Nifaze-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM) in Malakand division District Swat. This operation was conducted in three phases. First phase was initiated on November 2007 when Army and local police launched search operation against militant in southern part of Swat valley but militant activities gradually started to increase in valley. TNSM militant group was infiltrated into cities of Swat. Within months militant led by Sufi Mohammad spread in swat valley. Second Phase of Operation Rah-e-Haq was launched in July 2008 against increasing activities of militants. This operation was continued for end of year and the focus was on northern side of valley. At that phase security forces were just stopping militants to enter in Swat valley. It seems that security forces were more than on defensive rather than on offensive mode. In January 2009 security forces started third phase of this operation in reaction of attacked on Security forces and destroying Schools in Swat. This operation was also ended with peace deal in February 2009 known as Malakand Accord (Fair & Jones, 2010).

### **Operation Rah-e-Rast**

After the Malakand Accord Government was ready to accept demand of TNSM by institutionalized Islamic laws of justice in Malakand division. But in the shadow of this accord militant continues their activities in Swat valley. After the two-month militant occupied the major cities of Swat. They not only attacked security forces but also destroyed many police stations and government institutions including Government offices, schools, banks and other places and take complete control on large part of Swat. They robbed many Shops, Banks,

NGOs offices and Gas stations in valley. They not only occupied Mingora city but also spread their influence on neighboring districts.

Now Taliban were just few kilometers away from Islamabad that was worrying signs for Pakistan. Pakistani security forces launched operation Rah-e-Rast in May, 2009 to clear the area of Swat with the aim to kill or capture the leadership TNSM. It was a full-scale operation launched against militants. On 30 may after almost one month fight Army regain the control of Swat valley and successfully completed its all objectives.

### **Operation Rah-e-Nijat**

Baitullah Mahsud and his TTP network increased terrorist activities in Pakistan. There were 2,148 terrorists attacked were recorded during 2008 to 2009 in Pakistan (Pakistan Security Report , 2009). It was seemed as every place and every corner of country was the target of TTP. After the escalation of violence across Pakistan Security forces launched another military operation in South Waziristan against TTP network.

Operation Rah-e-Nijat was started with the aim to destroy the network of TTP in South Waziristan and weaken the militant infrastructure, support base in FATA. COAS General Ashfaq Kayani explained that Operation Rah-e-Nijat was only against foreign militants and cruel militant elements, not against Mahsud Tribe (Jones & Fair, 2010). Security forces successfully conduct target operations in South Waziristan. Number of militants were killed during that operation. Pakistani Forces destroyed the command-and-control center and base camp of TTP and clear the area of Sararogha, Makin and Laddah in South Waziristan. Baitullah Mahsud was also killed in CIA drone attack in 5<sup>th</sup> July 2009 (Jones & Fair, 2010).

Due to effective approach and strategy security forces destroyed the infrastructure and command and control center also pushed them toward mountains in North Waziristan and some militant fled into neighboring provinces of Afghanistan. Although this operation was quite successful but did not destroy the ability of TTP to attack the State.

### **Operation Zarb-e-Azb**

After the military operations Rah-e-Haq and Rah-e-Rast in Swat valley and operation Rah-e-Nijat in South Waziristan, newly elected Government decided to give peace a chance to settle all the matters with negotiations. In January 2014 dialogue began between the representatives

of Government and Militants, with the aim to resolve all the matters with peaceful process but during the dialogue militant continued their terror campaign against the state. As Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said in his speech at the National Assembly on 16 June 2014.

*“At one hand we were doing dialogues and on other hand we were being frequently targeted. We were pursuing talks but our Air ports, Courts, Schools and places of worship were targeted. In spite of the sacrifices of our armed forces, we gave peace talk’s first precedence but our all efforts were gone in vain”* (Haider, 2015).

The Operation Zarb-e-Azb finally launched on 15th June 2014 with the aim to completely eliminate militancy and terrorism from Pakistan. It was full scale military operation in North Waziristan Agency and in other areas of FATA close to Pakistan and Afghanistan frontier in which more than 30,000 Pakistani soldiers were participating (Javaid, 2015). North Waziristan Agency was a hub of local and foreign militants. Militant groups were used NWA as a base camp to fight a war and operate terrorist activities in Pakistan. Terrorism not only disrupt National life but also major cause of huge humanitarian loses in Pakistan. Pakistani authorities vacated the area before initiation of operation to save the people from damage. According to Express Tribune 929,859 people were registered as IDPs (Javaid, 2015).

Zarb-e-Azb was started without any discrimination of militant groups with the main objective to completely eradicate militancy and terrorism from Pakistan. As Defense Minister stated that the operation will continue *“until the last terrorist has been eliminated”* (Javaid, 2015). This operation does not only mean to take back control of NWA and adjacent areas but this operation make sure that terrorism and militancy completely removed from Pakistan and operation will continue until the last terrorist in Pakistani territory.

The attack on Army Public School Peshawar on December 16, 2014 in which 132 innocent school children, 9 staff members were inhumanly killed by TTP militants shocked the whole of humanity (Javaid, 2015) .It can be considering as “Pakistan’s 9/11”. After that attack National consensus was developed to deal the terrorist with iron hand. Pakistan transformed its terrorism policy by taking extra ordinary measures to curb and eradicate all kind of militancy and terrorism in Pakistan.

Zarb-e-Azb is moving well toward its targets. According to DG ISPR Major General Asim Bajwa 2763 terrorists killed, 837 hideouts destroyed so far in zarb-e-Azb (The Express

Tribune, June 14, 2015) . After the successful year security forces cleared the 90% area of NWA and now last phase is ready, operation is moving toward last push. As Chief of Army staff General Rahil Sharif said on the completion of one victorious year of zarb-e-Azb

“Operation Zarb-e-Azab moves to last few pockets close to Pak- Afghan border” (Military Operation Zarb-e-Azb, 2015). This operation was continued so far with the hope to eradicate terrorism and militancy from Pakistani society.

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