

COUNTER TERROISM IN PAKISTAN AND WAY FORWARD

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Introduction

While the world is entangled in defining the peril of terrorism unanimously, Pakistan has rightly identified terrorism as a serious threat to her survival. Notwithstanding her precarious economic and complicated psycho-social environment, Pakistan is playing a lead role in GWOT. Over the past decade or so, growing terrorism like situation in different parts of the country in general and along western borders in particular, have shaken the entire fabric of society. Attributing the root causes to the interests of global and regional players alone will not suffice.¹ Internal factors will also have to be studied in great details. Similarly, focusing entirely on settlement of internal discords and consigning the resolution of international security problems affecting Pakistan to oblivion will put the picture out of all perspective. At this crucial juncture of the history, it is therefore imperative for Pakistan to understand the nature of terrorism, its history and root causes under which it is affecting the state.² It is only after an in depth comprehension of these facets of terrorism that Pakistan will be able to review its existing Counter Terrorism strategy and devise a way forward.

To study and understand the nature and history of terrorism in Pakistan, analyze factors abetting terrorism and recommend a viable way forward to counter terrorism in Pakistan.

Dilemma of Understanding the Nature of Terrorism

- The word “terror” is derived from the Latin expression “terrere,”³ which means, “to frighten.” Webster’s English Dictionary defines terrorism as the use of violence committed by a group in order to intimidate or coerce to

1. Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies, “External Players will Continue to Exploit Pakistan’s Internal Security Threats if Left Unmanaged,” <http://san-pips.com/index.php?action=events&id=43> (accessed April 12, 2016).
2. Encyclopedia Britannica, “Root Causes of Terrorism in Pakistan- An Empirical Analysis,” <http://www.britannica.com/bps/additionalcontent/18/34634307/Root-Causes-of-Terrorism-An-Empirical-Analysis> (accessed May 10, 2016).
3. Edwin Post, *Latin at Sight, with an Introduction, Suggestions for Sight-Reading, and Selections for Practice* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1894), 41.

attain their political demands.⁴ However, the world has not been able to find a commonly accepted definition of terrorism.

- Kofi Anan, the former UN Secretary General, noted, “I understand and accept the need for legal precision. But let me say frankly that there is also a need for moral clarity. There can be no acceptance of those who would seek to justify the deliberate taking of innocent civilian lives, regardless of cause or grievance. If there is one universal principle that all people can agree on, surely it is this”.⁵

Terrorism and Insurgency: According to Clausewitz, “Every age has its own kind of war, its own limiting conditions and its own peculiar preconceptions.”⁶ The credibility of this assertion stands the test of contemporary times. In the last few years, warfare’s spectrum has seen drastic changes. Unconventional warfare remains the focus of belligerents to achieve desired objectives, while conventional warfare has been relegated to backstage.

Insurgency and terrorism both fall within the spectrum of asymmetric warfare.⁷ Insurgency may employ terrorism as a tool. Generally, terrorists rarely attempt to control areas or hold terrain, whereas insurgency does attempt that. The distinguishing characteristic of insurgency is its attempt to hold and control areas/ terrain.

To sum up it could be concluded that currently no clear and universally agreed upon definition of terrorism exists. Thus, for common understanding of this complex term, one could decipher that “the very nature of indiscriminate use of violent manifestation of means to achieve politically intended ENDS” could be termed as Terrorism. Its nature of manifestation however, encompasses various forms and facets ranging from insurgency to irregular warfare. It has to a large extent substituted the conventional /regular / traditional concept of warfare. It could be used by belligerents as a tool / mean to break the will of opponent to attain political objectives. It breeds itself on internal dynamics of the state or society.

4. Webster’s Online Dictionary, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/terrorism> (accessed May 12, 2016).

5. Module 1, Terrorism; its Nature, Definition, and Trends, Program on Terrorism and Security Studies (PTSS), College of International and Security Studies, Germany.

6. Albrecht Schnabel and Hans-Georg Ehrhart, Security Sector Reform and Post-Conflict Peace Building, http://www.amazon.com/gp/search?index=blended&keywords=every%20age%20has%20its%20own%20kind%20of%20war&_encoding=UTF8 (accessed May 2, 2016).

7. Asymmetric Warfare- Definition, <http://www.iwar.org.uk/military/resources/aspc/text/aa/def.htm>, (accessed May 13, 2016).

History of Terrorism

Historical Overview

The Sicarii, an offshoot of the religious sects of the Zealots in Palestine which operated from AD 66-73 was an anti-Roman religious movement that attacked Jewish collaborators. They often attacked crowded places to strike fear provoking conflict.⁸ A thousand years later, the Assassins, a Shia sect of Ismaili and Nizari, used dagger at close range, inflicting terror and showing a willingness to die.⁹ Then, came Anarchists of the late nineteenth century who brought a transformation detaching terrorism from the state and bringing it to a non-state act. The anarchists sought to invoke fear by killing one head of state per year in the 1890s, including US President William McKinley.¹⁰ Likewise, Russian revolutionaries killed Tsar Alexander II in 1881.¹¹ In the first half of 20th century, terrorism took a new direction.¹² It became state monopoly in a number of countries in the 1930s and 1940s. In the 1960s and 1970s, terrorism broadened to include ideologically motivated groups such as Germany's Red Army Faction, Italy's Red Brigades, France's Direct Action, UK's IRA and America's Weathermen.¹³ Meanwhile, the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in 1979 led to a US backed insurgent movement. The Iranian revolution of 1979 led to the re-emergence of sectarian terrorism and that of suicide terrorism in Lebanon following the Israeli invasion of 1982.¹⁴ Between 1980 and 2000, suicide terrorism became a visible phenomenon. This methodology was extensively used by LTTE, Hezbollah, Hamas and PKK.¹⁵ On top of different forms and manifestations of terrorism, then occurred the historic event of 11 September 2001. The event was attributed to Al-Qaeda. The decade which followed 11 September 2001 saw US (GWOT) in which it attacked Afghanistan in 2001, Iraq in 2003 and later Libya. The USA's GWOT instead of resolving the issue rather resulted in rise of ISIS in the heart of Iraq and Syria which has now spread in most of the Muslim countries with isolated but well calibrated terrorist activities in western world too.

8. *ibid.*

9. Amy Zalman, Assassins (Persia and Syria, 11th and 12th Century), <http://terrorism.about.com/od/groupsleader1/p/Assassins.htm>, (accessed May 2, 2016).

10. Jennifer Rosenberg, 1901-U.S President William McKinley Assassinated, <http://history1900s.about.com/od/1900s/qt/mckinleykilled.htm>, (accessed Jun 3, 2016).

11. Kim Seabrook, Ignacy Hryniewiecki and the assassination of Tsar Alaxandar II, <http://socyberty.com/history/ignacy-hryniewiecki-and-the-assassination-of-tsar-alexander-ii/>, (accessed Jun 2, 2016).

12. Amy Zalman, History of Terrorism. <http://terrorism.about.com/od/whatisterroris1/p/Terrorism.htm>, (accessed Jun 2, 2016).

13. *Ibid.*

14. *ibid.*

15. Gearson, Jhon. "The Nature of Modern Terrorism." In *Superterrorism: Policy Responses*, edited by Lawrence Freedman. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002.

Terrorism in Pakistan

In the aftermath of 9/11, commenced the GWOT. Pakistan, on account of its geographical location was placed in an area where USA identified its major target for its war on terror i.e. Afghanistan.¹⁶ In the prevailing circumstances, Pakistan was left with very limited options. Supporting US led GWOT emerged as the only suitable option. However, this decision to side with the US had far-reaching consequences to the inner stability of the country. Many militant organizations sprung up in Pakistan and started targeting the security forces on the pretext that these had sided with US. Over a period of time, foreign assistance from hostile elements started flowing in to organizations like Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)¹⁷ for destabilizing the country.

Summary

To sum up it is clear that terrorism has existed since ages which could be traced back from Sicarii movement of 66 – 73 AD to this date. With the evolution of human society its extent and intensity has however, varied in different periods depending upon breeding factors. It is also concluded that terrorism is not a phenomenon that has manifested itself exclusively in a particular part of the world or civilization. Although currently it is being waged in most part of the Islamic world, yet it is not inclusive to a particular religion. It has been a phenomenon world over, across the various divide of religion, geography, history, civilization and culture to state a few.

Factors Abetting Terrorism in Pakistan

Based on above the specific factors which abetted terrorism in Pakistan could be listed as under:

- **Global War on Terror:** GWOT has directly affected the social, cultural and economic fabric of country's society and is major contributing factor of ongoing wave of terrorism. The terrorists want to coerce the Government to disassociate from US led GWOT in all its forms and facets.¹⁸
- **Hostile Factor:** With the overthrow of Talibans regime in Afghanistan, certain hostile countries saw in it an opportunity to conduct offensive

16. Christophe Jaffrelot, *Pakistan: Nationalism without a Nation* (London: Zed Books Ltd., 2002), 87.

17. Silobreaker, *Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan*, http://www.silobreaker.com/tehreeketaliban-pakistan-11_36719144, (accessed Jun 3, 2016).

18. *Military Operations Other Than War and Specialized Warfare (MSW): Reader*, AFWC & AOWC- 2009/10, NDU, Islamabad.

Low Intensity Conflict against Pakistan. One of the neighbouring country established number of consulates along Pakistani border in the West and actively started funding and providing material aid to terrorist. The ongoing terrorism has a direct input from these hostile sources.¹⁹

- **Jihadi Culture**²⁰: During ‘Afghan War’ against Russian occupation, there were number of foreigners and locals who were trained to fight ‘holy war’ with the active assistance and cooperation of USA, KSA and others countries. Lately, these groups turned against the Government of Pakistan for supporting US led GWOT.
- **Sectarianism/Extremism**: The Iranian revolution accelerated the Shia – Sunni divide in the society and situation got further complicated when some of the countries started supporting certain Sunni Sects too. Pakistan, thus, became the battle ground of conflicting ideologies.
- **Mass Weaponisation**: Afghan war led to mass weaponisation of the society. The easy availability of weapons not only led to serious law and order problem but also gave fillip to the terrorist’s activities all over the country.
- **Bad Governance**²¹: The era of 90s and first decade of 2000s was marked with bad governance and rampant corruption in the society. The increased poverty, growing un-employment and worsened law and order situation coupled with above factors provided ideal grounds for perpetuating terrorism.
- **Political Instability**: Weak political institutions have also played an equal role to create perception of mistrust and lack of confidence. This factor is a major contributor in the present wave of terrorism in Balochistan and FATA.
- **Drone Attacks**: Drone attack carried out by USA inside Pakistan especially in tribal areas also resulted in revenge attack by the family members of victim and their sympathizers.

Summary: To sum up, it could be concluded that there exists socio-economic, socio cultural, socio-political and ideological factors both internal and external on which whole range of population have dissenting views. Failure of the state to consensually address those factors / lessen the wide dissenting gap through political, administrative and participative means resulted in the current mess. This also provided an opportunity to hostile external elements to exploit the situation for achieving their intended political ENDS.

19. Real Ahsan, Terrorism and the Root Causes, <http://mukto-mona.com/wordpress/?p=88>, (accessed Jun 1, 2016).

20. ibid

21. Asian Development Report of Jul 2020 – Poverty in Pakistan, Issues, Causes and Institutional Responses available on <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/33464/files/poverty.pdf> accessed on 30 Sep 2016.

Counter Terrorism-Way Forward for Pakistan

Strategic Vision for Counter Terrorism: The recommended short term and long term objectives are:

- **Short Term Objectives (1-5 Years)**
 - Prevent regrouping and attacks by terrorist on the people of Pakistan.
 - Identify and destroy terrorist's bases, infrastructure and their capacity to operate wherever found.²²
 - De-radicalize, contain and eliminate Terrorists remaining high and middle tier leadership.
 - Deny weapons and funds through effective border management, intelligence operations, well-articulated diplomacy and regional approach.
 - Launch comprehensive media campaign to counter ideological support to terrorists and insurgents by gaining the support of local people through winning their hearts and minds.
 - Quick relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction of effected people / area by launching development work.
 - Protect and defend potential targets of attack across the country.
- **Long Term Objectives (5-10 Years)**
 - Extension of political system across the board to all parts of Pakistan.
 - De-weaponisation of entire society.
 - Launching comprehensive education reform aimed at enhanced literacy rate with special focus on education and creating equal opportunities for all.
 - Enhance government architecture and inter-agency collaboration.²³
 - Foster intellectual and human capital.²⁴
 - Accelerated development in the less developed areas.

The Proposed Strategy: The proposed Counter Terrorism Strategy for Pakistan is built around five strands as elaborated below:

22. The Project Gutenberg E-text of National Strategy for Combating Terrorism (2006), by United States.mht

23. ibid

24. ibid

- **Political Ownership and Direction:** All Counter Terrorism operations should be politically owned, driven and dominated. The proposed measures in political domain are:
 - **Extension of Political System:** Government must extend its domain to farfetched portions of FATA and Balochistan. People of these areas should be given confidence in the political and administrative system of Pakistan.²⁵
 - **Legitimacy of Cause:** Influencing public opinion in the favour of Counter Terrorism operations is of immense importance for the success of such operations. Pakistan requires a national effort to convince people that countering terrorism is a question of survival for the state.
 - **Unity of Effort:** For an effective strategy, 'the Clausewitzian Trinity' the State, People and Armed Forces must be at harmony and in synchronization to achieve the desired end state.
 - **Rule of Law and Justice:** Only rule of law and justice can ensure good governance. General public requires a just and balanced society for improving their social conditions. Troubled areas of the country should be a special focus in this regard.
 - **Enhanced Government Architecture:** Military can act in any internal security duty only for a specified period.²⁶ To ensure an uninterrupted social uplift, a motivated and competent civil administration is a must.
 - **Dialogue / Negotiations:** Efforts must be made to have dialogue with those individuals who are ready to lay their arms and accept the writ of the Government. The focus now should be on use of Soft Power.
 - **Gaining Local Support:** Terrorism and insurgency can be eliminated only when sufficient local support is garnered to give moral ascendancy to military operations.²⁷
 - **Regional and Global Counter Terrorism Cooperation:** Pakistan cannot address the issue of terrorism single handedly. A Regional Counter Terrorism Policy (RCTP) may be formulated by taking all the stake holders on board.²⁸In this case the RCTP be linked with Global

25. Khalid Aziz ex Chief Secretary NWFP, lecture on 23 December 2014 at NDU, Islamabad.

26. IRIN Asia, Pakistan: The Role of the Military in the Pakistan earthquake, <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportid=34370>, (accessed May 26, 2016)

27. David Galula, Counterinsurgency Warfare. Westport: Praeger Security International, 2006.

28. Khalid Aziz ex Chief Secretary NWFP, interview by author, 23 December 2014, NDU, Islamabad.

Counter Terrorism Policy (GCTP) which should be formulated under the aegis of United Nations.

- **Counter Narrative.** Terrorists are seeking their support largely from amongst the under privileged and less educated lot of the society on the narrative of substituting the existing status quo with Islamic socialist society. This finds strong appeal amongst the masses. Government must chalk out a counter narrative highlighting true Islamic values based on respect for dissent, tolerance, patience and equality.
- **Socio-Economic Uplift**
 - **Quick Impact Projects:** Quick impact projects' should be initiated immediately specially in the affected areas which require less resources and can benefit more people.
 - **Employment Opportunities:** Unemployment is often a cause of frustration. Terrorism and Insurgency prone areas should be given more employment opportunities.²⁹
 - **Provision of Basic Amenities:** Lack of these facilities creates untoward situations for common man who is likely to react negatively in compelled circumstances.
 - **Winning Hearts and Minds:** Adequate rehabilitation and development operations must be planned to achieve stability in the affected areas.
 - **Women Emancipation:** Women should be brought into main stream by improving their literacy rate and empowerment.
 - **De-Weaponisation of Society:** The society must be provided with a sense of security and a massive de-weaponisation campaign must be launched all over the country.
 - **Promotion of Education and Sports:** The youth must be engaged by providing them good education and healthy activities to direct their energies on constructive and innovative projects.

29. Blurtit, what are the Main Social Problems in Pakistan, <http://www.blurtit.com/q886651.html>, (accessed Jun 3, 2016).

- **Information Operations:** Following is recommended in this regard:
 - **Countering Ideological Support:** Religious leaders have a critical role to play in undermining ideological support for terrorism. Government must endeavour to bring maximum religious leaders on board and seek 'Fatwas' against suicidal bombings and killing of innocent civilians.
 - **Psychological Operations:** Deliberately planned psychological operations should form an integral part of proposed Information Operations Policy. This must be launched in synchronization with information operations and overall counter narrative.
 - **Shaping the environment:** Media must launch a campaign to shape the public opinion against the terrorists. The terrorists be sidelined by educating the people about their hidden intent.
 - **Use of Technology-Cyber Space:** Comprehensive institutionalize measures be taken to restrict the use of technology and cyber space by the terrorists. This should include registration of all citizen and media using various kind of technology and cyber space. .
 - **Limiting Financial Support:** Comprehensive legislation and strict implementation is required to suffocate terrorists financial help line through strict monitoring of money transaction.
- **Military Interventions:** The following merits attention in this regard:
 - **Conceptual Contours:** The recommended concept of engagement is as under:
 - Military means must be politically driven backed by popular public support.
 - Convergence of military and political components.
 - Use of minimum essential force.
 - Conduct of effect based operations to shape the environment for effective articulation of political and socio-economic means.
 - Reduce own and exploit militants' vulnerabilities.
 - Conduct integrated, joint and intelligence based operations.
 - **Comprehensive Beginning to End Plan:** A comprehensive and detailed planning must be carried out by visualizing all actions from beginning to end keeping in mind the desired end state.

- **Intelligence:** All intelligence agencies operating in the area should focus to gain maximum possible information about the miscreants. Human intelligence must be efficient and reliable.
- **Force cum Technology Oriented Approach:** Adequate force along with appropriate modern surveillance and precision engagement means should be employed as per the dictates of ground/situation. The Drones (when available), Combat Aviation and Air Force can be used for the purpose.
- **Gaining Local Support and Creating Rift among Miscreants:** Local support must be gained in the area for better intelligence and denying harbour to the miscreants. Covert operations be undertaken to create rifts among various militant groups.³⁰
- **Border Management System:** Pakistan must organize an efficient border management system with her neighbours. The unguarded areas must be fenced, mined or monitored through aerial surveillance.
- **Legislation:** Following is recommended in this regard:
 - **Constitutional Cover:** The existing constitutional cover does not provide adequate powers and authority to the Armed Forces to conduct independent operations and needs to be suitably amended.
 - **Amendments in Criminal Procedure Code:** No special powers have been given to Armed Forces in Criminal Procedure Code. After the arrest, the responsibility of investigation and prosecution rest with the police which complicates the issue. This void needs to be filled through adequate legislation.
 - **Political Promises/Public Demands:** Political promises made by political leadership must be provided legal cover to enhance the credibility of the State and instill confidence of the public.

Conclusion

It is a proven fact that terrorism and insurgency are threats which endanger the very existence of Pakistan today. Pakistan, as a nation, need to fight with full might against this menace and enemy of the society. Military and political machinery have equally important roles to play in this regard. It is only by an integration of all segments of society and organs of the state as one whole that Pakistan can eliminate the plague of terrorism.

30. David Galula, Counterinsurgency Warfare. Westport: Praeger Security International, 2006.

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3. Anne Aldis and Graeme P.Herd. The Ideological War on Terror, New York: Routledge, 2007.
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55. Earthquake, <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportid=34370>,
56. Global Watch, “Pakistan-Epicenter of Global Terrorism,” <http://www.pakistanwatch.org/main.php?t=EP&st=T>
57. http://www.amazon.com/gp/search?index=blended&keywords=every%20age%20has%20its%20own%20kind%20of%20war&_encoding=UTF8

58. <http://www.statemaster.com/encyclopedia/Sayed-Abul-Ala-Mawdudi>
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Brigadier Shah Zaman was born in southern province of Pakistan on 15 March 1967 and joined Pakistan Military Academy on 18 October 1986. He was commissioned in an Infantry Battalion of Pakistan Army on 10 March 1989. He has served on various command, staff and instructional appointments in various capacities throughout his career spanned over 27 years. Brig Shah Zaman has served in the highest and the coldest battle field of the world, Siachen Glacier, twice, once as Lieutenant and second time as a Major. He has commanded his own infantry regiment in Kashmir along the Line of Control and a mechanized brigade in north western areas of Pakistan fighting militancy. Brigadier Shah Zaman has served as Grade 3 operational officer in an Infantry Brigade as a Captain. He has also served as operational staff officer in multinational UN HQ in Bosnia while he was a Captain. He has also served as Brigade Major of Mechanized Brigade and as Deputy Assistant Military Secretary in Military Secretary Branch of General Headquarters of Pakistan Army. In the capacity of Lieutenant Colonel he has served as Grade 1 operational staff officer in Divisional HQ and Grade 1 operational planning officer in the Corps HQ. Beside he has also served in the capacity of Colonel General Staff of a Corps HQ over seeing operational, planning, intelligence, security, training and psychological warfare branches of the Corps. His military qualifications beside host of mandatory courses include selective courses such as Command and Staff Course from his own country, Command and staff course from China, Armed Forces War Course from National Defence University of Pakistan and National Defence Course from National Defence College of Bangladesh. In the domain of civil qualification he has attained Masters degree in Economics, in International Relations and in Science of Warfare and Strategic Studies. He also holds honors degree in Strategic Warfare Studies.