



Center for  
Research &  
Security  
Studies

# Pakistan in 2011: The Simmering Crises



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*Pakistan focused Questions,  
Independent Answers*

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The publication contains research papers and research reports that deal with national and regional security, political and economic developments during 2011. The endeavor is part of the annual activities of CRSS to produce research based analysis of happenings in and around Pakistan.

CRSS will welcome feedback on the publication.

**CRSS Team**  
**Islamabad**



## **Sunni Ittehad Council: The Strengths and Limitations of Barelvi Activism against Terrorism**

Aarish U. Khan

### **Abstract**

Several Barelvi leaders joined hands for an alliance, the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), in May 2009 to work together and guard against religious extremism and terrorism. The move seemed to be influenced by a gradual escalation of attacks on shrines across Pakistan since late 2006, as well as on the Barelvi (Sufi) community that venerates these places. Presumably, pro-Al-Qaeda Pakistani militant organizations orchestrate these attacks on places which are frequented by thousands of followers every day. SIC has been able to achieve some successes but in the socio-political maze of Pakistan, this alliance, too, is hamstrung by limitations. This paper attempts to briefly look at the history of attacks on shrines, explain the achievements of SIC and analyze its limitations in an environment beleaguered by violence and sectarian differences, which Al-Qaeda-inspired militants - also called "Force Multipliers of Al Qaeda" - appear to exploit every now and then.

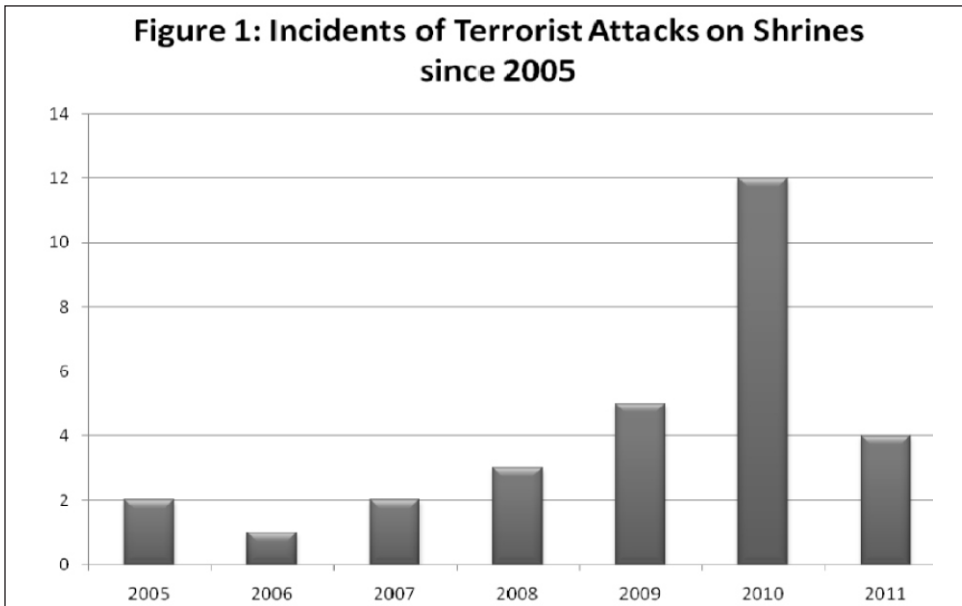
### **Introduction**

According to the 1998 Census, 96.28 percent of Pakistani population is Muslim.<sup>1</sup> These Muslims are further and mainly divided into Sunni and Shi'a sects. A recent report of the Pew Research Center says the Shi'as constitute up to 15 percent of Pakistan's total Muslim population,<sup>2</sup> which is a lot less than the estimate of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) which puts Pakistan's Shi'a at around 20 percent.<sup>3</sup> The predominant Sunni sect is further subdivided mainly into the Barelvi (Sufi) and Deobandi schools of thought.<sup>4</sup> There are no reliable statistics available for the proportions of the Barelvi and Deobandi populations. The Barelvis are, however, estimated to be between 50 to 70 percent of the total Sunni Muslim population of Pakistan and can be differentiated from the Deobandis by virtue of their tradition of veneration of Sufi saints and their shrines.<sup>5</sup> Most of the banned militant terrorist outfits of Pakistan either subscribe to the Deobandi or the Wahabi-inspired Ahl-e-Hadith or Salafi school of thought, while none of them is Barelvi.<sup>6</sup> From 1980 to 2005 the anger of these militant organizations was directed only against the Shi'a community. Even today, militant organizations are targeting the Shi'a population in all parts of the country with bomb blasts and target-killings.<sup>7</sup> In Kurram agency of the Federally

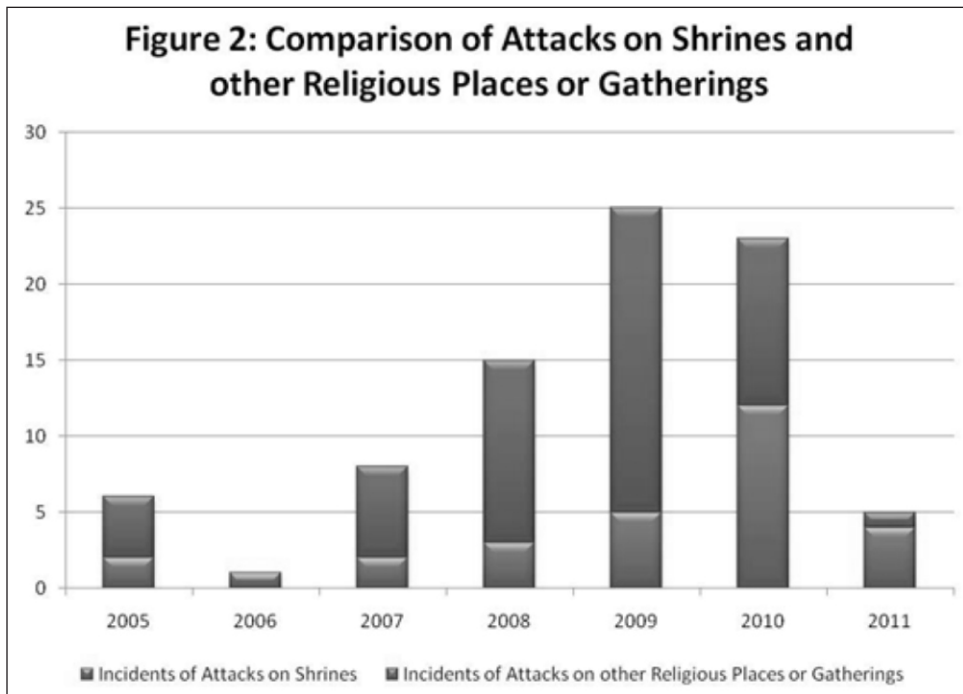


Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), the Shi'a Turi tribe is battling against the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) militants since 2007, when the TTP took advantage of the already tense relationship between the local Shi'a and Sunni tribes inhabiting this mountainous border region.<sup>8</sup>

In 2005, however, the militant organizations began going after "symbols" of the Barelvi community such as mosques, prominent religious leaders, and shrines. It began with a bomb blast at the shrine of Peer Rakheel Shah in Jhal Magsi on March 19, 2005, that killed 49, followed by a suicide attack at the Bari Imam shrine near Islamabad on May 27, 2005, in which 25 persons were killed and more than 100 injured. Since then, extremist militants have repeatedly attacked shrines and, at times, Barelvi leaders as well. According to the data of the incidents of attacks on shrines compiled by the Center for Islamic Research Collaboration and Learning (CIRCLE), a think-tank based in Rawalpindi, 209 persons have been killed and 560 injured in 29 terrorist attacks on shrines since the first attack in March 2005.<sup>9</sup> One estimate has put the number of suicide attacks targeting shrines in Pakistan from 2005 to November 2010 at 70,<sup>10</sup> which could not be verified with a timeline though. Figure 1 below, based on the data of CIRCLE, shows a gradual rise in attacks on shrines since 2005. This trend peaked in 2010, while four high-casualty attacks have already taken place in 2011.



Comparing the data of attacks on shrines with that of assaults on other religious places or gatherings throughout 2005 and 2011, one can ascertain that the numbers of attacks on shrines exceeds those on other religious places or gatherings for 2010 and 2011. Figure 2 below-based on a combination of the data of attacks on shrines obtained from CIRCL and the data of attacks on other religious places or gatherings provided by an associate of the Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), Mr. Nafees Muhammad-illustrates the trend.



The last attack on a shrine, a twin suicide bombing at the shrine of Sakhi Sarwar in Dera Ghazi Khan on April 3, resulted in the killing of 50 persons and injury to more than 120. One of the alleged suicide bombers -who was caught before he could detonate the explosives tied around him-has made a disturbing revelation that he was training with 350 other teenagers at a camp in north Waziristan. This is enough to believe that more attacks against the shrines cannot be ruled out. The attacks on the shrines are generally attributed to the Deobandi and Ahl-e-Hadith (Salafi) backgrounds of most of the banned militant organizations in Pakistan, which view veneration of shrines by their devotees as a form of worship of the graves and, thus, heresy.<sup>11</sup> Some analysts also argue that militants target these

sacred places because of the ideological challenge that they pose to militancy i.e. portrayal and perusal of moderate and peaceful image of Islam.<sup>12</sup> It is true that the idea of Sufi Islam attracted many class-bound Hindus of the subcontinent for its inclusivity and generosity. It was this docility of the Barelvis that kept them away from the Afghan jihad as well as the ire of the jihadist organizations until 2005. At this point in time though, either the ideological appeal, or the perceived heretic traditions, of the non-violent Sufi Islam has become a source of alarm-or at least discomfort-for the militants. Because of their peaceful and non-violent character, the Barelvis were very slow in reacting to their systematic targeting by the militant groups. Their stand against militancy is still in a very nascent stage, and that is one of the reasons many observers are not sure about the direction that it would take. Owing to the uncertainty surrounding the future of Barelvi activism against militancy and the paucity of literature on the subject, this paper attempts to make some initial inroads into the understanding of the dynamics of Barelvi activism against terrorism.

### **Sunni Ittehad Council: The Face of Barelvi Activism against Militancy**

It was in May 2009, that several Barelvi political parties and apolitical groups joined together to form an alliance with a one-point agenda of countering religious extremism and terrorism, called the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC). This alliance included some important Barelvi groups and political parties like Jamiat-e Ulema-e Pakistan-Markazi (JUP-Markazi) led by Haji Fazle Karim, Jamaat Ahl-e Sunnat (JAS) led by Mazhar Saeed Kazmi (the elder brother of former Federal Minister for Religious Affairs, Syed Hamid Saeed Kazmi), Sunni Tehrik (ST) led by Sarwat Ijaz Qadri, Almi Tanzeem-e Ahl-e Sunnat led by Peer Afzal Qadri, Nizam-e Mustafa Party led by Haji Hanif Tayyab, Markazi Jamaat Ahl-e Sunnat led by Syed Irfan Mashhadi, Zia-ul-Ummat Foundation led by Peer Amin-ul-Hasnat Shah, Halqa-e Saifiya led by Mian Mohammad Hanafi Saifi, Anjuman-e Tulaba-e-Islam (a Barelvi student organization), Tanzeem-ul-Madaris (the Barelvi Wafaq that issues degrees to the graduates of madrassahs) led by Mufti Muneeb-ur-Rehman and represented at SIC by Ghulam Mohammad Sialvi (its secretary general and former chairman of Pakistan Baitul Maal), Anjuman-e Asaatza-e Pakistan led by Peer Athar-ul-Haq, and several others. Currently, Haji Fazl-e Karim-leader of JUP-Markazi, a firebrand Barelvi leader, and a Member of the National Assembly (MNA) on a Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) ticket-is the chairman of the SIC.

The SIC, since its formation, has achieved certain important milestones against religious extremism. On August 14, 2009, the SIC organized a Peace March in Rawalpindi condemning religious extremism and terrorism and expressing support and solidarity with the Pakistan Army battling against terrorists in Swat at the time. The march was attended by more than 10,000 followers, which was an impressive showing for any group raising its voice against terrorists in Pakistan. On October 17, 2010, the SIC organized an ulema and meshaikh convention in Islamabad with the main message of expressing solidarity against religious extremism. Once again, the showing was remarkable with more than 5,000 Barelvi Ulema from all across the country participating in it. It ended with a pledge to stage a Long March from Islamabad to Lahore against terrorism on November 27, 2010. The Long March- despite a crackdown by the Federal and Punjab governments- succeeded in gathering a sizeable number of people in the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad on the planned date. The first day of the march also witnessed scenes of showdown between the SIC activists and the police, when the police tried to stop them in Rawalpindi. 150 SIC activists were injured in the clashes with police on November 27 while hundreds were arrested.<sup>13</sup> Thousands of SIC activists gathered in Lahore on November 28 when the march ended there.<sup>14</sup> SIC's last conference on April 17 in Lahore gathered around 1,000 muftis from 55 different countries to give a joint fatwa against suicide bombing and condemn attacks on shrines.<sup>15</sup> The SIC has made itself heard and seen in the electronic and print media as a voice against extremism in a short period of time, which is no mean achievement.

All this has made many national and international observers believe that- or at least wonder whether- the Barelvi community in general, and the SIC in particular, can be banked upon as a counterweight to militant extremism from within the religious community of Pakistan. Indeed, the SIC has made some remarkable progress against religious extremism and militancy in Pakistan. It is for the first time that a mainstream religious community has come out in the open against militant extremism. The SIC, as its various shows of force have suggested, has a reasonable number of motivated followers that could be mobilized against terrorism.

The limitations of Barelvi activism under SIC raises certain concerns, however, put limits on the SIC as a potential bulwark against militant religious extremism and as a representative organization of the Barelvis in

this confrontation. One might spell out these concerns as follows:

- The SIC has left out some important Barelvi organizations like the Dawat-e-Islami led by Ilyas Ataar Qadri and Minhaj-ul-Quran led by Dr. Tahir-ul-Qadri. Both the organizations are the most visible faces of the Barelvi community on the electronic media and among the highly respectable among their academic circles. Some important and powerful Barelvi families like the Makhdooms of Punjab or the Pagaros Sindh have not made many favorable gestures towards SIC either. There are yet other organizations like the faction of the JUP led by Abul Khair Zubair, which has joined the opposite camp. He was part of the six-party (later five-party) religious alliance, the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), along with the largest Deobandi political parties of Jamiat Ulema Islam's Fazlur Rehman faction (JUI-F) and the Jamaat Islami (JI), which do not share the same views against religious extremism with the SIC.
- The SIC has not charted a clear direction for itself yet. The leader of the SIC, Sahibzada Fazle Karim, announced during the Ulema and Meshaiikh Convention in October 2010, that they would use SIC as a political platform even though it was initially established as a non-political platform.<sup>16</sup> He reiterated this in the SIC conference in April 2011, in Lahore as well.<sup>17</sup> It often appears that Karim is using the platform for increasing his political mileage, and emerge as a national leader of the Barelvis. This can be determined from the grand announcements that he makes at each of the activities of the SIC. The one on April 17, also witnessed an announcement from Karim of a Train March from Karachi to Islamabad on August 14. This is something that might be raising eyebrows within the Council, as mentioned in the next couple of points.
- No matter how strong, the SIC is still an alliance; it is not a single organization. The diverse organizations that constitute the SIC sometimes have divergent interests or opinions. There are indications of simmering differences within the SIC. During the October 2010 Ulema and Meshaiikh Convention, Peer Riaz Hussain Shah, Secretary General of the Jamaat-e-Ahl-e-Sunnat and a senior member of SIC, lashed out against other SIC leaders accusing them of taking money from the U.S. Several SIC members did not participate in the November 2010 Long March as well, despite the fact that the decision was endorsed by them during the October 2010 Ulema and Meshaiikh Convention.
- While the SIC claims to be an anti-extremism alliance, their overall posture is pro-Barelvi and, thus by default, anti-Deobandi and divisive.

The SIC has, perhaps deliberately, not come up with any gesture of bridging the divide with their Deobandi counterparts. The reason could be their grievances against the latter over not coming up with as strong a commitment against religious extremism and terrorism as themselves.

- So far the stance of the SIC has been very reactionary. Initially, it was like a lethargic lumber of the Barelvi religious leaders and custodians of the shrines that they did not really want to carry forward. Thanks to the successive strikes at the shrines by the terrorists that they have finally spurred into some action. Despite that, however, most of their struggle so far seems to be more of anti-shrine-attack or pro-Barelvi rather than anti-extremist, anti-terrorist, and pro-Pakistani.
- The SIC is walking a tight-rope by motivating people-mostly the pumped up youth-to openly vent their anger on the emotive religious issues. When emotions run high, organizing platforms can be hijacked by more violent elements. The Sunni Tehreek (ST), one the constituent parties of the SIC, has a violent track record and is on the watch-list of the interior ministry for banned outfits. If there is any serious untoward activity involving ST in future-there have been some not very serious ones in the past-and the interior ministry bans ST, it could become very problematic for the SIC to have an organization among its ranks that is declared a terrorist organization by the government.

In addition to these limitations facing the SIC, the Barelvi community as a whole is constrained by its own limitations in the battle against religious extremism and terrorism. Even though it might statistically be the biggest school of thought among the Sunnis in Pakistan, it is not a monolithic whole. The Barelvis in Pakistan are divided into four different families called silsilas that trace their lineage to Prophet Mohammed (PBUH): Qadriya, Naqshbandiya, Chishtiya, and Suhurwardiya. Their system is also rife with nepotism and corruption, which is at times in complete contradiction with the teachings of Ahmed Raza Shah Barelvi, the principal ideologue of the Barelvis in the subcontinent. There are also personality clashes among the Barelvi leaders, as mentioned earlier in the context of the SIC.

### **Conclusion**

Though not grand, yet the SIC has made significant progress in a span of mere two years against the proponents of the militant Islam, largely unparalleled by any other religious organization thus far. Coming out in the

open and chanting slogans against Taliban and militants of similar bent of mind in a volatile and insecure atmosphere of Pakistan requires courage and conviction. The SIC has displayed a consistent resolve in its peaceful struggle against extremism, without allowing its limitations to impact or impede its mission. At the same time, while advocating peaceful Islam, the SIC components will have to check violent tendencies within their own ranks as well. The ST in particular would have to tame its violent cadre to appear as an advocate of peaceful Islam. The SIC will also need to chart its future direction carefully, assume a more proactive role, and develop a more universal appeal and vision. It will also have to take a clearly defined line of action, emphasize greater inclusivity, commit itself to internal accountability, and improve its networking.

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#### **End Notes**

1. Population Census Organization, Government of Pakistan. Data available at [www.census.gov.pk/Religion.htm](http://www.census.gov.pk/Religion.htm) last viewed on April 28, 2011.
2. Pew Research Center: Mapping the Global Muslim Population: A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Muslim Population, The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, October 7, 2009, p. 10.
3. CIA - The World Factbook at [www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html) last viewed on April 28, 2011.
4. The Ahl-e-Hadith or Salafi school of thought is also practiced in Pakistan, but its followers are a small minority.
5. Both Barelvis and Deobandis follow the Hanafi School of Islamic jurisprudence and have a lot of commonalities with one another.
6. One of the Barelvi organizations, Sunni Tehrik, is on the watch-list of the banned organizations of Pakistan's Interior Ministry. It is discussed a little later in this paper.
7. For details see Lawson, Alastair: "Pakistan's evolving sectarian schism" BBC News, January 25, 2011 at [www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-12278919](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-12278919) last viewed on April 28, 2011.
8. According to a news report a truce was signed recently in Kurram, see Butt, Qaiser: "Kurram agency: after years of fighting, jirga brokers truce" in The Express Tribune Karachi, January 30, 2011. It is not guaranteed, however, that this truce would last, because many such ceasefires in the past have not sustained for long.

9. The data can be accessed at [www.terrorismwatch.com.pk/images/Timeline%20of%20attacks%20on%20Shrines%20In%20Pakistan.pdf](http://www.terrorismwatch.com.pk/images/Timeline%20of%20attacks%20on%20Shrines%20In%20Pakistan.pdf) last viewed on April 29, 2011.
10. Tohid, Owais: "In Pakistan, militant attacks on Sufi shrines on the rise" in *Christian Science Monitor*, November 5, 2010.
11. Tohid, Owais: "In Pakistan, militant attacks on Sufi shrines on the rise" in *Christian Science Monitor*, November 5, 2010; Jamil, Mohammad: "Who is behind attacks on shrines" in *Pakistan Observer Islamabad*, April 5, 2011; Imtiaz, Saba: "Targeting symbols or spirituality - II" in *The Express Tribune Karachi*, September 26, 2010.
12. Murshed, S Iftikhar: "Sufism and the terrorist scourge" in *The News Islamabad*, April 12, 2011.
13. Urdu language daily *Nawa-i- Waqt Lahore*, November 28, 2010.
14. "SIC 'save Pakistan' long march ends in Lahore" in *Daily Times Lahore*, November 29, 2010; see also Urdu language daily *Nawa-i- Waqt*, November 29, 2010.
15. Urdu language daily *Nawa-i- Waqt Lahore*, April 18, 2011.
16. "Sunni Ittehad Council to hold long march for peace" in *Daily Times Lahore*, October 18, 2010.
17. Urdu language daily *Jang Karachi*, April 18, 2011.



## **Arab Spring: Relevance of Al-Qaida in the Arab World and Pakistan**

Farooq Yousaf | CRSS Research Associate  
July 30, 2011

The public uprising against dictatorial regimes in some of the Arab countries is meanwhile known as the Arab Spring. It has become synonymous with protests against regimes in the Arabian Peninsula. The protests began in Tunisia in December 2010, and have since spread to Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, Syria, Yemen, Algeria, Jordan, Morocco and Oman. The movement was successful in Tunisia and Egypt, where both President Bin Ali and President Mubarak were ousted amid growing pressure from the masses. The movement also led towards civil war in Libya coupled with civil uprisings in Bahrain, Syria and Yemen. Minor protests have also been witnessed in Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and Sudan.

As masses began thronging the Tahrir Square in Cairo late January, many people around the world also began asking whether Pakistan could also face a spring of its own. The context obviously was the burgeoning sense of insecurity among the masses, terrorist violence, coupled with the crisis of governance and economy. These tumultuous events also raised a major question: was this all inspired by Al Qaeda or to what extent did this organization impact these events at all? Or was it a spontaneous outpour of craving for democratic rights-regardless of what Al Qaeda and its affiliates have been telling the people all around the world in general, and in the Muslim world in particular?

### **Origin of the Crisis**

The self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi in Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia, for his ill treatment by the police laid the foundation for the history books for a new chapter known as the Arab Spring.<sup>1</sup> The first revolution of its kind began unfolding in Tunisia in January (2011), and was popularly dubbed as "Jasmine" revolution. In this case, twenty six years old Mohamed, a vegetable vendor was the sole earner for his family of eight. On December 17, 2010, a policewoman confiscated his unlicensed vegetable cart and slapped him for arguing over the issue. Bouazizi in response went to the local administrative headquarters to lodge a complaint, but no one heard

him. Within an hour of the incident, he came back with inflammable liquid and set himself on fire.<sup>2, 3</sup> Fighting for his life with 90% severe burns, he died 18 days after he torched himself, leaving behind the seeds for a defining revolution for the Arab world. Soon after the event, riots erupted in his native town of Sidi Bouzid. The protests gained momentum and spread like fire to all parts of the country. These protests got an additional push from the prevalent high unemployment rate, rampant corruption, and higher rate of inflation, and lack of freedom of speech in most of the Arab/Muslim societies.<sup>4</sup>

It was nothing less than a scene from a documentary, when scenes of protestors celebrating on army Tanks in Tahrir Square, Egypt were telecast by media around the globe.<sup>5</sup> Month long camps, sit-ins and protests finally culminated in the departure of President Hosni Mubarak, a move that promised a better and democratic future the masses. The successful movement to overthrow two dictators in a row altered the geo-political and geo-strategic landscape of region and extra-region. Many regimes and allies in Arab world close to the US, have to re-examine their respective foreign policies, in order to incorporate common interests of their people.<sup>6</sup> Ironically, a revolution initially tagged as an agenda-driven campaign by Al-Qaida turned to be a movement solely based on a quest for fundamental human and democratic rights and underlined a fatigue with decade-long family dynasties ruling them.<sup>7</sup> It was this craving that drove millions to the streets, and not Al Qaeda's trans-nationalist, militant appeal. Bahrain faced similar uprisings like in Tunisia and Egypt, but with the support of Saudi Arabia, and sheer silence by the USA and other advocates of human rights, the regime succeeded in quashing the initial wave of demonstrations successfully. The presence of US Fifth Fleet in Bahrain constituted one major reason for no American, British or German outcry over high-handed quashing of pro-democracy protests in Bahrain.

### **Al-Qaeda after the Arab Spring**

One of the major corollaries to the Arab Spring was Al-Qaida's decline in popularity in the region. Al-Qaida and Osama bin Laden seemed an afterthought during the revolution. There were no banners or posters in support of either Osama or Al-Qaida in Egypt, Tunisia or Saudi Arabia. Occasional images among thousands would appear but that also went unnoticed.<sup>8</sup> The past few months of public upheaval has barely witnessed or

heard the Al Qaeda leaders nor did any of the new crusaders for democracy vow revenge on any western country or its leader - an inherent ingredient of Al Qaeda's political statement. Calls by some for eliminating western influence from their countries fell on deaf ears. This obviously confronts Al-Qaeda with a new challenge, a challenge expected to be even more daunting in the post Osama bin Laden-scenario.

The secular Arab revolt was a bolt from the blue for Al-Qaida and all the Muslim extremist groups operating in the region. The leaders ousted amid revolts were on basis of socio-economic issues and basic rights for the masses. These groups are finding it hard to capitalize on this upheaval that allowed them a minimal vacuum to leave their mark during the protests. Although the current situation doesn't allow the extremist groups to gel with the masses facing enhanced perils, but on the other hand, they may find opportunities in coming months. That is why Al-Qaida seems to have been increasing its efforts in a bid to regain its lost popularity. One of those efforts was in form of an essay written by Anwar al-Awlaki, a Yemeni-American cleric and top propagandist for Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, or AQAP, which American counterterrorism officials consider the most dangerous Al-Qaeda affiliate. In his essay on the online magazine "Inspire" titled, "The Tsunami of Change," Awlaki highlighted that the protests, by having broken the "barriers of fear" and by ousting seemingly immutable dictators who protected "American imperial interests" in the region, would work to Al Qaeda's longer-term political advantage.<sup>9</sup>

In a desperate attempt to regain public attention, Al Shahab, the media wing of Al-Qaida, released Osama's audio tape on May 18, in which Osama praised the revolts against the regimes of Tunisia and Egypt. In the same message, Osama urged for the need of creating a Muslim Council for revolutionary advice to spread revolts all around the Muslim world. "A delay may cause the opportunity to be lost, and carrying it out before the right time will increase the number of casualties," said the message.<sup>10</sup> Zawahiri also tried to get in the act through his message for revolution but his message came just a week before Mubarak was forced out of office. The message was not as intriguing for the Egyptians as it only criticized democracy as a form of government without a major emphasis on success of the Egyptians. Shadi Hamid, director of research at the Brookings Doha Center and a fellow at the Brookings Institute, says that in recent years, Al-

Qaeda morphed from an organization into an idea, "and the idea has proven increasingly unattractive to most Arabs," he quotes. Bin Laden, Hamid says, "presided over Al-Qaeda's turn toward irrelevance in the past five years."<sup>11</sup>

In other attempts Al-Qaida militants fought alongside the rebels in Libya and Egypt so as to show support for the movements. It is also trying to fill the chasm left by regime changes, as well as capturing small territories in countries such as Yemen, declaring them as Islamic Emirates so as to stamp their authority. The pro Al-Qaida scholars and clerics have started to speak freely that would also provide a boost to the organization's mujahedeen.

Even before the movement, Al-Qaida's was losing its appeal among major sections of the society all over the world, where it claimed to be carrying out its activities. The organization's ideology was already rejected in Osama's homeland of Saudi Arabia and Zawahiri's Egypt. The militant activities are mostly carried out by the local extremist organizations such as the Tehrik-e-Taliban in Pakistan, calling Al-Qaida their parent organization and Osama their leader. Al-Qaida of a decade ago was far stronger than the current one, but it does not take out of the equation, the danger posed by even the weaker contingent.

The status of Al-Qaida as a political alternative seems irrelevant in most countries with the exception of Yemen, the only Arab state with a marginal influence of Al-Qaida, though not threatening the regime of President Ali Abdullah Saleh. President Saleh has been criticized for allowing the militants to capture the area of Zinjibar, so as to distract the protestors from the mass movement. He also claims that without him, Al-Qaida would thrive in the country leading to chaos and anarchy, a ruse that Gadhafi also invoked in an attempt to preempt active US-led invasion of his country. Al-Qaida is only one of the many factors that is taking Yemen towards destruction and motivating the masses to come on the streets. This scenario makes Yemen possibly the only playing field, along with some regions in Somalia, for Al-Qaida and other terrorist organizations.

The rapid progress of Al-Qaida and other militant contingents, over the years, reflects the failure of Muslim societies as a whole. If revolts and peaceful movements like Arab Spring would have been initiated in the past, it probably would have dealt a severe blow to the militant philosophy of Al-

Qaida. Osama bin Laden's sole agenda was throwing out Western powers, specifically the USA, from the Muslim countries as the people were not having the courage to do so. Arab Spring has proved that the people had the capacity to do that, and that, too, through non violent means. They have already overthrown two tyrants and are determined to add more to the list.

### **US Role in Revolts**

Though Arab Spring caught US government and policy makers off guard, yet scores of US-based rights' groups and organizations played a vital role in this uprising, supporting and training activists on its soil. The New York Times, in an article, written by Ron Nixon of April 14, 2011, noted that "even as the United States poured billions of dollars into foreign military programs and anti-terrorism campaigns, a small core of American government-financed organizations were promoting democracy in authoritarian Arab states". It also indicates the change of US plan for the Middle East, where regime change and replacement of these regimes with US trained democratic leaders seems imminent.<sup>12</sup> Analysts in the US believe that the United States' democracy building and promoting campaigns in the region played a huge role in the whole event. A number of leaders and groups involved in protests received training and financing from the US groups including International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute and Freedom House, according to diplomatic cables released by Wikileaks.<sup>13</sup>

### **Arab Spring and Pakistan**

The Arab Spring also triggered a debate as to whether something similar was possible inside Pakistan as well. But, viewed against totally different political contexts, such a scenario was never imminent. Many argue that Pakistan, amid all crisis and problems, cannot afford an Arab-like revolution. The debates and statements from world leaders lead us to a single question: Will these revolts reach Pakistan? US Vice President Jo Biden's statement of "revolts like these may reach countries like Pakistan" further fuelled the discourse on the possibility of a yet another revolt - military or otherwise - in the country. Thus a comparison of antecedent conditions in Pakistan and the Arab states is necessary; Tunisia and Egypt as well as other Arab countries were already suffering under political suffocation for decades, with limited freedom of speech and association. Egypt for decades witnessed autocracy, where Hosni Mubarak, ruling since 1981, being an extension to previous autocratic regimes. Tunisia, also had the same situation, where the country

has been ruled by two autocrats, Habib Bourguiba followed by Zine el Abidine Ben Ali, since its independence in 1956.

Pakistan, on the other hand, has undergone a various transitions - from political to military rule to political during the past six decades; three long military rules (General Ayub Khan, General Ziaul Haq and General Pervez Musharraf), and political governments led by former prime ministers Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, his daughter Benazir Bhutto, and Nawaz Sharif. Almost all forms of governments and all prominent leaders have been tested, with no revolutionary leader in the making. Since its inception in 1947, Pakistan witnessed a strong influence of military establishment in State affairs. Any voice against the establishment in the past was silenced, though the case - with the exception of Balochistan is different now. That province is still reeling under a Balochi nationalist insurgency and a mighty response by the security forces.

### **Media**

Almost unparalleled media freedom is another trait that differentiates Pakistan from the Arab world, particularly since the advent of the private electronic media. Media has recently proved to be a watchdog and source of letting out the frustration for the masses in Pakistan. It is a conduit for public anger and sentiments. A country like Pakistan, where countless factions with vested interests have divided supporters, can hardly see a united revolution like protest. The regional diversity in Pakistan is unlike Tunisia and Egypt, where majority of the population belongs to single race and ethnicity.

Interestingly, a story published on Asian Correspondent, posted by "Pakistan Voice", elaborates speaks of an event where leaders and fighters from the Arab revolution were invited to Lahore by "Khudi Pakistan", scheduled to be held at the office of South Asia Free Media Association. Just a day before the event, the participants received a message for the organizers that the event had to be postponed due to security threats in the area. That is why, an intriguing title was given to the article; Arab Spring Postponed in Pakistan.<sup>14</sup>

Likewise, according to a recent report in a leading Pakistani daily, Express Tribune, Hizb ut-Tahrir, the radical pro-Caliphate outfit, was making efforts

to imitate the revolt models of massive uprisings of Tunisia and Egypt in Pakistan earlier this year. "They wanted an Arab spring in Pakistan," said an official familiar with the secret inter-departmental letter, circulated among the Punjab police, the Directorate of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), and the government in April this year.<sup>15</sup> In the past Hizb ut-Tahrir regularly distributed pamphlets and leaflets in middle and upper-middle class residential areas of large cities in Pakistan. And this activity got sudden impetus in the backdrop of the successful uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt. In its pamphlets, Hizb ut-Tahrir specifically targeted the armed forces, middle and lower middle class, and especially the youth, "to make a concerted effort to get rid of the government, citing the example of Tunisia". The case of the arrest of a serving army Brigadier Ali Khan and four unknown Majors, back in May 2011, validates the fact of penetration of ultra-conservative group into armed force' ranks.

### **Judiciary**

But in reality, that is hardly enough to be compared to what the Arab states have gone through. And also, one has to bear in mind, that lone incidents such as this do not necessarily be taken as representative of the Pakistani political landscape. More importantly, Pakistan's judiciary has emerged as a strong check on arbitrariness of the government, particularly since the restoration of judges whom General Musharraf had suspended in November 2007. The judiciary in Pakistan is also seen as the ultimate source of relief to injustice and excesses of state institutions, and therefore works as a ventilator of anger and frustration directed against the government and the ruling elite.

Analysts around the world fear that following bin Laden's elimination as well as the overshadowing of Al-Qaida's message by the Arab Spring - something that the Washington Post also reported in its July 26th edition - it will look to find a foothold in volatile countries like Pakistan. Albrecht Metzger, an expert on Islam, also fears that after failure in the Gulf, Al-Qaida's next target could be Pakistan, which has weak democratic structures. He quotes, "It's a very important country for Jihad because radical Taliban there are taking over power or at least dominating the social and political structures in the country. I think that will be an important battlefield for al-Qaeda. Not the Arab world, at least not for the moment."<sup>16</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Al-Qaida's threat to the Arabs was long dying and the Arab Spring proved to be the last nail in their coffin. It is a positive sign that the harbingers of change in the region are ambassadors of peace and prosperity. The Arab Spring that originated in Tunisia and seems to be knocking at the power houses in Tripoli, is rightly called the spring that has brought about a change that no one had expected in such a short span of time. It also proved that the Arabs of today still embody the spirit of their ancestor revolutionists like Jamal Abdel Nasir. The democratic-cum-social revolution seems to have caught Al-Qaida off guard, making it mostly an irrelevant phenomenon in the region. The dawn of a peaceful yet influential revolution, it seems, forecloses much of the space for any inculcation of Al Qaeda's extremist philosophy and ideology among the Arabs. Pakistan may also take a leaf out of it, where common people have begun talking in terms of a revolution, largely inspired by the events in the Arabian Peninsula. But given the opportunities of ventilation - elections, media and a largely independent judiciary - Pakistan is still way off from the point where public anger could translate in to a boiling spring.

No doubt, however, that the Arab Spring certainly stands out as a strong message to all the violence driven extremist organizations that change could effectively be brought through non-violent movements.

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## **End Notes**

1. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arab\\_Spring](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arab_Spring)
2. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohamed\\_Bouazizi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohamed_Bouazizi)
3. <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,2044723,00.html>
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  15. <http://tribune.com.pk/story/216828/intelligence-warning-hizb-ut-tahrir-planned-arab-spring-in-pakistan/>
  16. <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,14905125,00.html>

## **Gas Pipeline - Regional Stabilisation Factor?**

August 29, 2011

### **Background**

Pakistan currently finds itself at the heart of two major gas pipeline projects, both conceived in the early 1990s. One involves import of at least 750 million cubic feet per day (MCFD) of gas from Iran's Pars gas field to the southern Pakistan. The other one envisages about 3.2 billion cubic feet of natural gas per day from Turkmenistan's Daulatabad fields to Afghanistan, Pakistan and India through a 1,640 km pipeline (also called TAPI). Both are critical to the growing energy needs of South Asia, particularly of energy-deficient Pakistan and India but progress on both seems hostage to multiple competing interests.

Old rivalry over the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir and a contest for influence in neighboring Afghanistan hardly helps both South Asian neighbours to close ranks for a joint and mutually beneficial strategy on both projects. Iran, on the other hand, has its own problems and vice versa. Both Teheran and Washington are locked in a perennial acrimony - ranging from allegations of Iranian support for radical, anti-US Islamist groups to its pursuit of nuclear weapons. This acrimonious Washington-Tehran relationship does not augur well for both Iran and Pakistan to mobilize funding for the project. India, on the other hand, has recently struck a bilateral price deal with Turkmenistan, thus upsetting Pakistan.

### **Status of Iran-Pakistan Pipeline**

The discovery of gas reserves in Sui in Balochistan in the 1952 helped Pakistan use gas as a primary means of energy security. Gas now accounts for more than 43 percent of the country's total energy generation. But Pakistan's gas supplies now seem to stagnate at around 4 billion cubic feet per day (bcfd), while the demand has risen to 6.5 bcfd, expected to rise to 8 bcfd in three years.

Iran has an estimated 982 trillion cubic feet (TCF) or 27.8 trillion cubic meters (TCM) of proven natural gas reserves which are the world's second largest after Russia but has been finding difficult to develop them because of the sanctions imposed by the United States and the United Nations for its nuclear programme. The project idea came to light in 1989 and has since

been under discussions among a number of stakeholders - buyers and sellers and prospective investors.

Iran and Pakistan remained engaged in talks over the project since early 1990's which lost warmth in the aftermath of a few significant gas discoveries in Sindh. The two sides later also roped in India in their talks as gas demand in Pakistan increased.

The three nations kept on talking the gas supply project for long, at times marred by differences over pricing mechanism and security concerns. As India signed a civil nuclear deal with the United States, Iran and Pakistan agreed to have Japanese Crude Cocktail formula under which price of gas delivered at Pak-Iran border would be around \$9 per MMBTU (million british thermal unit) at a crude oil price of \$90 a barrel. Compared with lower average domestic gas prices of about \$3.5 per MMBTU, the imported gas would only be used for generating about 5000mw of electricity.

Under the gas sales and purchase agreement, the two countries could have review of gas price before the gas flows actually start. Teheran had hoped to get the strategically important project going by the end of 2014 but Pakistani authorities have started approaching their Iranian counterparts to amend the agreement under which the Iranian gas should start flowing into Pakistan by the end of 2014.

Formal talks between Iran and Pakistan on the issue are expected to start soon. Iran's dream of piping natural gas from its South Pars gas fields to Pakistan, however, may not come true at least until the end of 2014 because Pakistan, embroiled in an economic crisis and beset by an insecure political environment, is seeking a six-month grace period beyond Dec 31, 2014.

Islamabad desires an extension in the cut-off date to skip a penalty clause under which it is mandatory on Pakistan to start purchasing gas by the cut-off date or risk paying the price of stipulated amount of gas in penalty. While Iran has completed 80 percent of the construction work of the pipeline on its side, Pakistani part of project is mired in internal controversies. Under the agreement, 750 MMCFD of gas per day will be piped to Pakistan, which could be raised to the tune of 3.2 BCFD if the project was extended to China.

Preparation of technical studies related to route survey, the front-end engineering design etc, was the first snag to hit the project. The Sui Southern and Sui Northern Gas Pipeline - (SSGCL) and (SNGPL) - which jointly possess the largest gas transmission systems in Pakistan world, were forced to stay out of the race to pave the way for foreign firms to step in.

The SSGCL and SNGCL offered to complete the physical survey of the pipeline in 8-10 months but the petroleum ministry wanted to award the contract for survey and Front End Engineering Design (FEED) to a joint venture of the National Engineering Services of Pakistan and a local representative of ILF of Germany at a contract price of \$55 million. However, the security agencies expressed concerns over the proposed aerial survey by foreign consultants from the strategic Gwadar port to Multan and Nawabshah, fearing it could compromise national interests.

The contract signing for route survey and FEED was also delayed over taxation matters. The delay in the project raised worries among Pakistani authorities that Iran could invoke penalty clause of the agreement, starting with about \$200 million by December this year.

"The real worry is that Iran may not restrict itself to just penalty; it may demand the construction cost of the pipeline from South Pars field to Sistan," a Pakistani official said. The completion of the route survey and FEED study, which should have been ready by the end of 2011, is a prerequisite to hold an investor conference and start construction of 785 kilometer piece of the pipeline from Iran border to Nawabshah in Sindh at an estimated cost of upto 1.5 billion dollars.

The ILF had offered to complete the study (survey plus feed) in 18 months but was asked to reduce the time to 12 months to skip penalty. The company is reported to have completed first round of surveys and would be filing initial maps to the government in about two weeks.

Interestingly, while the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank are interested to provide finances for the project, Russian and Chinese companies are also competing for the construction contract of the strategically-important pipeline. Given Pakistan's close ties with China, Islamabad may eventually award the engineering, procurement and

construction (EPC) contract to Beijing. In top level contacts with the Pakistani officials, the Chinese leadership is reported to have expressed serious interest in the project.

Pakistani Minister for Water and Power Naveed Qamar is reported to have discussed the issue during his recent visit to China to attend a meeting of the joint economic commission. Such an equation could also evoke China's interest in seeking extension of the pipeline to its territory at a later stage, or at the very least would be interested to set up industrial units around Gwadar. Nevertheless, senior executives of the Russian energy giant - Gazprom - have been visiting Islamabad quite often to bid for the project and has already submitted formal expression of interest.

The SSGC and SNGPL are also in the run for the project to improve their profile as international pipeline engineering firms. During the rule of former President Pervez Musharraf that ended in August 2008, Pakistan had proposed China as a replacement for Indian, which pulled out of the project after signing a civilian nuclear energy cooperation deal with the United States.

While Pakistan has been inclined to include China in the project, it was also interested to woo Gazprom because of Russia's vast experience in pipelines and had invited it in 2010 to participate in the project. Pakistan would prefer to fund the project through public-private partnership in an attempt to ensure at least a part of the return on financing to remain within the country. Pakistan and Iran signed the gas sale purchase agreement in June 2010. A segmented approach has been adopted for project whereby both countries would be responsible for building and operating the pipeline transportation network in their respective territories. Around 62 percent of the Iranian natural gas reserves are located in non-associated fields, and have not been fully developed.

Major natural gas fields include South and North Pars, Tabnak, and Kangan. Pars in the south is Iran's most significant gas field, estimated to have 450 TCF proven natural gas reserves. Pakistan's efforts to meet gas shortages have not been successful in view of bureaucratic wrangling, manipulation and political inaction.

A plan envisaging import of 500MMCFD of liquefied natural gas (LNG) has been stymied by judicial disputes over changes in the bidding process.

### **TAPI**

Gas pricing issues are also hampering the gigantic Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project because Turkmenistan wants separate price agreements with each country while buyer countries seek a uniform gas rate.

### **Status of TAPI**

The 1,640 km TAPI project is proposed to bring 3.2 billion cubic feet of natural gas per day from Turkmenistan's Daulatabd fields to Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. Out of this, Pakistan will get 1.365 BCFD of gas per day, India 1.365 BCFD and Afghanistan 0.5 BCFD.

The project came into limelight when Pakistan and Turkmenistan signed a memorandum of understanding in March 1995, with Argentinean energy firm Bridas Corporation as the main sponsor. The US based UNOCAL and Saudi Delta Corporation offered them as alternative consortium and constituted a new firm Centgas consortium. Unocal executives had been engaged with Taliban to facilitate the pipeline to pass through Afghanistan. In the aftermath of attacks on US embassies in Darul Salaam (Tanzania) and Nairobi (Kenya) some African countries in August 1998, the Unocal pulled out of the talks in 1998.

The project talks revived when in December 2002 heads of Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan signed a fresh memorandum of understanding and allowed Asian Development Bank to sponsor a detailed feasibility study. Conducted through the British Pensions, the ADB submitted the feasibility study. The United States also supported the project as an alternative to the Iranian gas pipeline as India joined talks initially as an observer and then as a formal participating buyer.

In April 2008, Pakistan, India and Afghanistan signed a framework agreement to buy natural gas from Turkmenistan, followed by an inter-governmental agreement in December 2010 in Ashgabat, the Turkmen capital. ADB has funded the feasibility study of the project but with little success in sorting out the multi-lateral pricing issues.

The participating countries are also undecided about issue of "lane packed gas" - a term used for pipeline that stays put in the pipeline and undelivered - as to who should pick up its cost.

Turkmenistan is of the view that buyer countries always pay for lane packed gas as per international best practices but buyer countries want the seller to share the price of the lane packed gas. Nevertheless, authorities are hopeful of signing a multiparty Gas Sales Purchase Agreement (GSPA) much before December 2011.

Dealing a blow to Pakistan, India has struck a bilateral gas price deal with Turkmenistan under TAPI gas pipeline project thus foiling Pakistan's endeavours for a uniform gas price. This has literally put the finalisation of the Gas Sales Price Agreement (GSPA) in jeopardy, according to officials at the ministry of petroleum and natural resources in Islamabad.

"Yes, we have come to know that Turkmenistan and India have finalised the separate gas price instead of going for uniform price for all three buyer countries. So we have also told Turkmenistan in plain words that Pakistan will match the lowest gas price between the seller and buyer country," officials said.

Earlier Pakistan, Afghanistan and India, the three buyer countries, had sought a uniform price of gas while Turkmenistan wanted a bilateral arrangement (separate prices) for every country. "It seems Turkmenistan is not inclined to selling gas to Pakistan at the price that it is charging India, officials say.

Pakistan and Turkmenistan were earlier scheduled to hold crucial talks on GSPA at Ashkhabad on August 15-16, but on account of the visit of Dr Asim Hussain, federal minister of petroleum and natural resources to Poland, the Ashkhabad talks are now expected to be held in September. During the talks, Pakistan is likely to express its "grave concern on the separate gas price deal with India," said officials. Pakistan is of the view that a separate tariff would have huge political repercussions for each buyer country.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has already expressed willingness to sponsor Pakistan's equity in the TAPI project; Pakistani officials say the ADB's offer to sponsor the major chunk of Pakistan's equity in the project

will provide massive relief to the country.

Sources privy to the Manila talks, held from May 30 to June 3 (2011) said the talks were stalemated on separate tariff issue as Afghanistan, Pakistan and India argued that a separate tariff would have huge political repercussions for each buyer country.

Another issue still awaiting an amicable, multilateral solution is the sulphur content in the gas from Turkmenistan. Pakistani and Indian officials, according to Pakistani official sources, are not yet on the same page on this issue. India desired that sulphur content should not be more than 0.25 percent, whereas Pakistan has decided not to side with India because of its separate gas deal with Turkmenistan. However, Turkmenistan said it would have to build a de-sulphurisation plant, which would increase prices for all buyer countries.

### **Future Prospects**

As of now, the squabbling over pricing formula, the Iran-US tiff and the perennial Pak-India conflict of interest, the future of the two pipelines still seems to hang in balance. Yet, if all the stake-holders can close ranks, remove some of the major bilateral or trilateral frictions and address mutual reservations, the Iran-Pakistan (and potentially India) pipeline as well as the TAPI can indeed emerge as regional security and peace stabilizing factors - pipelines for peace and stability so to say. The primary challenge for all the stake-holders, however, is how to decouple these commercial ventures from their competing political interests. If the United States removed its overt and covert opposition to the Iran-Pakistan pipeline, that could serve as a huge confidence-building measure for Pakistan, which at the moment is not only struggling to fend-off security threats and overcome economic challenges, but is also desperately looking for alternative sources of energy.

(Contributed by Mr. Khaleeq Kayani. He is a special correspondent on economic affairs for the prestigious daily Dawn)



## **Karachi Seething under Violence and Terror**

January 11, 2011

### **1. Background**

One of the three largest cities in the world, and the largest in Pakistan, Karachi has a multi-ethnic population of 17 million people. During the last couple of years, Karachi has seen recurrent outbreaks of violence which have claimed hundreds of lives. Despite repeated claims by the government of having wiped out the miscreants, the return to normalcy has always been short-lived. Some of the most heinous episodes of violence in Karachi were witnessed during 2010. In fact, the number of people who fell prey to target killings in Karachi during 2010 was higher than those who lost their lives in terrorist attacks across the country during the same year. According to the statistics, 49 suicide attacks killed 1138 people during 2010 across the country, while the number of politically-motivated target killings only in Karachi stood at 1510.<sup>1</sup>

Such frequent relapse into deadly violence by the country's commercial hub is bound to have huge economic costs for the country. In fact, controlling violence has been an overriding concern for all humanitarian societies since ever because a good law and order situation is imperative for the proper functioning of the society as well as for sustained economic growth. In a society where violence is rife and the state does not enjoy monopoly over it, normal functioning of the economy is seriously hindered, creating many a socio-economic problems which in turn cause further violence. It is therefore imperative that the state apparatus be trained, equipped and empowered in such a way that it is able to weed out this menace from the society.

Some brief comments highlighting the commercial salience of Karachi underline the significance of the aforesaid argument. Karachi is regarded as the commercial nerve center and the financial capital of Pakistan. The tax collected in Karachi makes up over 50% of the total revenue collected by the Federal Board of Revenue. It produces a major chunk of value added goods in large-scale manufacturing and other industries and accounts for about 20% of the total GDP of Pakistan. According to a study conducted by Price water house Coopers in 2007, Karachi's GDP (currently \$55 billion) is expected to touch \$120 billion mark by 2020 at a growth rate of 5.9%. This

high GDP is mainly attributed to the concentration of main centers of financial sector and mega industrial base in the city. Textile, cement, steel, heavy machinery, chemicals, food, banking, insurance are the major sectors functioning in the city.<sup>2</sup> Its port handles a large portion of imports meant for the NATO troops in Afghanistan.

In February 2007, the World Bank identified Karachi as the most business-friendly city in Pakistan. However, since the recent wave of violence; Karachi's economic potential has been seriously jeopardized as it has resulted in a flight of capital from the city. The hugely devastating repercussions of the violence happening in Karachi for the nation's economy make it all the more important to comprehend the causes of this violence in order to curtail it. The interplay of a number of political, social and religious factors explains Karachi's frequent descent into chaos.

## **2. Political Factor**

Politics, unfortunately, lies at the root of much of the violence that has befallen Karachi in recent months, with other factors such as ethnic and sectarian polarization and the activities of criminal elements coming into play only as a result of the mayhem caused by the brutal acts of the political actors. The dynamics of political violence revolve mainly around political turf wars between the various stakeholders of the city.<sup>3</sup> The above observation is corroborated by the fact that most of the victims of these target killings had obvious political affiliation. The political component of the violence is so pronounced that the Sindh home minister exclaimed on the floor of the House that had he been given a free hand without having to cater to the dictates of political expediency, he would have eradicated the perpetrators of deadly violence, most of whom, he alleged, enjoyed the backing of political parties. The irony of the matter is the sudden end to all such violence as soon as the federal interior minister flies to Karachi and holds meetings with the Mutahidda Qaumi Movement (MQM) and Awami National Party (ANP) - two parties whose enmity is believed to be the driving force behind much of the violence in Karachi. Such occurrences leave little doubt about the identity of the perpetrators of violence and show the cognizance of the government to the involvement of these parties behind the acts of such barbarism.

It is worth mentioning here that violence in Karachi has assumed such

terrible proportions only recently - in fact more so during the reign of the current government. The situation was relatively normal during the Musharraf era. Between 2002 and 2007 there were negligible reports of ethnic violence in the city and consequently, the city's economic activity picked up again. MQM won the local bodies' election in 2004 and ran the city amicably, fully supported by the central government. Also, no major suicide bomb attacks by Taliban/al Qaeda took place in the city (after 2005) and sectarian violence also subsided.

The contrast between Karachi's situation during the tenure of the two governments corroborates our hypothesis about the primacy of political factors in city's violence. When the MQM was able to govern the city on its own, there was no violence. However, as the Pashtuns awoke to the possibility of translating their numerical strength into commensurate political gains, which, obviously, were to come at MQM's expense, an all out conflict ensued. Pashtuns have no representation in the national assembly and only two out of the 40 Karachi [Members of the Provincial Assembly] MPAs are Pashtuns.<sup>4</sup>

This all started with the February 2008 elections, when ANP, for the first time, won two Sindh provincial assembly seats - a tantalizing result which encouraged ANP to aspire to expand their political gains. For MQM, however, the results were an alarm bell which raised the possibility of Karachi slipping out of their complete dominance. As the two sides were determined to pursue and preserve their interests at all costs, the result was deadly violence becoming part of Karachi's everyday life.

Politics, thus, has not only been mainly responsible for providing the backdrop that has triggered the current phase in violence in Karachi, it has also been the major factor why the omnipresent official security apparatus has miserably failed in apprehending the perpetrators of the violence. More than anything else, it is perhaps the fragility of the coalition government at the Center, where both MQM and ANP are coalition partners, that has stymied the government's ability to penalize the elements responsible for the violence in what used to be called the 'city of lights.' As the government lacks political will to tackle the situation, which would require taking on elements belonging to its coalition partners and perhaps to its own ranks, Karachi continues to remain in the grip of a deadly wave of violence.

### **3. Ethnic Factor**

The ethnic factor is inseparably intertwined with the political factor that explains much of the violence in Karachi. Most observers of the violence choking the city of Karachi are of the view that underlying the bloody conflict between the MQM and ANP is a huge demographic shift in favor of the Pashtuns - who are believed to constitute 20-25% of Karachi's population. There has been an explosion in the Pashtun population in Karachi in recent years mainly for two reasons: Firstly, because of the military operation in FATA and Swat and secondly due to the presence of a large number of madrassas in Karachi. When Pakistan's security forces launched operations in FATA and Swat against the terrorist elements based in those areas, it resulted into a huge crisis of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) when a large number of inhabitants from these areas were forced out of their homes. Many of them came to Karachi to take refuge as most had some relative already settled here. Once settled in Karachi, they were soon tempted to eke out a living in the country's largest commercial center.

Second factor which explains the continuous rise in the Pashtun population in Karachi is the existence of a large number of madrassas in the city - three of which are believed to be the largest in the country. These madrassas cater to the educational needs of hundreds of thousands of students. It is worth mentioning here that during 2010, the number of students enrolled in these madrassas was considerably higher than in 2009. Majority of these madrassas belong to the Deobandi school of thought which is the dominant school of thought among the Pashtuns. So these madrassas continue to attract Pashtun students which end up in swelling Pashtun population.

Sensing the resultant demographic shift, the MQM leadership took strong exception to this trend, accusing the ANP of Talibanizing Karachi, while the ANP took offence to such allegations, criticizing the MQM for equating Pashtuns with the Taliban.<sup>5</sup>

As the shifts in the city's demographics were bound to affect the respective share of each ethnic group in the city's political representation, the issue got enmeshed with the political tussle between ANP and MQM. The tussle between the two parties, representing two ethnicities took a vicious turn after the 2008 elections when the Pashtun dominated ANP won seats in the provincial assembly - a first in Sindh's history. The election results appear to

have emboldened Karachi's Pashtuns who are believed to constitute 25% of the city's population but have been excluded from the structures of power in the city. The results have awakened the Pashtuns up to their strength, who appear determined to expand their share of the political pie. This has, understandably, evoked stiff resistance from the MQM, representing Karachi's Urdu speaking majority, which has hitherto enjoyed absolute control over the city's politics and governance. This on-going conflict of interests between the MQM and the Pashtun ANP is believed to be mainly responsible for the recent spate of target killings in the country's industrial capital.

#### **4. Sectarian Factor**

The sectarian dimension to the ethno-political violence has also been gaining salience for quite some time. A nexus between the political parties and the six banned sectarian outfits appears to have emerged. Besides incidents carrying overtly sectarian dimensions such as attacks on Ashura processions - the most important of the rituals practiced by the Shias - many other incidents of sectarian violence are also believed to have taken place among various groups.

According to some analysts, sectarian violence in Pakistan has always worsened when the protagonists have a base where they can operate from. A Karachi beset with a serious law and order problem offers these elements an ideal place to turn it into a base for the implementation of their nefarious designs. Karachi's huge population is a mix of Shia and Sunni Muslims, represented by various religio-political and purely religious groups, with links to militant organizations. A tug of war between these groups is a constant destabilizing factor and a constant threat to peace and stability in the city. These elements seem to be benefiting from the city's ethnic and political polarization and the state's institutional decay to create room for themselves.

The ranks of sectarian elements involved in Karachi violence have swollen also due to the ongoing military operations in the country's tribal region. It's a well established fact that the Sunni sectarian organizations have had close links with the militant organizations fighting against the US forces in Afghanistan and now against the Pakistan Army in the tribal belt. As these militants had to flee their areas, due to the military operations against them,

most of them are believed to have come to Karachi, joining the ranks of sectarian elements.

Some analysts believe that the MQM-Haqiqi - a splinter group of MQM - has forged close ties with Sunni militant elements. This alliance appears to be responsible for the attacks on MQM's Shia leaders. Shia elements in turn are also believed to have been resorting to violence to avenge the killings of their fellow community members.<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, as Pushtuns are predominantly Deobandi and most of the MQM supporters are Brelvi and Shia, a section of Muhajir Deobandis support JI. This situation provides banned Deobandi outfits like outlawed Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) and Lashkr-e-Jhangvi with an ideal opportunity to use Karachi as their desired hunting ground.<sup>7</sup>

The government's attitude towards the sectarian violence has been that of denial. Interior Minister, Rehman Malik, has been harping on the theme of involvement of 'external forces' and a 'third hand' behind such violence, which he once stated on the floor of the upper house of the Parliament.<sup>8</sup> However, the sectarian character of many of these acts of violence is so pronounced that it leaves little doubt for any observer of the city's events to identify the true motives behind such violence.

## **5. Gangsters and Criminal Elements**

Close observers of the city's politics agree, however, that the central actors in the bloodshed are competing ethnic political parties and the criminal gangs linked to them. At the heart of the conflict, they say, is a fight for control of the hugely lucrative tracts of public land that are being illegally developed, both for profits and cementing control of turf and political power. Turf wars between drug cartels, land mafia, organized crime syndicates and extremist groups complicate the difficult task of policing vast slums.<sup>9</sup>

The presence of fleeing terrorists from tribal areas due to the army operations have added to the complex web of criminal elements in Karachi. These elements have had links in Karachi since the 1980s. They can easily find refuge in the madrassas and slums. They do not face much difficulty in reaching Karachi from the tribal areas. The Taliban generate millions of

dollars through criminal activities in Karachi, with one-third of bank robberies and ten percent of kidnappings linked to the Taliban, and average ransom sizes of \$60,000 to \$250,000.<sup>10</sup> From an American perspective, it also happens to be the hub for importing life-saving relief supplies as well as material for the U.S. and NATO war effort in Afghanistan.

Though the above narrative gives a very bleak picture about the prospects of peace and stability in Karachi, the situation can still be brought under control. In fact, government has no option but to restore normalcy in the country's commercial capital otherwise the law and order situation in the city will continue to deteriorate with hugely negative repercussions for the nation's economy, sectarian and ethnic harmony and healthy patterns of political interaction among various groups. Two steps need to be taken immediately: de-weaponization of the city and the establishment of government's writ in all parts of Karachi.

As long as it remains hostage to the politico-business interests of various competing groups, which continue to obtain arms easily, it will remain a daunting challenge to bring peace and normalcy to Karachi. One of the ways to solve the problem of violence in Karachi is through its de-weaponization. Several attempts have been made in the past to rid Karachi of weapons but failed miserably because those supposed to cleanse the society of arms are themselves armed to the teeth. To eradicate the menace of violence from the city, it is imperative that only the state institutions hold possession of arms and have monopoly over legitimate violence. The capacity of the law enforcement agencies should be strengthened. They should be equipped not only with the latest arms but also with state of the art training in combating urban violence. And to ensure the successful undertaking of these tasks, strong political will is desperately required. The government should not bow before the dictates of political expediency and allow the law enforcement agencies to have a free hand. Any perpetrator or instigator of violence should be brought to book regardless of his political, ethnic or religious affiliations.

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## **India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Endgame**

February 10, 2011

Let me begin with former British foreign secretary David Milliband's thoughts on Afghanistan's endgame, articulated through a very well-written article in mid January. "Afghanistan's battles are not just between the Afghan and foreign forces and the Taliban insurgency, but between (and within) Afghanistan's often warring tribes. They know western patience is wearing thin; NATO has been there longer than the Russians. Also while parts of the Afghan National Army are being trained well, it is a basically Tajik force seen as the enemy by many Pashtuns." (David Milliband article in British papers, including Telegraph, Jan 16, 2011).

David Kilcullen, the Australian counter-insurgency expert, who also served the US Army and the State Department in many capacities, also makes a compelling case in his book "The Accidental Guerrilla." (his experience on Afghanistan deals with the period between 2006-2008)

"Despite its importance as a terrorist safe haven, Pakistan is a problem. Not the problem. ... we see local (Afghan) guerrilla cells cooperating with mobile insurgent columns that draw supplies and recruits from Pakistan, but can operate for extended periods deep inside Afghanistan, drawing on local support. Thus fixing Pakistan would help but not solve the Afghan problem. The key to the Afghan insurgency lies in Afghanistan, not Pakistan."

All this means that the need for a twin track political strategy is more urgent than ever. State or international security forces will not stabilize the country; only a peace deal can do that.

Track one is an internal political settlement. It needs to be far more up front in its recognition of what the end game (for the US and its allies) will be a decentralized series of political settlements in the villages and valleys of Afghanistan, with national and international forces limited to preventing the overthrow of government in Kabul and al Qaeda taking root.

But this track will never get going unless track two - the track of regional political engagement - has real legs, Milliband emphasized. This needs to be a series of agreements which recognize the divergent interests of the different neighboring countries, from Pakistan to Iran. At the moment, it is a

free for all, with a number of states backing all sides.

The key is, and always has been, a political settlement which can make withdrawal possible on terms that protect regional and global interests. Every one of the regional powers, Pakistan especially, would gain from an Afghanistan no longer exporting drugs, extremism and refugees. But none of these countries will gain anything if they hold out for Afghanistan to be their client state.

This underscores the non-linear nature of the Afghan problem, with an extended crisis in Pakistan itself in the form of frequent suicide bombings (one such attack in Mardan, some 40 kilometers north of Peshawar left 32 soldiers killed this morning Feb 10).

- It is a situation in which, on the one hand multiple, conflicting state interests are at play i.e. Its India versus Pakistan,
- It's the US establishment - Pentagon - intelligence that considers the Pakistani establishment as big road-block for its involvement with Pakistani and Afghan Taliban
- It's a non-Pashtun Afghan establishment skeptical of the Pakistani establishment,
- It's the United States breathing down the neck of Iran, through Jundullah, It's the special 3,000 strong force - revealed in Obama's Wars by Bob Woodward, that is operating in Pakistan and Afghanistan for dubious missions (Ref: Raymond Davis and other people like him.)
- It's the Russian apprehensions vis-à-vis an ever expanding American role in the region/
- It's also the Russian discomfort with the smuggling of drugs out of Helmand (32,000 foreign troops), Kandahar, Uruzgan and Ningarhar via Tajikistan / Uzbekistan.

On the other hand - Al-Qaeda/Local Taliban/Pakistani Taliban: All supported also by religion political parties, organized crime, drugs cartels, transporters, smugglers: for them Afghanistan represents a relatively

smoother playing field.

Does this complex inter-play permit a regional approach for a peaceful conflict-resolution in Afghanistan? And will the United States give way to such an approach?

If we look at the present US approach, the answer to these questions is no. And this emphatic NO is based on interviews with key and influential Afghan leaders who are part of the current Afghan government.

While Milliband and Kilcullen propose a regional approach, a combination of a) settlement of Afghanistan's internal problems and b) a trust-based understanding between its neighbours as facilitators, the Americans think differently. Gen. Petraeus believes right now, as also enunciated by vice president Joe Biden during his Jan 13th visit to Pakistan, that while he applies ever more pressure on what they call insurgents, he considers Pakistan as the key to his problems in Afghanistan. The US establishment naively makes out Pakistan as the major stumbling bloc but is it really so if we look at what people like Peter Tomson, David Milliband and David Kilcullen have been suggesting?

One pre-requisite for addressing apprehensions of Pakistan will be to engage it in a constructive way, with an assurance that it's not being encircled by the trio of Afghanistan/America and India. While India is legitimately cross with Pakistan for its role in eastern Punjab and Kashmir, it has to acknowledge that Pakistan has paid a very heavy price for its adventurist policies as far as using non-state actors as foreign policy tools is concerned. The trans-border dynamics, currently at play in Afghanistan and Pakistan - al-Qaeda versus America and NATO, US versus Iran, US versus China and Iran - has not only brought death and destruction to also Pakistan but also confronted it with an ongoing security crisis, that is economically debilitating and socially nerve-wrecking.

Imtiaz Gul, executive director, Centre for Research and Security Studies, Islamabad, presented this paper at a roundtable organized by Department of War Studies, Kings' College, London.

## **Malakand in Turmoil: Challenges and Responses**

Zubair Torwali | Senior Research Fellow, CRSS  
November 2011

Malakand division is located in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) province of Pakistan. With a population of approximately six million the division covers an area of 29,800 sq. km, which occupies 40 percent of the total provincial land mass. The division is comprised of seven smaller administrative units called districts---Malakand, Buner, Swat, Shangla, Upper Dir, Lower Dir and Chitral. Malakand borders Afghanistan's Badakshan and Nuristan provinces in the north and northwest. In the southwest, it shares a border with the Bajaur and Mohmand agencies of Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). In the east, it borders Federally Administered Northern Areas (FANA), now renamed as Gilgit-Baltistan. In the south, Malakand borders with densely-inhabited Charsadda-Peshawar, Mardan and Swabi districts of KPK. With the exception of Chitral, which is inhabited by the Indo-Aryan Dardic language speaking Khowar, Kalash and a number of smaller tribes, the Malakand is fundamentally home to Pashtun tribes. The major Pashtun tribe is Yousafzai and its sub-tribes and nomadic Gujars. However, in upper Swat and adjacent Upper Dir district two other linguistic minorities of Dardic origin-Torwali and Gauri, who are said to be the original inhabitants of Swat and Dir live with a total population of about 300,000. During the span of last four years, Malakand faced catastrophe twice: once as a result of Taliban militancy and subsequent military operation to clean up the mess, and then nature struck the area hard in the form of flash floods in 2010. Flash floods took away the basic physical infrastructure of the area with severe bearing on the local and state economy.

### **1. Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM)**

Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM) meaning Movement for the Enforcement of Islamic Law is a Pakistani militant group whose objective is to enforce Sharia law in the country. Its current chief, Sufi Muhammad, who was an influential local leader of Jamaat-e-Islami in Swat, left the Jamat in 1989 and established TNSM. The organization was founded in reaction to the abolition of the Provincial Administrative Tribal Area (PATA) regulations by the Supreme Court of Pakistan. It was active in the areas along the Pak-Afghan border especially Swat and Malakand. It also supported the Taliban forces in neighbouring Afghanistan.

In 1994 Sufi Muhammad fomented an insurrection in Malakand for the enforcement of Sharia law and gained control over most of Dir and Swat. TNSM announced Sharia law in Swat and the government of Pakistan responded by launching a military action against the TSNM affiliates, and forced it into retreat after fierce fighting. Swat was the main hub of the 1994 militancy under the banner of TNSM. Here the TNSM militants had enforced the Sharia law and the first implementation was to force the traffic to keep right. In mosques announcements were made that Nimaaz, the five times a day practice, was made obligatory for every Muslim. Any Muslim found in non-compliance, would be punished with lashes. The Saidue Airport in Swat was besieged by TSNM men and it took two days to regain the control.<sup>1</sup> During 1994 to 2001 the situation in Malakand division was considerably normal but there were occasional protests by the TNSM on the main Malakand Road. Sufi Muhammad and his fighters usually came to roads in summers and staged protests by blocking the grand trunk road in the city. In addition to this, TNSM held demonstrations in the division particularly in Swat but the motives were not to sabotage the normal day life. When the US led attack on Afghanistan began in retaliation of the 9/11 attack in New York and Washington Sufi Muhammad sent thousands of volunteers to fight alongside Taliban. Sufi Muhammad was jailed in November 2001 by the government of Pakistan for illegally crossing border and joining the war in Afghanistan. While, Sufi Muhammad was in prison, his son-in-law Maulana Fazlullah led TNSM. Maulana Fazallulah was known as "Mullah Radio" for using his illegal FM station for spreading out his sermons. President Musharraf banned the group in January 2002 for its alleged role in stoking extremist ideas in the society and fuelling violence.<sup>2</sup>

After a brief pause, the group experienced a revival in the aftermath of the October 2005 earthquake. Radio broadcasts reinforced local beliefs that the earthquake was a punishment for their sins, and in retribution local inhabitants of the region destroyed video gadgets, such as televisions and computers. Maulana Fazalullah's sermons on the FM radio became very popular in Swat. He began to demand donations from the people for the construction of a large religious seminary in his home village, Maam Dheri in the vicinity of Kabal on the right side of the river eight kilometers across Mingora, the main town of Swat Valley. Interestingly, Fazalullah was able to collect huge donations from the local people. Even his followers volunteered services and labor in the construction of the religious school

near the bed of the River Swat. Large congregations were seen each Friday at the site. As he gained influence and support Maulana Fazalullah's aggressive demand for the enforcement of Sharia transformed into an armed agitation by the end of 2006. On his orders his followers launched violent protests against the police and other law enforcement agencies at that time.<sup>3</sup>

The government was first reluctant to take on the swelling challenge of violent extremism posed by the emerging cleric, however, when in July 2007, the group took over much of the Swat district, Pakistani government launched a half-hearted military offensive against them but left the task unaccomplished. And it was the full fledged military operation "Operation Rah-e-Nijat" (Path of Salvation), which ousted Maulana Fazlullah and his followers from his stronghold, Maam Dheri and drove them towards the mountains. It was believed that many of them fled to tribal region and even crossed Pak-Afghan border to relocate in Taliban controlled areas of Afghanistan. Then the war was confined to the vicinity of Maam Dheri only and no bigger action was observed elsewhere in the district.<sup>4</sup>

## **2. Tahrik-e-Taliban Swat Chapter (TTP Swat)**

In the aftermath of the siege and destruction of Lal Masjid (Red Mosque) in the Pakistani capital, Fazlullah's forces thrived and allied with Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which so far had its area of influence and operation restricted to tribal areas. Fazlullah and his militia reportedly received orders from Baitullah Mehsud, the then commander of TTP to unleash jihad against the state.

The government then looked like a mere spectator and the Taliban were gaining ground day by day and committing atrocities in the city in the name of enforcing Islamic law. They began to petrol on the main roads, burn music shops and explode bridges. Meanwhile their fighters began to come back from FATA along with hard core militants from FATA especially from Waziristan. On October 8, 2007 members of the group, now Swat Taliban, obliterated the face of the 23 feet colossal image of a seated Buddha carved in 7th Century AD into a reddish rock. The said sculpture was carved into a stone near the village of Jehanabad in the vicinity of Manglawar in Mingora.<sup>5</sup>

In May 2008 Sufi Muhammad was released after he renounced violence in discussion with the provincial government. Eight leaders of TNSM signed a peace agreement that recognized the provincial government's sovereignty, promised to shun violence and declared attacks against police, military and government targets "un-Islamic". But the deal did not long last and the Swat Taliban became more ferocious. Armed Taliban roamed freely and checked the public transport for 'infidels' and government officials. They abducted innocent civilians and policemen; slaughtered them and threw the dead bodies on the roadsides in the night. Honoring the peace deal,<sup>6</sup> the security forces did not fight the Taliban as the government had made commitment with Sufi Muhammad that the security forces would stop fighting the Taliban if the latter comply with the peace deal.<sup>7</sup>

By January 2009 the Swat Taliban had established summary courts enforcing and following Islamic laws that openly administered punishment to people who violated their strict code of conduct in a region extending from Matta sub-division in upper Swat valley to Kabal sub-division close to the main Mingora town.

The Swat Taliban slaughtered people and hanged the throat slit bodies on poles and trees in the busiest squares in the districts to scare the people and to force them into obedience of the new order of the day. Nobody in Swat could dare to stand up to them and they brutally reacted to any resistance. In Matta, however, Pir Sameeul Haq, tried to raise a Lashkar (group of armed men) against them with the help of his followers but he was soon crushed and his body was strung over a tree for many days as a clear message to rest of the people who might have thought to resist. The security forces did not openly support any local resistance to the Taliban. This distrust between the people and the security forces encouraged the Taliban to hold whole of Swat under their sway.<sup>8</sup>

Earlier, in December 2008 the Taliban set January 15, 2009 as deadline for a complete ban on female education in Swat. Some 400 schools enrolling 40,000 girls were forced to close. At least 10 girls' schools that tried to open after the January 15 deadline were destroyed by the militants in the town of Mingora. Over the year more than 170 schools were bombed or torched, along with other government-owned buildings.

### **3. Peace Deal and Sharia Nizam-e-Adl Regulation 2009**

On February 16, 2009, the KPK government signed a peace agreement with the Taliban and agreed to enforce Sharia (Islamic System of Justice) under Nizam-e-Adl Regulation in the Malakand division. The deal raised eyebrows of the large segment of Pakistani society and the international community, who believed that Pakistan capitulated to the Taliban. In return, Fazlullah's followers agreed to observe a ceasefire negotiated by Sufi Muhammad.<sup>9</sup>

After the February 2009 peace agreement, the TTP-Swat started to expand to the adjoining districts of Bunir, Shangla, and Lower and Upper Dir under the pretext of enforcing Nizam-e-Adl. The Swat Taliban initiated a drive to recruit locals in Swat, Bunir and Shangla in an attempt to create self-sustaining local Taliban structures in these districts. TNSM, which by now very much seemed a political wing of the TTP-Swat, even attempted to enter Chitral to promote its agenda of Talibanization under the garb of Nizam-e-Adl in April. However, a local peace committee of Chitral requested TNSM leader Sufi Muhammad to postpone his visit.<sup>10</sup> He probably agreed because the difference in ethnicity in Chitral and the district administration. Moreover according to reports Swat district commissioner, Muhamad Javed was encouraging the Taliban in Swat. He was later on tried by the ANP government but in Chitral the local administration was not so cooperative. Ethnicity also played a major role in the insurgency. Kohistan is more rigid than Swat but the Taliban did not take hold there, maybe because of the different ethnicity there.

In early April 2009 Sufi Muhammad ended support for peace negotiations stating that the government was not sincere in the establishment of Sharia courts in the Swat Valley. President Asif Ali Zardari refused to sign any agreement until peace had been restored in the valley but failed to elaborate on how those conditions would be achieved. On strong recommendation of the National Assembly, President Zardari signed the agreement, the Sharia Nizam-i-Adl Regulation 2009, on April 13, 2009. A spokesman for Sufi Muhammad, Amir Izzat Khan, stated that the law would allow for peace in the Swat region and that the Taliban were in the process of disarmament. Muslim Khan added that an "Islamic syllabus" would be instituted in schools and that women would not be allowed to go to jobs or to markets so as not to become "show-pieces." In the wake of the peace deal the Swat Taliban expanded their writ to the adjacent districts Bunir, Shangla



and Dir. The Taliban did not abide by the agreements set in the infamous peace deal and incidences of public punishments and killing of people was routine. The civil society of Pakistan along with the human rights organizations was not happy at the peace deal. International community strongly resented the deal, as well. A video from Swat wherein the Taliban were lashing a young girl became the hot news in the national and international media adding pressure on the government over its apparent surrender before the militants.

Meanwhile the government facilitated Sufi Muhammad to calm down the Taliban led by his son-in-law, Maulana Fazalulla. Sufi Muhammad entered Swat as a hero with a long procession. The next day he had to address a large gathering in the famous Grassy Ground in Mingora. Sufi Muhammad made a speech by calling the Pakistan's Constitution and Supreme Court 'un-Islamic'. This announcement proved the last nail in the coffin of the peace deal and the federal government ordered the security forces to launch an offensive against the Taliban in Swat.

#### **4. The Operation and Mass Exodus**

In early May 2009 the operation Rah-e-Raast was launched. In June Pakistani security forces bombed and destroyed the Maam Dheri compound that served as Fazlullah's headquarters.<sup>11</sup> Before the military launched a full-fledged military action against the militants and terrorists, saving the lives of hundreds of thousands of innocent people was essential. Therefore, a massive exodus of over three million people took place, who were temporarily dislocated mainly from the districts of Swat, Bunir, Lower, and Upper Dir. These people fled to Peshawar, Charsada, Nowshera, Mardan and Swabi. They were relocated in IDPs camps in the scorching heat of summer. The civil society NGOs, and international community supported the displaced persons. Media was also not behind in raising funds for the IDPs. With the support of the Parliament, political parties, civil society, and the masses, Pakistan Army launched the Operation Rah-e-Rast to clean up the Malakand division of terrorists and militants, in early May 2009. Those who were left behind particularly the people of upper Swat and Swat-Kohistan in Swat district, who could not flee the war due to the closure of routes in the operation, faced the worst conditions. They soon ran out of food, medicine besides being gripped by the terror.

The army was generally warmly welcomed by the people of troubled districts of Malakand. The operation made significant success within days and weeks. By the end of that summer the terrorist network in the area was successfully dismantled. The militancy and the military operations rendered tremendous loss to the economy, infrastructure, tourism, mental and physical health, natural resources, education, local administration and social set up in the region.

Adding to the chaos little more than a year after the return of the IDPs to a somewhat stabilized Malakand division the worst flooding in Pakistan's history struck the region and undid what little progress had so far been achieved by the army and the civilian government in the reconstruction of the area.<sup>12</sup>

## **5. Rehabilitation**

In early 2011, after almost two years of the successful and the longest sustained military operation, a gradual withdrawal of the army began from the districts of Buner and Shangla. Although this was a welcoming move but it could not be made public because the ability of the local security forces to maintain law and order was untested. More importantly the capacity of the local administration to lead rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts and improve the service delivery in education, justice, health and basic infrastructure could be stalled by the lack of a cohesive local governance framework in Malakand division. Though there are significant changes in the institutions that provide justice namely the implementation of the Nizam-e-Adl Regulation, the justice delivery lacked more needed reforms as the question of the over 4,000<sup>13</sup> suspected militant illegally detained by the army is still to be settled. There is still a lack of community level reconciliation efforts as well as so far no concrete measures have been taken to fill the spaces which had in the past accelerated violence in the region. The law promulgated by President Asif Ali Zardari on June 23, 2011, called as 'Action in Aid of Civil Power Regulation 2011', provided a legal cover to the armed forces for all military actions against suspects of terrorism in both FATA and Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA). The law provided for setting up internment centers where detainees could be kept for interrogation. The internment centers being considered 'a ray of hope' according to DAWN by the relatives of missing persons where the alleged detainees could be shifted from the military custody for their identification

and whereabouts.<sup>14</sup> But the slow pace of shifting of the detainees to the internment centers is annoying one on the part of the government which has been given a legal cover to these arrests for four years.<sup>15</sup>

### **i. Governance and Security**

In 1969 Swat, Dir and Chitral were merged with Pakistan as Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA) under the article 246 (b) of the Constitution of Pakistan. The PATA status of these districts meant that policies were now to be approved by the president and handed down to the provincial governor to take effect. Since then significant changes have undertaken in the division. The most significant changes were: the enforcement of PATA regulations in 1975, the striking down of these regulations by the Supreme Court of Pakistan in 1992; the local government ordinance in 2002 and its repeal in 2009; and the most important among them is the recent implementation of the Nizam-e-Adl Regulation. According to the article 247 (3) of the Pakistan's Constitution no act by Parliament or the Provincial Assembly be extended to PATA without the prior authorization of the provincial governor with approval of the president. Consequently the policies are made at the national level without consultation with the local people. The area has political representatives at provincial and national levels but the political turmoil, the PATA status, ineffectiveness of the service delivery and delayed justice have degraded the governance at local level and eventually given birth to dissatisfaction among the people. For instance, a land dispute may take years, even decade, to be settled by the courts. No practicable measures were so far taken to address the issue of governance despite the fact that the area has recently undergone severe turmoil in the garb of militancy. This is due to the complicated constitutional status of the area as PATA which means under the direct prerogative of the president of Pakistan via the governor. After the merger the commissioner was the key interlocutor between all the districts and agencies. At the district level the deputy commissioners were given both executive and magisterial powers.

In 2002 the Local Government Ordinance, also known as devolution plan, was imposed in the area. It further aggravated the situation as the feudal lords or the influential political families got elected at the local and district level as Nazims. This deteriorated the situation further and alienated the local people from the state institutions. A complicated system of powers

evolved which created rifts in the bureaucracy and the local representatives. This situation is also regarded one of the factors responsible for the government's inability in tackling the militancy in the initial stages.

After the military offensive in Malakand division all the administrative decisions were virtually taken by the military. At present the district coordination officers at each district, especially in the most sensitive district of Swat is supposed to coordinate the different institutions but under the control of the military. It seems the major issue is now of transition of power from military to the local administration and police. Army has withdrawn from two districts-Shangla and Buner and it is expected that Swat will be vacated over the next two years but people apprehend potential threat of a comeback of the militants if military leaves Swat.

In order to improve the provincial government's ability to respond to the issue of militancy and governance, an Apex Committee for Policy Coordination of senior civilian and military officials was formed back in 2008. The Apex Committee has devised a strategy as how to give the administration in the civilian control. The divisional administration was restored and regional committees were formed at the office of the Malakand Division Commissioner with both civilian and military officials in order to coordinate and facilitate the transition. While programs were introduced to build the capacity of the civilian administration manpower but so far the greater challenge is to restore the confidence of the local population in the civilian administration. There is lack of trust between the people and the local administration due to corruption and misuse of power

The participation of the civil society and local community in the development of the local administration is limited due to the involvement of the military. The local civil society is also dominated by either landlords or politicians who never want land or tax reforms. Nevertheless, the civil society and diaspora have contributed to the relief and rehabilitation efforts in the wake of the floods.

However, from the government side the most significant reform introduced was the implementation of the Niza-Adl Regulation. The significant feature of the regulation is the strict time limit to settle the cases. During the

inauguration of Darul Qaza in Swat in January 2011 the Chief Minister KPK, Amir Hyder Khan Hoti claimed that 27,000 civil cases have been decided since the system was set up in 2010.<sup>16</sup>

## **ii. Social Services Delivery**

Poor education, health, basic infrastructure, rise of militancy, an overall lack of effective governance and decline in economic development have all added to the inefficiency of the government to adequately provide basic social services to the people of the conflict and floods ravaged Malakand. These factors are still producing impeding the government's ability to provide civic facilities to the people. Over the past few years a more rapid decline in the provision of education is visible due to the natural disasters. Under the Taliban, insecurity, destruction and closing of girls' schools almost made the access to education impossible to youth. Same is true for health. It was almost impossible for the women to have access to health facilities during the reign of Taliban.

Flood during last year floods have badly devastated infrastructure-schools, roads, health units, markets, hotels, agriculture and communication system. The most affected districts due to floods are Swat, Upper Dir and Shangla.

### ***Government initiated programs***

The key institution tasked with fostering security and development in the region was the army. After the destructive floods in July 2010 the role of army even became more critical in stabilizing the security and carrying the construction work. Concerted efforts have been made by the army, police and government officials to introduce programs and institutions to counter extremism and begin the reconstruction process in Malakand division. These efforts include the community policing model, a de-radicalization program and the establishment of the Swat University.

The community policing was introduced to recruit youth with a fixed salary of PKR 10,000 monthly on a two-year contract basis for maintaining law and order. The recruits were recruited and trained on sub-divisional level by the army.

In September 2009 the military started a de-radicalization program with the

Pashto name Sabawoon (new dawn) with the objective to bring to normal life the would-be-suicide bombers and hardcore militants. The program includes counseling, secular and religious education along with vocational training. Presently it has two centers, both are in Swat.

The Swat University was established last year and presently it has started admitting new students but it has still to go miles to be a real center of educating the youth in all subjects of social and natural sciences. But here again the politically driven recruitment in the faculties and administration can be counter productive. Swat University was supposed to be administered by the late Dr. Farooq Khan, a renowned and liberal scholar of Islamic history and jurisprudence who was reportedly killed by the Taliban in 2010 on the pretext that he was instigating the people against the Taliban.

During the uprising more than 175 schools, particularly girls' schools, were destroyed by the militants in Swat. Among them about 140 schools are still to be constructed. The construction was carried by the Pakistan Army with funding from donors such as the Government of the United Arab Emirate. Meanwhile the army has renovated some of the primary and high schools in the area.

Many small bridges were bombed by the Taliban in Swat and in a few other places. After the militancy the floods hit Swat, Shangla and Upper Dir. Among them Swat was the worst affected area of the disaster. Almost all the bridges over the Swat River were destroyed by the floods apart from damaging a greater portion of the main highway from Chikri to Kalam (45 kilometers) in upper Swat Valley. The whole area was inaccessible for almost a year. The army with the allocated fund of PKR 140 million by the provincial government somehow restored the road for four wheelers in summer this year. Steel fabricated bridges provided by USA were installed in some places and thus an access was made possible.

### ***Civil Society Interventions***

There has been a great deal of sustained donor interest in investing in the rehabilitation and development of Malakand division since late 2009. However, Swat gets more attention being the worst hit both by militancy and the floods. International donors such as the US Agency for International Development (USAID), UK Department for International Development

(DFID), UN Fund for Children (UNICEF), UN World Food Program (WFP), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the World Bank and others have funded projects and partnered with Pakistani and local organizations to provide improved service delivery. But now the focus is going to shift to the public sector and to fund them for reconstruction and development in order to strengthen the dwindling public sector efficiency. One such project is the reconstruction of 119 schools in Swat. According to media reports foreign donors have set aside \$400 million for reconstruction projects in Malakand. Out of \$36 million by USAID, \$20 million have been allocated for the reconstruction of schools.

The decision to go through the government rather than to working directly with the NGOs and local partners has always been controversial as the government has lagged behind in its already initiated projects even before the floods. For instance, by November 2010, none of the 175 destroyed schools in Swat before the floods was in the process of being built. On the other hand the USAID is also contributing to enact hotel industry in Swat which was badly affected due to floods and militancy. By the end of November 2011 almost all the hotels in Swat were provided with cash, equipment, furniture and electronics. This was done directly or partnering with national NGOs.

### **Recommendations**

There is need to do more to attain sustainable peace and prosperity in the Malakand, in order to erase the scars of militancy and calamity. The government should be more proactive and transparent in winning back the trust of the people, lack of which can fuel militancy once time.

In order to ensure a lasting peace in Malakand basic changes in the human development paradigm along with a shift in the national security policy are quite essential. Order has been restored in the region but the people still apprehend potential threat of militancy as they see Malakand well connected with Pakistan's federally administered tribal areas, usually termed as the Lawless Frontiers.

Measure for peace building and rights advocacy campaigns should be taken with the larger community besides improving the tourism industry by constructing better means of communication in the whole region. The Swat

and Malakand universities must be made centers of quality education for both girls and boys.

The village level jirga (local councils) institutions should be enacted and strengthened to work as a vigilant civil society and tools for monitoring and evaluating developmental projects. The revival of this old institution can also contribute for better integration and dispute settlement.

The writer is also Executive Director Idara Baraye Taleem-o-Taraqi (IBT), Bahrain Swat, KP, Pakistan.

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## **Global Geo-Politics and the Role of Civil Society**

When the Fellows of ALFP 2011 began discussing at the International House of Japan as to what role the civil society is playing in Asia and elsewhere, and how its function can be more effective, I offered a counter-argument; can the civil society function effectively, particularly when the cause of political conflict or crisis is directly or indirectly related to global geo-politics? Can the civil society or segments of it offset the fall-out of conflicts triggered by geo-political considerations? Cases in point are Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq and Libya. US-led interventions in these countries - military offensives, secret commando raids and drone attacks on sovereign territories, mostly without UN approval, may have helped bigger countries achieve their objectives but at a high political cost; majority of populations in these countries - perhaps with the exception of Libya - disapprove the US-NATO military interventions - the majority public opinion looks at these interventions as a means to neo-expansionism i.e. a ploy to gain access and control over natural resources.

Let us have a quick look at the present day geo-political landscape and its dynamics which is determined by:

- a) strategic considerations, and
- b) competing commercial interests of a few lead countries.

### **Major Geo-political Players**

The USA tops the list of major geo-political players (structural actors), followed by its lead NATO allies such as the United Kingdom, Germany, France and Italy. Saudi Arabia and the Russian Federation are the indirect pawns of this geo-political chessboard.

### **Trigger Geo-political Pawns**

In addition to these major powers, one has to keep in mind the countries that can be classified as the "geo-political pawns" (trigger actors). The most important among these pawns are China, India, Brazil (three giant but competing markets), Israel, , Iran, and Syria.

At the heart of the inter-play among these structural and trigger actors in the global geo-politics are certain "trigger factors" for geo-political that can be listed as follows:

- a) USA-Israel Alliance versus Palestine/Arab countries
- b) USA-India Alliance vs China
- c) Japan-USA Alliance vs China
- d) USA-Saudi Arabian Alliance ( USA punished Taliban for human rights violations but is not unhappy with Saudi Arabia for lack of fundamental human and women rights.
- e) USA vs Iran (US ambassador to Islamabad told a conference in Islamabad on Nov 25th, for example, that Pakistan's "idea of importing gas from Iran is not a good one").<sup>1</sup>

### **Mounting Pressure on Natural Resources**

A closer look reveals that at the heart of geo-political alliances and the inter-play among structural and trigger actors is the desire for strategic advantage and the protection of commercial interests. This obviously entails a quest for natural resources such as energy and precious mineral resources.

At the same time the need to protect and promote industries as well as retain access to cheaper markets i.e. commercial interests, leads to an intense competition. This gives birth to the need for safeguarding access to markets i.e. keeping crucial sea lanes and highways - Gulf, Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea - open through strategic alliances.

### **How does this happen?**

#### **Military Bases**

Overseas military bases are thus used as an instrument for a foothold in regions considered crucial for strategic and commercial interests. The bases usually serves as an Insurance Policy for access to, and control of resources, and the routes of their transportation.(US Military bases in Japan, South Korea, Guam (near the Philippines), Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Afghanistan, Europe inter alia are some cases in point).<sup>2</sup>

It leads us to conclude that primarily Geo-Economics serves as the primary force behind geo-politics as pursued by the United States and other NATO member states.

This pursuit of strategic and commercial interests has also invariably given birth to a number of conflicts, most of them located in Asia, namely Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Middle East, and stoked unrest in several

countries because of the unquestioned western support for Israel (which is viewed by most Muslims and Palestinians in particular as an aggressor and usurper of Palestinian statehood), or for undemocratic or dictatorial allies such as those in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Bahrain, Qatar.

A cursory look at this conflict spectrum reveals that the USA-NATO alliance is common to most of them and the direct beneficiary of their alliance turns out to be Corporate USA, Corporate Europe, Corporate Japan, and the US/Western Military Industrial Complex.

In fact, former US president D. Eisenhower had warned about this creeping influence of the US military industrial complex back in the 1960s. In his farewell speech on January 17, 1961, Eisenhower had cautioned:

This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence - economic, political, even spiritual - is felt in every city, every State house, every office of the Federal government. In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.<sup>3</sup>

The interests of dozens of multi nationals and their ingress in state affairs (as pointed out by Eisenhower) also play a crucial role in shaping the strategic policies of the US and its allies.

In the context of multi-national corporations and natural resources, especially oil, we must not forget that many US energy giants, such as Exxon Mobil, have entered Iraq and signed lucrative deals with the authorities.<sup>4</sup>

This entry comes at the back of a war that was based on allegations on Iraq possessing "weapons of mass destruction" and state "sponsors of terrorism".<sup>5</sup> The same pattern has been followed in the Libyan intervention which also leads to interests in oil as Libya is one of the chief exporters of the commodity.

Also, the role of political lobbies and oil companies is nowhere as evident as in USA: Tea Party and Israel lobby are perfect examples of how powerful interest groups have become in current world. Hence, domestic politics is also directly impinging on the geo-politics and making it more convoluted in nature, hopeless in prospects and helpless in scope. In sum, one can foresee that the future of geo-politics is fraught with futility and ineffectiveness.

In this context, talking of global geo-politics and the ability of the civil society to cope with, and overcome the consequences of those politics sounds like a paradox. Why? Let us first look at the phenomenon of civil society.

### **Geo-Politics and Civil Society**

Though the civil society phenomenon is a historic one, it emerged in its current state and nature in post-communist era. Generally, civil society is meant to be "the arena, outside of the family, the state, and the market where people associate to advance common interests."<sup>6</sup> Now looking into the nature of both the governing structures, one finds that the new model of governance, that is of civil society, is totally in contrast with the existent one of nation-state structure which is the base of geo-politics: where the former strives for "respect for diversity" and "absolute equality".<sup>7</sup> Whereas the latter is for ensuring national cohesion at the cost of squeezing the rights of its subjects. Despite the fact that a large chasm exists between the two entities, there is need for convergence between these two concepts of service delivery, conflict resolution and nation building. The thumping role played by civil society during Tsunami in 2004, earthquakes in Pakistan (2005) and Haiti (2010), and recent Tsunami and earthquake in Japan suggests that it can be a burden sharer for the states, and a robust global partner in reconstruction of sites hit by natural calamities.

Likewise, the role of civil society in putting pressure on states to address urgent global issues of climate change, human rights, poverty, health etc., is another example of its burgeoning political clout. Although, there can be a counter argument that states have not gone too far, as yet, to make an apparent difference in addressing these frantically taxing global issues, but one cannot deny the importance of advocacy campaigns relating to these issues, getting increased recognition with the passage time. So, civil society is out there to compensate for the vanishing political clout of relatively better and legitimate powers (USA and Europe) in a political world where

economic rivalries among major players have left behind the "to do good" aptitude of dominant political players with a certain set of interests that they perceive as crucial for their state.

The civil society, on the other hand, is often disadvantaged, if not marginalized, by its non-state, non-governmental status i.e. limited administrative, legal and financial capacity. It faces even greater limitations in countries such as China, Russia, Iran, Israel or Kingdoms like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain or Qatar, where centralized governance structures, or the western interests restrict or impede the functioning and promotion of the civil society that includes media, non-governmental organizations and representative bodies of professionals such as lawyers, academia, doctors.

Secondly, state or states' interests place usually constrain civil society organizations, particularly in developing countries or nations with questionable democratic models, or those mentioned above. And these limitations make it difficult for the civil society to deal with the consequences of conflicts generated by internal political dynamics (authoritarian, semi democratic, or undemocratic governance and political structures) or those triggered by bigger powers in the name of their national interests.

Latest examples are the civil society movements in the Middle East - Libya, Tunisia, and Syria in particular - and the western role in it. Afghanistan and Pakistan also offer a good example of how the mighty west - led by the United States - can subvert well-intended actions by the civil society or circumvent the rule of law to the disadvantage of the very principles that the west stands for.

Former British ambassador and Special Representative to Afghanistan Sherard Cowper-Coles, for instance, is extremely critical of the way the United States has led the reconciliation and reconstruction effort in Afghanistan since December 2001.

"The way the American government and the establishment has thrown money around, only to fuel corruption and promote bad governance--- sums which may seem quite small in Washington create powerful distortions, and feed much corruption, in economies as poor as

Afghanistan's," writes Cowper-Coles in his 2011 book *Cables from Kabul* (Harper Press, London, UK).

A rather aspect of this is that, thanks largely to the role of Congress, US aid funds are almost as much for Americans as for overseas beneficiaries. Thus, some 40 per cent of American aid moneys allocated to Afghanistan are said to find their way back to the United States, in the form of consultancy and security contracts, equipment orders, and so on.<sup>8</sup>

The same happened in Iraq, and is happening in Pakistan - where Pakistani NGOs receive funds for human rights, democratization, and rule of law. Ironically, this social sector funding is not even ten percent of what the US spends on its military /security operations, yet it creates vested interest within the country that at times is in conflict with the national interest. Some of the actions by the US-NATO troops based in Afghanistan - like the (Nov 26, 2011 attack on a Pakistani military post that left 26 soldiers dead, or the Sept 30th 2010 gunship attack on a border post that killed three Pakistani soldiers) run contrary to the Western claims of respect for law and sovereignty of other countries, and undermine even good work that these countries conduct through the local civil society. Events of the last two decades have increasingly fueled the allegation that the US and its allies do tend to use the UN and or the Security Council as "an instrument of war."

Drawing on several examples , particularly the first and the second US-led invasion of Iraq, the Libyan uprising and the ongoing civil rights' demonstrations in Syria, Carla Stea ( GlobalResearch.ca 10/01/2012) points out that "since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Security Council has been in danger of becoming a political battering ram used for the purpose of "legitimizing" the neo-imperial adventures, and the reassertion of Western dominance over former colonial territories in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East ."

"Twenty-two years ago, as a result of the United Nations Security Council adoption of Resolution 678, which authorized the use of "all necessary means" to end the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and "approved" the launch of the first United Nations supported Persian Gulf War, former United States Attorney General, Ramsey Clark, who had witnessed the devastating consequences of that war's saturation bombing of Baghdad stated: "The

United Nations, which was created "to prevent the scourge of war," has become an instrument of war," writes Stea in her critique of the ever-growing influence US-NATO exercise within and over the UN Security Council.

### **Challenges for the Civil Society**

When big powers use a multi-lateral forum such as the UN, this can limit the scope of work and extent of influence of civil society organizations, particularly in areas where the UN wants to intervene or its sanction is sought for intervention by big powers. Why? For the simple reason that the UN nations stands for values such as fundamental human rights, sovereignty of nations, democracy but when it sanctions action in conflict zones, it runs the risk of allowing the US and its allies to establish their writ over that particular region, at times at the cost of the very core values that the UN stands for.

Viewed against this backdrop one may ask as to what are then the real challenges that the civil society in Asian countries faces? Perhaps we could list them as follows:

- a) how to surmount domestic structural hurdles (non-democratic, authoritarian or semi- democratic governance and bureaucratic structures at home)
- b) how to neutralize the impact of external factors i.e. major geo-political players such as USA, NATO, Russia which are given more to their own strategic and commercial interests than to the long-term interests of the target countries. There are directly impacting countries in crisis such as Pakistan - which has endured thousands of deaths and billions of dollars in economic losses but the US and its allies are still not happy with it
- c) another challenge for the civil society is to how to position itself while dealing with the consequences of geo-politics i.e. whether to become the mouthpiece and supporter of the majority in countries like Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iraq, or take hand-outs from US/UK funded organizations for democracy , rule of law and human rights? (Does the US/NATO alliance care for these when it comes to their national interests?)

### **Global Governance Institutions and Civil Society**

With ever increasing networking of civil society organizations across the globe and their ability to close ranks on national, regional and international



issues that concern lives of people at large, the civil society can play an important role in accountability into the global governance system. Under its influence, we identify that civil society's mobilizations have growing impact on political decision makers such as the UN, WTO, EU, ASEAN, World Bank and IMF in favor of the transparency, discussion, outside assessment, effectiveness and integration of the societies.<sup>9</sup> Former UN Secretary General Kofi Anan also underscored that peace and prosperity can readily be achieved in the world through collaboration and active partnerships among governments, international organizations, the business community and civil society. But the problem is that there is imbalance of power within the international organizations which are said to be key players in the decision making processes of the world affairs. The global governance institutions are generally dominated by the G-8 nations, resulting in decisions that at times are neither democratic nor representative of all members of the world organization. Nevertheless, no doubt that these institutions were created with collective responsibility to work for democracy, legitimacy, justice, self-determination, other humanitarian concerns, and mobilize states and other actors to coordinate in mutually beneficial ways for political peace and economic progress.

"Over the years, though, the civil society in developing countries has a sense of alienation by the global governance institutions like UN and other global financial and regional organizations which are rarely representing the interests of the millions of people who are affected by their decisions but who have no access to the decision-making of these institutions. Civil society organizations thus become channels of contact at national and transnational level with these institutions. They can demand accountability of the global governance system by giving voice to the general public and also can better work in the service delivery to the marginalized societies. In this way democratic process can be promoted through the involvement of an effective and lively public opinion by their valuable input into the political system which keeps national and global institutions under pressure for accountability and so these institutions can get legitimacy at national and international level.<sup>10</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Answers to the questions raised above are generally in the negative, but must we despond and despair, or should we draw optimism from the way

the civil society as a whole functions, for example in Pakistan; an independent judiciary, a very vibrant, independent print and electronic media, a brave legal community (lawyers), hundreds of NGOs, trade unions and dozens of political parties and groupings most probably offer us a reason to be optimistic about the role of the civil society as a whole - it works as a bulwark, as a watchdog against state high-handedness, internal governance failures and shortcomings, and external influences.

Generally, it is a safe presumption that in the face of fierce competition for territorial influence and ever shrinking economic resources, the civil society faces daunting challenges all over, particularly in regions beset with political crisis or natural calamities. But, we must also admit that despite limitations, the civil society also contributes enormously in upholding, promoting, defending, and strengthening the democratic process.

The civil society responses to the great east Japan disaster, when thousands of volunteers - most of whom well and highly placed executives from the public, social and corporate sector - flocked to the disaster-hit regions. Had it not been for these volunteers from all over Japan, the relief, recovery and rehabilitation would have taken much longer.

Similarly, the civil society response to the earthquakes and floods in China, Pakistan, and the far eastern countries, too, offer examples of the supplemental role that the civil society can play in conflict and calamity.

However, the civil society in politically volatile and economically backward countries such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and parts of the African and far-eastern Asian countries shall have to brace for survival in a world wherein competing commercial and strategic interests of the United States and its allies, China, India and Russia continue to cast their shadow over well-meaning non-state, civil society movements.

A case in point is Pakistan. In Pakistan civil society movement began in March 2007 with the dismissal of over five dozen superior court judges and culminated with their restoration two years later in March 2009. Lawyers and human rights organizations as well as the private media kept their pressure up throughout, leaving thereby little option for the government but to restore all the judges to their positions.

That is why, I would say, regardless of the internal limitations and irrespective of the external geo-political factors, the civil society as a whole can and must function as a watch-dog as well as an agent of social transformation. Defending human rights, raising voice for civil democratic liberties and guarding citizens' against unbridled national and multi-national corporate sector. The civil society is thus an essential element of social change--- And thus should "pursue their goals through institutions and attempts to induce change in the moral behavior of state, global governance institutions and market based actors towards the common people of the society."<sup>11</sup>

Imtiaz Gul, executive director, CRSS-Islamabad presentation this paper at International House of Japan, Nov 8th, 2011.

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## **Pakistan Security in 2011**

The following document gives an overview of the state of security in different parts of Pakistan. The primary objective of "Pakistan Security in 2011" is to provide a glimpse of the country's continued perilous journey - moving from one political or security setback to another with a direct bearing on the economy. In 2011, Pak-US relations in war on terror plunged to its lowest point in its decade long history. The Raymond Davis case of January 27, US raid to kill Osama bin Laden of May 2 and NATO attack on a Pak-Afghan border post badly impacted the bilateral relations, and thus tossed the volatility of security in Pakistan into the air. Indeed, severing of Pak-US ties also had repercussions for economy in Pakistan during the course of the year.

### **Security Overview**

Pakistan's security conditions remained volatile all through 2011. As many as 3,250 people fell prey to militancy related violence across the country while almost 700 security personnel were killed as a result of ongoing conflict between militants and security forces in different parts of Pakistan during the current year.<sup>1</sup> A Pakistan Security Report 2011, published by the Pakistan Institute of Peace Studies (PIPS), counted about 7107 people dead across Pakistan in 2985 incidents of violence of various nature during 2011.<sup>2</sup>

### **FATA**

Pakistan's semi-autonomous Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) - spread over about 27,200 sq. kilometres bordering Afghanistan - remained embroiled in the military-militant hostilities. Known abroad as the world's "most dangerous place," FATA is home to some of the most lethal militant organization like the Tehreeke Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Lashkare Jhangvi, and the Afghan Haqqani Network - which , according to US military and intelligence officials, are the local supporting arms of Al Qaeda.

According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Pakistan Army's media wing, almost 473 military men were killed and 1543 injured in ongoing military operations in the volatile tribal regions (FATA) of Pakistan during 2011. Also, 711 civilians were killed and 1548 other injured as a result of militant attacks in the region. During the year, security forces carried out 10 major and 38 minor operations against Taliban militants in the said areas, that border Afghanistan.

According to the data compiled by The Long War Journal, US carried out 64 drone strikes in Pak-Afghan bordering region (south and north Waziristan) during 2011, which resulted in the killing of 405 suspected terrorists and 30 civilians.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, militants banked lesser on awfully lethal terrorism tactics, the suicide bombing in Pakistan during 2011. According to a report by the Conflict Monitoring Center, 41 suicide attacks were reported across Pakistan, which resulted in the killing of 606 people and injuring 1002 others. But again these were the civilians who bore the major brunt of suicide bombing, "[A]s 59 percent (358 out of 606) and 85 percent (856 out of 1002) of the injured were innocent citizens."<sup>4</sup> After civilians it was the security forces, usually the prime target, lost their 187 personnel during different suicide attacks. Also, 51 suspected suicide bombers perished while unleashing blood and terror. The number of suicide attacks was 48 percent lower than the last year.<sup>5</sup>

### **Karachi**

Political, criminal and ethnic slivers of violence in the most populous metropolis of Pakistan that is Karachi, badly impinged on the economy and security of the city which has a direct bearing on the national economy because Karachi is the major gateway for Pakistan's external trade. Ethno-political violence involving the ruling Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Jamaat-i-Islami (JI), Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), Awami National Party (ANP) and Sunni Tehrik (ST) played out badly in the city and accounted for major losses of lives. Estimates suggest that 1675 people were killed in different types of violence in the city; meanwhile criminal activities soared matchlessly in comparison with recent past years with 1113 houses and 19 bank robbed and 105 people kidnapped.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, the phenomenon of suicide terrorism revisited Karachi during the current year and 18 people lost their lives as a result of five suicide attacks.<sup>7</sup>

### **Balochistan**

Data compiled from different sources suggests that as many as 621 people were killed in insurgency and sectarian related violence across the province. Out of these, 281 people were shot dead in different incidents of target killing and firing. Two suicide attacks took the lives of 68 people in the province and 120 people were perished as a result of bomb blasts and landmine explosions. Moreover, the ongoing 'kill and dump' operation in the hapless province emitted shocking ripples across Pakistan, as figures

suggest that 231 mutilated dead bodies\* of nationalist political workers/missing persons were recovered across the province in 2011. Likewise, abductions for ransom and political gains are another emerging trend in Balochistan, where 47 people were abducted for the aforementioned reasons during the course of the year.<sup>8</sup> Also, steep rise in sectarian violence in Balochistan was the prominent feature of the year. As Balochistan government estimates suggest that 117 people mostly belonging to Shia sect of Hazara community were killed in 20 incidences of violence, while 84 people were severely injured. Relatively higher number of people killed in sectarian violence suggests that sectarian militancy, taking the benefit of reigning security vacuum in the province, is blatantly putting down its roots in the province.

### **Dead Bodies Recovered in Balochistan**

S.#	Division	Unidentified		Baloch		Pashtoon		Others	
		2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
1.	Quetta	-	13	42	16	7	09	08	04
2.	Kalat	01	07	27	57	01	-	01	8
3.	Mekran	-	01	08	52	-	-	-	1
4.	Nasirabad	-	05	02	05	-	-	01	1
5.	Zhob	-	-	01	02	02	08	-	1
6.	Sibi	-	02	01	-	-	-	-	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>01</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>

**Grand total:** 2010: 102  
2011: 196

### **Bomb Blasts/Rocket Firing Incidents 2007-2011**

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	15-12-2011
<b>R/Firing</b>	197	377	172	144	199
<b>Bomb Blasts</b>	414	512	481	455	379
<b>Total</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>889</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>557</b>

*Source: Balochistan Home Department, Quetta*

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\* Meanwhile, data compiled by the Balochistan government recorded the discovery of 196 mutilated dead bodies of missing persons and political workers in the province.

**Summary of Attacks on Utility/Communication Installations 2007-2011**

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	15-12-2011
QESCO	42	58	52	13	30
SSGCL	33	51	54	07	60
RAILWAYS	21	21	20	04	12

*Source: Balochistan Home Department, Quetta*

**Khyber Pakhtunkhwa/Punjab**

In the case of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), 719 people fell prey, mostly to terrorist attacks carried out by Islamist militants, largely by the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan. Two dozen suicide attacks killed some 382 people during 2011. And here again, it were the civilians who paid the heaviest price of terrorist violence, as 227 civilians along with 175 security forces' personnel got killed.<sup>9</sup> In the populous and relatively stable province of Punjab 116 people were killed in different types of 30 terrorist attacks.<sup>10</sup> While the internal security landscape remained fragile, the external security also received a rude shock when US Special Forces - SEALs - sneaked into Pakistan at midnight on May 2, 2011, killed Osama bin Laden and took away his dead body. On the one hand, it was the biggest achievement for the US in 2011, but the worst humiliation for the Pakistani armed forces, triggering unprecedented criticism and also prompting questions on the safety of the country's nuclear weapons.\*

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\* According to Jeffery Goldberg and Marc Ambinder of the Atlantic Monthly Magazine, in the aftermath of May 2 raid on Osama bin Laden compound, Pakistani Army Chief General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani was very nervous and upset regarding the safety and security of nuclear weapons. And soon after the raid, he rang up to Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Khalid Kidwai, the head of Strategic Plan Division (SPD), to ascertain the state of security of nuclear weapons and asked the SPD head to beef up the security. They (authors) underlined: "General Kayani's worry, as expressed to General Kidwai after Abbottabad, was focused on the United States. According to sources in Pakistan, General Kayani believes that the U.S. has designs on the Pakistani nuclear program, and that the Abbottabad raid suggested that the U.S. has developed the technical means to stage simultaneous raids on Pakistan's nuclear facilities." Jeffery Goldberg and Marc Ambinder, "The Ally from Hell", The Atlantic Magazine, December 2011.



**Details of Terrorist Activities and Resulting Casualties in KP**

DISTRICTS	No of Cases REGISTERED	PERSONS KILLED						
		POLICE	FC	ARMY	CIVIL	TOTAL	CIVIL	TOTAL
Peshawar	143	45	1	1	141	188	347	456
Charsadda	41	3	79	0	28	110	124	208
Nowshera	20	4	0	7	31	42	103	131
Mardan	21	4	0	31	5	40	41	125
Swabi	18	0	0	0	13	13	30	30
Kohat	13	4	6	0	11	21	13	22
Hangu	21	8	0	0	86	94	133	170
Haripur	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Battagram	1	2	0	0	5	7	17	22
Bannu	17	17	3	4	4	28	5	25
Lakki	8	0	0	0	3	3	12	24
D.I.Khan	13	14	0	0	5	19	7	16
Tank	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Swat	14	3	0	1	10	14	10	23
Shangla	4	3	0	0	0	3	0	0
Burrer	1	0	0	0	2	2	0	0
Dir Lower	9	3	15	1	52	71	98	115
Dir Upper	5	16	12	0	5	33	2	4
Chitral	2	4	27	0	0	31	1	18
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>943</b>	<b>1392</b>

*Source: Home Department, Peshawar, KPK*

**Suicide Attacks in KPK during 2011**

DISTRICTS	No of Cases REGISTERED	PERSONS KILLED				
		POLICE	FC	ARMY	CIVIL	TOTAL
Peshawar	4	4	0	0	77	81
Charsadda	2	2	79	0	23	104
Nowshera	2	2	0	5	13	20
Mardan	1	0	0	31	0	31
Swabi	2	0	0	0	13	13
Kohat	1	0	0	0	1	1
Hangu	3	8	0	0	37	45
Battagram	1	2	0	0	5	7
Bannu	2	12	3	0	4	19
Lakki	1	0	0	0	3	3
D.I.Khan	2	7	0	0	3	10
Dir Lower	2	0	0	0	48	48
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>382</b>

Source: Home Department, Peshawar, KPK

**Economic Security**

Pakistan's economic security remained in peril during 2011 due to adverse security conditions, structural weakness, poor governance and prevailing gloom global economic environment. The latest State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) annual report released on December 19th also highlighted Pakistan's institutional weakness at all tiers of the government - judiciary, civil services, law enforcers, regulatory bodies and accountability agencies, which it said were directly responsible for poor economic growth in the country.

The report, also expresses multiple concerns surrounding the economy, attributing the institutional weakness to the extremely poor governance indicators and to the deteriorated business environment. This way, says the report, Pakistan performed the poorest of all South Asian neighbours.

According to the Doing Business 2011 - Making a Difference for

Entrepreneurs survey carried out by the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation, Pakistan dropped eight places in the list of the best countries for doing business, slipping from 75 in 2010 to 83 in 2011.

The SBP reports also draws on the survey to underscore the need for drastic measures to fix some of the most pressing problems that Pakistan faces.

"Both domestic and global factors are responsible, but we believe that domestic issues are more decisive and chronic. These include the collapse of fixed investment, acute energy shortages, urban violence and lawlessness, poor physical infrastructure and institutional fragility," observes the report.

It also points to the loss-making public sector enterprises which "continue to haemorrhage and drain scarce fiscal resources. Railways, national airline PIA and Pakistan Steel are classic examples of the heavy cost of poor governance to the economy," the report said and added that "Pakistan's political leadership must take credible steps to stop the slide". But who listens to the State Bank and who is interested in stemming the slide?

Alarming, the forecast for 2012 is not encouraging at all. The balance of payments has never been as worse as it is today. International oil prices are likely to soar beyond \$100 per barrel. Debt servicing is close to 58 billion dollar foreign, according to estimates placed before the National Assembly recently, will cross a whopping \$4.2 billion in the current year, with no hope of a substantial cut in the defence and internal security budget that currently stands above \$9 bn.

According to the State Bank of Pakistan report (2010-11), "The issue of fixed investment merits special mention. Pakistan's investment rate was only 13.4 percent in FY11, which is the lowest since 1974", the report narrated.<sup>11</sup> "[T]he GDP growth of the country is likely to settle in the range of 3-4 percent by the end of fiscal year 2011-12, which means that the economy is faltering and barely ahead of the population growth rate."<sup>12</sup>

Moreover, the report underlined that the major causes behind "[T]his grim state of affairs include the collapse of fixed investment, acute energy shortages, urban violence and lawlessness, poor physical infrastructure and institutional fragility."<sup>13</sup> Also, it categorically termed the 'institutional

weakness' in all spheres of the government as the major factor holding back the country economically. The poorly governed and chronically sick state institutions like PIA, Railway, Wapda and Pakistan Steel Mill were the major drainer of the government financial resources.<sup>14</sup>

The report also quoted a recent World Bank study on the ranking of business friendly states. According to this study, "--- Pakistan slipped from 96 to 105, out of 183 countries evaluated and out of 10 specific topical criteria, Pakistan scored poorly on the availability of electricity (at 166), followed by citizens who actually pay their taxes (at 158)."<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore, as a debt-ridden economy dependent on foreign loans, grants and aids, Pakistan suffered a lot in 2011 for its continued tensions with the US-led Western coalition engaged in the War on Terror in Afghanistan. These tensions also minimized the Western goodwill for Pakistan and thus resulted in shortfalls, including the US decision to withhold \$3.2 billion in Coalition Support Funds (CSF). CSFs are the reimbursements that the US makes to Pakistan for deploying almost 150,000 troops on its 2,560 km long border with Afghanistan.

### **Outlook for 2012**

As a whole, 2011 marked yet another year of turmoil, uncertainty and fragility for the state of Pakistan and its over 180 million people. The US raid to kill Osama bin Laden on May 2, and the deaths of two dozen Pakistani soldiers in a US-led NATO attack on Salala Check Post in the Pak-Afghan border region of Mohmand precipitated the internal security crisis. These attacks not only exposed Pakistan's vulnerabilities, kicking up a new anti-military establishment story, but also brought relations with the United States to a standstill.

Numerous comments and reports by American writers and US policy makers kept insisting that the gravity zone in War on Terror lies in Pakistan.<sup>16</sup> This way, the US security establishment is rapidly becoming wary of designs and motives of its Pakistani counterpart. And this fact was succinctly outlined by the usually soft-spoken former US Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen in his last appearance before the US Senate Armed Service Committee on September 22. In his statement, Admiral Mullen slated the Pakistani ISI for its duplicity and treacherous motives in fight against

terrorism.<sup>17</sup> Against this backdrop, the perception about the role of Pakistani military in fighting terrorism will not die down easily and as a result external security of Pakistan will remain under severe scrutiny.

Most analysts agree that simmering conflicts in FATA, KPK and Balochistan, and the clash of political and commercial interests of various political parties in the country's largest city Karachi on the Arabian Sea will continue to strain Pakistan's security apparatus, consume attention and resources. This is likely to keep the security situation volatile, particularly because of the Al-Qaeda-linked groups such as TTP, Lashkare Jhangvi, Lashkare al Alamal Islami. Tensions between the ethnic MQM and Awami National Party in Karachi, which caused hundreds of deaths in 2011, are likely to play out in 2012 as all parties prepare for the impending general elections. That is why the outlook for the next year remains dismal.

According to a recent article in The New York Times, Pakistani citizens are overly pessimistic about the direction and prospects of the country. As only eight percent of the citizens were hopeful that Pakistan will overcome the challenges it is currently facing.<sup>18</sup> Thus, widespread state of hopelessness among the masses, economic meltdown, raging wars against militants and separatists, loss of overriding political ground for single political party, external pressures to 'do more', nervousness among military ranks about US designs, and motives of civilian government and adaptation of violence as a tool to make heard by the ethno-political factions, paint a gloomy outlook of Pakistan in 2012.

### **Counter-terror Efforts in FATA and KPK**

Fragility of the political system, porous governance, the insecurity stemming from militant groups and continued tensions with external players such as the United States and India also impede efforts to counter terrorism. All these factors in fact constrain the war against religious extremism.

Some of limitations that the civilian security apparatus faces are:

1. Attacks on pylons/gas pipelines/public places in KPK and Frontier Regions continue to hurt public interest and instigate public anger against the government (a notorious militant tactic)
2. Militants' supply of weapons and money continues and intelligence

agencies are still clueless as to where exactly these resources are coming from (laser guns for target killings of strict commanders/officers, also apparently used in the Dec 22 attack on the Frontier Constabulary Fort in Tank, KPK)

3. Public disinterest and lack of cooperation. Most people don't report the presence of aliens, although the situation in Malakand and Swat region has turned around, with a lot of militants being arrested on tips by locals
4. Poor governance and poverty continue to cast shadows on counter-terror efforts. Certain people within the community take aliens - potential terrorists - as paying guests, without knowing who they actually are
5. Security forces continue to remain under-strength
6. Insufficient monetary resources
7. Deficiency of electronic surveillance devices
8. Legal restrictions (under the Anglo-Saxon Law), whereby this legal framework restricts quick administrative action (we cannot fire first, says a senior police official)

In this context, it seems that the counter-terror war, and by implication the counter-radicalisation efforts, require a greater and more coordinated response, backed by administrative, financial and technical resources as well as a legal framework. Obviously, such an approach also runs the risk of giving a "carte blanche" to a force that is known as one of the most corrupt institutions. But finding a balance between efficient uses of available resources and preventing their abuse is not impossible. All we need is the civilian and military cooperation and a consensus on how to supplement each other, rather than pursuing same goals with a narrow institutional outlook.

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