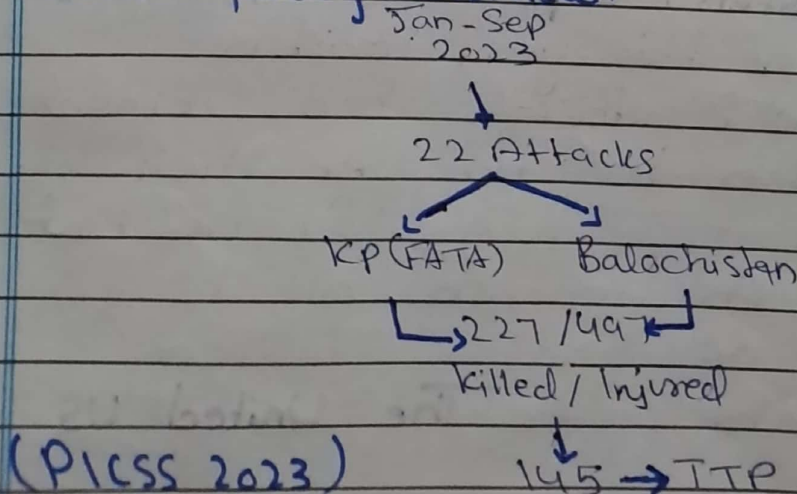


Q. Critically evaluate the reason and implication of the revival of militancy in Pakistan. Give recommendation.

Ans. INTRODUCTION:

Pakistan is going currently through a critical phase, as at one side it is enacting crucial steps to revive the ailing economy, while curbing the revival of militancy on the other. According to Pakistan Institute of Conflict and Strategic Studies, 99 attacks were reported across country only in the month of August 2023, which is the highest number in any single month since 2014. Recent militant attacks have become major security threat to Pakistan, especially to already vulnerable provinces, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan.

2. Contemporary Overview:



3. Rivival of militancy in Pakistan:

Post 9/11, United States have fought war for twenty years in Afghanistan, but that did not bring expected outcome for US. Consequentially, US had to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan, and the 20 year old battle, from 2001-2021 came to an end.

i) Taliban took over Afghanistan:

Pakistan was optimistic when Taliban had taken the charge of Afghan government, as US ended 2 decade long war on Terror, but the reality came out to be otherwise. As soon as the Taliban government came in power, banned militant groups also came to rise.

ii) Afghanistan: Safe havens for Militants:

Earlier this year, Pakistan government officials had warned Afghanistan to not let their soil as safe havens for militant groups. As terrorists attacks surged as soon as Taliban came into power. The US

State Department also followed the suit, endorsing Pakistan's apprehensions, and stated that Afghan Taliban administration should bear responsibility to control terrorism activity originating from their soil.

iii) Taliban Counter Allegations:

Particularly, for the first time Afghan Taliban levelled counter allegations to Islamabad, rejecting any presence of militants in Afghanistan. In a blunt statement, the Afghan Taliban asked Islamabad to put their house in order; and that to create stability in Pakistan is not their responsibility.

iv) Rise of TTP: 2022 Cease Fire Called off:

Pakistan backed the Taliban against the U.S.-supported regime in Kabul, seeking to corner India and rein in the TTP. However, Taliban return to power had a rejuvenating effect on TTP, as they called off ceasefire and resumed countrywide attacks.

v) Failed Negotiations with TTP:

Earlier talks with TTP backfired due to their non-negotiable demands. They wanted Pakistan to withdraw forces from borders, reversal of FATA merger, and imposition of Sharia at some areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. After the talks failed in 2020, a delegation was sent to Kabul in February 2023, on one point agenda to make Taliban understand Pakistan's red line on terror attacks.

vi) Balochistan Insurgency:

Rise in militancy has been witnessed in Balochistan as

TTP has opened military fronts.

↑ According to NACTA report 2023,

the insurgency is based on two factors. First, the explaining factors; poverty, lack of education, infrastructure, and employment.

Second, After U.S withdrawal, Terrorists get hold of modern ammunition. Several terrorist captured wore US army uniform and carried M16 rifles used by U.S military.

4) Implications For Pakistan:

The revival of militancy in Pakistan has caused major threats in social, economic, and security domains of country.

i) Threat to National Security:

The insurgency in militant attacks cause existential threat to country. Cross border, as well as terrorist attacks create harm to peace and stability in society. Forces being primary target of attacks bring loss to the country and increase its vulnerability. According to PCSS, in recent attacks on Police lines mosque in Peshawar and FC as well, exposed the TTP intention to threaten institutions and the national security of the country.

ii) Threat to Economy:

Pakistan is already in the worst economic turmoil, and revival of militancy has been burdening already ailing economy of Pakistan. According to world Bank report 2023, Pakistan

is ranking on 142 among world economies. In such grave situation, the country needs to spend more on security and stability, causing neglect toward the development and progress of country.

iii) Creating Institutional Weakness:

Pakistan's military is playing crucial role in reviving peace and stability in the country. Both FC and Police have become primary targets of terrorist attacks, creating cowardly attempt to weaken the institutions. Moreover, the reason to attack FC is to bring military in the cities to ensure security and making the border security relaxed, so non-state actors; TTP could get the opportunity to occupy the territories.

iv) Threat to National Integration:

Balochistan being the target of recent militant attacks, and caused major instability in terms

of peace in the province. The province, already dealing with multiple socio-economic challenges, become easy target of proxy wars of enemy countries. According to Pakistan Journal of International Affairs report 2021, India was being involved in instigating Balochi Separatist movements creating chaos and promoting anti-state sentiments in the province. The episode of Kulbhushan Yadave is evident before the world.

v) Diplomatic Isolation:

The increased militant attacks has created major instability in the country, and have harmed the peace of the country. On the other hand, due to such menace of terrorism, Pakistan has been experienced isolation on global level. As political, economic & social stability play crucial part in maintaining strategic ties globally, as well as for garnering Foreign direct investment in the country.

5. Recommendations For Pakistan:

Though in past Pakistan has dealt with iron hands with such non-state actors in the form of military operations as Zarb-e-Azb and Raah-e-haq, yet new wave of militancy requires Pakistan to formulate crucial steps.

- 1) Pakistan should revisit Afghanistan policy. Reive negotiation and dialogue and reach consensus to curb militancy.
- 2) Pakistan should increase border security to prevent cross-border movement of militants.
- 3) Pakistan should initiate military operations against TTP, as dialogue will not be beneficial.
- 4) Reive political and economic stability in the country.

6. Conclusion:

Peace and security are key players in development and progress of a country. Pakistan has the capacity - evident from past successful operations - to deal with iron hands with militants. By taking crucial steps it will be able to nip the menace of militancy in the bud.