

Question:

Critically evaluate the role of Pakistan in "War on Terror."

Answer:

Introduction:

After the tragic events of Sep 11, 2001, the Bush administration declared the worldwide "War on Terror". It involved overt and covert military operations, new legislations and efforts to block the financing of Terrorism and much more. It called on governments to join the US in fight against terrorism by asserting that "either with us, or against us". Many governments of the World, including Pakistan, despite all its domestic challenges joined this US-led coalition of "War on Terror". Pakistan played a significant role as a major "non-NATO member" in operations against Al-Qaeda and Taliban.

US demands to Pakistan:

On Sep 13, 2001 US government sent a formal list of demands to Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf. The demands included in the list are as follows:

→ To stop Al-Qaeda operatives at its borders and end all logistic support to bin Laden.

→ To provide territorial access to US and allied military forces and other personnel to conduct operation.

→ To give US blanket over flight and landing rights necessary for all military and intelligence operations.

→ To provide US with intelligence sharing.

→ To continue to condemn terrorist attacks publicly.

→ To cut off all the shipments of fuels to Taliban and stop recruits from going to Afghanistan.

→ If the evidence implicated by bin Laden,

Al-Qaeda and Taliban continued to harbour

them, block all the relationships with Afghanistan.

Operation Enduring Freedom post 9/11:

The goal of invading

Afghanistan after 9/11 was to dislodge the Taliban and to capture and kill the Al-Qaeda operatives.

The US succeeded in removing the Taliban but they re-emerged particularly in the Pashtun region. Pakistan also deployed a large number of troops along the Afghanistan border and employed a large portion of its logistical resources. Christian Fair, says in his book,

The Counter-terror Coalition, Coalition with Pakistan and India. US officials acknowledge that "Pakistan has deployed more ^{support} troops, captured more terrorists and committed more troops than any other nation in GCTF (Global Counter-Terrorism Force)".

The Taliban and Al-Qaeda managed to re-assemble in tribal areas ^{along border} between Pakistan and Afghanistan. In this war on terror, the economy of Pakistan has sliding downward and the FDI also decreased due to high security risks in the region.

Global War on Terror and Pakistan's Position:

Pakistan's geographic proximity to Afghanistan was one of the main reasons that US needed Pakistan's help. Without Pakistan's help, it was

unlikely the US would have been able to pursue its interests in the region. Also the expenditures of US and NATO allies would have been much times higher if Pakistan had not cooperated. This shows that Pakistan's contribution to "War on Terror" was pivotal. It is generally recognized that without active and sincere participation of ~~US~~ Pakistan, the desired results in breaking Al-Qaeda would not have achieved. This fact was realized by Americans and both the countries were drawn into intensive cooperative relationships. Pakistan also provided different types of support to US including access to air, naval and land bases, intelligence sharing, logistical support and cut the domestic elements who were in support of terrorism against Americans and NATO allies.

Former President Pervez Musharraf had cut off all the diplomatic ties with Afghanistan. Pakistan's decision to join the "war on Terror" included many incentives like country's security, security of its nuclear assets and revival of economy.

Steps taken by Pakistan:

Pakistan supported all the

UN resolutions aimed at preventing terrorism

Pakistan is a signatory to many UN resolutions

The government of Pakistan took many steps including:

→ Co-operation with International coalition to curb terrorism

→ Immigration control measure to keep a check on the movement of potential extremists

→ Actions against fanatical extremist organizations and groups

→ Detention of Jihadi leaders, and banning ~~of~~ Jihadi Organizations

→ Reformation and regulation of madrassahs and mosques.

The government also provided support to the US including: Provision of air base, support for air corridor and naval bases, support for logistic support by road, support in operation enduring freedom, banning of militant organizations and operations against Al-Qaeda and Taliban

Critical Analysis:

The US war against Terrorism has badly affected Pakistan's economy and society. The joining of US-led coalition had some short term gains

It helped Pakistan overcome sanctions, end its isolation and revive economy as well as military assistance and initiate a composite dialogue with India. Pakistan also got the status of non-NATO ally and that of "front line state" from a failed state. On the other hand, Pakistan had to revise its Afghan policy and faced difficulties in diplomacy while supporting the freedom struggle of Kashmir. It increased extremism in the society, led to huge influx of Afghan refugees and displaced people. Pakistan must keep on with its efforts to facilitate Afghan peace process to end this bloody war.

Conclusion:

The War on terror has had a significant impact on Pakistan, both internally and externally. Pakistan provided a great support to US to counter the terrorism. In War on terror, Pakistan supported US to counter those militant groups which Pakistan supported in the past to achieve its own objectives in India and Afghanistan. As a result, extremism and militancy increased in Pakistan. Moreover, this support made Pakistan's economy sliding downward and Pakistan has to face difficulty in supporting the freedom struggle of Kashmiris due to this diplomacy.