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REVIVAL OF TERRORISM IN PAKISTAN

2. INTRODUCTION

Pakistan has been facing a renewed wave of terrorism from its western border. Indeed, this is a return of terrorism after Pakistan had dealt with such a menace through its various operations ranging from 2007 to 2017. Operation Zarb-e-Azb was the last of such operations during that time, which was conducted in North Waziristan Agency (NWA). The area was a "No go area" as the headquarter of Fitnah al Khawarij was present there. Through this counter-terrorism operation the Pakistan's security forces was able to destroy all the terrorist networks of the Fitnah al Khawarij. This led these terrorist to flee to Afghanistan. There they were welcomed by NDA and RAW, which led to their regrouping. This essay will analyze the reasons for their revival, the impact it is currently having in Pakistan, and the way forward.

2. REASONS FOR THE REVIVAL OF TERRORISM IN PAKISTAN

① After the withdrawal of US and Nato troops from Afghanistan, TTP was encouraged to challenge the writ of the Pakistani State

As 160,000+ troops of both the US and Nato left Afghanistan, the Afghan Taliban celebrated ^{it} as a victory. Twenty years of fighting was over, this gave Fitna al-Khawarij new hope. This terrorist outfit used Afghanistan as a launchpad to carry out terrorism in Pakistan. Since the Taliban takeover of Pakistan Afghanistan, Pakistan has faced a renewed wave and an overwhelming amount of terrorist attacks.

According to reports:-

Year	Attacks
2021	268
2022	365
2023	577
2024	Attacks leading to 950+ killed

A UN report on militancy, which was released in Feb 2025 states that Afghan Taliban continues to support TTP. The report further added that between 6000 & 6500 TTP members are present in Afghanistan.

② RAW and Afghan Taliban continue to support Fitnah al khawarij and BLA in Pakistan

India has been using TTP and BLA as proxies to not only challenge the writ of the Pakistani state, but also de-stabilise Islamabad. The Government of Pakistan has provided the world with evidence regarding this backing. Evidence included bank transactions, interception of communication between Indian spies and the terrorist outfit, and the most important evidence in the name of Khulbushan Yadav. When it comes to the Afghan Taliban, they have not only provided a safe haven for Fitnah al khawarij but also provided them with Nato weapons. It is estimated that \$1.6 billion worth of weapons were left by Nato and US troops, which were taken over by ANDSF. According to Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, these terrorists are using sophisticated weaponry; ranging from M4 rifles, M24 sniper, Night vision Goggles and many more.

③ Weak policing in the area that finds it difficult to maintain the status quo

As the policing act in 2018 was extended to Ex-FATA, they were unable to

take control of the ⁹ Area. The military left the area, which created a security vacuum that the police could not overcome. This led to the increase in terrorist movements in the area that went unchecked by the local policing. The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) in Banu does not have an official building. Due to lack of funding they have to rent out a building. This lack of preparedness against an enemy with modern weapons led to the rise in terrorism in KP and Balochistan.

④ Inconsistent policies from different Governments Led to uncertainty

Successive Governments oscillated between kinetic and non-kinetic strategies. When a government wanted to negotiate, the demands of the TTP were unattainable. They demanded for the reversal of the 25th Amendment, which merged FATA into KP and to reinstate the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR). This stalemate led to the revival of terrorism in Pakistan.

3. IMPACTS ON PAKISTAN

① Renewed terrorism has caused countless deaths

Deaths of Pakistanis have increased since 2021, with the most deaths consisting of the security forces. After the forces, these terrorists outfits are killing Chinese nationals (in dasu, bisham, karachi, Gwadar). Then comes civilians of Pakistan. In the first six months of 2024, the death toll because of these attacks were 950+.

② Foreign Direct Investment has decreased due to security concerns

Pakistan is at the crossroads that connects central Asian countries with south Asia and beyond. Terrorism has greatly affected the FDI. Pakistan special economic zones (SEZ) are currently not fully operable due to the security concerns, which has impacted the trajectory of Pakistan to an extent.

③ The Government is investing more on security & less on social development

The Government of Pakistan has increased the defence budget in FY2025. The reasons are genuine, but this has left social development without the increase in funds required for development. The poverty level in

Pakistan has reached 44%. A part of this rise is due to the revival of terrorism in Pakistan.

④ People that were effected by previous operation, oppose any new military operation

Sanitation operations such as operation Sarbakaf in Bajaur were heavily opposed by the people of the area. Since a full scale operation can cause massive displacements, the people of ~~Ex-Fata~~ want the state to negotiate with the terrorists. It is estimated that the operational cost of operation Zarb-e-Azb was Rs 206 billion. The operation, though successful, displaced 0.9 million Pakistanis. This has ^{pushed} caused the state and the people of the area into an awkward position.

4. WAY FORWARD

① A need for a unified and coordinated National Action Plan.

The plan should involve all state-holders. It should have a mix of kinetic and non-kinetic actions. The Government should focus on increasing the intensity of intelligence based operation (IBO), which would assure

minimum collateral damage.

② De-weaponisation of KPK and Balochistan

De-weaponisation of KPK and Balochistan would ensure the writ of the state. De-weaponisation should be encouraged and those who voluntarily surrender their weapons must be incentivised.

③ Empower Local Governments and modernise the Police

The state should focus on empowering local government so that the writ of state is not lost. Police should be modernised in these areas as the enemies are more prepared. In order to combat such sophisticated weapons, modern weapons should also be provided to the local police. In areas like these, ^{an} morale is an important factor the wins duels.

④ Engaging with Afghanistan on a diplomatic level

A UNSC report published in 2023, revealed that the link between Afghan Taliban and Fitnah al Khawarij remained strong. Pakistan should consiste-

–ntly engage Afghanistan. Pakistan should take every measure necessary to fully stop the operations of Fitnah-al-Khawarij in Afghanistan. This level of cooperation with Afghanistan will build trust and open opportunities for regional prosperity.

5. CONCLUSION

The reasons and impact of the revival of terrorism in Pakistan maybe multi-faceted in nature, but one thing that remains constant is the resolve of Pakistanis. Through the creation of a Unified National Action Plan, empowering local governments, modernising police, deweaponising KP and Balochistan, and consistently engaging with Afghanistan would bring an end to this menace; resulting in lasting peace in the region.

improve the references and the paper presentation part.

AOA Sir, sir kindly also address the following questions that I have regarding presentation:

1. How can I incorporate flowcharts in my answers?
2. What steps should I take to facilitate the examiner through my presentation?

Thank you!