

PART-II**Q2****TTP REVIVAL**

The terrorist group, Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has been a long standing issue for Pakistan and its threat has revived once again. This resurgence is a complex issue rooted in a combination of factors including Afghan Taliban's rise to power, internal political instability, recent relations with India, rise of Noor Wali Mehsud, decline of Islamic State-Khorasan (ISK) and perceived government failures. Following are the reasons for this revival of insurgency:

Reasons of TTP's Revival

While there are various reasons for the revival of TTP in Pakistan, following is some of the major ones:

(i) Noor Wali's Reunification of TTP

TTP went through a long period of crisis and internal fragmentation and by 2018

it was nearly defunct; its nominal leadership could hardly muster around 2000 fighters under its direct authority. The rise to power of Noor Wali Mehsud, the most intellectual of TTP leaders so far, inaugurated a reversal of the group's decline. Noor Wali spent years trying to reunify the TTP, to good effect. The majority of the splinter groups have now come back together, and most of the remaining ones will follow suit. This reunification has revived the group to its original strength in Pakistan, leading to large scale attacks, specially in Waziristan.

(ii) Decline of ISK

Another one of the key reasons the TTP has been able to revive its operations is that its regional competitor ISK is suffering. Since 2015, a variety of state-led operations against ISK have inflicted substantial losses upon the group. While ISK is still capable of launching occasional large scale

attacks, its general standing has deteriorated, leaving it as a much weaker alternative for the region's ~~the~~ jihadis.

(iii) Relations with India

During this year, it has been proven publically that the relations between the insurgent group and India have deepened. By renewing this budding romance with the TTP, India aims to reinvigorate its strategies of applying pressure on Pakistan through Afghan proxies. With India's economic and diplomatic aid, Taliban have been able to revive themselves to their power.

(iv) Political Instability

Pakistan's internal political and social instability, including a polarized society, has created a vacuum that the TTP has filled, exerting pressure on the government.

Policy Recommendations

To counter the terrorism spread by the TTP, the government of Pakistan can take the following policy decisions:

(i) Strengthening Border Security

A robust border security system is crucial to prevent the TTP from crossing into Pakistan, recruiting and launching attacks. This includes improved intelligence gathering and coordination with the Afghan Taliban.

(ii) Awareness to the Youth

TTP preys upon vulnerable young people, specially students of colleges and universities. A comprehensive plan to spread awareness among the youth should be launched in every school, college and university to avoid further recruitments in Pakistan.

(iii) Addressing Grievances:

The government needs to address the root causes of extremism, including

poverty, inequality, and lack of opportunities, to prevent further radicalization.

Concluding Remarks:

With the current rise of negative messages against Pakistan on social media by its own citizens, it has become easier for the Taliban to target and recruit such individuals who are already against the state. So, it is a shared responsibility of the state and its citizens to counter such groups and insurgents instead of ~~creating~~ deepening the divide.

Q 4 BANGLADESH RELATIONS UNDER YUNUS ADVISORY

Under Yunus' leadership, Bangladesh has exhibited a shift in foreign policy, moving away from its close ties with India and towards greater engagement with China and Pakistan. This shift is characterized by a diversification of ~~econo~~ economic and political relationships, potentially leading to a more balanced foreign policy approach.

Bangladesh - India Relations

(i) Deteriorating Relations:

Relations between Bangladesh and India have deteriorated significantly since the fall of Sheikh Hasina government, with growing mistrust on both sides. New Delhi had been friendly with the previous government despite its authoritarian trampling of human rights and democracy.

India is sheltering Sheikh Hasina, who the new prime leader of Bangladesh says must be extradited to Dhaka.

(ii) Concerns over Hindu Minority

India has expressed concerns and worry about the safety and well-being of the Hindu minority in Bangladesh (Dec 2014), while Bangladesh views India's support for Hasina as a hindrance to the establishment of the Yunus-led government.

(iii) India's Response:

India appears to be hesitant to engage with the Yunus government, particularly without a resolution to the political crisis and a clear path towards elections.

Relations with China

(i) Economic and Political Ties

Bangladesh has been actively seeking closer economic and political ties with

China, potentially reducing its dependence on India. The recent visit to Beijing by Yunus marked a historic milestone in Bangladesh-China relations, commemorating the 50th anniversary of diplomatic ties. Today China stands as the biggest trading and defense partner of Bangladesh.

cii) Investment and Infrastructure

China has been a major investor in Bangladesh, particularly in infrastructure projects because of the ^{strategic} geopolitical gateway of Bangladesh, connecting two of the world's most dynamic regions. In 2018, China surpassed India as Bangladesh's largest trading partner and since then, it has maintained its dominant position. Although some analysts have cautioned that over reliance on Chinese capital could lead to longterm debt dependency.

Relations with Pakistan

(i) Improved Bilateral Relations

Under Yunus, Bangladesh has shown a willingness to strengthen its relationship with Pakistan, which has been welcomed by Pakistan. Since August 2024, there have been numerous diplomatic exchanges between the two countries, such as Yunus' meetings with PM Shehbaz Sharif. An upcoming visit by Deputy PM and Foreign Minister Ishrak Banu will be the first expected ministerial visit from Pakistan to Dhaka in the last 13 years, indicating eagerness on both sides to deepen ties.

(ii) Trade Relations

This foreign policy shift extends to commercial ties, after a long time, Pakistan and Bangladesh have resumed direct trade. Direct flights have resumed and both countries have simplified visa procedures. Though still early, this signals a significant

break from the past and could form an emerging regional triangle, especially with deepening Beijing-Dhaka ties.

Concluding Remarks:

Yunus' leadership has brought about a shift in Bangladesh's foreign policy, reducing its traditional reliance on India and exploring other options. This shift could lead to a more balanced and independent foreign policy for Bangladesh, allowing it to pursue its interests with greater flexibility.

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Q1 INDUS WATER TREATY: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Indus' Water Treaty is a water - distribution treaty between India and Pakistan, arranged and negotiated by the World Bank, to use the water available in the Indus River and its tri tributaries.

Recent Developments

Following a targeted terrorist attack in Baisaran Valley of Pahalgam, Indian Occupied Kashmir, India declared the suspension of the Indus Water Treaty with Pakistan. This decision was made by the cabinet Committee on Security.

India cited national security concerns as the primary reason for suspending the treaty even though Pakistan's involvement has not been proven in this case.

Concerns About the Treaty

With one short explanation, India has stopped the water flow for Pakistan but the pressing concerns aren't for short terms but longer term implications are at play.

During all the trying times, the treaty has upheld itself but now a question arises, whether India has any right to stop the water for Pakistan or if India can do as it pleases and for infrastructure over the river which would hinder the flow of water for Pakistan?

Pakistan is now in a tough position, not because water will stop but because the system it supports was never built for uncertainty. The flows of the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab are the backbone of Pakistan's agriculture, its energy system. At present, Pakistan has no alternative for these waters.

Recommendations

1- Domestic Water Management

Pakistan should invest in Dams and reservoirs to enhance water storage capacity, especially during the wet season. Implementation of water-saving irrigation techniques could reduce water losses and maximize agricultural productivity. Furthermore, exploring alternative water sources, such as groundwater and rain water harvesting, to supplement river water and reduce dependency on the Indus system could help.

2- Proactive Dispute Resolution

The PIC (Permanent Indus Commission) is the designated forum for resolving disputes related to the treaty, so regular meetings and communication are crucial.

If disagreements arise, proactively utilizing the dispute resolution mechanisms outlined in the treaty, such as the appointment of a neutral expert by the World Bank could help resolve the matter.