A Review of the Emergence and Popularity of Tehreek-e-Taliban Swat

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Abstract: *Tehreek-e-Taliban Swat (TTS) emerged as a formidable challenge for the Pakistani administration in Swat. It was able to launch a successful insurgency in Swat within a very short period. It was very surprising for the political observers that insurgency got considerable public support in a limited period. TTS touched the climax of strength when it was able to get administrative control of the Swat area. The leadership of TTS used modern tools and tactics i.e. FM radio to propagate its program. A private militia (Shaheen Force) was also organised to launch the armed struggle. Local police and Frontier Constabulary (FC) became ineffective in maintaining the administrative control of the Government of Pakistan. The study investigates how TTS was able to become so powerful in Swat. It is an analysis of the factors responsible for the rise and augmentation of TTS under the leadership of Fazalullah. The purpose of the study is to develop a scholarly understanding of the ideological foundation and strategy of TTS. This study is explanatory in its nature. The explanation is based upon the qualitative interpretation of the actions, policies, and strategies adopted by the leadership of TTS.*

Introduction

Swat valley is an alternating elevation and mountainous region. The valley is protracted from south to north to the foothill of *the "Hindukush"* mountains series. Swat River had an abundance of water that is a blessing of God. Valley has lush green gorges, plains, glaciers, forests and mountain series. The significant vicinities of Swat are Charbagh, Madyan, Mitaltan, Bahrain, and Mitalta. There are different ethnic groups, including Pakhtuns, Gujjars and Kohistans. Pashtu is the predominant language spoken in the region. The most predominated population is Muslims and minorities like Christians, Hindus, Ahmadis and Buddhists.

Swat valley came under a catastrophic situation through an organised movement named Tehreek- Nifaz-e- Shariat-e-Muhammadi (TNSM), set the foundation by a noble saint Sufi Muhammad. This organisation is determined to struggle to enforce Shariah laws in Swat. PATA regulations provided it as fertile constitutional grounds for strengthening its stance. 9/11 incident changed the paradigm, and the leash of TNSM came into the hands of Fazlullah, the son-in-law of Sufi Muhammad. He used new tools and tactics and struggled over through an organised constitutional government by use of violence and subversion. He organised his private militia under the name of "Shaheen force" and became the head of TTS. He started a protracted political and military struggle to deteriorate the legitimacy, power and control of the existing government. Swat insurgency had a specific ideology in which the leadership of Fazlullah instigated violent acts of terrorism, sabotage, civil disobedience and wage gruelling warfare to overthrow the existing government. He used terrorism as a

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tool of insurgency in Swat in the name of religion, which is a very important feature in human lives (Khatuk, 2010). Incidents like air strikes on Madrassa caused innocent children's causalities, and the Lal Masjid operation enabled Fazlullah to propagate his narrative of Pashtun cleansing. He came under the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan umbrella and was nominated as "Ameer" of TTS. Resultantly, the wave of pro-militants spread all around the valley. Mostly young boys were attracted to TTS. The organisation was financially supported and funded by militants. The timber and precious metals industry came into the hands of these culprits, and they imposed heavy taxes on it. They performed lethal actions for collection of money, abduction for ransom, burglary, and robbery were common actions performed by the militants. The oppressed people, including the tenants, voluntary joined the organisation. He got massive support and popularity in a very short interval with the help of TTP and other indigenous and foreign organisations.

It has been observed that the Inter-state phenomenon of war has minimised while intra-state insurgencies have been increased (Hippler, 2006). The contemporary insurgencies devastated the existing political order and established substitute governments with the support of the local population. Bernsten (2008), Metz (2007), Underhill (2014), and Rich and Duyvesteyn (2012) have provided sufficient writing and intellectual discussion on insurgency and its dynamics. Mitchell (1998) exemplifies the beliefs and structure of insurgency. Neil B. E (2006) explains the types and enlightened variables of insurgency. William S. J (2013) and Asprey (1994) meticulously defined the rudiments of insurgency, operational strategies and manoeuvres. Traditionalists considered themselves soldiers of God. They want to enforce divine laws on earth as per their religious teachings. They believed in and faith in exclusive access to sacred knowledge and values. Milton-Edword (2005), Shepared (2009), and Mozaffari (2007) explained the combination of religious movements and Jihadi organisations with traditionalist insurgency. (Shah,1995; Khan, 2010; Sultan-i-Rome2012; Khattak, 2010; Rashid, Orakzai,

2011) had an authoritative discussion about the upsurge of militancy in Swat. They analysed the situation accurately and explicit the factors that caused the escalation of TTS.

Sufi Muhammad, the key founder of TNSM, provided a concrete self-interpretation logical platform for TTS. He claimed that the constitution of 1973 of Pakistan itself described that no law would be constituted against the Quran-o-Sunnah, while all the practising and existing systems (economic, judicial, social and political system) and laws are against the Islamic Sharia. Sufi Muhammad itself described in his writings "Al-Faraq-Bain-ul-Sharia wal Jumhoria, (2011). In this book, he elucidated how the existing system of Pakistan is antagonistic to the Islamic Sharia system. In his other literature, Dawat-ul-Haq, (2011) and Marafat Haq-o-Batil (2011) claimed that government deliberately did not want to impose Sharia laws under the external pressure of the West. He openly released a *"Fatwa"* against those individuals who objected to the Sharia law. They are all liable and worthy of death. He stressed Sharia laws. He advocated that only Nazam-e-Adil could bring a speedy and fair judicial system to Swat. Akber (2011), Mir (2008) and Ahmed (1978) narrated that Pashtuns breathe under Pashtunwali. It provides a social interaction among the Pashtun nation. They regarded their social norms, customs, and values. They could sacrifice their lives for their customs. Khattak (2010), Rahi (2021), Ali (2010) and Manzoor (2008) are those scholars who observed the situation closely. They analysed the mayhem situation and unveiled the factors that caused the rise of Fazlullah. Benenson (2010), Rehman (2007) and Tajik (2011) advocated that when Fazlullah had established his shadow government in Swat, FC and Police remained unsuccessful in maintaining law and order situation meanwhile the military took over the charge of Swat.

The main objective of this study is to investigate how TTS flourished and why it became violent and what were the supporting factors that caused its upsurge.

Reinforcement Elements of Swat Insurgency

1. Constitutional Dilemma
2. Religious Esoteric Attraction
3. Ethnic Support through Pashtunwali
4. Economic Deprivation
5. Security Flaws

Constitutional Dilemma

Swat state had its own independent identity before its emergence. Incidents did not occur suddenly; many hidden reasons remained recessive and dominant in favourable conditions. The same happened in the case of the Swat insurgency. TNSM was flourishing under the nose of security agencies, and they were not serious about overcoming the situation at the right time. Many subsidiary predicaments participated in the flourishing insurgency. These dynamics included constitutional dilemmas, economic deprivation, the esoteric attraction of religion and ethnic affiliation based on '*Pashtun Wali*'. The constitutional dilemma was generated with the development of the PATA regulations of 1975, in which primary change let known by Regulation No.1 of 1975, in which PATA Criminal Laws Regulations (CLR) were considered obligatory and applied atone. Whereas Regulation No. II of 1975 described the procedure of civil matters of PATA through this notification. Two parallel judicial systems were functional in these specific areas according to regulation No.1 of 1975. According to the schedule to the regulations, crimes were categorised into two parts. The crimes cited in part I would be prosecuted in the tribunal established by the Deputy Commissioner (DC), and those crimes mentioned in part II be prosecuted in the same court of law, but the difference was just the consent of all concerned clusters. There were five members of the tribunal, one of the government officers, whose rank would not be below the Tehsildar. He had no authority to penalise any delinquent on his own. The Deputy Commissioner (DC) had powers to take action in a case only if four of the fifth member of the tribunal declared an individual guilty during their judgment. Crimes related to murder, robbery and sedition were kept out of the purview of the hearing (Sultan-i-Rome 2012).

The civil disputes were kept into two categories according to Regulation No. II of 1975. The cases other than land dispute, in which the claim's value did not exceed the five thousand rupees, were kept in the list I, while the rest offences were placed in part II. The disputed offences were placed in a tribunal consisting of three members whose rank would not be less than Tehsildar. The hearing of cases that come in Part II would be in the court of DC. Tribunal acted as the fact-finding body. The opinion of the Tribunal affected the decision and decree of the DC. The right of appeal was granted against the decision or decree of DC to Commissioner and Provincial Government, respectively (T. Majeed 2016).

PATA special provisions were promulgated under regulation IV of 1976 on 29 December 1976. The powers over civil and criminal cases from the Judiciary to the executive are called the 'Jirga'. The 'Jirga' had exclusive jurisdiction in all respect of offences under the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) except crimes against the state. Regulation NO. I of 1975 was amended through PATA Criminal Law on 11 January 1978. Under this amendment, crimes against public serenity, public integrity and untrue pieces of evidence were omitted from the exclusive authority of the Jirga. Some chapters of PPC were exempted, and cases under these chapters were put on trial in the Judiciary. A dual judicial system was operating in criminal and civil matters. The cases were not speedily disposed-off and caused umbrages. These regulations birth the redressing, grievances, denunciation and criticism. In these circumstances, the situation became bad to worse. Consequently, disappointment and alienation prevailed, and voices for extension and change of regular laws arose in Swat and Malakand (Khatuk, 2010).

The Provincial Government (KPK) constituted a commission in 1981 under the guidance of Justice Allah Bakhish Khan to assess the public estimations and the possibility of the implementation of the customary laws. The commission worked on it and finally sent reports in 1982, but the

government set aside the report in the cold storage.

A delegation under the supervision of advocate Jahnzeb met the Chief Minister and claimed the implementation of customary laws in the Swat. During negotiation, Nagotal Malak passed sardonic annotations that they wished for Shariah and Islamic laws. He further added that they would accept neither the civil laws nor PATA laws; they would not hesitate to sacrifice themselves and their children. Chief Minister of KPK communicated to the Commissioner of Malakand to have a consultation with conspicuous leaders of Malakands and seek out their views of what kind of regulations they desired. Individuals who participated included Islamic clerics, lawyers, Khans and Maliks. The demand of Khans and Maliks was to implement the PATA regulations, while the politicians and lawyers wanted to implement the regular laws. Mahmud Jan Khan, the prominent leader of PPP, opposed regular laws and claimed for Islamic laws and declined to accept and sign other than the Shariat-e- Muhammadi. The Nagotal Malak took a stand for the enforcement of Sharia laws.

Mahmud Jan Khan and Nagotal Malik were the prominent leaders of PPP, and Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpaoo, as Chief Minister of NWFP, was handling the situation. The delegation consisted of seven prominent leaders of different political parties, including PPP, Awami National Party (ANP), Jamiatul Ulma-e-Islam, Jamat-e-Islami (JI), and Muslim League (ML). These all were committed and decided that they would not rest until Shariat-e-Muhammadi was not prescribed. The demands of Sharia law spawned under the leadership of Sufi Muhammad as a head of the organisation for the enforcement of Sharia laws in the Malakand division. 'Yaa Shariat ya Shahadat' was a motivational slogan that meant (either Shariat or martyrdom).

The PATA regulation NO. I and II of 1975 were later challenged by the litigants vide writ petition No. 401,417,442 and 495 of 1989. Another writ petition No. 28 of 1990 was filed. The division bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) declared that these regulations were an exposed violation of Article 25 of the constitution 1973 of Pakistan. The Provincial Government of (NWFP) filed an appeal against the verdict of the Peshawar High Court (PHC), but Supreme Court (SC) dismissed the appeal on 13 February 1994. The previously mentioned verdict of PHC and the SC verdict provided fragile ground for TNSM to fill the gap and embellishment their demands for putting into practice Sharia laws (Sultan-i-Rome 2008).

Religious Esoteric Attraction

The concept of state is not present in Quran; even in the period of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the concept of state was also not present. The teaching of the Quran also referred to an organised authority which belongs to Allah Almighty. Allah Almighty has communicated the divine with a decree to governer and people as governed (Muhammad 2011). It is the decree from superior(Allah Almighty) to inferior(populace), and people accept the order of divine laws. The meaning of Islam is to surrender or submit the will before Allah Almighty, which connects a relationship between Allah and his men. The obligation of the messengers was to deliver the divine order or message to the public. Every messenger had a distinct Shariat. The Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad was also the last messenger of Allah Almighty, who came with a distinctive Shariat-e-Muhammadi. Islamic contract theory is based upon two schools of thought. According to Hobbes and Al-Farabi, people mutually gathered and formed a society rendering it to Single-Contract Theory (SCT). The individuals agreed on the universal contract of compliance to a ruler who is conferred at once with exclusive authority. In Double Contract Theory (DCT) presumed that once a society is established by one contract, a king is ordained by another agreement to decree in harmony with definite conditions and restraint on his powers (Khadduri 1951). Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad was the supreme head of the leading authority, and Caliph occupied this locus after the passing away of the Holy Prophet. However, they did not implement the prophetic function of propagating and communicating the Divine Will. With the death of Hazrat Muhammad,

The divine legislation was also ended, and the judicial right of the Caliph was to elucidate the divine law rather than to present new laws. In SCT, people are considered a passive party; the ruler had absolute powers, and the individual had limited authority to do with government institutions. However, during the appointment of the Caliph, DCT applied in which the Caliph was on one side and the Muslim community on the other side. Therefore, people are aligned to Allah Almighty and carry all responsibility of the Caliph. The Caliph was bounded to carry out the whole responsibilities from divine rules. The Caliph pull out his powers from the celestial law. The Caliph remained on Sharia laws and exercised his power as well: if he did not exercise his power according to Islamic Sharia law, he would not remain long on his chair. The earlier structure of the Caliphate was based on DCT, which was based on Shariah law (Khadduri 1951). No law can be constituted or altered against the existing laws presented by Holly Quran. The divine laws are perpetual, concrete and comprehensive. Even there is no authority of a prophet to dissent (Mozaffari 2007). The Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad interpreted these laws and taught his cliques the true decree of Allah Almighty.

Sufi Muhammad propagated his ideology on the apparent teachings of Islam. He used these tools to exploit the individuals of Swat. He was against democracy and struggled for the establishment of Islamic Sharia laws in Swat. He advocated that the right to vote only belongs to a person who is a male Muslim and has the best awareness of Islamic teachings because of his vote for the selection of the pious and honest person. The current economic, judicial, and political system is entirely western shaped. The entire western systems are apostate, so these could not be accepted in Islamic systems. Therefore, under these circumstances, voting is un-Islamic and Haram. Some distinct illogicalities distinguish the democratic system from Sharia (Muhammad 2011). Sufi Muhammad clarifies the difference between existing democratic systems and Islamic Sharia in Pakistan.

1. The democratic system belongs to demos, while sovereignty belongs to Allah in an Islamic state.
2. Everyone has the right to vote, while in a democracy, only religiousness and piousness can participate in voting.
3. The decision between untruth and sooth will be in favour of sooth, while in the democratic process, the truth has no value; it depends upon only the majority decision.
4. The rule of women is forbidden in Shariah but allowed in the democratic system.
5. It is obligatory to veil women while liberty is granted in a democracy.
6. It is obligatory to unite for the sake of truth, while in democracy, verboten.
7. Discordance in a permissible act is verboten, whereas discordance is the base of democracy.
8. There is a disparity between males and females, whereas in democracy same rights are allowed.
9. There is a difference between learnt and arrogant persons, while democracy gives the same right to vote.
10. Differences between Muslims and Non-Muslim exist, while in democracy, there is no difference between them.
11. There is a compulsion for revenge according to Quran and Sunnah, whereas it is forbidden in the democratic system.
12. Sentences for Islamic offences (i.e. rijim, qazif, etc.) are obligatory, while democracy denie
13. The non-Muslim rulers cannot rule over Muslims, while in a democracy, everyone has the right to rule.
14. It is fixed to take taxes from non-Muslims, while in the democratic system, only the state had the right to impose a tax with the same aggregate.
15. There is no concession of opposition benches in Islamic Sharia, whereas, in democratic government, opposition benches are compulsory.
16. There are clear signs between the Muslim and non-Muslim ways of life while democracy supports equality.

17. To tell a lie is forbidden in Islam, and attaining support while it is compulsory in democracy.
18. To deceive or cuckold is forbidden in Sharia, while democracy ignored it.
19. To attain power for the rule in Islam is "Haram", while democratic values lie in it.
20. To spend money on the electoral process is forbidden in Sharia, while a lot of money is spent during the electoral.

The above glittering teachings were enough to exploit the people who had an esoteric attraction toward Islam. Fazlullah propagated these teachings through his FM broadcasting. He elaborated that the democratic and Islamic Sharia are antagonistic to each other. Islam is entirely different from the existing democratic system. The real difference is found in its gist. Therefore, democracy in Pakistan is the same, just as in India and western countries (USA, UK), which is antagonistic the Islamic values. Fazlullah waged Jihad against this apostate system and tried to enforce the Islamic Sharia in the Swat and Malakand divisions.

Ethnic Support under Pashtunwali

In the context of Pakistan and Afghanistan, both had strong ethnic ties among *"Pashtun"* (Waite, 2010). Due to rebellious cross-border activity, Islamabad remained inevitably in debates about Afghanistan's doom. Likewise, the violent activities bordering Afghanistan contribute to the origins of conflict in the Swat Valley.

9/11 incident changed the paradigm; the gigantic flight of Taliban leaders to the tribal areas of Pakistan provided TTS with a new ally. Strategically Taliban were interested in this region. Swat had no border sharing with Afghanistan, while Malakand was important as the Peshawar–Swat and Peshawar–Chitral highway passes through it; severing this at the Malakand pass would cut the whole Malakand division off from the rest of the country and connecting Taliban pockets of resistance in a chain from South Waziristan to Swat (Ali, 2009).

In October 2006, a USA missile targeted a madrassa in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan (FATA), killing 80 students (Orakzai, 2011). Pashtun had a distinct social interaction and bounded with each other based on language, socially, relatively and culturally. The other incident of Jamia Hafsa and Lal Masjid made violent the militants because a large number of students of Lal masjid belonged to these tribal areas. Fazlullah built up a narrative that the Pakistan military was doing ethnic cleansing of Pashtun. He succeeds in exploiting the militants and dominating ethnic factors in the Swat.

Pashtunwali

"*Pashtunwali*" is the Pashtun code of life, as practised and understood by Pashtuns. In the social behaviour of Pashtun s, it is considered as an essential element of Pashtun. It is partly fiction and partly reality, which is found in the proverbs, metaphors and in songs. It can never be away from the individual's mind. Academics recognised it as an overlapping set of beliefs as a core of "*Pashtunwali*". It can be said that "*Pashtunwali*" functions are dominant in the social and cultural life of Pashtuns. Pashtuns from all wakes of life contributed to modelling the multidimensional and intimate account of *"Pashtun"* social and political life. There are four main fundamentals upon which the whole structure of "*Pashtunwali*" is constructed (Ahmad, 1978). The sentiments and sympathies of the public were in favour of TTS. Pashtuns never accepted the supremacy of non-Pashtun. So local Pashtun community provided them with moral and physical support.

Socio–Economic Deprivation

Socio-economic deprivation was also a supportive factor for the rise of TTS. The concept of deprivation refers to the impression that spirits of discontent and deprivation are connected to a preferred point of reference. The deprivation arises when desires and needs turn into genuine expectations, necessities, and desires blocked. Deprivation apparently reflects a

dominant factor in the account of social movements. It acted to expound the quest for a social revolution that inspired violent actions. These actions emerged collectively in the form of economic and social deprivation. This deprivation is the main reason for violent and social movements (Krahn & Harrison, 1992). Political Scientist Gurr (1970) argued that instead of an outright standard of deprivation, a cavity among acquired and projected generated collective discontent. He explained that contentious collective political violence is the mean reason based on a perceived discrepancy between men's value expectations and their value capabilities. If the intensity of dissatisfaction increases, violence is probably increased. Khattak (2016) argued that seeds of insurgency in Pakistan's exclusively in PATA regions sowed due to social and economic deprivation. Militants are emerged due to deprivation, injustice, and socio-economic conditions. These grievances lead to social disorder and aggressive group responses. The gap between attainments and expectations would contribute to the motivation of the people to become violent. The rebellion was most likely to be fueled by movements based on perceived deprivation. The chief source of the human and social aptitude for violence seems to be frustration and aggression contrivance (Khatuk, 2010).

The conflicts are raised when the state neglects the areas and denies the mainstream society, economy and education. This frustration leads men to act aggressively (Millard,1939). While the areas where structural conditions are conducive to violent conflicts, such an outbreak will be likely to occur when the government is actively providing highly visible development projects (Koven, 2014). Unemployment is a high statistical significant predictor of terrorism, mostly in those nations where earlier attacks have been recorded (Richardson, 2011). Socio-economic deprivation has given birth to insurgencies, civil wars and small wars, which in turn affected the regulatory capacity of these states. It weakened their legitimacy and created major humanitarian and security problems.

The economic and social marginalisation of a sizeable population provided the breeding ground and raised the violence and insurgency in Swat. The land ownership pattern in the Swat proved to be a pivotal factor in fanning unrest and violence in this region. The individuals who supported Fazlullah were mostly those who were part of the depressed population of the society. The lucrative attraction of wealth and power enabled them to join the TTS. Shaheen Force of Fazlullah consisted mostly of the depressed entities of the society.

Flaws in security policies

The security situation of FATA and PATA was twice affected by the invasion of the Soviet Union and US led-operation enduring after the 9/11 incidents. The security situation was challenged in both incidents badly. The tribal areas that were adjacent to the border were communally and socially interacted and attached to each other. Some security analysts like; Christine Faire and Ayesha G Tellies argued that Pakistan had used the Taliban as their strategic deterrence tools against their traditional enemy India. Mujahideen were holy fighters of Afghan Jihad. However, after the downfall of the Soviet Union, Mujahideen become a headache. They were skilled and well-armed. They established their governments in Afghanistan under the leadership of Usama bin Ladin (C. C. Fair 2010).

Mujahedeen had close ties with Pakistan Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), so security institutions treated them softly. They grew up and flourished in tribal areas, i.e. FATA and PATA. The National Security Council (NSC) of Pakistan remained nonfunctional. No other than the military was an active institution that dealt with security affairs. Pakistan's military was trained for conventional war against its traditional enemy India. When Security forces cordoned down the Swat area, then they faced high resistance from militants. Mulana Fazlula had established his own private militia, "Shaheen Force" (I. A. Khan 2009).

The lack of special strategy and planning created a pungent situation that caused more than fifty thousand causalities and billions of economic losses. The topography of the area made the situation harder. The law enforcement agencies, including police and

FC could not take strict action against the militants. These militants also had close tied with the political and religious parties. Police and FC could not manage the law and order situation due to a lack of manpower, equipment and political interference. During personal communications with police officials, they said that they tried their best to overcome the situation, but there was no strict SOP to handle the militants.

Conclusion

The rise of TTS in Swat is obviously, a challenging task for the leadership in a sovereign state. Actually, the TTS was developed from TNSM. This organisation was religious-based organised. The religious-based organisations around the world consist of traditionalist-committed individuals. They did not hesitate to sacrifice even their lives. TTS flourished under the leadership of Falullah because of his new way of tactics and tools. He achieved the sentiments and support of the local community. He approached the tenants, poor and social and economically depressed persons. He gained the sympathies and compassions of the name of Pashtunwali. He justified himself that he was the son of Pashtun soil and was fighting for an Islamic state's rise. He empowered organisations by building a social relationship with TTP and other indigenous and foreigner militant organisations. Concrete religious framed ideological structure, esoteric religious attraction, social and economic deprivation, Pashtun ethnicity and security laps were the major factors that caused the augmentation of TTS. If all the law enforcement institutions were operational timely, then the situation would be different from the situation faced by the security agencies.

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