

## **A Critical Analysis of Terrorism and Military Operations in Malakand Division (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) after 9/11**

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### **Abstract**

*The 9/11 was a paradigm shifting event in the international and global politics. On September 11, 2001, two jet planes hit the twin's tower in United States of America (USA). US official authorities said that it is done by al-Qaeda. This event also changes Pakistan's internal and foreign policies. The government of United States compel Afghan Taliban government to handover the master mind of 9/11 attack and their leader Osama bin Laden but the talks failed between the both governments. Therefore US government compel the government of Pakistan to give us Military bases and assistance against Afghan Taliban. Pakistan agreed with US as frontline ally of US in war on terror. The majority of Pakistani people were not happy with the decision, therefore, some non-state actors appeared in different part of the country especially in Malakand Division and FATA to support Taliban regime in Afghanistan. In Malakand Division Mulana Sufi Muhammad head of Tehrik Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi started a proper armed campaign for Afghan Taliban Support and sent thousands of people to Afghanistan support Taliban against US and their allied forces. It was a basic reason behind the emergence of terrorism in Malakand division KP but it did not played it role alone to cause terrorism in the region. Many other important factors i.e. weak political administration, unemployment, economic deprivation, socio-political instability constituted the main reason that opened room for non-state actors to consolidate their grip on the region.*

**Keywords:** Afghanistan, Pakistan, United States of America, Al-Qaeda, Taliban, Malakand Division.

### **Introduction**

Since the beginning Pakistan has remained a security state. However, after September 11, 2001, Pakistan Army was ensuring internal security and stability

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through tackling insurgency in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and the Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA) of the country. FATA comprises seven agencies, i.e. Bajaur, Mohmand, Orakzai, Khyber, Kurram, North Waziristan, and South Waziristan. PATA of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa includes the districts of Swat, upper and lower Dir, Buner and Shangla. Insurgency was one of the shocking challenges to the security, political, social and economic prosperity of Pakistan. It was a challenge for political government and Pakistan army that how to maintain peace and prosperity. However in this regard, the army has launched some major and several minor military operations against the insurgent, militant and terrorist groups.

Terrorist actions of *Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan* (TTP), *Tehrik Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi* (TNSM), and other foreign-related elements are matters of serious concern to Pakistan. The Pakistan army has used heavy ground and air weapons during the operations. It has resulted in enormous and huge collateral damages. The killing of civilians, innocent people, including women and children, the destruction of schools, collages, civil institutions and hospitals is the result of these operations. However Taliban also contributed a lot in the destruction of Malakand Division and committed many brutal actions against the innocent people. Thousands of casualties cause by suicide attacks and have wide consequence and implications on internal security. The internal socio-political circumstances and the economic situation in FATA and PATA-KP had been collapsed as a consequence of all this. The vital objective of such operations was to force the terrorists groups out of their strongholds and to wipe out their power. To reinstate the government writ and military infrastructure to stop non state armed actors from launching future attacks and terrorist activities.

**Table 01: List of Pak-Military Operations**

S. No.	Military Operation	Launching Year	Region of Occupation
1	Operation Enduring Freedom	2001	Afghanistan/Pakistan
2	Operation Al Mizan	2002	FATA
3	Operation Zalzala	2008	South Waziristan
4	Operation Rah-e-Haq	2007	Malakand Division
5	Operation Sher Dil	2008	Bajaur Agency
6	Operation Rah-e-Rast	2009	Swat KP
7	Operation Rah-e-Nijat	2009	South Waziristan Agency
8	Operation Black Thunderstorm	2009	Malakand Division

9	Operation Koh-e-Sufaid	2011	Kurram Agency
10	Operation Zarb-e-Azb	2014	North Waziristan Agency

## **Military Operation**

Military operation is a planned and designed movement by the equipped military forces in war and it may be used for training in war. Military actions and operations is also use when a state wants to developing situation in response. These are the actions designed by military plan to resolve any issue and control the situation in the state's interests. These operations may be non-combat or of combat types (Glantz, 1991). The military actions and operations have some code names for security purpose and also general names for common usage i.e. Pakistan military operation Rah-e-Haq or Zarb-e-Azb.

Similarly this structure of military actions are planned in armed forces and that is use to conduct operations at different levels of war. However it is a common relationship between the sizes of units, the area where they need to operate, and the requirement or scope of mission they going to perform. But the correlation is not considered absolute while it depends on situation (Glantz, 1991).

## **Terrorism: Definitions**

Terrorism is a complicated phenomenon with extensive wide history and diverse meanings. It depending on the context that when, where and who uses it. Walter Liqueur said terrorism represent the illegitimate and unlawful utilization of power to attain a political objective. He extended his definition that when innocent people are targeted for that goal is called terrorism (Laqueur, 2005). Brian Jenkins says Terrorism is the exercise of force planned to bring about political change. Terrorism also can be defined as Patrick O'Neil mention in his book "Essentials of Comparative Politics" Terrorism is the use of violence by non-state actors against the innocent people and civilians in commands to attain a political goal (O'Neil, 2007).

However as a result of brief study, some of my arguments may criticize these definitions. The terrorism is not like rebellion or insurgency. It is a crime like criminals do in any state or country. Terrorism is so different from rebellion and insurgency. The terrorists have no any solid arguments for their acts. Even they do not have any justification for their actions. If they had any argument (may be right or wrong) but they target the innocent people, they will be considered terrorists. No matter if they are individuals, groups or state, but when they target the innocent people we can call them terrorists. Definition of terrorism in own opinion is "it is an act to commit by non-state armed groups,

state or criminals or anyone with a state or anti-state policies to target the innocent people to achieve his/her objectives or political and nonpolitical goals.” Even if they have any ideology mean that, they have any political or religious ideology and they are revolutionary groups, but if they commit a criminal offense to make disturbance for their own survivals. Though they will be consider as terrorist.

### **Terrorism in Malakand Division: A Brief Discussion**

In 2009 some non-state actors in Malakand Division demanded the government to implement Shariah in the region. These non- state actors were locals and they show him, as a religious background. They propagated their agenda and run their campaign through local radio station, so their campaign had been very enthusiastic and appealing for the locals, hence most of them joined these groupings (Islam, 2014).

Then government launched military operation ‘Rah-e-Rast’ in Malakand Division in 2009. After failing to influence the Taliban to vacate Buner, Dir, and Swat, where the militants had combined control in the first several months of 2009. Outcomes of this military operation were intense and were faced with strong resistance from militants or non-state actors. The circles of these militants were religions grouping from different districts of Malakand Division though the head of the militancy began in Swat.

Military Operation was launched against the religious extremist non state armed actors in the some areas of Malakand Division which included Swat, Buner and Dir Lower. However the military operation was started to establish the writ of the government and provide safe and prosperous life to people of the region. At the same time it caused lots of difficulties such as the economy loses poor health and education, increased unemployment, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and more other relevant problems.

Pakistan military launched a massive offensive against Taliban groups in Malakand region of KP in the last week of April 2009. The operation was chosen as a last alternative after the failure of two peace agreements of the provincial government. The first peace accord conducted with Mullah Fazlullah a local Taliban leader in Swat and the second with TNSM head Sufi Muhammad. But Taliban had refused the agreements and violated the peace accords, to lay down their arms. The basic reason of this failure was; the government of KP signed agreement with a function less leader Sufi Muhammad and it was true that Sufi Muhammad had no commands on local Taliban of Swat. Taliban did not stop their attacks against security forces including Pakistan army, Frontier Corps (FC) and local police either (Islam, 2014).

*“Almost all previous operations had eventually ended with the government reaching a peace agreement or truce with Taliban. After every agreement, the*

*government declared its victory. Taliban, nonetheless, used these agreements strategically to their advantage. These deals had not only consolidated their control in certain areas but also helped them make new recruitments, vital for making further advances” (Rana, 2009; Butt et al, 2011).*

**Table 02: Shows Terrorists attack in FATA and KP (2009)**

<b>Region</b>	<b>No. of Attacks</b>	<b>Killed</b>	<b>Injured</b>
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	1,137	1,439	3,616
FATA	559	644	1,046

**Source:** Arshad Ali. (2010). Economic Cost of Terrorism: A case Study of Pakistan. *Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad.*

### **Emergence of Militant Groups in KP**

After the incident of 9/11 there are more challenges for Muslim states like Iraq and Afghanistan which results war and conflicts. The both countries paid enough and still paying the people losing their lives many people have been paralyzed, disabled and injured due to various attack of allied forces and terrorists. Pakistan is also one of them and facing much more difficulties, death and destruction because of frontline ally non NATO ally (Rahman, 2011). The Malakand Division is provincially administrated tribal area (PATA). The Supreme Court of Pakistan gives order in 1994 that Malakand division to be administering under regular Pakistani law and no any kind of special provisions for the region. But the decision is not very effected, because the head of TNSM Sufi Muhammad call for exclusive *Shariah* jurisdiction. However in 2002 president Musharraf was trying to establish the local governance which has work for security aspects in the PATA districts (Aziz, 2010).

KP region Malakand division and especially Swat where the extremism took place has no shared border with Afghanistan even with FATA. But then what were the causes of terrorism in KP. The so called Islamic extremist group was active before 9/11 with the name of TNSM. During Afghan *Jihad* Sufi Muhammad supported Hikmatyar *Hizbi-e-Islami* (HI) financially and through man-power. In 1989 TNSM leader Mulana Sufi Muhammad started a campaign, the objective of which was the implementation of *Shariah*. Foundation of *Tehreek-i-Nifaz-i-Shariat-i-Muhammadi* was laid down in June 1989 in lower Dir. Mulana Sufi Muhammad’s activities were limited to Malakand division districts like Swat, Lower Dir, Upper Dir, Shangla, Malakand, Buner, Kohistan district of Hazara division and Bajaur Agency in FATA. Soon TNSM got strong support of people in that regions and Sufi Muhammad demanded implementation of Islamic law (Khan, 2010).

The people of KP and FATA are committed to religion; therefore they supported Sufi Muhammad's campaign. The people not only followed him in that campaign before 9/11 but they were supporting him in November 2001 as well, when he called people for "*Jihad*" against US and NATO allies in Afghanistan. Sufi Muhammad was active and prominent member of *Jamat-e-Islami* (JI) in Lower Dir. Some people are of the view that opponent political parties also tried to break the hold of JI in that region. They used Sufi Muhammad as a weapon holder because he was against the democracy and current political system of Pakistan (Aziz, 2010). In 1991 Sufi Muhammad started his campaign in Lower Dir's head-quarter Temergarah along with many supporters. He demanded enforcement of *Shariah* in Malakand division. At that time the sitting Chief Minister (CM) of North West Frontier Province (NWFP) (now KP) was Mir Afzal Khan. He assured that government will fulfill Sufi's demands. The case of implementation of *Shariah* was filed in Supreme Court of Pakistan on 14 February 1991. Supreme Court ordered the government of KP that Malakand division will usually be governed by common law and no kind of special provisions would be given to Malakand Division. (Aziz, 2010).

Supreme Court's decision increased the support for TNSM campaign whereas the local Khans, Maliks and the bureaucracy facilitated Sufi Muhammad. In May, 1994 the Sufi Muhammad called his campaign against the government. In November 1994, his supporters started an armed campaign for their demands and took control of many government buildings in Swat District. In 1999 after the long protest of TNSM, the provincial government regulated "*Shari-Nizam-e-Adal Regulation*" in Malakand division KP (Ali and Khan 2010). But that "*Shari-Nizam-e-Adal Regulation*" was not acted upon properly. The government wanted to settle the trouble on temporary basis and gain some time. New legal administrative institutions of 1994 indirectly suspended the legal rights of peoples of Malakand. That legislation did not meet the criteria of Islamic law not followed proper Pakistani law. Therefore interim government policies dragged circumstances to awful circumstances.

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa situation overall was different from FATA. In KP Malakand division the anti-government extremist group TNSM was active before 9/11. As we know Sufi protested several times in 1991, 1994 and 1999 at Dir, Temergarah and Swat with thousands of supporters. They demanded the enforcement of *Shariah* but whenever government rejected Sufi's demands he protested and launched armed campaign for that purpose. So it is true that Malakand has no close nexus with Afghanistan but the weak administration did not minimize the influence of organizations like TNSM even they supported those organizations for some short term benefits. These administrative weaknesses and their policies paved the way to strengthen these organizations. In future, it resulted in strong opposition to the government of Pakistan after 9/11. Sufi Muhammad later mobilized the people in Malakand division for war against

NATO forces in Afghanistan. He organized a protest demonstration in Swat, Mingora in September, 2001 for raising a “voluntary army” for anti-US *Jihad* in Afghanistan. He collected 10000 persons equipped poorly with weapons and crossed the Pak-Afghan border in 2001 to wage war against the US and their allies.

When the then US president George W. Bush announced to invade Afghanistan against Taliban, Sufi Muhammad once again motivated people to support Afghan Taliban and sent many people to “*Jihad*.” After that Sufi Muhammad was sentenced to imprisonment with his son in law Mulana Fazllulah. Fazllulah was released from jail. He established unauthorized FM radio channel in his native village Imamdheri (three kilometers away from Saidu Sharif). He started the preaching Islam from the channel. In the beginning he was supported by the TNSM members. He motivated people through polite speeches. Every night at 8 p.m. he used to start his (*dars*) speeches. Up to 2005, he was preaching peacefully. In 2007 he established his own Taliban organization and started strong anti-state campaign. The *Lal Masjid* military operation provided him strong social and economic support. The people of Malakand division gave him every possible financial support. The females donated their jewelry, money and other financial assets to the cause Jihad followers of Fazllulah. Actually Red Mosque operation increased Mulana Fazllulah support and thousands of people joined Swat Taliban, to them the *Lal Masjid* Operation presented government as an anti-Islamic and unjust institution. After the death of Hakeem Ullah Mehsud he (Fazllulah) appeared as TTP leader (Firdous, 2014; Aziz, 2010; Khan, 2009; Mayo, 2011; Kakar, 2009).

## **Causes of Terrorism in Malakand Division**

In Malakand Division terrorism had many causes and impacts. According to a survey, the 63 percent of the households of the region agrees with the view that people joined the militants to improve their daily livings and incomes. The survey also mentions that 85 percent has the view that there was a link between poor socio-economic status and militancy. The said report mentioned that the Taliban also involved in looting rich households and money. However according to the survey 75 percent community of the region thought that unemployment induced youth to join the militants (Aziz, 2010).

Media was also main factor behind the emergence of non-state armed actors. Media plays effective role in the construction or destruction of people, state and nation. Radio was used as an instrument of media, in KP and FATA. Radio played very effective role in mind sitting of people. In these regions (FATA & KPK) where literacy level is much low, there were no proper tools of communication and access of media communication in those areas. In this situation FM broadcasting was a very efficient toll for media communications.

Taliban used Radio as toll to motivate the people to challenge the writ of government in the region (Razzaq, 2010). If we compare Malakand Division to other areas of country the Malakand Division of KP has more FM radio stations. It is because of the different rules of Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) for PATA (Alam, 2013). In the mention region PEMRA was the responsible for illegal FM Radio broadcasting. The illegal broadcasting mostly established by the people who had religious background i.e. Sufi Muhammad and Fazlullah. They propagated their beliefs and ideology through the local illegal FM radio broadcastings. This was also a reason behind militancy and terrorism in the region (Khan, 2015).

The following table briefly shows and discuss the causes of terrorism in *Federally Administered Tribal Areas* and the *Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Malakand Division*.

**FACTORS CAUSING TERRORISM IN FATA AND KP**

Political Factors	Socio-Political Factors	Economic Factors
<p><b>1.Govt. Ignorance &amp; Lack of Security</b> (Drone Strikes, Internal and external unproductive and aggressive policies, hard Govt. approach toward citizens, military operations on own)</p> <p><b>2.Ineffective Negotiations and Peace agreements</b> (Not fulfilling of peace agreement, absence of Taliban &amp; public trust on government, killing of Taliban after signing peace accords)</p> <p><b>3.Religious and Ideological Rational</b> (Supporting Non-Islamic regimes against Islamic Country Afghanistan, capturing and imprisonment of Taliban, <i>al-Qaeda</i> members &amp; those who struggling for the</p>	<p><b>1.Illiteracy</b> (People had no sufficient knowledge about Islam, Lack of modern knowledge, role of illegal local Radio transitions by Taliban, No proper check and balance of government of social activities and society)</p> <p><b>2.Legacy of Past Policies</b> (In Afghan war govt. and US support to <i>Mujahedeen</i>, Invited Arabs and freedom fighter from the whole world, govt. developed people behavior to <i>Jihad, Shariah</i>, Afghan Taliban appreciation by Pak govt.)</p> <p><b>3. Lack of Public Support to Govt.</b> (Adoption of US policies by govt., sudden u-turns in past policies, own people were suffered and disturbed because of US policies)</p>	<p><b>1.Unemployment</b> (Unemployment Force Youth towards Taliban)</p> <p><b>2.Poor Economic Conditions</b> (Economic condition of the people improved by joining Taliban, handsome wages, illegal business protection, easy access of poor people involvement in arms and drugs etc businesses after joining Taliban)</p> <p><b>3.Class Discrimination</b> (Class discrimination on economic bases, Maliks, Khans and landlords had immunities in the system poor had not, unequal distribution of resources &amp; wealth, People fanning Taliban because lack of class differences, every person can achieve power,</p>



<p>Implementation of <i>Shariah</i>, Lal Masjid type aggressive actions, US Drone Strikes in religious institutions)</p> <p><b>4. Legal, Political Flaws &amp; Poor Administration</b></p> <p>(Injustice in FATA and KP, FCR, lack of effective judicial and administrative system to solve people problems and issues, some government institution and prominent persons and authorities involvement in Taliban, <i>Mujahedeen</i> making for short term goals, illegal local Radio transitions by Taliban)</p>		<p>wealth and position by joining Taliban )</p> <p><b>4. Underdevelopment</b></p> <p>(No proper check and balance of government on the improvement of economic activities in society).</p>
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Political Factors Led to Spark Socio-Political Factors and that both led to Economic Factors further these all three leads towards terrorism in FATA and KP (Malakand Division).

### **Impact of Terrorism in Malakand Division**

World Bank and the Asian Development Bank both are important international financial institutions. Both institutions were involved in the verification process of damages and needs assessment in Swat and other Malakand districts where the army has been battling the Taliban. World Bank and the Asian Development Bank both estimated that Malakand Division suffered a lot after Military operation and Terrorism. They further mentioned that the reconstruction process of Malakand Division would be completed in three years (Haq and Nargis, 2009). But it not only affected the infrastructure of the region. It also caused other outcomes. UNICEF survey said hundreds and thousands of women, children, elders, and the people from stage of life displaced due to terrorism and military operation. They faced a lot of risks in different sectors of daily life and daily routine. The people of Malakand region faced many issues i.e. health, education, physiological, nutritional support, clean water, sanitation, protection and other violation (UNICEF, 2010). Najam U Din and Farzana Bari mentioned in his research that especially displaced women faced specific risks and unintentional problems (Din, 2010; Bari, 2010). “Displacement can expose women and girls to a range of factors which may put them at risk of further violations of their rights” (Din, 2010).

**Table 03: Economic Losses in different sectors of KP & PATA (2015)**

S. No	Losses in Sectors	Losses
1	Schools Completely Damaged	Above 200
2	Schools Partially Damaged	Above 180
3	Tuorism Sector	Rs 9 Billion
4	Agriculture Sector	Above Rs 51 Billion
5	Livestock	Above Rs 62 Billion
6	Rehabilitation for other losses i.e. Hospitals, roads, properties, IDPs funds etc	Needed \$2 Billion

(Islam, 2014)

## Conclusion

Terrorism and military operations both suffered Malakand Division and its people. It affected thousands of innocent people, thousands of population got physical, economic, psychological and educational disabilities. The infrastructure of Malakand Division i.e. hospital, schools, offices of civil authorities, houses, mosques, roads, farming fields and many other places of the government and peoples were damaged. But at the same time terrorism had many causes in Malakand Division that why it occupied in the region. During the research it is examined that the main factors which prompted terrorism in the region were weak administration and their policies, lack of sound governance weakens the loyalty of locals for the government. The illegal activities of non-state armed actors like *Tehrik-e-Nifaz Shariat Muhammadi* and *Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan* in the region caused militancy in the region. However that was government negligence which provide proper and possible gap to these non-state actors to have footing in Malakand Division. Government negligence and fragile policies of political administration in the Malakand Division also reason for terrorism. Illegal FM broadcasting by the militants is also a vital cause of terrorism in the region. The FM broadcasting played its role to change the mind of the people of Malakand Division towards social instability and extremism. Economic dislocation and illiteracy also cause terrorism and militancy in the Malakand division. These all elements open room for extremism, militancy and terrorism in the region.

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