

Partnership in War on Terror and Mounting Militant Extremism in Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Pakistan's fight against extremism is not a success story, as extremism seems to be on rise leading to militancy, intolerance, ethnic division and sectarianism. This has become a daunting challenge for Pakistani government which has not been very successful in dealing with this challenge which has caused serious security concerns internally as well as externally. Certain decisions of the government have actually added fuel to extremism rather than lessening or controlling it, the decision to become a partner of USA in war on terror has led to immense increase in terrorist activities by the extremist elements, The war on Terror that started in 2001, a decade after the start of War and intense fighting, it is yet to be clearly established that it has helped Pakistan in achieving the objective for which she participated in the War. Pakistan entered as an ally and the frontline state in the name of national interest as determined by the decision makers at that time. It is argued quite forcefully that as terrorism mainly emanated from the religious extremism it was imperative to participate in the War on terror to curb extremism in the society however, no clear evidence is available after a decade of sustained losses of life and limb, property and resources that Pakistan has gained its objective or reached close to it.

KEY WORDS: War on Terror, Extremism, Pakistan, Terrorism, USA

Introduction

Ever since after 9/11 when the twin terrorists attack were launched in USA that badly hurt and damaged the prestige and status of the super power, led USA to initiate its war on terror in which Pakistan not only became a partner but also a major player. Pakistan's decision to join USA in its war on terror and especially after the Lal Masjid Operation in 2004, the wave of terrorism has badly hit Pakistan, suicide attacks have become a common feature. 'The Lal Masjid episode, in which demand for Islamist system was pushed by the extremists who occupied a children's library and created a severe law and order situation. Unfortunately excessive force was used which resulted in many deaths and

disappearances of the female students of the religious seminary. It is often said that this show of force by the rulers at the time resulted in further alienation of the extremists from the existing system and the Pakistan Army and impelled them towards a deadly terror campaign that materialized soon after the Lal Masjid episode.' (Ali, 2010: 374). 'The violent end of the Lal Masjid rebellion marked a critical watershed in Pakistan's struggle with Islamic militancy. It was the deadliest battle with militant since Musharraf declared his alliance with the United States, and al Qaeda leaders were quick to respond, calling for revenge.' (Hussain, 2010: 118).

Terrorism in Pakistan also took strong holds when in 2001 USA launched its war on terror in Afghanistan, many Taliban and Al-Qaeda elements took shelter in the tribal areas of Pakistan as to carry out their activities. 'For a short time, Pakistan once again became a key player, and once again the reason for its elevation was Afghanistan. The destabilizing effects of the war in Afghanistan were always likely to be felt here first. The pashtun population in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province shares linguistic and ethnic ties with the region that formed the principal base of the Taliban in Afghanistan. The same brand of Deobandi Islam is strong on both sides of the border.' (Ali, 2002: 200). 'To live in the Pakistani tribal areas was a strategic decision taken by Al-Qaeda. There is no better terrain in the world to fight a guerilla operation than the area between Pakistan and Afghanistan. It is a natural fortress that makes for the best defensive as well as offensive positions, and there are secret tunnels to provide safe retreats and from which deadly attacks against an enemy can be launched undetected.' (Shahzad, 2011: 180). These militants would enter Afghanistan from here through the porous border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. These foreign elements soon found local friends to give a boost to their terrorist activities. The heads of the local tribes in the tribal area, who opposed the presence of activities of terrorist militants, were very soon killed by them. No doubt the presence of militant groups has brought a bad name to Pakistan but they are also involved in terrorist attacks in Pakistan.

The security personnel of law enforcing bodies became the main target of the militants. These attacks which earlier were targeted towards the security offices or personals only, now do not discriminate between civilians and security personnel. The tragic aspect is that the militants have even targeted women, children, educational institutions and even mosques. The worst aspect of this issue is that the Taliban and Al-Qaeda elements have joined hands with the local religious and sectarian groups, creating a highly volatile situation, making things even more complicated and devastating. Growing extremism has also led to radicalization, which has not only brought about violence but has also, resulted in intolerance. The count and activities of these elements seem to be growing which poses a strong challenge to Pakistan's security. The whole of Pakistan's security apparatus is involved in fighting out the militant extremists. 'The Pakistan army had stopped deploying troops around FATA in early 2002 because of the build up of tensions

with India after the storming of the Indian parliament by Kashmiri militants. For much of that year problems with India preoccupied the army and allowed Al Qaeda to move around at will in FATA, forgoing new allies among the local Pakistani Pashtun tribes. Arab militants married into the tribes while at the same time helping revive the Afghan Taliban with training, funding and supplies of weapons.' (Rashid, 2010: 224).

The mixture of extremism with militancy has brought about an explosive situation to Pakistan's internal as well as external security. The world which seems to be criticizing Pakistan over its role in curtailing terrorism should also realize that without the support of Pakistan there cannot be any peace not only in Afghanistan but in the whole of the region. Both Pakistan and Afghanistan should adopt policies that fully respect the sovereignty of each other. Both countries need to control the cross border infiltration which has caused strained relations and mistrust between the two. 'As described by Barack Obama, President of the United States, in March 2009, the region had become the 'most dangerous place in the world... a safe-haven to hide, train terrorists, communicate with followers, plot attacks, and send fighters to support the insurgency in Afghanistan.' As a result, instead of continuing to prosecute the war against insurgent Taliban forces in isolation, Obama made clear that the future of Afghanistan was 'inextricably linked' with that of its neighbour, Pakistan' (Schofield, 2010: 9).

Politics of Religion in Pakistan

'Since its birth, however, Pakistan has been torn between different interpretations of its Islamic identity.' (Schaffer and Schaffer, 2011: 24). Even though Pakistan was created in the name of religion but its earlier years were comparatively free from religion into politics but unfortunately very soon the political leaders for one reason or the other exploited religion and used it to achieve their political objectives. The politics of religion in Pakistan has caused immense damage to the society and the state leading to religious hatred, backwardness, intolerance, sectarianism and ethnicity. The overall development of Pakistan has been badly hampered by the inclusion of religion into politics.

"The failure of successive government in Pakistan to understand the adverse implications of allowing religion to be used for politics purposes deepened intolerance and militancy in society. Unfortunately, issues which caused extremism and frustration in various segments of population were neither properly understood nor any serious effort was made by state authorities to address those issue. Consequently, Pakistan which was a new state and had country in the Muslim world missed the opportunity and allowed it self to become a haven

of extremist and violent groups” (Ahmar, 2011: 47).

The politics of religion that began during the Cold War era when United States exploited the religious factor to counter the threat of communism. United States heavily paid the religious parties to use religion as a tool to propagate that Communism is a threat to Islam. This also was the beginning of empowerment of religious parties. Later on, it was during the Afghan war in 1970's and 80's that turned out to be the most devastating and damaging in the life of Pakistan with regard to role of religion into politics.

Religion started playing a crucial role in Pakistan during the Zia regime and the Afghan war left grave social, economic, political and religious impact on Pakistan. 'In addition to sponsoring and launching Islamic mujaheddin to fight in Afghanistan and Indian Kashmir, General Zia's Islamization crusade cast a punitive pall over the nation's tolerant religious culture and affected every aspect of national life, including justice, education, policies, and social discourse.' (Constable, 2011:135-136). 'Nusrat Bhutto issued a warning to the world and her people in Pakistan about the continuation of Ziyaul Haq's dictatorial regime. She said that regime's exploitation of Islam for political purposes would ultimately lead to religious extremism with the religious right in the power seat.' (Zakariyya, 2005: 109). Religion emerged as an important factor in the politics of the country, ever since then religion has become an important but also a controversial issue in Pakistan. Not only this, the Afghan war brought about religious militancy also. Ever since then militant religious extremism has grown over the years and especially after 9/11. General Zia's era is remembered as the worst period in Pakistan's history regarding rise of extremism. The Pakistani society which had always been a moderate and homogenous turned into an intolerant and divided society. His policies during his rule brought cleavages on basis of religion, sect, damaging the whole Pakistan fabric of society.

The militants have adopted all kinds of terror techniques that include suicide attacks, kidnapping, target killing and bomb attacks etc. The extremist elements have actually misused and exploited religion to achieve their own goals. 'The terrorist threat from Islamist extremists is therefore now present across Pakistan. It will almost certainly grow further, and may end by radically changing the Pakistani state.' (Lieven, 2011: 405).

War on Terror Partnership: Strained Relations

'Islamabad is Washington's protégé. As the Kingpin, owing to its geopolitical position, in the imperialist strategic deployment in Western Asia, Pakistan has seen its importance grow considerably in the eye of the US government since 1979.' (Achar, 2004: 92). 'The decision made by Pakistani President Musharraf to permit US forces the use of Pakistani airspace and territory. Islamabad was hoping that improved relations with the West would culminate in a rescission of economic

sanctions in place since the Pakistani nuclear tests of 1998. Moreover, the threat emanating from extremist forces in Pakistan could be contained only if Afghanistan became stabilized.’ (Wenger and Zimmermann, 2010: 332).

Post Osama period shows a totally trust deficit relationship between Pakistan and USA. Since Pakistan joined the war on terror the relations between the two have never been very comfortable. ‘Throughout the intervention, the West has had inordinate difficulty in deciding whether Pakistan is an ally or an obstacle in the search for solutions to Western Security concerns in Afghanistan.’ (Bird and Marshall, 2011: 185). The demands of US towards Pakistan have been never ending, to which Pakistan has mostly adhered to. This led to unpopular steps and decisions on part of Pakistan government. In retaliation anti US sentiments within Pakistan grew over time. The hatred towards US led the extremist forces to adopt militant activities against the state in relation to the support provided by Pakistan to USA in fighting war on war. Very soon Pakistan was engulfed with terrorist activities spreading all over the country creating havoc. This unpopular decision of Pakistan over the passage of time turned out to be mere disastrous creating internal and external security threats for Pakistan.

Even though at many occasions since 2001 when Pakistan joined War on terror, it has shown apprehensions towards the US demands but three recent incidents have led to lowest ebb in relations between USA and Pakistan. On 27 July 2011, a US citizen Raymond Davis, a member of a USA intelligence agency, the real identity still remains unknown, shot down two Pakistan nationals in Lahore. This shooting took place on a major busy road of the city in broad day light, while running away from the scene he was arrested by the local police. He remained in custody only for some time. There were contradictory opinions of both the governments, Pakistan opined that the decision will be based on the decision of the court whether Raymond Davis enjoys diplomatic immunity or not. While US government was of the opinion that Raymond Davis was a part of diplomatic staff and under Vienna Convention on Diplomatic relations he enjoys diplomatic immunity. The issue lingered on but under the immense pressure of US government ultimately Raymond Davis was sent back to USA after paying *Diyyat* to the families of the victims, an Islamic law followed by Pakistani courts. There was public outrage against the decision. This was taken as a violation to the sovereignty of Pakistan and also brought lot of embarrassment and criticism to the government for bowing down to the demands of USA.

The other incident that also badly damaged the sovereignty of Pakistan took place on 2 May, 2011 when at night time US helicopters landed in Abbottabad for an operation to arrest Osama Bin Laden from his hiding place. This operation that killed Osama was not in the knowledge of Pakistan government and this was also a clear violation of Pakistan’s sovereignty. Pakistan government was highly critical of this operation. This operation had significant impact on Pakistan. There was outrage in Pakistan over the breach of sovereignty by US while the US and Indian media and some officials talked about inquiring into the question whether

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Pakistan was implicit in the conspiracy to hide Osama Bin Laden in Abbottabad. Though later it was acknowledged that Pakistan government was unaware of the presence of Osama Bin Laden. This incident however, has further increased the mistrust between the two countries which was created due to Raymond Davis episode earlier in January.

The third and the most crucial was when, US led NATO forces used gunship helicopters to attack on two Pakistani border check posts on the night of November 26, 2011 in the early morning hours at about 2.00am PST. The attack was a coordinated NATO strike and used two or three Apache helicopters, an AC-130 gunship and an unknown number of fighter jets. The check-posts were located 2.5 kilometres inside Pakistan from the border with Afghanistan in the Salala area of the Baizai subdivision of the Mohmand tribal region in FATA, Pakistan. These attacks resulted in killing of twenty six Pakistan Army personnel. More than thirty other soldiers were injured in the attack. There have been contradictory claims by both sides about who attacked first.

Consequently, there was a strong reaction from Pakistan. The political and military leadership unanimously took political and military measures against NATO. Pakistan ordered US to vacate Shamsi Air Base, located in Balochistan province, which was believed to be used for stationing and operation of drone strikes in the Tribal areas of Pakistan. Pakistan gave fifteen days' ultimatum to US in this regard after which US vacated it. Besides, Pakistan also boycotted the Bonn conference about the future of Afghanistan in protest to these attacks. Bonn conference was a very important event about the political solution of Afghanistan in which about 90 countries participated.

These attacks have further soared the relationship between Pakistan and US which were already at their low point due to several developments this year starting from Raymond Davis issue and killing of Osama Bin Laden in Abbottabad operation by US Navy SEALs. Niaz writes that:

'Presently, anti-US sentiment is sweeping across Pakistan as well as in the Islamic world in general; this is unlikely to mellow down in the near future. There is a wide disconnect between the governments and grassroot perceptions of the people. Occupation of Iraq and continued killings, arm gap with India, Indo-Israel nexus, Pakistan's nuclear proliferation scandal, isolation of the country, and rise of India as a hegemonic power-all fuel negative feelings that put pressure on the government. Besides, there is resentment brewing in Balochistan, and the NWFP, especially FATA, which has been scene of recent military action.'
(Niaz, 2011: 181).

'Popular support for Islamic extremism has grown steadily in Pakistan as a result of the unpopular US policies in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf. (Jetly, 2009: 25). 'Pakistan is frightened by the Coalition presence in Afghanistan, and by

the effect it is having on the region, and frightened too of prospect that the allies are going to leave, abandoning Pakistan yet again as its neighbour falls apart. Pakistan is annoyed that after a decade of this war, the Western powers still fail to acknowledge that the country cannot always be driven by their needs, at the expense of its own.' (Schofield, 2011: 210). 'In this overall scenario, many US officials and journalists wonder whether Pakistan is a reliable ally. The dilemma is that Pakistanis see the US administration in the same light. As far as history is concerned, the US track record is worse than that of Pakistan, in this context. The present Pakistani leadership has already burned its bridges and it is in the larger interest of Pakistan to continue on this path. From the American perspective, continued engagement is the only way forward to build a better future.' (Abbas, 2005: 236).

Background

A number of external and domestic factors have played role in promotion of militancy and extremism in religion in Pakistan, which Khan has narrated as:

'The Afghanistan conflict has deeply impacted Pakistan's polity and society. Until September 11, 2011, and the U.S. military intervention, the phenomena of Talibanization and Taliban-related militancy had been largely concentrated in war-ravaged Afghanistan and were generally viewed in Pakistan as a product of the Afghan Jihad and subsequent warfare in Afghanistan. Nonetheless, within Pakistan a number of radical militant groups emerged supporting the Afghan Jihad and the uprising in Indian-occupied Kashmir that flared up in 1989. A combination of religious motivation, madrasa education, Afghan-related and later Kashmir-related rhetoric, and official patronage instigated and imparted momentum to religious militancy.' (Khan, 2011: 209).

An external cause because that Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979 that set up a theocratic government in Iran. The revolutionary leaders of Iran were thinking in terms of spreading the revolution to neighboring Muslim states, in these circumstances rulers of neighboring states feared a Shia onslaught in their countries on one hand and Shia's living in those countries were emboldened by the Iranian revolution and began to assert themselves in their societies where they were hitherto accepting a secondary position. This created a reaction in Sunni majority states of Middle East and Ahl-e-Sunnat came out with their own religious agenda to counter spreading Shiaism. This in turn caused radicalization and extremism in neighboring states and Pakistan was no exception to it.

The actual and the main cause remains the Soviet forces invaded Afghanistan in 1979 on the call of Communist Government of Afghanistan. It was taken as threat of communism to Middle East and South Asia and was also not acceptable to the US and its allied powers. In the Muslim world it was taken as an attack of communism on Islam. Afghan resistance movement was organized with the financial and military support of America, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and other countries. Those fighting against Soviet forces were glorified as mujahideen fighting for Islam. Some Pakistani groups also joined them in the name of *jehad* against infidel forces. Pakistani government fully supported such groups. After the withdrawal of Soviet forces these mujahideen with militant training and orthodox Islamic views played a crucial role in promoting religious extremism.

According to the partition formula of Indian Kashmir, the Muslim majority state was to be given to Pakistan, but India with the connivance of Raja of Kashmir retained the state. The issue was brought to the UN and the international body adopted resolutions calling for plebiscite in the state. After lapse of six decades the plebiscite could not be held due to arrogant and dilatory attitude of India. UN and the World community failed to implement the resolutions of UN. This injustice with the Muslims of the region was bound to create reaction, the Kashmiris and the Pakistanis came to the conclusion that if they had to liberate Kashmir they have to do something practically. Their reaction came in the form of radicalization and extremism. 'Terrorism, as broadly understood in the present context, has been playing a critical role in influencing the thrust of bilateral relations in South Asia. There have been clear examples in the region where an attitude of acquiescence or even encouragement has been adopted by one state towards terrorist violence in or on another state. Such situations have naturally resulted in added acrimony and tensions between two neighbouring states.' (Khatri and Kueck, 2003: 328).

The most recent cause of religious militancy is due to the joining of war on terror by Pakistan that has brought about devastating effects on Pakistan with regard to rising militant extremism. This decision by the government had to face a strong backlash with the public opinion going against the decision. With the US operation in Afghanistan Al Qaeda and Taliban elements crossed into Pakistan. 'With the ousting of the Taliban regime, Afghanistan ceased in the short term to be a sanctuary for militants; hence many returned to Pakistan.' (Kumaraswamy and Copland, 2009: 142). 'Traditionally the tribal people are honour bound by custom to provide shelter and hospitality to persons who solicit refuge in their homes invited or uninvited, regardless of their background or record of conduct. Instability inside Afghanistan was thus pushed over to areas of Pakistan – at first in the Tribal belt and gradually elsewhere in country. (Arif, 2010: 9). These groups soon found the local religious and sectarian groups in Pakistan as their partners to carry out devastating terrorist activities.

Political polarization and instability often gives space to extremist groups to further their agenda because it deteriorates governance and weakens mainstream

political parties. In such a situation smaller groups with some specific agenda find space to operate. Frequent Martial Laws and interruptions in democratic process coupled with geo-political situation of the region provided conducive environment to religious groups and parties to create more fragmentation and polarization in the society helping the extremist groups to flourish. The large numbers of madrassas in Pakistan have played a role in producing militancy and extremism in Pakistan. 'Geographically, madrassas are most popular along the western border with Afghanistan. In the rest of the country, madrassas enrolment is thinly but evenly spread.' (Naveeda, 2010: 433). Madrassas have also been misused as to promote religious militancy especially during the Zia regime to fight back the Soviets from Afghanistan. 'The madrassas in Pakistan have proliferated after 9/11 and under Musharraf. This makes clear the intent of the new religious seminary in Pakistan. In the old radical madrassas ready to face America and its allies, induction of acolytes has doubled.' (Ahmed, 2010: 317).

Pakistan is one of those countries who have a high growth rate. A large portion of population consists of young people. It is responsibility of the state to educate and train them and channelize their energies towards development and progress. If they are not properly educated and trained and placed in proper work, they get frustrated and are vulnerable to extremism and radicalization. The same is happening in Pakistan. Thus a big youth population if not educated and placed properly turns toward lawlessness and create problems. This phenomenon is called by the demographers as "youth bulge". It is one of the main reasons of extremism in Pakistan.

Implications of Extremism

- I. Distortion of national image at international level:** Due to rising extremism national image of Pakistan is badly damaged at international level. No one is ready to trust Pakistan. Pakistanis are thought as bigots and terrorists everywhere. Pakistan is taken as a country of intolerants and bigots which can not be trusted and relied upon.
- II. Prevalence of terrorism and lawlessness:** Extremist elements usually resort to terrorism to achieve their objectives. In Pakistan these elements have adopted the tactic of suicide bombing to further their political agenda, and where terrorism is in its peak. Extremists have provided shelter to their likeminded people coming from all over the world. Terrorism and lawlessness have become order of the day in Pakistan. 'In Pakistan, developments over the past years have raised serious question about the government's capacity to adequately address the law order problem.' (Jalalzai, 2007: 83).
- III. Flight of capital and decline of growth rate:** Due to terrorism, polarization and lawlessness no one is ready to invest in the country. Stability and law and

order is a necessary condition for business to flourish. In Pakistan no new investment is coming and already operating businesses are closing.

- IV. Political polarization and instability:** Political polarization and instability causes radicalization and extremism and in turn these are further caused by extremism. So it is a vicious cycle. Due to extremism and non-accommodation of others' views there is more polarization and fragmentation in the society. 'Radical religious organizations capitalized on the political insecurity of the country.' (Juergensmeyer, 2008: 90).
- V. Intolerance, exclusionism and hatred:** Extremism harbors intolerance and creates an environment of hatred for those who do not espouse an extremist group's ideology. Extremist groups do not accommodate other's point of view and even do not tolerate them. They think themselves right and all others wrong. The same situation is prevailing in Pakistan. 'Radical Islamists organize themselves and demand strict ideological and behavioural adherence of each of their members. This radicalized view, however, further isolates the organization from the rest of society.' (Bhambri, 2009: 246).
- VI. Isolation in comity of nations:** 'Pakistan's international isolation is widening and deepening because of interplay of internal and external hard line Islamic forces.' (Datta and Sharma, 2002: 276). Due to these factors Pakistan has been isolated at international level. Even its traditional friends are not ready to trust Pakistan as they are apprehensive of Pakistan's policies and often advise it to rectify the situation.

Conclusion

The real beginning of religious militancy in Pakistan initiated during the rule of Gen Zia's orthodox religious policies which along with the monetary aid from Saudi Arabia led to sectarianism and extremism in Pakistan. 'It was Zia who released the fundamentalist genie' (Kaplan, 2001: 249). 'Zia bequeathed upon the country a legacy of ethnic strife, sectarianism, and a drugs and weapons culture.' (Shah, 1997: 216). Zia regime due to political expediency promoted and supported religious elements. Initially to counter the influence of Peoples Party and later to support jihad in Afghanistan and seek American aid and blessings he generously formed, funded, promoted and protected religious groups and parties. Due to unlimited funds and government support these elements gathered strength in the terms of numbers, power and influence. They all had extremist agenda. Now they have captured a sufficient space in the society and operate with assertiveness. This led to strong divisions, religious hatred, violence and intolerance in the society; these menaces were further augmented after USA initiated war on terror in this region. The spillovers of the US war in Afghanistan have brought about serious internal as well as external threats to Pakistan. 'Considering all elements that impinge on national security like common ethnicity, porous borders, migration,

refugees and movement of non-state actors, the insecurity and instability of Afghanistan will have great impact on Pakistan's internal stability and security.' (Ahmar, 2009: 153).

Since 2001, militancy and terrorism have penetrated into Pakistan as the Taliban and Al-Qaida outfits found shelter in the tribal areas to establish, launch and plan their activities. Very soon these militant groups spread out to the major cities of Pakistan bringing disaster and terror everywhere. Their agenda included suicide bombing, target killing, kidnapping, threats and talibanization of the Pakistani society. After sometime it was realized that the US war had become a war of Pakistan. Since 2004, the military has launched various operations against the militants and in retaliation has lost a large number of its personal. 'The insane 'war on terror' has decimated two countries, Iraq and Afghanistan, and brought a third one, Pakistan, almost to the verge of collapse.' (Khan, 2011: 235). 'Closely allied with al-Qaeda, the TTP is the main Taliban militant umbrella group in Pakistan, and is responsible for most of the suicide bombing and fidayeen attacks carried out in almost every nook and corner of Pakistan in recent years. Among the TTP's stated objectives are resistance against the Pakistani army, enforcement of the Shariah, and the targeting of American and NATO forces in Afghanistan.' (Mir, 2010: 13).

No doubt, Pakistan now a days is passing through the toughest era of its history because of the on going militant extremism and terrorism. Religious intolerance has become a dominant feature of the society, there is religious exploitation and radical sectarian religious groups are rapidly growing and becoming more militant. 'The use of military force alone cannot win the war against rising militancy, which poses the biggest internal security threat to the country. To reverse the ride of militancy there is a need to take a holistic approach which also includes the political mobilization of the people to combat terrorism.' (Lodhi, 2011: 147-148). Amir Mir explains as:

'The meteoric rise of the Taliban militia in Pakistan since the 11th September 2001 attacks has literally pushed the Pakistani state to the brink of civil wear. Since the US-led Allied forces launched their offensive against al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan in the aftermath of the 9/11 episode, the leadership of the two "non-state actors" in the war-torn Afghanistan has been systematically moving fighters across their eastern border into Pakistan, where they have taken over the rugged mountainous regions of the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and the Federally Administrative Tribal Areas (FATA) after joining hands with the local Taliban militia.' (Mir, 2009: 1).

'The challenges from Taliban and its presented and future allies is not irreversible. But Pakistan cannot face this challenge unless it returns to the precepts and advice of the father of the nation, Mohammad Ali Jinnah. If Pakistan

does not find modernity, it will sink into medievalism. There is no third path.' (Akbar, 2011:312). Post 9/11 period has brought about dire consequences to Pakistan's internal as well as external security, only a politically and economically strong Pakistan with a dedicated leadership and a moderate educated and tolerant society can shun off the threats being faced by Pakistan. The terrorized society of Pakistan calls for uprooting militant extremism for a more tolerant society.

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