

Mainstreaming FATA through 25th Amendment in the Constitution of Pakistan, Implications for Counter Terrorism Efforts

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Abstract:

Because of terrorism stemming from the unstable Federally Administered Tribal Areas, Pakistan has increased its geopolitical prominence in international politics since 2001. The Frontier Crime Regulation (FCR) 1901, which was inherited from the British, regulated this semi-autonomous region of the country. It remained a grey region after the partition, with the government having little control. During the War on Terror, Pakistan incurred massive losses. Consequently, Pakistan's political parties and military establishment have decided to bring reforms to the legal, socio-economic, political, and security systems there. Following that, the proposal to merge FATA into the mainstream was debated by various stakeholders for several years. In May 2018, Pakistan's parliament approved the merger of the FATA and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa under the 25th Constitutional Amendment (KP). This paper aims to highlight the efforts by the US and Pakistan towards counter terrorism. It is also studying the impacts of this merger on counter terrorism efforts. Further, the impact on Pakistan's internal security was also examined in this study.

Keywords: FATA, Amendment, Constitution, Implications, Pakistan

Introduction

Since 2001, when hundreds of militants, including al-Qaeda terrorists, escaped from Afghanistan's collapsing Taliban regime, the semiautonomous tribal territory of Pakistan near the Afghan border, technically known as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). The presence of a large number of terrorists in this undeveloped and neglected region gave rise to the indigenous *Tehrik-e-Taliban* Pakistan (TTP or Pakistani Taliban) movement, which spoiled the region's centuries-old tribal customs and power dynamics. Shortly, FATA became a haven for all types of extremists, including both Pakistani and foreign militants. Due to a convergence of factors, including FATA's unique political, legal, and administrative status, the territory has historically suffered from socio-economic and political development restrictions as well as serious security concerns. Poverty is widespread, and the region's private and public infrastructure, as well as livelihood opportunities, have been destroyed by decades of militancy and subsequent counter-military operations, which peaked in June 2014 with the launch of Operation *Zarb-e-Azb*. Over a million FATA citizens were relocated as Temporarily Displaced Persons (TDPs) during these operations, with the vast majority settling in the neighboring province of KP. Officials from Pakistan's military claim to have put an end to militancy in the tribal region. Many experts believe that the challenge now is to consolidate

the gains of these military operations and keep the FATA region free of Taliban resurgence, which will necessitate proactive investment in the region's political, administrative, and economic infrastructure, as well as FATA's mainstreaming.

Various reforms were implemented by various Pakistani governments in the erstwhile FATA, but these efforts failed to improve the region's status. Such efforts by numerous governments, on the other hand, cannot be overlooked, as they have proven to be a vital platform and foundation for current integration. Finally, on May 24, 2018, Pakistan's National Assembly passed a historic 25th Amendment to the 1973 Constitution, allowing FATA to be integrated into Pakistan's KP province with a huge majority.

The region's recent integration will bring political, economic, and technological developments, as well as new rays of hopefulness for its citizens. If the government of Pakistan is serious about developing these areas, they should immediately focus on two tasks: first, infrastructure development, and second, the rehabilitation of the homeless and troubled sections of society. FATA's merger into KP is a significant step forward for Pakistan's government. Along with the development of infrastructure in the region, this integration will bring about positive developments. The current merger will give the region hope for peace, prosperity, and development.

FATA Terrorism and Counter Terrorism

The Cultivation of Terrorism in FATA

Despite being nominally part of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Pakistan's Northwestern tribal region has had a curious semiautonomous status for much of its history. Following Pakistan's independence in 1947, the region opted to join Pakistan on the condition of being given a special semiautonomous status. Because of this autonomy, central governance and administration were kept to a minimum. The notorious colonial-era Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR), which granted considerable executive, judicial, and revenue powers to a federally nominated Political Agent, was preserved in FATA (PA). FATA remained the least-developed region in Pakistan after independence, with roughly 60% of its population living below the poverty line due to a lack of accountability, audits, and an effective government (Fiaz, 2012). Furthermore, because there was no state machinery, tribal communities created and executed their own laws and administration based on tribal codes and traditional institutions. As a result, FATA resembled America's Wild West in that all powers, including enforcing the law and administering justice, were concentrated at the local level.

Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, FATA became the focus of considerable worldwide attention. However, Pakistan's tribal region was portrayed in a negative light this time, as a hub of extremism, militancy, and, most importantly, as the major refuge of America's most sought man, Osama bin Laden. Subsequently, the launch of the US-led War on Terror required a joint counter-terrorist operation by the US and Pakistan to eradicate Islamic militancy and extremism from FATA, which had been purposefully developed during the 1980s. Pakistan's tribal belt has been an accessible target for the free flow of extremist discourse and beliefs due to a lack of legislation and governance (Rashid, 2010).

After the United States launched a war against the Taliban's rule in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the FATA region became a haven for hundreds of al-Qaeda-linked terrorists who fled Afghanistan to the mountainous tribal territories next door in Pakistan (Witte & Ali, 2007). As a result, the US began pressuring Pakistan in 2002 to launch military operations in the tribal areas to drive out foreign extremists (Wilson & Akhtar, 2019). The militants established their organizational structure as the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan in December 2007, naming a central commander or Ameer, appointing a spokesman, and forming

several chapters across the country. The TTP then declared war against the Pakistani state, carrying out dozens of suicide strikes around the country, resulting in significant losses. Since the Taliban initiated a fight against the Pakistani state in 2004, government figures have put the number of Pakistanis killed at between fifty thousand and eighty thousand, including civilians, security forces members, and militants (I. Ali, 2018a).

Counterterrorism Efforts

Ground Operations

After being defeated by NATO forces in 2002, the Afghan Taliban, together with Uzbeks, Chechens, and Arabs, sought sanctuary in Pakistan's tribal areas. A pro-Taliban wave spread through Pakistan's Pashtun heartland, and they backed the Afghans totally against NATO forces while avoiding anti-Pakistan activity in Waziristan and elsewhere (M. Tariq, Afridi, & Minhas, 2018). Despite this, Pakistan caved in to American intimidation and joined the War on Terror. Militancy spread all along the Pak-Afghan border, eventually infiltrating KP's settled districts. Suicide attacks in congested areas and against military stations are also used by militants. The situation deteriorated further, and the army was forced to begin a full-fledged military operation across the FATA. As a result, millions of people were forced to flee their homes, resulting in a crisis of internal displacement (Yousaf, Rashid, & Gul, 2018).

In tribal areas, major military operations include:

Operation *Al Mizan* (Justice): The operation, which began in 2002 and ended in 2006, saw roughly 80,000 soldiers deployed in the FATA region under President General Musharraf (Tellis & NAWAZ, 2017).

Operation *Zalzala* (Earthquake): In January 2008, an operation against Baitullah Mehsud and his allies was launched in the South Waziristan Agency (I. Khan, 2009).

Operation *Sirat-e-Mustaqeem* (Righteous Path): This operation began in June 2008 with the goal of eradicating Lashkar-e-Islam (LeI) from the Khyber Agency's Bara region (N. Hussain, 2011).

Operation *Sher Dil* (Lion Heart): The military relocated its operations to the Mohmand and Bajaur Agency in 2008, commencing Operation Sher Dil in September to target all insurgent groups operating in the area (Fair & Jones, 2009).

Operation *Rah-e-Nijat* (Path of Salvation): In October 2009, a large operation involving over 30,000 troops was started in South Waziristan against the then-TTP (Khattak, 2011).

Operation *Brekhna* (Lightening): This operation began in late 2009 with the goal of ridding the Mohmand Agency of criminals and terrorists (Abbasi, 2014).

Operation *Koh-e-Sufaid* (White Mountain): *Koh-e-Sufaid* was started in the Kurram Agency in July 2011 with the goal of reducing sectarian and militant bloodshed (ISPR, 2011).

Operation Khyber 1, 2, 3 and 4 (2014-present): Since the year 2014, To supplement Operation *Zarb-e-Azb*, in the agency, four small and large-scale operations dubbed Khyber 1, 2, 3, and 4 have been executed. Khyber 4 is the most recent operation, and it aims to clear IS militants from the Khyber Agency (Yousaf et al., 2018).

Operation *Zarb-e-Azb* and the National Action Plan (Sharp and Cutting Strike) The Pakistan Armed Forces started the joint military offensive *Zarb-e-Azb* in the North Waziristan Agency of FATA in 2014 against numerous militant groups, including the famed Haqqani Network, to flush out the Taliban, which was hotly opposed by the Taliban (Z. Ali, 2016). Following the horrible December 2014 attack by the TTP on the Army Public School in Peshawar, which left 132 students and nine staff members dead and over a hundred critically injured, public support and the support of all political parties has been bolstered. The TTP claimed responsibility for the attack, claiming that it was in retribution for military operations in the North Waziristan and Khyber tribal agencies. On the BBC news channel, a Taliban official explained the attack on APS by saying that it was in retaliation for military operations because the army-run school had a large number of students from military families (Begum, 2018). Pakistan announced the National Action Plan (NAP), an ambitious counterterrorism campaign, just days after the school attack (I. Ali, 2018b). The Prime Minister launched the NAP against terrorism on December 25, 2014. It included a comprehensive and integrated list of steps that the government and law enforcement agencies should take to combat terrorism and extremism in the country (Begum, 2018). The Taliban's bases in North Waziristan Agency were effectively removed by Operation *Zarb-e-Azb*, and at the time, US Secretary of State John Kerry confirmed that the notorious Haqqani Network had been dismantled and its remnants had fled to Afghanistan (M. W. Khan, 2016). Hundreds of Taliban fighters have died in North Waziristan and the surrounding Khyber region as a result of the attack. General Raheel Sharif, the former Chief of Army Staff, stated that the militants were not only enemies of Pakistan, but also enemies of humanity.

Drone Strikes

Hundreds of drone strikes were carried out by US and NATO forces, principally in Waziristan, on moving targets and militant sanctuaries. It was successful in assassinating Baitullah Mehsud (August 2009), Hakim Ullah Mehsud (November 2013), and a few other militant commanders, but it also targeted innocent weddings and funerals, causing irritation and hatred. In 2016, then-US President Barack Obama admitted that drone attacks had killed hundreds of civilians (Ackerman, 2016).

A US drone strike on a madrassa in Bajaur in October 2006 (Plaw & Fricker, 2012), proved to be a watershed moment. It killed roughly a hundred young students, some as young as ten, and sparked a more dangerous trend: the ethnic and religious disintegration of the people. Indeed, this strike was a crucial catalyst in the area's emergence of tribal militancy. As a result, an irritated group of tribal Pashtuns are allied with the Taliban. Under President Obama, the drone campaign grew in intensity, becoming a rallying cry and a recruiting tool for extremist groups. In reality, it was claimed in January 2017 that Barack Obama had ordered ten times as many drones strikes as George W. Bush had (Purkiss & Serle, 2017). In 2004, the United States began conducting drone strikes in Pakistan's tribal areas. According to data from the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, there have been 430 confirmed aerial strikes, resulting in between 2,515 and 4,026 deaths and about 1,700 injuries (Popalzai, 2018).

Initiatives by Tribesmen

Since 2001, tribal Pashtuns have employed *Jirga* and *Lashkars* to combat militancy and terrorism in FATA on and off. Recognizing the importance of these two *Pashtunwali* systems, terrorist groups have repeatedly assaulted *Lashkars* and *Jirgas* with the goal of abolishing tribal elders and leadership.

In 2010, a *Jirga* gathering – aimed at discussing measures against militants – was attacked in the Mohmand Agency by the *Taliban*, killing more than 100 people. Another peace *Jirga* gathering was attacked by the *Taliban* in 2016, killing four tribal elders. There have been several instances where *Jirga* gatherings and consensus statements have shown the desire of tribal Pashtuns to achieve peace in their region. The *Taliban*

assaulted a *Jirga* meeting in the Mohmand Agency in 2010, killing over 100 people while discussing counter-terrorist tactics. In 2016, the *Taliban* attacked another peace *Jirga* meeting, killing four tribal elders. *Jirga* gatherings and consensus statements have proved tribal Pashtuns' determination to pursue peace in their region on multiple occasions. In terms of the *Jirga*-based *Lashkar* formation, the Salarzai tribe of Bajaur and the Mullagori tribe of Khyber agency effectively formed *Lashkar* in 2008 to not only defeat the *Taliban* in their respective agencies, but also to keep other factions out (Yousaf et al., 2018).

These military activities were launched without consulting local tribal chiefs. The tribes developed hatred and anti-military attitudes as a result of their disrespect for the tribal chiefs. Military operations result in widespread human rights violations and civilian casualties. The tribal elders said that the Pakistani government's authorities were committing genocide against innocent tribesmen in order to impress the US (Wilson & Akhtar, 2019).

25th Amendment and FATA's Mainstreaming

FATA Reforms Committee

The debate over FATA reform was sparked by an unusual move by FATA members of parliament in September 2015, when they unanimously demanded that the government repeal the FCR and integrate the tribal territories with the neighboring KP province (Report, 2015). Then-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif constituted a special six-member FATA Reforms Committee in response to the FATA MPs' great actions. The committee was tasked with proposing necessary reforms, identifying viable options for the future of the FATA region, and developing substantive recommendations and a roadmap for implementing changes in the tribal region. It was headed by Sartaj Aziz, adviser to the prime minister on foreign affairs (K. Ali, 2015).

The committee spent eight months visiting tribal agencies, meeting with tribal elders and other stakeholders, and developing recommendations and a roadmap for defining FATA's future. The committee highlighted four primary choices, which were thoroughly investigated in its report: 1) Maintain the status quo. 2) Council like Gilgit Baltistan 3) Separate province, 4) Merger with KP (Desk, 2016).

The Government's Reform

Plan After months of discussion, former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government approved a series of reforms in early March 2017, which will end in the merger of FATA with the adjacent province of KP. On the grounds of doubtful possibilities, a lack of revenue, and poor sustainability, the official reforms committee ruled down the creation of a FATA province (Raza, 2017).

By extending the formal judicial system, introducing modern policing, establishing local government, and initiating a wide range of economic and social development initiatives, the reforms aim to provide constitutional protection to the FATA people. By the end of 2018, the recommendations call for the return of internally displaced persons and the rehabilitation of war-torn areas caused by military operations (Raza, 2017).

25th Constitutional Amendment and FATA's Mainstreaming

Finally, Pakistan's National Assembly passed the historic 25th Constitutional Amendment bill for the merger of the FATA and KP on May 24, 2018. There were 229 votes cast in favor of the amendment, with one vote against it (229-1). All of Pakistan's mainstream political parties have recognized this amendment

bill, while the Jamiat Ulema-e Islam (JUI-F) and the Pakhtunkhwa Mili Awami Party (PMAP) have opposed it on various political grounds. On May 25, 2018, Pakistan's Senate passed the 25th constitutional amendment (I. G. D. Hussain, 2018). With the amendment, the jurisdiction of the higher judiciary will be prolonged to these areas, and residents of FATA will be able to file cases with the Supreme Court and the Peshawar High Court without restriction. Political agents were replaced by the Deputy Commissioner and the Assistant Commissioner. The Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR), which were enforced by the British, were repealed. FATA's current seats in the National Assembly and Senate will be retained until 2023, after which they will be counted under the KP section. In the NFC award, FATA will receive a 3% share. In addition, over the next ten years, Rs.100 billion will be granted to FATA to be spent on development projects. This move signs the beginning of a new era for the region. The recent merger has the potential to bring significant political, economic, social, and cultural changes to the FATA region, as well as several prospects for its citizens (Haq, 2018). FATA residents will have the same political, constitutional, and economic rights as the rest of the country.

FATA's Mainstreaming and Political Stability in FATA

Terrorism not only damaged FATA's social and economic structures, but it also had a significant impact on its political system. Pakistan's tribal territories are governed by the Frontier Crime Regulations (FCR). Local disputes are settled through the Jirga system, which is associated with political agents appointed by the federal government. The Jirga system has also been shattered because of militants assassinating a number of local leaders. It has influenced and altered the political situation of FATA, and, along with the presence of military forces in the region, it has weakened the power of political agents.

These militant groups provided immediate justice for the poor people of the FATA. As a result, the general public has decided to take their complaints to these militant groups for resolution. However, these militant groups quickly misused their reach and authority, and the local community was left with little choice but to support these militant extremists. Due to military pressure and other obstacles, the other political groups were unable to get the support of the local people (Chughtai, 2013). In conflicted areas, women are completely excluded from political decision-making.

New Deal for Pakistan's FATA Alleviate Terrorism Threat

In these areas, numerous scandalous factions have sprung up that enjoy wrongdoings such as robbery, plundering, burglarizing, looting, seizing, and slaughtering of innocent people. Locals' social and political rights in the tribal zone had been jeopardized. The inhabitants of FATA were unhappy by their lack of political rights. As a result, such an unclear, chaotic, and dismayed environment has stoked anti-American sentiments and accelerated terrorist actions in general, as well as suicide attacks in particular (Khalid & Roy, 2016).

According to the US, this region provides safe havens for extremists who launch attacks by crossing into Afghanistan, where over 14,000 US forces are stationed. Several terror groups found refuge in the tribal belt, which shares a long and porous border with Afghanistan, when US-led forces deposed the Taliban government in Kabul. Pakistan's military has launched a number of operations in the restive tribal belt in the last decade, aimed at destroying militant sanctuaries and Taliban strongholds. The seven tribal agencies, which have long suffered from terrorism and anarchy, have now been merged into the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and will be regulated by state law.

All of these changes will have an impact on that area's war on terror. The merger will aid in the restoration of fundamental rights to people who have been denied of them, as well as healing some of the wounds left by the war on terror.

Drone Attacks

Since 2004, the United States has carried out a number of drone attacks inside Pakistani territory, primarily targeting insurgents from the Haqqani network (M. Tariq & Marwat, 2015). Pakistan has denounced the airstrikes, claiming that they infringe on the country's sovereignty. Islamabad also denies that the Haqqani network has any organized presence in the country. Over the last decade, the US has deployed drone strikes to target al-Qaida militants, Pakistani *Taliban*, and the Haqqani network. Between June 2004 and January 2018, the US launched 430 drone attacks in Pakistan, according to figures published by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism.

Pakistan's response to drone strikes will be even stronger as the tribal region is mainstreamed. Hopefully, as a result of this merger, there will be a significant reduction in drone strikes. Locals' reactions will also be considered, which will be overwhelmingly negative. The United States will likewise not want to see its relations with Pakistan degrade anymore (Anwar, 2018).

Political Intervention and Institutional Installations Enkindle Positive Change

Representation Extension in the Provincial Legislature

The Pakistani government recently introduced significant changes, including the integration of FATA into KP. The tribal areas were declared as special zones and were considered to be the President of Pakistan's direct responsibility, with the President delegating his authority to the Governor. The President of Pakistan is authorized by the Pakistani Constitution to extend the Federation's executive authority to the tribal areas.

The adult franchise, which has been granted to other parts of Pakistan since 1947, has not been extended to the FATA, obviously for political reasons. Ironically, they have been excluded from constitutional reforms enacted in other parts of Pakistan over the past fifty years. However, in late 1996, the Pakistani government decided to extend the adult vote to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Only a few notables and *Malik's* were allowed to vote, while the common man in tribal areas had no right to vote. The 1997 elections were the first of their sort in the FATA, with adults voting to elect 12 members to Pakistan's National Assembly. The recent decision was heralded as a watershed moment in tribal history, transforming the entire socio-political structure. FATA has been given representation in the province legislature because it was a federal subject.

For the benefit of the general population of the FATA, the colonial era 'black law' has been repealed. The government hoped that by extending these changes to the FATA, it would be able to resist the rising tide of militancy and militants' poisonous one-sided drive to impose their ideological agenda on the people. The historic decision will also aid in the containment of the region's growing militancy tendency, as well as give a platform for educated tribal youth to participate in positive political activities. To the outside world, the FATA is a hotbed of militancy, but by enacting reforms, the tribal territories would be transformed into a paradise of peace and prosperity (S. W. A. Shah, 2012). The majority of Pakistanis believe that the new laws will eradicate terrorism in the tribal areas and that the extension of the new regulations will herald in a new period of growth and progress in the FATA. The tribesmen will share more responsibility and trust

in the country's political system, contributing to the ongoing effort to maintain high regard for democratic institutions and systems.

In the twenty-first century, democracies, both old and new, face a fundamental challenge: how to sustain their democratic structure and principles on the one hand, while firmly and successfully responding to the terror threat on the other. As such, democracies must constantly strike a compromise between democratic values and security. The executive branch, and to a lesser extent, the legislative branch, has primary responsibility for combating the threat of terrorism. Both are directly responsible for ensuring public safety and democracy and are accountable to voters. These branches are in charge of assessing the country's requirements and dangers, developing a clear policy to address them, and executing that policy. At the end of the day, counter-terrorism efforts are primarily a joint effort of the executive and legislative branches (MERSEL, 2017).

Democracies are extensively more liable to terrorism than are other forms of government. The assumption that potential terrorists and terrorist sympathizers would not need to option to violence if they were able to participate openly in competitive politics and have their voices heard in the public square, democracy would diminish terrorism (Gause III, 2005). In this context, the current political participation of the tribesman will be instrumental in eradicating terrorism. Pakistan held its first-ever provincial elections on Saturday in a hilly region near the country's northern border with Afghanistan, which was once dubbed the "epicenter" of international terrorism. On July 21, 2019, voters across FATA took part in one of the region's freest and fair elections in its history. The implementation of a new plan for dealing with terrorists in the FATA was high on everyone's agenda (Sherani, 2016). The elections in the seven districts of FATA, according to Pakistani officials, are vital to the government's efforts to support regional and global efforts to bring peace to Afghanistan and combat violent extremism. The historic vote occurred on the same day that Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan flew to the United States for his first meeting with US President Donald Trump at the White House on Monday, where the two leaders will discuss counterterrorism and other matters (Gul, 2019). The new approach would primarily support a law-enforcement counter-terrorism model as well as engagement with tribal leaders to remove support for extremist groups. First and foremost, the new government shares the vital strategic goal of developing FATA and integrating the region into the global economy and politics. The new government also has the necessary incentives to end FATA's status as a terrorist safe haven (Sherani, 2016).

Installations of Judicial Setup and Counter-Terrorism Measures

FATA's court system has always been a troubled one. Technically, a judicial system refers to the identified and recognized procedures of justice that have been validated in a given area. These can contain both formal and informal techniques, as long as the two processes are acknowledged and in sync. In FATA, political authorities were in charge of a component of justice, while the Jirga was in charge of what could be described as an informal judicial system. Both, however, were unable to provide justice and maintain peace and order on their own. This created a vacuum, which became fertile ground for militant groups to thrive (Sherani, 2016). Preventive measures implemented through the judicial system such as detention and arrest, house demolitions Interrogation methods, provisions for armed forces civil liability, and electoral laws prohibiting candidates who support terror activities are examples of counter-terrorism measures.

Arrest and detention are two common counter-terrorism techniques applied by security forces, primarily to prevent future terrorist activities. The court demolishes the terrorist's home as one of the methods it employs

to prevent suicide bombings and terrorist attacks. This is a serious administrative step, not a part of any criminal procedure, because it frequently ends in the loss of residence for an entire family, even though the family was not involved in terrorist activity (MERSEL, 2017). Through recent mergers, the jurisdiction of the higher judiciary has been extended to these areas. The Supreme Court of Pakistan and Peshawar High Court now have the authority of laws usage in the region as well as preventive measures for counter terrorism.

The Anti-Terrorism Act of 1997, the National Counter-Terrorism Authority Act, the Investigation for Fair Trial Act, the Protection of Pakistan Act of 2014, the Twenty-Point National Action Plan to Counter Terrorism to establish military courts to try alleged terrorists, the 21st Constitutional Amendment Act, and the Pakistan Army (Amendment) Act, 2015 make up Pakistan's "anti-terrorism" legal framework (R.-u.-d. Mehsud, 2017).

The recent merger is a significant step forward in protecting FATA people's fundamental rights under Articles 184 (3) and 199 of the Constitution. The protection of the FATA people's rights, which are defined in Articles 8 to 28 of the Constitution, will now be guaranteed by the higher judiciary ("What is the Levies Force?," 2012). This will inculcate a sense of patriotism in the people of the region, and they will refrain from using it against the state by any outside hands.

The Levies are part of a security apparatus installed between the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata) and settled areas known as the Frontier Region (FR). As opposed to the *khasadars*, referred to as "tribal police" and appointed by tribal authorities, the Levies are appointed by the political administration on a merit basis and are given arms and ammunition by the government (Sherani, 2016). The major policing forces in the area are the levy and *khasadars*. The reform package recommends that its numbers be increased, and that it be provided with specialized training, equipment, and facilities to enable it to perform to the best of its abilities. These are important and relevant recommendations for strengthening the civil armed forces' capacity to successfully combat terrorism and policing the area. The levies have been appropriately trained and organized to serve as the local police force. The staffing of 20,000 levies was viewed as a positive step toward improving the turbulent tribal belt's law and order situation (Shigri, 2019). The *Khasadar* and Levy forces should be incorporated into the KP police force as soon as possible since the local force would produce practical results in maintaining peace. When Fata merges into KP, KP police will be in charge of policing in Fata (R. MEHSUD, 2019).

The process of merging nearly 20,000 *Khasadar* and levy forces with the KP police would be completed within six months, according to Supreme Court of Pakistan directives. They will receive sufficient training to cope with the difficulties that have arisen as a result of the newly merged tribal districts, because the local force was familiar with the local dynamics and people, the merger of the local force with the provincial police resulted in greater security in the tribal regions ravaged by militancy (Ghauri, 2009). The merging of the local and police forces is a great step since it creates a force of locals capable of dealing with tribal concerns in the face of years of militancy. Because local expertise was crucial in this scenario, merger the local force into the police force would improve security.

Economic Prosperity

Reasons for Economic Backwardness of FATA

Generally, tribal societies are resistant to change. The tribal chiefs are adamant about not changing their customs, legal system, or administrative structure. Tribal leaders have a vested interest in keeping people illiterate so that they may continue to govern them. Tribal leaders refused to authorize the development because they feared it would weaken their control over tribal people. The social and political instability in FATA has deterred investors and prevented any worthwhile socio-economic activities. They were also left at the mercy of their leaders because the government never made any attempt or policies for their uplift. The surge of Afghan refugees is putting pressure on the tribal economies, which are already broken. The constitutional status of tribal territories has also hampered development because there is no check and balance system in place between tribal leaders and the political administration in charge of using development funds. There was no enforcement or intelligence system in place to keep unlawful activity under control. There was no political party in tribal areas, and tribal leaders would not allow any to be promoted since political parties are seen as a threat to tribal leadership (Yousufi & Mustafa, 2019).

Economic Causes of Terrorism in FATA

Terrorism in Pakistan, particularly in the FATA region, is fueled by economic poverty and displacement. The government's poor economic policies regarding FATA aided in the spread of terrorism in the region. Economic deprivation is a contributing component of the FATA problem. Other factors, such as political and socio-political determinants, play a role. The people of FATA were left in a vacuum as a result of the government's weak policies. Furthermore, FATA's economically deprived residents filled the vacuum. When anti-state operations first began, many people joined these groups for a variety of reasons, including ideological reasons, religious reasons, revenge, personal tussles (tribal fights among themselves), and power.

Underdevelopment

The region's most pressing issues are unemployment and underdevelopment. Former FATA is regarded as one of the country's most underdeveloped and backward areas. FATA's distance and isolation from the country's urban centers, as well as harsh local traditions, strict cultural values, poor and ineffective government policies, created inappropriate conditions for commerce, business, and industry investment. Such types of situations lead to massive illiteracy, underdevelopment, and unemployment, creating an environment conducive to the spread of extremism and terrorism in the regions. Thus, underdevelopment in that sector had a significant role in the growth of anti-state behavior. The majority of experts believe that the government's negligence in many areas, such as unemployment, lack of positive awareness activities, lack of proper religious and educational institutions, illegal broadcasting, and unauthorized radios, contributed significantly to anti-state activities and aided the *Taliban* agenda. Inadequate administration and a lack of government interest in regional development, such as industrialization, foreign or domestic investment, and the lack of effective educational institutions, created a vacuum for unemployed youth and illiterates to join the Taliban.

Economic Deprivation and Terrorism

Poverty, unemployment, economic injustice, class discrimination, and the desire to achieve economic benefits by joining the Taliban were all economic factors that contributed to terrorism in the region. According to a poll done by the FATA Research Center, more than 90% of respondents thought that poverty aided in the strengthening of terrorism in FATA. A poll done by a US institute revealed six primary reasons that feed terrorism in today's globe (M. Tariq, Ahmad, Perveen, & Ghaffar, 2015), with poverty being one

of them. The Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) cited the same cause for the country's increased terrorism. They claim that financial insecurity causes societal growth to be unbalanced. People who live in a financially impoverished society are unable to meet their basic necessities. They are unable to invest even a small amount in education, discipline, and generational care. The government's economic inefficiency and other socio-political policies are unable to provide the people's political, social, and economic demands, such as schooling, education, health care, and good generational care (Ghauri, 2009). Therefore, when intra-societal conflicts arise, society becomes deeply divided. Furthermore, the external elements were easily able to fill that space and vacuum. The same thing happened in FATA, where poverty helped strengthen the *Taliban*.

Class inequality, unequal distribution of wealth and resources, and the landowners', *Malik's*, Khan's, and the elite class's insensitivity to the poor masses boosted individuals to join the Taliban. To calm down the people of FATA and KP, or anywhere else, the government must take protective measures. These protecting actions include the creation of job opportunities, the encouragement of foreign investment, the establishment of industries, improved economic policies, the provision of stable income, and so on. The discussion as a whole concludes that there is a strong link between economic marginalization and terrorism in FATA (Yousufi & Mustafa, 2019).

Counter Measures

Some protecting actions must be implemented by the government. These protecting actions include the creation of job opportunities, the encouragement of foreign investment, the establishment of industries, improved economic policies, the provision of stable income, and so on. Pakistan is using all military and non-military means at its disposal to ameliorate the situation in the tribal areas. Pakistan has also devised a number of development projects in collaboration with the United Nations, the United States, the United Kingdom, and other countries in order to address the root causes of terrorism (M. Tariq, Rizwan, & Ahmad, 2020). Pakistan's Annual Development Programme Fund for FATA 2008-09, the FATA Sustainable Development Plan (SDP) 2006-2015, and US Development Assistance for FATA are among the notable development programmes (Noor, Hashmi, & Bukhari, 2018). It is considered that the international community, particularly the United States, should use its clout to assist Pakistan in focusing on the main challenges, namely terrorism, which is a constant threat to world peace.

10-year Socio-economic Development Plan and Tax Exempting

To address social and economic underdevelopment in FATA on a sustainable basis, the government planned a 10-year Socio-Economic Development Plan. 10-year Socio-Economic Development Plan for FATA is another milestone that will have long lasting effects on the region's peace and prosperity. The objective is to develop and plan for effective implementation of integrated sectoral policies in former FATA which cover infrastructural development, enhancing human development parameters, women's socio-economic development and incentivize private sector investment in the region (Wasim, 2018). Since FATA remained excluded from the national mechanism for financial distribution through the National Finance Commission (NFC), the government also planned a three percent share for FATA under the NFC, over and above the existing public sector development allocation. Based on recent budgetary data, the proposed three percent allocation equals approximately PKR 120 billion per annum (Noor et al., 2018). Similarly, the government has proposed taking appropriate steps to improve financial inclusion standards in FATA, as well as

increasing the number of beneficiaries of government-sponsored social welfare programmes such as the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), among others. The government has proposed measures to record individual property rights using modern technology such as GIS mapping and record digitization, in addition to increasing the number of commercial and farm banks in FATA.

The government is planning a 10-year Socio-Economic Development Plan to address FATA's long-term social and economic underdevelopment. The 10-year Socio-Economic Development Plan for FATA is another significant achievement that will have long-term implications for the region's peace and development. The goal is to create and plan for the effective execution of integrated sectoral policies in former FATA that address infrastructure development, human development, women's socioeconomic development, and private sector investment in the region (Wasim, 2018). Because FATA was left out of the national financial distribution mechanism through the National Finance Commission (NFC), the government set aside a 3% share of the NFC budget for FATA, in addition to the existing public sector development budget. The proposed three percent allocation equals around PKR 120 billion per year, according to recent budgetary data (Noor et al., 2018).

FATA and Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA) will be tax exempt for the next ten years as a result of the 25th Constitutional Amendment. The Economic Coordinating Committee (ECC) is inviting industrialists and traders from all over the country to invest in FATA. This move is appreciated by the locals, particularly the younger generation, because it will help to create new job opportunities ("PDWP approves 20 projects worth Rs12.5b," 2020).

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government allocated Rs62 billion for integrated districts in the 2019-20 budget (Ashfaq, 2020), Rs183.1 billion in the 2020-21 budget (M. Ali, 2021), and Rs199 billion in the 2021-22 budget for FATA merged districts ("PDWP approves 20 projects worth Rs12.5b," 2020). The funds will be used for education, health, road construction, agriculture and livestock, and sports facilities. On November 21, 2019, the Provincial Development Working Party (PDWP) approved a Rs945 million Ten Year Development Program (TYDP) for the merged district. This ten-year plan includes projects in education, health, agriculture, and housing (Michael, 2007).

The multibillion-rupee 10-year socioeconomic plan promises huge socioeconomic development in the war-torn FATA region. Aside from health and educational facilities, the plan calls for significant infrastructure development in the agriculture and communication sectors, which will create jobs and business opportunities in the region. The recent move is a sign of hope for the war-torn region's marginalized people.

Social Changes

Terrorism and Tribal Society

Terrorism has long-term consequences for individuals, groups, and society as a whole. Human conflict and corruption are unavoidable in society. Human conflict manifests itself in the form of violence or terrorism. Terrorism has far-reaching consequences for the general public. Terrorism, without a doubt, has a direct impact on economic development and prosperity, as well as psycho-social implications that severely harm human personality and society (Chughtai, 2013).

Terrorism has extremely distressed the people's lives in different manners. The social scenario in FATA has relatively changed due to rising terrorism and military operations. The social life in militant controlled

areas was completely disturbed. While the extremist groups imposed the radicalization all over the country. The terrorist activities and the military operations have destroyed the local culture of FATA (Haider & Jameel, 2017). The major impacts of terrorism on tribal society are changing their outlooks, their social behaviors, their strict cultural norms and their way of life in all respects. The people of FATA are faced with a very crucial environment as compared to the rest of Pakistani. They saw the destruction of their land, property, and their businesses in the hands of militants as well as in the hands of security forces. These people are also the eye-witnessed of their dears whiling slaughtering by the militant. They have been expelled from their villages in the name counter-insurgency measures (S. W. A. Shah, 2012). The war on terror has both positive and negative impacts on the lives of tribal people.

FATA Amalgamation into KP and its Social Impact

The Pakistani government's announcement of a merger would go a long way toward fulfilling the aspirations of the people of the tribal areas for emancipation and ushering in a new era of political and social development. The recent move provides a historic opportunity for tribal people to become masters of their own fate, rather than resigning it to the wills and whims of militants, as is currently the case. Despite the fact that the merger provided a ray of hope for tribesmen mired in conflict and poverty (Noor et al., 2018). Because of successful military operations, the people of FATA were able to rid themselves of the chaos and instability. As a result, it is hoped that this integration will have a significant impact on the FTA's social life (S. A. A. Shah, Parveen, & Khalil, 2019). The people of FATA now have the right to file appeals before the Supreme Court and the High Court, thanks to the 25th constitutional amendment. FATA residents have easy access to the higher courts. Fundamental rights have been guaranteed, and the people of FATA now have representation in the KP Assembly. The recent merger has created a peaceful environment in the region (K. TARIQ, 2019).

Residents of FATA travel to other cities in the country in search of quality education. This shows that the education sector in FATA is suffering a slowdown, which must be addressed as soon as possible. The recent merger has ushered in a new era of development and growth, with education being one of the first sectors to undergo reform. The Federal Government, in collaboration with the Pakistan Army, began work on rebuilding educational institutions in FATA. The federal government has set aside Rs240 million for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of educational institutions destroyed by terrorism (Yusufzai, 2020). Because of a lack of hospitals and doctors, nursing staff, an adequate stock of equipment, up-to-date laboratories, and high-quality medicines, the region lacked health facilities. This integration will also have a significant impact on the health of the people of FATA (Sherani, 2016).

The multibillion-rupees 10-year socioeconomic plan and 3% NFC share promise massive socioeconomic development in the war-torn FATA region. Aside from health and educational facilities, the plan calls for significant infrastructure development in the agriculture and communication sectors, which will create jobs and business opportunities in the region. The well-thought-out agenda is a sign of hope for the war-torn region's marginalized people (K. M. Shah & Areas, 2018).

Pashtunwali, or "Pashtun way of life," is a strong Pashtun culture founded on local customs and a code of conduct. *Pashtunwali* principles include the management of tribal issues and conflicts. The traditional *Jirga* (a group of tribal elders) is in charge of resolving tribal issues and conflicts. *Jirga* is well-known for reflecting the values of the "*Pashtunwali*." Human rights violations in this system, on the other hand, cannot

be hidden. *Jirga* violates the rights of women and children because they have no right to speak to this system about any issue. The recent integration, like the other aspects, has sounded the alarm for further system maintenance (A. Khan, Alam, Shah, Ullah, & Shafi). The establishment of courts and a policing system following the merger would reduce the role of the *Jirga* system in tribal areas. Two distinct systems are in conflict. The government is attempting to build basic infrastructure for the police and court systems. The current situation in the region is conducive to development and peace (Gregory, 2011).

A solid mechanism is required for the implementation of educational reforms in these areas. The only way to address the grievances of the disturbed and helpless sections of society is to improve education and health care provision. Education generalization increases social awareness and employment opportunities in society. The government should priority the provision of education and health services in these areas in order to restore and maintain peace and security. Economic, legal, and political interventions can improve social integrity and direct society toward political and social stability, thereby contributing to peace and development in tribal areas.

The people of the newly merged districts have a progressive approach towards development. They want an immediate change to bring prosperity to the region, but change takes time and is a gradual process. No one can envision a rapid and positive change in any society. Primitive societies, too, respond to new customs and values in a modernizing manner. It will be a lengthy and complicated process. The first stage of change is political development. The merger process was a watershed moment in the history of the tribal region. A change in the system as a whole would result in changes in all aspects of an individual's life. Change implies that a society is willing to adapt to its way of life, and that they are attempting to alter societal norms and traditions.

Conclusion

The integration of Federally Administered Tribal Areas into Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa has resulted in significant and positive changes in the former FATA's overall situation. It is a significant step by the Pakistani government. The region can now look forward to peace, prosperity, and development after the region's recent integration. Residents of FATA will have the same political, constitutional, economic, and administrative rights as the rest of the country's citizens. It is hoped that the war economy will be transformed into a stable economic boom, transforming the region from a geostrategic to a geo-economics zone. Furthermore, following integration with KP, former FATA, a historically conflicting area, has now become a land of peace and harmony. Along with this, the abolition of terrorism and militancy will ensure regional and national security. The full integration of FATA will require the effective implementation of peace and security measures. Although Pakistani military forces have successfully pushed the Taliban out of the tribal areas, coordinated military efforts and public support are required to prevent the militants from regrouping and retaking ground in the border region. This integration is also critical for decreasing the risk of border disputes with Afghanistan, ensuring the security and stability of the entire region, including Pakistan. Instability in Afghanistan would continue to destabilize the entire region of South and Central Asia, as well as the Middle East, because FATA is adjacent to Afghanistan.

The extension of the Pakistani constitution to tribal areas, as well as the permanent abolition of the centuries-old oppressive law known as the FCR, are both positive steps in the right direction. However, there are some other fundamental issues that must be addressed with caution. To limit the influence of *al*

Qaeda and its ilk, the tribal society's entire infrastructure must be revamped. The first priority should be to provide free education, followed by significant improvements in health, agricultural developments, industrial revival, and an improvement in the tribal region's communication system.

The people of the region have shown great fortitude in the face of terrorism and protracted social conflict. There is an urgent need for the government to focus on rapid development, or else foreign hostile elements will look for an opportunity to exploit masses in the name of identity, leading to a recurrence of conflict that had been managed after a lot of sacrifices by the people of the region and government forces alike. This tribal belt was a hotbed of corruption, illegal trade, and militancy, all of which had a significant impact on the governance system. These reforms will have a positive impact on the region. On the other hand, implementing these reforms remains a gigantic task. So, its implementation requires the assistance of civil society, particularly the region's youth, because only locals can play an important role in the region's development.

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