



**FROM DECLINE TO REVIVAL: ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF TTP'S
STRENGTHENING ON REGIONAL STABILITY IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA,
PAKISTAN**

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Abstract

The resurgence of terrorism in Pakistan, particularly the reemergence of the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), poses a significant threat to regional and national security and stability. The article aims to examine the impacts of the TTP's resurgence and evaluate the government's counterterrorism strategies. This article propose a comprehensive framework to tackle the escalating threat. The study's issue stems from the escalating militant actions in KP, leading to deteriorating security conditions and the displacement of the local population. Understanding the reasons that contributed to the resurgence of the TTP is essential for devising effective counterstrategies. The article is significant since it provides a comprehensive analysis of the evolving security landscape and policy recommendations to enhance Pakistan's counterterrorism framework. The research employs a qualitative methodology, using secondary sources, including government documents, academic articles, and expert evaluations. The article asserts that political instability, inadequate governance, and cross-border factors drive the resurgence of the TTP in KP. Although military operations have achieved short-term success, the absence of a coherent counterterrorism plan remains a substantial obstacle to long-term stability.

Keywords: Terrorism, Extremism, Revival of TTP, Regional Stability,

Introduction:

Since 1947, Pakistan has faced several challenges, with each decade seeing an increase in both the intensity and intricacy of these problems (Ali, 2014). In order to understand the menace of terrorism, that have plagued this region for decades, it is important to analyse the recent resurgence of the Taliban in KP. The socio-economic and political condition has been impacted by the historical background of Talibanisation in KP, notably the Afghan factor, which has eventually enabled the rebirth of the TTP (Ahsan, 2015). Pakistan emerged as a closed ally of America in the war on terror and is now facing the menace of terrorism (Batool & Virk, 2022). The choice taken twenty-four years ago continues to significantly impact them, as the scourge of terrorism has ravaged their peace, education, security, economy, and essential social standards of living. In his book "What We Won," Bruce Reidel argues that the Afghan War (1979-1991) did not resolve the problem but instead initiated a new phenomena that would persist internationally for years. This specific forecast was entirely accurate about Pakistan.



Following the September 11, 2001 attacks, Pakistan allied with the United States in the “war on terror” by providing military assistance and air bases to confront the Afghan Taliban. They were once nurtured and schooled by US itself. Pakistan faced substantial expenses due to this decision (Yamin, 2007). The southern region of KP has become a significant target and the most vulnerable area for terrorism. The southern region of KP has succumbed to terrorists. The geographical location, challenging terrain, and economic hardships have mostly facilitated these regions’ transformation into havens for several terrorist organisations and leaders evading the US “war on terror” in Afghanistan (Azad, 2024). Since 2008, the southern part of KP has mostly faced destruction; yet, a substantial policy adjustment did not transpire until 2014. On 16th December 2014, terrorists attacked an Army Public School in Peshawar. Due to this attack 150 persons, mostly children and female teachers, were killed. TTP took responsibility of the attacks. This crucial event caused a substantial change in governmental policy, leading to far-reaching consequences. Nevertheless, the calm after 2021 seems to be transient, as a significant rise in terrorism has once again been noticed in most parts of Pakistan. Taliban and the separatists executed substantial offensives in these areas. The organisation often referenced in connection with these attacks is TTP, or the Pakistani Taliban. Since its return, the TTP has shown increased lethality and danger. Since 2021, deaths from terrorist activities have surged by 138%, with a 55% rise in the incidence of these events (Akhtar & Ahmed, 2023).

Terrorism is the paramount worry in Pakistan after the events of 9/11. The recent rise and strengthening of Talibanisation in KP provides a substantial problem for the law enforcement agencies. Despite substantial counterterrorism efforts and military actions, KP, especially in the southern region, has seen a revival of the TTP. The incidence of terrorist attacks is increasing every day. This situation presents a considerable threat to regional stability. The revival of TTP from Afghanistan to Pakistan’s terror landscape since the middle of 2021 has severely hampered peace efforts in the country. This research is to examine the effects of terrorism and the rebirth of the TTP in KP.

TTP: An Introduction

Subsequent to the Russian invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, this region emerged as safe-haven for Afghanis and non-state actors. After 9/11, these groups escalated their activities, resulting in increased lethality and designation as terrorist organisations. The region as a whole and individual states have tried to confront this emerging danger to national peace and security. Counterterrorism actions have ultimately confronted the consequences of these extremist activities, with Pakistan as the principal actor. The absence of official conversations between the TTP and the Pakistani government was attributable to several factors. One of the factors was targeted drone strikes. This method may have eradicated TTP’s reliable negotiators, complicating the attainment of agreements for both new and established leaders. An alternative perspective highlights consequences of drone attacks may have drawn discontented individuals to the TTP, strengthened its support base, and impeded “moderates” from promoting a negotiated settlement. Furthermore, others assert that Pakistan’s purported collaboration in the US drone program has undermined its legitimacy and credibility as a partner for the TTP in any potential peace negotiations (Farooqa, 2020).

The withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan produced a power vacuum, enabling the Taliban to restore their influence. International and local support, especially from Pakistani proponents, greatly enhanced the Taliban’s initiatives. The Taliban developed a presence and



exploited local grievances because of the fragile governmental structures in Afghanistan and Pakistan's tribal regions. The Taliban's recruitment and narrative were impeded by intricate tribal dynamics and sectarian and ethnic strife. Unsuccessful military operations and unconventional peace agreements helped the Taliban acquire military expertise and notoriety. Their ideological appeal and objections to Western operations strengthened the Taliban's tenacity and capacity to endure foreign assaults (Abbas, 2014). The TTP is opposing the state in Pakistan. The UN reports that the TTP has several thousand combatants in Afghanistan, with fortified positions on each side of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Despite the collapse of the TTP from 2014 to 2018 due to Pakistani military operations, U.S. drone strikes, and internal conflicts, the terrorist organisation has been experiencing a significant recovery since the Afghan Taliban and the U.S. finalised a peace agreement in February 2020. Since July 2020, twelve terrorist organisations have merged with the TTP, including three Pakistani branches of al-Qaeda. Following these mergers, the violence perpetrated by the TTP has intensified, and this trend has worsened since the Afghan Taliban's rise to power in Kabul in August 2021 (Sayed, 2021).

Rise of TTP in Pakistan:

Pakistan, in conjunction with the US, maintained enduring relations with the mujahideen, Afghanistan's Islamic insurgency that opposed the USSR and the Afghanistan, resulting in the government's overthrow in 1992. Pakistan was among the few nations to acknowledge the Taliban which emerged as the dominant party among the mujahideen upon seizing power in Afghanistan in 1996, following years of internal conflict. Throughout the years, the Taliban's Haqqani network, accountable for several lethal assaults, operated from Pakistan and was strategically used by the Pakistani government to discreetly advance its goals. This prompted Hillary Clinton, then the US Secretary of State, to state that you cannot harbour snakes in your backyard and anticipate they will only bite your neighbors. After the 9/11, the US invaded Afghanistan to dismantle the terrorist network of al-Qaeda responsible for those attacks. Pakistan emerged as an important ally and strategic partner in the US' "War on Terror", primarily owing to its substantial regional influence and extensive control over extremist factions. Consequently, this undermined Pakistan's connections with several extremist factions that it had discreetly used for state-sponsored terrorism. The arrest and killing of Osama Bin Laden by US troops in Abbottabad in 2011 diminished Pakistan's reputation with both its American ally and terrorist factions. In August 2021, after two decades of conflict, the US and its allies withdrew from Afghanistan, transferring authority to the Afghan Taliban. Imran Khan, then Prime Minister of Pakistan, praised the Afghan Taliban's government, stating, "The Afghan Taliban has broken the shackles of slavery." In this setting, Pakistan sought to rejuvenate its alliance with the Taliban (Shah *et al.*, 2024). Since mid-2021, the TTP's resurgence from Afghanistan into Pakistan's terrorism scene has significantly obstructed peace initiatives, particularly in its tribal areas. The TTP arose as an insurgent entity in Pakistan, including the erstwhile FATA, in response to Pakistan's support for the United States during the US-led war on terror in Afghanistan (Akhtar & Ahmed, 2023).

After Afghanistan held unsuccessful negotiations to resolve the cross-border problem, the TTP in November 2022 unilaterally ended the peace agreement with the Pakistani government. The TTP instructed its militants to recommence assaults across Pakistan, exacerbating bloodshed in many areas. Within Afghanistan, Pakistan commenced operations against TTP commanders.



A March 2023 incident in Pakistan resulted in the deaths of five Chinese people. The Pakistani authorities attributed the incident to the TTP. China has made substantial investments in Pakistan via its Belt and Road Initiative. China has encouraged Pakistan to mitigate security risks and has expressed concerns on the escalating targeting of its people. In June 2024, Pakistan began its new counter-insurgency operations named 'Azam-e-Istehkam'. It will concentrate on domestic security challenges and cross-border armed insurgency originating from Afghanistan. The TTP is the preeminent terrorist organisation and receives backing from the Taliban government to execute cross-border assaults in Pakistan, as stated in a 2024 UN assessment. The organisation has been using NATO munitions that were abandoned after withdrawal. Pakistan has said that, in return for guarantees that the TTP would refrain from targeting Pakistan, the Afghan Taliban requested 10 billion Pakistani rupees (\$35 million) for the resettlement of TTP militants. The Taliban refute the assertion. The TTP has cautioned that it would persist in targeting enterprises operated by Pakistan's military (Banerjee, 2025).

Arrival of Talibanisation in KP:

Terms like "Mujaheddin" and "Taliban" were unknown to the international community until the Cold War, even till 9/11. After the 9/11, people often engaged in discourse on Taliban mujaheddin and Al-Qaeda. They were acquainted with Pakistan due to their agricultural endeavours, the assistance received, and the sanctuary provided there (Zaidi, 2010). The reasons contributing to the degradation over time continue to be an important subject of discourse. The events started in the late 1970s when, after much turmoil and political instability, a pro-Soviet regime ascended to power in Afghanistan. This development presented a perceived threat to the US, since this government might possibly assist the Soviet Union in solidifying its influence in the area. The US had to face the Soviet Union at this pivotal moment, and Pakistan served as the essential intermediary. Pakistan became an ally of the US (Farhan, 2021).

General Zia-ul-Haq, a dictator and military commander, directed and equipped the mujahedin in madrasas of Pakistan and prepared them for Jihad in Afghanistan (Khan, 2023). Those mujahedin were mostly belonged to the tribal areas of KP, driven by their fundamentalist Islamic beliefs and historical links to Afghanistan, which necessitated their involvement in the battle. In accordance with Islamic tenets and Pashtun solidarity, they were ready to undertake jihad against the Soviet communist forces. Their steadfast convictions and support from the US provided them with the strength to fight resolutely, culminating in the dissolution of the USSR in 1991 after an extended struggle. After the departure of Russian forces from Afghanistan, several factions of the mujahedin initiated fighting between themselves in their quest for control. The mujahedin, now referred to as the Taliban, established the Islamic Emirates of Afghanistan in 1996. The 9/11 catastrophe, when the Taliban assaulted two prominent structures in the US, altered the global landscape post-2001. The US began a 'war on terror' with Pakistan acting as a principal partner in this endeavour. During this era, Pakistan embraced terrorism. The areas of KP and Baluchistan, next to the Afghan border, mostly constituted their habitat. The Taliban organisation and some of its prominent leaders hide in the southern KP. The established, steadfast tribal and fundamentalist Islamic factions in KP provided them sanctuary (Ahmed, 2023).

The emergence of TTP in the southern regions of KP threatens peace and stability. Terrorism in these regions is impacted by several internal and external causes (Ahsan, 2015).



Understanding the historical origins of Talibanization, its modern resurgence, external influences such as Afghanistan and military operations, and the intricate economic and socio-political dynamics of the area is essential (Ahmad *et al.*, 2024). Nevertheless, the tribal community, which showed heightened resistance to this regional expansion, responded to the new resurgence with displeasure. The Swat Qaumi Jirga, representing the inhabitants of Swat, orchestrated a series of protests in reaction to the increase in terrorist activities in Charbagh Tehsil. They articulated their discontent and requested that the government take immediate action against elements threatening regional peace. Hundreds of people participated in rallies around KP in response to previous violent occurrences, particularly a school van attack that resulted in several deaths. Participants exhibited unity and warned of possible violent resistance if authorities fail to resolve their issues immediately. A series of demonstrations for the elimination of terrorism and improved security measures in the area illustrate the increasing hostility among the residents of Swat. Prominent political personalities have endorsed the protests and emphasised the need for peace in Swat. The demonstrations have brought attention to the need for effective counterterrorism strategies to attain lasting peace in the valley (Bacha, 2022).

The Post-2021 Terrorism and Revival of TTP in KP:

Fitna-Al-Khawarij's terrorist actions have escalated since mid-2021. The Afghan Taliban took control of Afghanistan in August 2021. An analysis of the terrorism trend from 2021 to 2024 reveals a discernible escalation of terrorist activities in Pakistan from August 2021 to 2024. In 2021, there were 268 terrorist acts, an increase from 193 in 2020. In 2022, many terrorist incidents occurred. In 2022, there were 365 reported terrorist incidents that resulted in the deaths of 971 victims, including 379 males and security personnel. In 2023, the number of terrorist attacks escalated to 527, resulting in the deaths of 1,502 persons, among whom were 532 members of security forces. By July 2024, a total of 397 terrorist acts had been documented. The year 2024 is regarded as the most detrimental year from a security standpoint, having resulted in the deaths of almost 950 persons, including 307 members of the security services (Khan & Khan, 2024).

It is troubling that, despite assurances that Afghanistan's territory would not be used by terrorists against any nation, the Taliban authorities have failed to prevent the Fitna-Al-Khawarij terrorists from attacks in Pakistan. Pakistan is confronting terrorism originating straight from Afghan territory. Earlier, the new Afghan Taliban government was hostile and uncooperative. Throughout the US and NATO occupation, the Afghan Taliban maintained proximity to Pakistan, with some key commanders staying there. Prior to the August 2021 Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, the TTP, also referred to as the Pakistani Taliban, seemed to be experiencing a rise. At that juncture, after years of organisational disunity, the group was starting to exhibit signs of revival. It not only survived the existential threat previously posed by the Islamic State but also fortified its ranks through a series of mergers, expanded its support base, implemented new regulations limiting the indiscriminate targeting of civilians, and accelerated the pace of its operations. Over the subsequent two years, leveraging the Afghan Taliban's triumph and deriving motivation from it, the TTP's resurgence has persisted in gaining momentum, partially attributable to an 'incoherent' reaction from the Pakistani military. The TTP is now seeking to intensify its violence against the state following a series of unsuccessful peace negotiations, characterised by an increase in geographical expansion,



additional mergers, the relocation of its fighters from their “victory” in Afghanistan to Pakistan, and a more localised focus with a centralised organisational structure (Syed & Hamming, 2023).

The TTP in Southern KP is now using a new tactic with the state, claiming responsibility for several terrorist acts under the pretence of newly established, unidentifiable factions. Pakistani officials are pressuring the Afghan government to restrict the activities of the organisation, which is financed from their country. The TTP is consistently attacking innocent civilians and military personnel on a regular basis. TTP is striving to strengthen itself while concurrently consolidating and extending its new initiatives (Ahmed, 2021). The Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS) indicates that in 2022, the state experienced 664 incidents of various forms of attack, signifying a 67% increase in terrorism relative to 2021. KP and Balochistan were the main areas of emphasis. The data reveals a notable escalation in violence after 2021. In 2023, KP had 317 terrorist events, while it was 213 in 2022 and 110 in 2021. The southern KP has seen a notable rise in extremism and violence. Authorities have already dismantled the organisation, although it is resurfacing with a more formidable presence in the region. Militants now prevail in the regions. TTP is seeing substantial growth in both scale and impact. They are establishing new coalitions and consolidating the fragmented Islamic extremist groups. The TTP has established checkpoints at many sites and performs frequent patrols, whilst the police stay stationary at their stations, let militants to operate with impunity from dusk till daylight (Muhamadzai, 2024).

Challenges for Peace and Security:

Post-conflict environments underscore the need for security for peace and sustainable development. State security is tasked with maintaining safety in post-conflict situations. It should also focus on the state’s maintenance and the well-being of citizens. The emphasis is on the state-led security sector reforms model, which highlights the need for the democratic system and efficacy for the rehabilitated population in post-conflict areas. In contrast, the notion of social security is very recent and highlights identity and societal resilience in response to perceived threats. The Taliban’s presence in the area undermines social unity and security due to the growing importance of identity-based distinctions (Bacha, 2022). Concerns about social security linked to foreign dominance, migratory patterns, and intercommunal conflict are significant, particularly in regions characterised by substantial ethnic and cultural variety, such as southern KP.

Historically, the Taliban may have seen themselves as the appropriate authority to resolve various grievances and community issues. We want to examine the securitisation theory to understand the relationship between social security and government security. Given that individuals exhibit heightened apprehension about danger during a conflict, it is important to consider how both governmental entities and societal structures might enhance perceptions of safety. Potential conflicts emerge from the public's reliance on risks and vulnerabilities, hence augmenting the potential for securitisation. Comprehending the dynamics in KP is essential, as the Taliban resurgence threatens both social and state security. The state’s initiatives to re-establish security must address the identity-based issues of local communities. All these factors need a careful balance to achieve lasting peace in post-conflict areas (Makki, 2022). The absence of strong contextual comprehension and local connections impedes acceptance of post-conflict progress in tribal areas. Strict border restrictions affect social norms and economic



stability, engendering animosity among populations. Scepticism exists over the efficacy of de-weaponization, owing to the cultural importance of weaponry and apprehensions about an increase in terrorist activity. The administrative frameworks post-war have become more complex owing to resistance to modifications to the court system and the conversion of Khasadar forces into standard police units.

An exhaustive inquiry examines the several challenges stemming from the emergence of TTP. The first problem pertains to the contemporary terrorist strategies used in their operations. These unconventional approaches present significant dangers to regional security and peace, necessitating a comprehensive overhaul of Pakistan's counter-terrorism strategies and frameworks. The TTP employs tactics including suicide bombings, guerrilla warfare, and targeted assassinations to disrupt conventional security forces and generate instability and fear. Comprehending these distinctions is crucial for formulating counterinsurgency strategies that operate more effectively with less human and financial expenditures. Secondly, this comeback significantly affects the local population and their governmental structures. It examines how the TTP interrupts ordinary life by instilling fear and displacing individuals. The group's influence on governance undermines the state's legitimacy and suggests that there must be measures that address security concerns while fostering community resilience and effective governance. The prospect of enhancing security in the region hinges on the Taliban administration's compliance with the international obligations established by the global community. The improvement of the security situation in the area is quite improbable without the assistance of the Taliban (Zhou, 2022).

Terrorism is a persistent problem that seeks to do damage to humanity. This has adversely affected the educational system in southern KP, leading to enduring violent extremism, explosions, and kidnappings. The findings indicate that terrorist organisations target educational institutions and civil-military entities to destabilise the whole educational system in these areas. The absence of checks and balances in madrasa education has increased the likelihood of sectarian bloodshed, with the Afghan war providing a conducive environment for it (Jan, 2020). Various investigations indicate that civic institutions are unable to confront the threat of terrorism, attributing this insufficiency to a deficiency in education that tackles present-day global challenges. The relationship among social justice, socioeconomic issues, and terrorism, proposing military operations and bilateral as well as international dialogues as methods to tackle the root causes. Utilising education as a counterterrorism strategy has been emphasised as a crucial instrument for societal transformation. Terrorism has extensive repercussions that affect the state and society. Terrorism is a threat that devastates lives, erodes income, and compromises religious tolerance and values. In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, Pakistan emerged as a target of terrorism, incurring substantial losses in both human life and financial resources. The socioeconomic framework of Pakistan has been profoundly affected by the war on terrorism. Critical incidents, such as suicide bombings and assaults on military installations, have exacerbated the detrimental effects on Pakistan's socio-economic fabric. While immediate solutions, such as military operations like Operation Zarb-e-Azb, have garnered support, education at all societal levels represents the long-term solution to marginalisation, feelings of deprivation among the population, and the reduction of socio-economic disparities between core and peripheral regions of Pakistan (Ibrahim, 2021).



The impacts of TTP on regional stability is substantial. The TTP's transnational operations are enabled by the permeable border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, resulting in choices made in one country affecting the security dynamics of the other. Attacks, invasion, and militant activities exacerbate the security landscape, necessitating coordinated efforts between the two neighbouring states. A meticulous examination of these consequences yields critical insights into the geographical extent of the TTP's activities, which informs the formulation of strategies that recognise the interconnectedness of security concerns. The TTP's resurgence exacerbates tensions between Pakistan and its neighbours, particularly Afghanistan, necessitating coordinated security measures, intelligence sharing, diplomatic initiatives, and to mitigate the regional impacts of this resurgence. The dangers emanating from Afghan territory will escalate and possess more regional ramifications after the US exit (Lobel, 2021; Wani, 2022).

Despite previous efforts to counter terrorism, including effective military operations that diminished TTP influence, Pakistan is now confronting new threats due to evolving conditions in Afghanistan. The TTP's heightened activity since 2021 underscores the intricate connection between Pakistan's terrorist challenges and Afghanistan's instability. Prioritising counterterrorism initiatives and addressing the root causes of Afghanistan's instability is more vital for sustaining regional security, particularly as Pakistan grapples with internal political turmoil (Ahmed, 2021).

Impacts of Strengthening TTP in KP

The reemerging of the TTP in KP is alarming and has had significant socio-economic and political repercussions on the province. The TTP has resurfaced with increased intensity, and targeted assassinations, extortion, and assaults on security personnel have become commonplace in the area, therefore destabilising it (Khan & Yousaf, 2021). This has engendered an atmosphere of apprehension among the local population, significantly affecting everyday life and economic endeavours. Furthermore, TTP actions have exacerbated the displacement situation in KP, as several families have been rendered homeless due to escalating violence. Displacement disrupts the social fabric and exerts significant pressure on local infrastructure and humanitarian organisations. The resurgence of the organisation hinders the region's development plan, since insecurity deters investment and undermines the education and health sectors (Ali & Zafar, 2020).

The TTP's strengthening poses a significant danger to Pakistan's national security by contesting state authority and eroding the counterterrorism advancements achieved in the last decade. TTP's capacity to function across the Afghan-Pakistan border challenges counterterrorism efforts, suggesting that there must be improved regional collaboration. Throughout the TTP's existence, several incidents have heightened regional security apprehensions. TTP targets prominent leaders and law enforcement agencies. These occurrences provide historical context for the group's ascendance and establish a basis for understanding the succeeding elements that led to its demise. The terrorist organisations and their facilitators that support TTP generally function through modified structures, contributions from domestic and international benefactors, criminal enterprises, such as kidnapping for extortion, theft, and ransom (Ahmad *et al.*, 2024).

Pakistan has a vast and porous border with Afghanistan. The permeable border between Pakistan and Afghanistan has facilitated extremists in concealing themselves and garnering support. The violence and volatility of the Afghan war have facilitated the TTP's recovery and



reorganisation. The historical connections between terrorist organisations in Pakistan and Afghanistan, along with their geographical intricacies, have enabled the TTP to use regional power dynamics. An intricate network of regional dynamics occurs, and several countries are reacting to these evolving situations. Pakistan is among them. Pakistan may possess an edge over India owing to the evolving geopolitical scenario after the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan. This strategic benefit entails an increased risk of terrorism, particularly from the TTP (Khan & Syed, 2021).

Government Response and Strategies for Counterterrorism

The Pakistani government has implemented many steps to combat the resurgence of the TTP, including military operations, talks, and socio-political efforts. Operations like Radd-ul-Fasaad and Zarb-e-Azb have been used to dismantle their structures; however, total eradication has not been achieved (Jalal & Hussain, 2019). These operations have successfully re-established authority over some territory; yet, they have faced criticism for failing to tackle the underlying reasons for militancy. Negotiations with TTP have become a vital component of the government's counterterrorism strategy. Nonetheless, these endeavours have mostly proven ephemeral, since ceasefire agreements often collapse due to reciprocal distrust and unmet stipulations (Kakar, 2021). The situation has prompted a discussion over the efficacy and feasibility of dialogue as a strategy to combat terrorism.

The administration has progressively acknowledged the need of tackling the socio-economic determinants of terrorism. Initiatives have been implemented to enhance infrastructure, employment, and education in KP to counteract the ideological allure of the TTP (Shah, 2020). Repeatedly, these efforts are undermined by the acute scarcity of resources, corrupt behaviours, and insufficient cooperation among players. An effective counterterrorism strategy must be multifaceted, including military, political, and developmental elements to provide enduring peace and stability (Abbas, 2021).

On December 4, 2024, Pakistan conducted targeted attacks against the training camps of the self-proclaimed TTP located in the Birmal region of eastern Paktika province, revealing Afghanistan's irredentist stance. The operations followed a series of terrorist assaults by the TTP against Pakistan's security forces (Haider, 2025). More than 686 security persons and 1612 citizens were killed in 444 terrorist attacks in 2024. This situation is alarming as it has increased 66% from the previous year 2023. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stated in a meeting of the National Action Plan Apex Committee, The plan for Pakistan's progress and prosperity, discussed yesterday, can only be realised via a collaborative enhancement of law and order throughout the nation and the definitive eradication of the TTP (Daily Dawn, January 3, 2025). The Pakistani government took many initiatives to tackle with menace of terrorism, it also includes targeted military operations in specific regions. However, it is observed that there were many factions within TTP. Moderates want authority and autonomy via negotiations while radicals distrust on government and reject dialogue. The current government is not in favour of negotiation and tackling the problem without differentiating between "good" and "bad" Taliban. The local people of the affected areas are not happy on the TTP's dominance. The debilitated state is struggling to counter terrorism and influence of the TTP in KP (Gugler, 2019). At the same time, strategies to fight back against the insurgency include working with communities, improving local economies, and building trust between the government and the people. The TTP is seen as lacking both financial means and intellectual capability to bring



social change in accordance with their agenda. Notwithstanding its deficiencies, the TTP persists in expanding its influence in areas with discontent and in enlisting individuals among displaced populations (Younus, 2023).

Conclusion

The rise of TTP in KP presents a significant danger to Pakistan's internal security and regional stability. This article identifies many causes contributing to the resurgence of the TTP, including socio-economic grievances, political instability, ineffective law enforcement and poor governance. The presence of uncontrolled madrassas disseminating extremist ideologies and the social media use by militant groups have also strengthened the organisation. The lack of public trust in security forces and deficiencies in governance have created a conducive atmosphere for the TTP to expand its influence. The cross-border dynamics between Afghanistan and Pakistan have significantly contributed to the resurgence of the TTP. The unregulated border between Pakistan and Afghanistan enabling the passage of fighters, armaments, and illicit financial resources. Despite the Afghan Taliban government's apparent condemnation of the TTP, evidence indicates that some elements within the Afghan Taliban continue to harbour and provide refuge to the TTP. The withdrawal of NATO and US soldiers significantly enhanced the morale of the TTP, enabling it to effectively organise in Afghanistan and coordinate operations in Pakistan.

Pakistan's counterterrorism approach, although effective in many areas, has not entirely eliminated the TTP danger. Military operations have momentarily diminished the organisation; nevertheless, without sustained initiatives in de-radicalisation, intelligence-sharing, and socio-economic advancement, these achievements are ephemeral. The lack of cooperation between civilian and military entities, unsuccessful peace negotiations, and inconsistent policy execution have created voids that the TTP has exploited. Although measures like border fences and intelligence-driven operations have mitigated cross-border mobility to a degree, a more comprehensive and multifaceted strategy is essential for enduring stability. The revival of terrorism in Pakistan, particularly the rebirth of the TTP in KP, is a multifaceted issue requiring a comprehensive response. Mitigating the root causes of militancy, enhancing intelligence capabilities, and fostering diplomatic relations with Afghanistan will be crucial for achieving lasting peace and security in the area. Without a cohesive and collaborative counterterrorism policy, the TTP threat would undoubtedly persist, posing a continual danger to Pakistan's national security and regional stability.



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