**Redefining Counter Terrorism Approach**

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The US withdrawal from Afghanistan and the Taliban’s rapid takeover of Kabul in 2021 provided a huge impetus for the TTP (Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan). The Afghan Taliban, after taking up the charge, immediately ordered the release of imprisoned TTP militants from Kabul cells. This illicit acquittance escalated insurgency in Pakistan afterwards.

TTP demands of establishing the Islamic caliphate in Pakistan, imposing Sharia law, and restoration of erstwhile FATA status are akin to some pipe dreams. Pakistan has always repudiated these frivolous requests. Pakistan iterates its stance on State sovereignty and that no foreign elements are legitimised to carry out any malign activities against Pakistan. if does then Pakistan’s military forces are also well equipped to stem the tide of foreign threats.

Pakistan formulated its first-ever National Security Policy in 2021. The then-incumbent government proposed a dialogue settlement with TTP. Thus, a ceasefire between the two lasted for only seven months. The TTP rescinded the agreement in November 2021 and launched even deadlier attacks across Pakistan. According to available accounts, the TTP has carried out sixty-plus attacks in different regions of Pakistan resulting in dozens of civil and military fatalities. This implies that the TTP only uses peace processes to reorganise itself for upcoming targets.

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The current exacerbated situation suggests the government of Pakistan revisit Its National Security Policy because the matter has gone beyond dialogue settlement. Pakistan’s security and law-enforcing institutions need to launch a complete crackdown on TTP insurgents. In addition, Pakistan’s Foreign Policy also needs some transitions, specifically towards Afghanistan. No good could ever be expected from the Afghan Taliban. TTP and Taliban were once genres of the same music, be it Afghan Jihad against Russians or Americans during the War on Terror. Two have been birds of the same flock throughout these years. Other than this, a threat that imperils Afghan Taliban is the unification of IS-KP and TTP against them; perhaps this fear binds Afghan Taliban with TTP and compels them to harbour TTP sanctuaries. In this regard, How come Pakistan expects Afghanistan’s cooperation to counter TTP? At this stage, Pakistan needs to realise that constant rebukes and warnings are not enough and that coercive diplomacy is the need of the hour.

Owing to the TTP Dilemma, Pakistan requires policymakers who are visionary, effective and strategic thinkers and can navigate the complexities of matters at the global level. On the contrary, Pakistan lacks such policymakers. Moreover, a discontinuous policy towards the Afghan Taliban also ignites tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan. For instance, During the Afghan Jihad war against the Soviet Union, Pakistan played a pivotal role in combating Russians. But Right after a decade, Pakistan took a swift shift and started to support the War On Terror against the Taliban. This ambivalent approach suggests State rethink who is it with. Pakistan needs a crystal clear stance for Afghanistan.

Furthermore, overhauling counter-terrorism courts is also a pressing need for the state. The low conviction rate remains a weakness in the terrorism landscape. Moreover, the paradox between CTD and Judicial approaches further complicates the scenario. CTD adopts a terrorism control approach while courts take a traditional “due process” approach. The state needs to bridge the rift between these two systems.

Furthermore, the Government of Pakistan must not overlook India’s growing influence in Afghanistan and the TTP. India, Pakistan’s oldest foe uses every tactic to imperil and dismantle Pakistan’s security. Therefore, Pakistan needs to formulate a robust policy for India so that it refrains from utilising Pakistan’s fault lines for its malign objectives.

Lastly, state security agencies also need to develop and implement counter-financing measures to understand and disrupt the finance networks supporting TTP. Many names have been on the cards for alleged support of TTP. These include India, Iran, and other Gulf states evidently. To deal with such a challenging situation, Pakistan should provide evidence to the alleged states and cooperate with them on counter-terrorism strategies.

Since terrorism is a global threat, Pakistan should also make efforts to draw global attention to the increasing threat from these militias. Big economies such as the USA, China, and Russia can play effective roles in combating these non-state actors. A heavy responsibility falls on the United Nations Office of Counter Terrorism (UNOCT) to unify world states on a single platform for the implementation of Global counter-terrorism strategies in regions that are most vulnerable to terrorism.

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