**The new war on terror**

**At no cost should the TTP be allowed to operate from safe havens inside Afghanistan.**

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The banned TTP has again chal­lenged the writ of the state of Pakistan at a time when the country is facing a serious econom­ic crisis, political instability and damages to property worth $30 billion caused by the floods. The TTP unilaterally declared an end to the ceasefire agree­ment with the state of Paki­stan and directed its militant to carry out attacks.

The Pakistani Taliban first came into the limelight towards the end of 2005 when a group in North Waziristan killed militants of another group and hanged their headless bodies and called themselves the Pakistani Taliban. That was the time when there were different self-claimed Jihadi groups who rose to power and destroyed the tribal struc­ture. In 2007, Al-Qaeda got different so called Jihadi groups united under the banner of TTP. It was Al-Qaeda which financed, organized and equipped the TTP under its ideological banner. Soon, the influence of TTP spread across en­tire erstwhile FATA and the Pukhtoon belt of Balochistan. In January 2008, the TTP under Baitullah Mehsud de­clared war on Pakistan, and at the same time in order to get recognition from the Afghan Taliban, thousands of Pak­istani Taliban were sent as reinforce­ments to Afghanistan.

[Two killed as blast hits Jaffar Express](https://www.nation.com.pk/16-Feb-2023/two-killed-as-blast-hits-jaffar-express)

Despite a fatwa from Mullah Omar to not fight the state of Pakistan, the TTP did not pay a heed to it. In 2004, the US introduced the drone attacks in erstwhile FATA and killed hundreds of innocent people. Thus, Pakistan be­came a victim of terrorist attacks car­ried out by terrorists who took ref­uge in erstwhile FATA. The Pakistani army launched the first major opera­tion, Al-Mizan, against terrorists from 2002 to 2006. At the same time, the government of Pakistan signed differ­ent peace agreements with the TTP, starting from the Shakai agreement in 2004, the Srarogha agreement in 2005, and the Swat agreement in 2009 etc. All the agreements failed as these were never honored by the TTP be­cause talks for peace were always tak­en by them as a sign of weakness of the state. In June 2014, operation Zarb-e-Azb was launched in North Waziristan to clear it from terrorists. The opera­tion was a success which cleared the region after defeating the Taliban, and those who escaped the operation fled to Afghanistan where they were pro­vided safe heavens.

[Imran Khan likely to appear before LHC today](https://www.nation.com.pk/16-Feb-2023/bail-plea-imran-khan-likely-to-appear-before-lhc-by-12-30pm)

Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad was launched in February 2017 to consol­idate the gains of operations across Pakistan. The operation was a continu­ation of the National Action Plan (NAP) which was drafted soon after the APS Peshawar attack. On August 15 2021, the Afghan Taliban took control of Ka­bul and declared the independence of Afghanistan. According to the media, after taking over Afghanistan, the Af­ghan Taliban requested the govern­ment of Pakistan to take back the TTP militants. Accordingly, talks were held between government of Pakistan and the TTP facilitated by Afghan Taliban. The TTP demands included the im­position of Sharia and the release of their militants from Pakistani jails, in addition to the reversal of the merger of Pakistan’s tribal areas with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A cease fire was agreed, however talks remained inconclusive.

In December 2022, the TTP unilat­erally ended the ceasefire agreement and directed its militants to carry out attacks across Pakistan. The recent surge in terrorist attacks across Khy­ber Pakhtunkhwa reflects their grow­ing strength in the province and foot­hold in Balochistan. The TTP took full advantage of the lull period and negoti­ations to regroup. The recent Peshawar police lines mosque blast which mar­tyred over 86 Police personnel has jolt­ed Pakistan. The suicide bombing was claimed by a faction of the TTP, the Ja­mat-ul-Ahrar to avenge the death of its leader Omar Khorasani. The TTP is all out to kill innocent Pakistanis across the country therefore there is a re­quirement of an aggressive response to flush out the terrorists who have en­tered Pakistan from Afghanistan. The TTP now appears to be more organized and armed with sophisticated weapons left behind by the US army during their exit from Afghanistan.

[Govt devising strategy to mitigate adverse impacts of climate change](https://www.nation.com.pk/16-Feb-2023/govt-devising-strategy-to-mitigate-adverse-impacts-of-climate-change)

The big question is who is funding and equipping the TTP inside Afghan­istan? The possibility could be first­ly, sympathizers of the previous gov­ernment, former officials of NDS, and also by hostile agencies led by India. The options available to Pakistan are ask the Afghan Taliban to take action against the TTP and ensure that there are no more safe havens. Before un­dertaking an operation, the TTP must be given an ultimatum with the op­tions to surrender to the state of Paki­stan with weapons, accept the consti­tution of Pakistan, and agree to be law abiding citizens of Pakistan or face an operation. On refusal of these options, their hideouts inside Afghanistan and erstwhile FATA must be targeted by air, drones and artillery. Before taking any action inside Afghanistan, the Af­ghan Taliban must be taken on board to avoid any misunderstandings. How­ever, at no cost should the TTP be al­lowed to operate from safe havens in­side Afghanistan.

[AJK PM urges world to take notice of India’s violations of UN resolutions, rights treaties](https://www.nation.com.pk/16-Feb-2023/ajk-pm-urges-world-to-take-notice-of-india-s-violations-of-un-resolutions-rights-treaties)

The terrorists with the support of their handlers are trying to dam­age the hard-earned peace of Paki­stan. Pakistan has already paid a huge price during the war on terror as more than 85,000 Pakistanis have lost their lives. The Pukhtoons of Pakistan have sacrificed more than any other ethnic groups in Pakistan as a result of this war. If any group deserves real appreci­ation for their contribution right from 1947, it is the Pukhtoons.

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