**Western border and terrorism**

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The border agreement with Afghanistan was signed between British India’s foreign secretary Mortimer Durand and Amir Abdur Rehman of Afghanistan. The demarcation of the border was carried out from 1893 to 1896 and the Wakhan Corridor was created as a buffer between British India and the Russian Empire. The border was ratified in the subsequent agreements and no objection was raised. The first Afghan ambassador to Pakistan, Shah Wali (uncle of King Zahir) said we do not have any border issue with Pakistan and if there was any, that has been settled. There is also an impression that Amir Abdur Rehman signed the agreement under duress and was imposed forcefully.

Contrary to this, the Amir after signing the agreement declared it a landmark agreement and took the elders of Jirga elders into confidence. The Afghan borders with China, Iran and Russia were demarcated by Britishers where Afghanistan was not present. If Afghans can accept these borders as legitimate, then why not its border with Pakistan. Nobody can reject historical agreements signed by countries; if they are not honoured, the international order will collapse.

[PM Shehbaz to chair cabinet meeting today](https://www.nation.com.pk/07-Feb-2023/pm-shehbaz-to-chair-cabinet-meeting-today)

All the Afghan governments tried to destabilize Pakistan by allowing the hostile powers to use its soil. During the governments of Hamid Karzai and Ashraf Ghani, India used Afghan soil as a second front to fix Pakistan through terrorist activities. Before the fall of Afghanistan to the Taliban, India had 66 terrorist camps in Afghanistan for terrorism in Pakistan. The porous nature of the border allowed terrorists to freely enter into Pakistan’s erstwhile FATA and Balochistan. After the tragedy at APS Peshawar, it was decided to fence the border. However, the fencing of border started in May 2018, not only on the Western border but also on the Iranian border.

The Chaman incident is unprecedented where the Afghan Taliban targeted the civilian population of Chaman city. The tribes in Chaman on either side are the same ‘Achakzais’ and targeting their own brothers is indigestible. Most likely a third force, namely elements of the Afghan National Army (ANA), Afghan Border Police (ABP) and National Resistance Front (NRF) absorbed by Taliban were involved. I was commandant of the Pishin Scouts in Chaman, and my experience is whenever there was a standoff, the elders (mashars) played an important role to defuse the situation.

[PM directs PTA to immediately restore Wikipedia services](https://www.nation.com.pk/07-Feb-2023/pm-directs-pta-to-immediately-restore-wikipedia-services)

Swat has witnessed militancy since 1992 when Sufi Muhammad established Tehrik Nefaz Shariat Muhammdi (TNSM) and demanded shariah in Malakand division. The situation worsened during 2008/9 when Fazlullah allied with the TTP soon after the Lal masjid operation. The Pakistan army launched operation Al-Mizan from 2002 to 2006 and operation Zarb-e-Azb in North Waziristan in June 2014 to rid it from terrorists. The Pakistan army succeeded in eliminating the menace of terrorism from KP and killed hundreds of terrorists, however some managed to escape to Afghanistan. Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad was launched in February 22, 2017 to consolidate the gains which is still in progress. Pakistan has paid a huge price on its war on terror as more than 85,000 Pakistanis have been martyred. The recent resurgence of terrorist groups in Swat, Dir, Laki Marwat, Bannu and North/South Waziristan is alarming. The unfortunate part is that the Afghan Taliban released the TTP terrorists from prisons, and were allowed free movement and entry into Pakistan.

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This resurgence is a serious blow as their activities have increased after the peace talks failed. Thousands of people took to the streets in various parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) to protest against return of TTP terrorist, especially in Swat. The hostage situation in the Bannu Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) compound has raised many questions. Apparently, the CTD officials were not ready nor were they trained to react to such a situation. Salute to courage and valor of the SSG troops who cleared the CTD building, and resultantly 25 terrorists were killed and 10 were arrested.

The big question is, who is funding and supporting TTP? Again, hostile elements are out to support TTP in order to destabilize Pakistan. The aim is to create fear and panic through banned terror outfits. They have found safe heavens in Afghanistan and have acquired sophisticated weapons left by the US. The most unfortunate part is that Kabul is not cooperating with Pakistan on TTP and border issue. The terrorists and their safe heavens must be eliminated in all forms and the writ of state has to be established at all costs. The hard-earned peace after the loss of thousands of lives and destruction of properties must not be sacrificed.