ISLAMIST MILITANCY IN SOUTH & NORTH WAZIRISTAN DISTRICTS

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Original Article

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Abstract

Taliban militancy in the tribal districts of North and South Waziristan is a hangover from the colonial past. Enshrined in the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR), weak state conditions especially on counts of legislation, judicial arbitration and execution have historically paved the way for armed mobilizations in these districts. After the independence of Pakistan, the central government continued with the colonial dispensation of the FCR in North and South Waziristan. Like previously under the British Raj, the occurrence of armed mobilizations continued unabated after the independence. This study purports to sketch an historical account of militancy in the pre and post-independence eras and to account for the occurrence of militancy from the British advent in these two tribal districts until the rise of Taliban there after the US invasion of Afghanistan. Secondary and primary sources and survey method were used for the conduct of the research. Secondary sources include books, research articles, and newspaper and magazine reports. Primary sources that were used include constitution and the FCR followed by a couple of interviews.

Keywords: Militancy, South Waziristan, FCR, State, Governance System, Armed Mobilization

Introduction

In recent past, the tribal districts of South and North Waziristan served as breeding grounds for Taliban militancy, which later also engulfed rest of Pakistan. From 2002 to 2006, in the country, there were 1, 2, 7 and 4 and 7 suicide attacks respectively (South Asia Terrorism Portal, n.d.). For subsequent years, the data were as follows: 2007 (54), 2008 (59), 2009 (76), 2010 (49), 2011 (41), 2012 (39), 2013 (43) and 2014 (25) suicide attacks in Pakistan (South Asia Terrorism Portal, n.d.). Since 2002 to 2014, a total of 407 suicide bombings ripped through the width and breadth of the country. In these suicide attacks, 6,272 people were killed with another 12,909 injured (South Asia Terrorism Portal, n.d.). From 2001 to 2014, the terrorist violence left a total of 56,189 killed, of which 20,054 were civilians, 6,047 security personnel and 30,091 militants (South Asia Terrorism Portal, n.d.). Moreover, at one time a total of 11 percent—89568 square kilometer, out of 778,720 square kilo meter—of Pakistan's landmass came under 'Taliban control', 'contested control' or 'Taliban influenced' (Saleem, 2009). In order to tackle the threat of Taliban's threat, by the end of January 2010 Pakistan had deployed some 140,000 personnel from soldiers, military and paramilitary forces (Hussain, 2010).

Militancy in the tribal districts of South and North Waziristan posed a fatal security threat to Pakistan from within. Tackling it became a major policy debate in the policy making circles of the country's powerful security establishment and civilian government from 2007 and onwards. This paper has two objectives. First, it gives an historical account of armed mobilizations in the tribal districts especially that of South and North Waziristan. Secondly, it peruses through the history of tribal areas to find a pattern of militancy that survives from the extant past.

Why did militancy develop in FATA? In order to answer the question, several books came to the fore. Ahmed Rashid's Taliban, Islam, oil and the new great game in Central Asia, first published in the year 2000 exclusively focused upon Afghan Taliban and preceded 9/11. Rashid's second and more relevant book to the FATA's quagmire is his Descent into chaos, how the war against Islamic

Extremism is being lost in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia, published in 2007. The main theme of the book is that owing to US's distraction from Afghanistan due to American invasion of Saddam Hussein's led Iraq provided a perfect opportunity for Al Qaeda and the Afghan Taliban to regroup especially in FATA where they established safe havens. Like many other writers, Rashid also strongly believes that Taliban are the strategic assets of Pakistan, who, from the world view of the country's overarching security establishment, will fill the power vacuum once the US led NATO coalition forces withdraw from Afghanistan—an assumption that the security establishment is convinced will happen sooner than later. On the causes of militancy in FATA, Mr. Rashid traced the history of militant activity to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and Pakistan's extensive support to the Mujahiddin groups in the world largest covert war. Although the work is seminal—especially in disseminating new information about the Taliban of Pakistan's tribal chapter—it hardly presents any new analysis of the Taliban phenomenon besides what has been overstated: the Afghan jihad and the Taliban as Pakistan army's strategic assets. In his latest book, Pakistan on the brink: the future of Pakistan, Afghanistan and the West published in 2012, Rashid does not present any new analysis. To the author, the Pakistani Taliban aims at "establishment of a state based on Sharia or Islamic law and for a caliphate" (Rashid, 2012, p.54).

Imtiaz Gul wrote The Al Qaeda connection in 2009. The writer, while also confirming the presence of Punjabi Taliban in the tribal areas, and like Rashid, attributed the restiveness in the tribal areas to the era of Afghan resistance to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the resultant relocation of Muslim militants from around the globe. Similarly, Maleeha Lodhi, in her edited book Pakistan beyond the crisis state, published in 2011 also attributes the "Islamic militancy" to Zia's era and by implication to Afghan jihad (Lodhi, 2011). Amir Mir's Talibanization of Pakistan: from 9/11 to 26/11 was published in 2009. The book spotlighted almost exclusively on the Punjabi Taliban and their militant outfits. The inventory includes Lashkar-e- Toiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), Harakatul Mujahiddin (HUM), HizbulMujahiddin (HUM), the Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) and Lashkar-e- Jhangvi (LJ). The problem with Mir's hypothesis is that it did not go beyond ascribing the present FATA quagmire to as being the blow back effect of Pakistan's military and intelligence establishment policy of 'strategic depth' (Mir, 2009, p. 15). Secondly, the author falls victim to the conventional wisdom trap by ascribing Islamic ideology to Taliban. "Taliban…aim at nothing less than cleansing Pakistan of all liberal and secular elements to turn it in to a pure Islamic state by enforcing Islamic Shariah (Islamic Laws) there" (Mir, 2009, p. 15).

In a latest series of literature on the militancy in Pakistan, Zahid Hussain wrote his book The scorpion's tail: the relentless rise of Islamic militants in Pakistan and how it threatens the world in 2010. Hussain sees the Taliban's militancy in the wider context of a fight between the radical Islamists and the state since 1947 (Hussain, 2010). Whereas for Islamists, since the inception of Pakistan, the country was destined to become an Islamic state—with Shariah being supreme law of the land—for liberals, it was a modern-secular-democratic polity with Muslim majority (Hussain, 2010).

The most insightful work to date—Pakistan, a hard country—on Taliban was that of AnatolLieven. Published in 2011, the book devoted two chapters exclusively on the Taliban, especially of the Pakistani stock. Although the work does have a compelling analysis on Taliban than any other book on militancy in FATA so far, it does have its own weaknesses. For instance, like other works on Taliban militancy, Lieven understands of Taliban's motive also fall prey to conventional wisdom. He calls Taliban's militancy as "Islamist rebellion" (Lieven, 2011, p.405). On the one hand and his analysis by implication attributes Islamic revolution to Taliban on the other (Lieven, 2011). Moreover, as far the causes of militancy in Pakistan, the writer attributed its upsurge "overwhelming to the US invasion of Afghanistan, and the influence of the Afghan Taliban" (Lieven, 2011).

Despite scholarly efflorescence in the field, hardly any of these studies go beyond being journalistic. Besides, none is embedded in a theoretical framework. Additionally, when one studies the literature, a reader gets the ineluctable impression as though militancy in FATA were a phenomenon exclusively linked to the era of Afghan resistance. This impression is specious. In fact, militancy in the tribal region is a historical tribal prerogative having its roots in colonial history and even preceded it. More, the Taliban phenomenon is also attributed to the Pakistan security establishment's policy of strategic depth in Afghanistan. The problem with this position is that not all the Taliban groups were supported by the security establishment. Furthermore, the research so far conducted on militancy in the tribal region provides very general picture with none specifically dealing with FATA militancy in a comprehensive manner. Moreover, these studies, although emphasizing on Islamic component of Taliban violence, are devoid of an analysis on the tribal aspect of the tribal militants led violence. Thus, the available literature, though important, does not give a coherent picture of the militancy emanating from Pakistan's north. If these studies do not provide a comprehensive analysis of militancy in FATA then what can? My stock of the militancy in the tribal areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is that there is more to the militancy equation. This paper is an attempt to bridge the gap by studying militancy in FATA in a holistic manner on the one hand and doing so from the theoretical perspective of weak statehood on the other.

This paper attempts to answer two questions. First, how did Taliban rise in the South and North Waziristan tribal districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa? Secondly, what explains the rise of Taliban in these tribal districts?

My paper argues following. *Taliban militancy, in South and North Waziristan tribal districts, is a continuity from the British rule in the then Indian northwest tribal areas. In these districts, militancy—with different labels and intensity—has historically stemmed from the weakness of state, which has remained as a necessary condition for militancy to occur. To precipitate militancy, sufficient conditions have varied from time to time in pre independence era and after it. Post 9/11, the relocation of Taliban, al Qaeda and their affiliates engendered militancy in tribal districts of South and North Waziristan. With their advent in the tribal areas, the British enshrined weak statehood in the local governance system, which was codified as Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR).*

Weak statehood and Tribal districts

According to article 246 (c) of the 1973 constitution of Pakistan, Federally Administered Tribal Areas include the respective Tribal Areas, adjoining Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, LakkiMarwat, Dera Ismail Khan and Tank districts and the agencies of Bajaur, Orakzai, Mohmand, Khyber, Kurram, North and South Waziristan.

The governance system for the tribal areas was enshrined in FCR. Originally drafted in 1878, FCR was modified in 1872 and finally in 1901. The document remained operative in the tribal areas until May 31, 2018, when tribal areas were finally merged with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and renamed as tribal districts from the previously Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Kakar, 2021). Even The Fata Interim Governance Regulation 2018 which was signed by the president on May 28, 2018, did not remedy the weak state conditions that the FCR, which was replaced by the former, enshrined (Kakar, 2021).

According to Edward Newman, weak state "refers to a situation where central government has poor capacity to control public order within its territory, is unable to consistently control its borders, cannot reliably maintain viable institutions or services, and is vulnerable to extra constitutional domestic challenges" (Newman, 2007, p. 465). Under the FCR, the Political Agent and his administration had no mandate to intervene in inter or intra tribal affairs of tribes until an issue posed a threat to state interests along the road side and threatened government buildings and installations—all combined constituting some 10 per cent territory, which was referred to as 'protected

areas' or 'administered areas' (Kakar, 2017). In other words, under 'normal' situation, more or less 10 per cent of land mass of tribal territory is a 'protected area' or 'administered area'.

Under the FCR, state shared judicial arbitration—a function which in rest of the country is performed by judiciary—with a tribal jirga, again a non-state institute. In the 10 percent protected area, the state outsourced arbitration to Sarkari jirga (government council), comprising the jury appointed by a Political Agent. The remainder 90 per cent of tribal areas is an unprotected area, where state abdicated its core functions, such as security, arbitration and implementation of laws, to a non-state entity called Olasijirga (people's council) and tribal lashkars (forces) (Kakar, 2017).

Execution of decisions passed under the FCR was carried out through the traditional force of Khassadars and levies, and the tribal lashkars (forces). Khassadars and levies, drawn from local tribes, performed the role of police force that functioned under a bureaucratic hierarchy led by a Political Agent in each one of the seven tribal districts. Lashkars were a non-state institution, which were constituted to execute a punitive action against a tribe or its outlaws and were dissolved when the task was accomplished. Hence, the state executive authority was weak in the tribal areas. Thus, in FATA the state has traditionally outsourced its primary functions to non-state actors such as jirgas and tribal lashkars.

The state had also shirked itself of provisioning security to tribesmen in the tribal areas. This is especially true of the unprotected areas of the region. The people in FATA, like states in international arena, live in Kenneth Waltz's anarchy, which is characterized by the absence of an overarching authority over the constituent units—states in international system and people in FATA. It is no coincidence that in the tribal areas tribesmen carrying a gun wrapped around their shoulders was a common sight. Thus, the people, though hardly able to make ends meet, had to pursue security first and everything else later.

Pakistan shares 25, 00 km long border with Afghanistan (Kakar, 2014). Known as the Durand Line, named after the British Foreign Secretary who had negotiated the border line with Afghan Emir Abdurrehman back in 1892, the border has remained porous for the movement of terrorists, smugglers, traders and nomads and immigrants ever since (Rashid, 2008). After the collapse of Taliban government in 2001, Taliban, al Qaeda and other militants crossed into Pakistan through this border.

The assumption is that the state tendency to abdicate its roles leaves behind it a power vacuum, which is amenable to the rise of non-state actors (Newman, 2007)—an axiomatic fact in the tribal districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

History in its Deadliest Continuity

Explored from the British arrival to the region, the tribal hinterland served as a staging ground for militancy with various ends. Pakistan's tribal landmass, which became a hotbed of militancy in recent years, has a past history colored with same occurrences. Weak state conditions were conducive to conceive and carry out armed mobilization across tribal areas.

Tribal Militancy in The Colonial Period

In the British times, there were five tribal agencies in the North West India. These were Malakand, Khyber, Kurram, North Waziristan and South Waziristan (Caroe, 1957). The Mohmand agency was created in 1951, with Orakzai and Bajaur established subsequently in 1973. The *goras*—an offensive word for the British as the tribesmen would call them due to their fair complexion—were alien rulers, neither Muslim nor Pashtun. Chronologically, the imperial British, in order to expand their rule and restore public order, carried out forty eight military campaigns in the North-West Frontier since 1849 down to 1908. (Nevill, 1977)

One of the high profile tribal armed mobilization and the subsequent military expedition in the frontier region was of the year 1897-1898. In opposition to the British demarcation of the Durand Line boundary, which the tribesmen believed was transpiring at the cost of their jealously guarded independence, the trouble initially rose in the Upper Tochi in June 1897 and by August the uprising had spread to Malakand, Chakdarra and Mohammand country and Shabqadr. The uprising reached Khyber and the Orakzai region. Thanks to British efforts that the conflagration could not reach Mahsuds (Caroe, 1976). Military was swung into operation on a scale unprecedented earlier. The operation was launched in Upper Swat, Bajaur, Buner, the Mohmand country and Tirah (Careo, 1976). Earlier, the Mahsuds' attack on the commission in South Waziristan in November 1894 had cost the British twenty one fatalities and thirty four causalities (Nevill, 1977).

Similarly, in 1914, MaulanaMahmudulHasan, the chancellor at DarulUlumDeoband, conceived of an armed struggle against the British colonial edifice. In order to dislodge the British from India, armed units would be dispatched to Pashtun populated tribal region. The local leadership—mullas— to support the armed insurrection came from Mohmands, Swat, Bajaur, Afridis and Waziristan (Haroon, 2007). Though the movement could not achieve its end, it immensely increased the standing of ulema in the tribal hinterland.

In May 1919, nationalist Afghan Amir Amanullah khan successfully mobilized the tribesmen of across the British Indian side of the Durand line during the Third Anglo-Afghan war. As usual the armed mobilization of the tribes took place through the intercession of Pashtoonmullas who managed to raise a tribal lashkar of 40,000 men, hailing from Shabqadr, Mohmand, Khyber, Tirah and the Waziristans, Bajaur, Swat and Buner (Haroon, 2007). True to the pattern of armed mobilizations in the tribal areas, in order to put down a revolt against him, Amir Amanullah in 1924 secured the man power support from the Indian side tribesmen through the agency of mullas. In September 1928, another rebellion broke out against Amanullah's reforms among the Shinwaris, supported by 400 Afghan Ulema who accused the Amir of heresy. (Haroon, 2007).

Habibullah, a Tajak—also known as Bacha-yiSaqao—staged an uprising against Amanullah, resenting his taxation measures and army conscription in northern Afghanistan. In order to save Amanullah's government from collapse, Haji Sahib Turangzai—a well-respected mulla from Mohmand— dispatched a lashkar of 2000 tribesmen to Jalalabad. (Haroon, 2007) All in vain, for the first time and for a brief interlude in 1929, a Tajik seized Kabul after having Amanullah dethroned. Nadir Khan, general of the Afghan army, garnered the support of local mullas across British side of the Durand Line divide. (Haroon, 2007) With the support of tribal lashkars of Wazirs and Mahsuds, more so in the latter's case (Caroe, 1976) from Waziristan, Nadir Khan seized the throne at Kabul by the end of 1929 (Caroe, 1976).

In the year 1930, with the nationalistic politics in full display in the settled districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, initially a discomfort on allowances issues among Afridis accompanied by the police incident of firing on a peaceful demonstration in QissaKhwani bazaar Peshawar (Mehra, 1998) saw armed mobilization in the tribal region unprecedented since the end of Third Anglo Afghan War in 1919. On 12 May 1930, the Afridilashkar of 4,000 men advanced towards Bara to attack Peshawar, a settled district. In late June, the mullas in South Waziristan raised a lashkar of 1400 men to attack Bannu via Khurram. As the Afridis raised a lashkar of 7,000 tribesmen and marched on Peshawar, the aerial bombardment once again successfully dispersed the lashkar of the formidable tribe (Mehra, 1998). Similarly, in 1934, Royal Air Force was called in to disperse a Mohmand lashkar in Malakand (Mehra, 1998)

Also known in the history of tribal areas is the struggle of Mirza Ali khan, aka the Faqir of Ipi in March 1936 when public passions were running high in the administered districts over a court's decision in the Islam Bibi case (Steward, 2007). A Hindu convert, Islam Bibi had married a Sayyid

Amir Noor Ali Shah, a Pashtun schoolteacher from Banu. Hindu parents of the girl strongly resented the marriage. Since she was a minor, the court ruled to hand over the girl to her parents until she reached the age of maturity to decide her fate. In response, the Daurs under the leadership of Faqir of Ipi, himself a Tori Khel Wazir, raised a lashkar of several thousand tribesmen to march on Bannu but the government's aerial missions dispersed them peacefully (Steward, 2007). Hostilities would resume sporadically. On March 29, 1937, Faqir raised a lashkar of one thousand Wazirs then joined by the Mahsud as well to take on the enemy (Steward, 2007). Towards the end of 1937, with the man at large, the Faqir's revolt cost the British dearly: 1000 casualties out of a deployment of 40,000 troops (Steward, 2007)

Tribal Militancy in ThePost Independence Period

The post-colonial Pakistan inherited both the Faqir and his struggle. Based upon his 1950 interview with an American journalist, Faqir's post 1947 struggle against Pakistan was meant for the creation of an independent Pashtun state solely comprising Waziristan of which he would have been the head (Haroon, 2007).

The news of death and destruction of their Muslim brethren in the next door Kashmir enraged the Pashtun tribesmen to wage jihad against the Dogra forces. On 22 October 1947, they crossed the border into Kashmir and on 24 October the tribal invaders captured power house near Srinagar (Burke and Ziring, 1990). The Mahsud, Mohmand, Afridi, Wazir, migratory Powindah and Miangul tribesmen all participated in the armed struggle (Haroon, 2007). At the height of the conflict their strength reached around 20,000 (Cloughly, 1999). The advancement of Pashtun lashkars came to a halt 25 miles from Srinagar as soon as the Indian forces were deployed in the capital (Steward, 2007).

Until 1960 when Pakistan Air Force undertook aerial strikes on the dissident tribesmen in Bajaur agency, the tribal hinterland remained calm. Afghanistan was held responsible for stirring up trouble in the tribal territory by supporting its agent—BadshahGul—who distributed ammunition among the tribesmen (Steward, 2007). In the year Kabul had turned a blind eye to the crossing of a lashkar of 15,000 men into the borderland (Haroon, 2007).

The Pakistan's tribal areas came to the forefront with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. FATA served as a launching pad in Islamabad-Washington's bid to dislodge the communist threat from Afghanistan. Given the ISI-CIA's patronage arms were secreted in FATA and the Mujahiddin would enter Afghanistan through the region and would retract back after conducting raids. As the refugees poured into Pakistan side of the border, a total of 278 Refugee Tented Villages were established in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Out of total, 104 happened to be in FATA especially in the Bajaur, Kurram and North Waziristan (Haroon, 2007). Mohmand agency on the Pakistan side housed the Afghan fighters' artillery offensive (Haroon, 2007). The arms transactions gave a powerful fillip to ammunition industry with DarraAdamkhel bazaar in Khyber becoming a central point for the sale and purchase of US-Chinese-Russian weapons. The bazaar housed five gun factories, 2600 arms shops and 3,000 technicians and labors and had the potential of producing about 100 AK-47 per day (Hilali, 2005). According to a CIA's report, 40 percent of US's supplied weapons destined for mujahidins would end up to the people outside the conflict (Hilali, 2005). As for the madrassahs' contribution, JammatIslami's 40 out of 107 seminaries established in the Afghan border area produced jihadi literature and nudged the people to join anti Soviet resistance (International Crisis Group, 2002). More, the Centre for Afghanistan Studies at the University of Nebraska-Omaha paid—US$ 51 million from 1984 to 1994—by the USAID distributed over 13 million textbooks— inculcating jihadi values—at Afghan Jihadi camps and Pakistani madrassahs (International Crisis Group, 2002).

The Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan paved the way for a devastating civil war. Recruited from the Deobandi seminaries in the Pashtun areas of Pakistan, the Taliban also recruited people

from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa tribal areas. In 1998, in order to fight for Taliban, 4000 madrassahs students many of whom hailed from FATA left for Afghanistan (Haroon, 2007).

How militancy started?

South Waziristan

In the beginning, Taliban's war against Pakistani military was defensive. They only fought against the military when it was deployed in the tribal areas, captured militants from al Qaeda and its affiliates, and started operations against pro-Taliban militants in the tribal areas. Initially, the objectives of pro-Taliban militants were 'to secure the region as a base camp for the war in Afghanistan and protect the mujahedeen—a euphemism for the Al-Qaeda-linked Arabs and affiliated Central Asians' (Siddique, 2014, p. 45).

Pro-Taliban militants—known as a mujahideen among tribesmen—were unhappy with the deployment of Pakistani military to catch and handover al Qaeda operatives following the ouster of Taliban regime. By the end of 2004, Pakistan had handed over 369 of the al Qaeda terrorists from a tally of a total of 689 (Rashid, 2008). Nevertheless, matters started to worsen when military became more entangled with Taliban. In mid-2003, officials in South Waziristan through the agency of jirgas successfully took into custody some of the foreign suspects that Ahmedzai Wazir tribesmen had harbored (International Crisis Group, 2006). In December 2003, the then Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa announced general amnesty for those foreigners who had surrendered to the government and lived in peace among the tribesmen (International Crisis Group, 2006). Nonetheless, in March 2004, under strong pressure from Washington, the Pakistani military deployed troops on transit points for militant crossing into Afghanistan in AngorAdda, Azam Warsak, Kalusha and Shakai in South Waziristan even before the regular political channels could be exhausted to surrender foreign suspects (International Crisis Group, 2006). The ensuing March 2004 Kalusha operation around the villages of Shin Warsak, DazaGundai, Kalusha, GhawKhawa, and Kari Kot near Wana targeted the areas that were under the control of five local Taliban leaders (ICG, 2006). Naek Mohammad, Noor-ul-Islam, Mohammad Sharif, Maulvi Abbas and Maulvi Abdul Aziz, all were accused of protecting foreign militants (International Crisis Group, 2006). Some 500-600 foreign militants and 2000-25,00 local tribesmen engaged in fierce battle with the military (Tohid, 2006). The operation did not only engender local sympathy among the Ahmedzai Wazir for the local militants (Siddique, 2014) but also among the Deobandiulema across the country.

In March 2004, Lal Masjid administration issued a fatwa, signed and endorsed by 500 ulema, probably all from Deobandi persuasion, from across Pakistan. It declared the military operation against Taliban as forbidden in Islam and demanded from embattled soldiers to disobey orders from superiors and that the funeral prayers of those soldiers that fought against Taliban would not be performed (Iftah, 2004). Not unlikely, FC soldiers deserted ranks and helicopters pilots refused to fire from above (Rashid, 2008). More, six army officers were already court marshalled for links with al Qaeda (Rashid, 2008). In the military operation, some 200 soldiers were killed (Rashid, 2008).

Cognizant that military operation could not obtain the desired result, the military switched to peace agreements with Taliban to secure the surrender of foreign militants in Shakai South Waziristan. The 24 April 2004 unwritten Shakai agreement—which was concluded with Taliban leader Naek Muhammad—offered amnesty and financial incentives to local Taliban in return for surrender of militants from al Qaeda and its allies or at least their registration with the local administration and the pledge that local Taliban would not allow their soil for cross border attacks in Afghanistan. (International Crisis Group, 2006) In an interview with Dawn, Naek Muhammad pledged that "Waziristan's soil will not be used to fire at Afghanistan" (Wazir, 2004). When asked if he would register foreign militants with government by stipulated April 30 2004 deadline, "There will be no operation and catching foreigners is not part of the agreement", (Wazir, 2004) replied Naek. Instead, he claimed "There is no Al Qaeda here [South Waziristan]" (Wazir, 2004).

As foreign militants were not registered with local administration, government closed down 600 shops in Wana Bazar, arrested tribesmen, impounded vehicles and used gunship helicopters and air force gets to hit militant sanctuaries in Shakai (International Crisis Group, 2006). In June 2004, the first ever US Predator drone attack to be carried out in Pakistan killed Naek Muhammad in his South Waziristan hideout. Naek's killing was made possible "in a secret deal, the C.I.A. had agreed to kill him in exchange for access to airspace it had long sought so it could use drones to hunt down its own enemies" (Mazetti, 2013), reported The New York Times. After his death, government renewed its amnesty offer. Musharaf government paid $540,000 to successfully secure the surrender of Haji Mohammad Omar, the acting head of the Mujahidin Shura of South Waziristan, Maulana Abdul Aziz, Haji Sharif, Maulvi Abbas and Mohammad Javed by December 2004 (International Crisis Group, 2006). These militant were believed to have had owed the amount to al Qaeda and the government helped them settle debts with the terrorist organization (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2005). In the wake of military operation, a large number of al Qaeda militants fled to the mainly Mehsud populated mountainous areas of South Waziristan (Siddique, 2014).

Abdullah Mehsud and Baitullah Mehsud helped regroup fleeing militants and started attacking government installations (International Crisis Group, 2006). Like Naek Muhammad Wazir, these two Mehsud militants had come to prominence while fighting alongside Taliban in Afghanistan (Siddique, 2014). By Sep 2004, these two militant Mehsud commanders had established training bases, ammunition stocks, and bomb-making workshops (International Crisis Group, 2006). With Abdullah Mehsud at large, Baitullah Mehsud surrendered in Sra Roghah and was, in turn, granted amnesty. He pledged loyalty to Pakistan, committed neither attacking government installations and forces, nor sheltering al Qaeda operatives and other foreign militants and, in future, to assisting government in war on terror. The agreement, however, agreement did not require Baitullah to surrender al Qaeda and other foreign militants (International Crisis Group, 2006). Reportedly, Baitullah, after going into hiding for some time, once again revitalized his activities to organize militants (International Crisis Group, 2006). Likewise, Mullah Nazir, another militant leader from South Waziristan was appointed as Amir (leader) of the Mujahidin Shura of Waziristan in November 2006 (International Crisis Group, 2006).

North Waziristan

After the military operation in South Waziristan, in 2006, many militants relocated to North Waziristan where they organized themselves and started attacking Pakistani forces in North Waziristan and international coalition forces and Afghan forces across the border. Government functionaries in the tribal agency were confined to government building and the militants ruled outside. The sub-tehsil of Mirali and Miramshah came under the control of MujahideenShura of North Waziristan. The shura banned tribal elders from meeting government and state officials. These mujahideen killed some 150 tribal elders and even ulema who were accused of cooperating and collaborating with the government (International Crisis Group, 2006). Invoking Islamic Shariah, these pro-Taliban mujahideen would behead those who were suspected of spying and warned that this would be the fate of those who provided information to the United States about militant leaders' whereabouts (Dawn, 2021).

In March 2006, the military carried out an operation in DandaySaidgi against Chechen militants (International Crisis Group, 2006). In reaction, pro-Taliban militants attacked Frontier Corps convoy in Mirali. (International Crisis Group, 2006) By the same time, cross border attacks on international coalition forces and Afghan security forces across the border put a pressure on Musharraf to prevent attacks that originated from Pakistan side of the border (International Crisis Group, 2006). Under pressure, the government reached a ceasefire with Mujahideen Shura of North Waziristan on 25 June, 2006 (International Crisis Group, 2006). A notorious Taliban leader Mullah Dadullah visited North Waziristan and met Pro-Taliban leaders and tried to persuade them that "we

should fight the U.S., UK and armies of other Western countries" and cease any war with Pakistani military (Yusufzai, 2006). During the ceasefire, government released all militant operatives and dismantled all military check posts that were established during the military operation in the tribal agency (International Crisis Group, 2006). On September 5, 2006, the government and the militants reached a peace agreement, which eventually became possible thanks to the intervention of Taliban supreme leader, Mullah Omar who had asked Taliban to sign it (Telegraph, 2006).

The peace accord barred pro-Taliban militants from having any parallel administration and crossing border into Afghanistan. They were also required to halt attacking government installations, property and armed forces. Similarly, these militants were barred from spreading and carrying out their activities in districts adjoining North Waziristan. All foreigners were required to either leave North Waziristan or to be peaceful and respectful of the law of the land.

The agreement required the government: to release all militants incarcerated during the military operation and not to re-arrest them for their wrongdoings in the past; restore all tribal privileges; remove the check posts that were established on the roads (during operations) and redeploy "Khasadars" and "Levies" on the old check posts that previously existed prior to the operation. Despite the agreement, the attacks by militants remained unabated due probably primarily to those militants, such as Abdullah Mehsud, who did not surrender and opposed the peace accord. "Baitullah's thinking might be that he can achieve his aims by signing the peace agreement, while mine is that only a holy war against the US and Pakistani government could achieve this," Abdullah Mehsud told BBC news (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2005). By November, the head of US forces also expressed its concern with three fold increase in movements of Taliban militants creeping from North Waziristan into Afghanistan (Rashid, 2008). By 2006, a full-blown Taliban insurgency was in full gear in Afghanistan (Jones, 2008).

Conclusion

The preceding paragraphs have demonstrated weak state conditions have historically served as necessary condition for the launching of armed mobilization in tribal districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This is true of the British advent in the northwest and post-independence including the rise of Taliban in North and South Waziristan tribal districts. Post 9/11,many Taliban and their al Qaeda associates relocated to these districts. Once, they established themselves they exercised monopoly over the coercive means that are the obligations of state. The state switched from military operations to signing peace agreements with Taliban. Military operations against Taliban ironically helped them spread to areas that they were not active before. As such, amnesty offers and the resultant peace accords—meant to lure militants to quit militancy—only established that local Taliban were the defacto rulers of South and North Waziristan. More, the expansion of Taliban severely circumscribed the state authority and writ. Worse, these deals also resulted in the rise of militant activity across the border in Afghanistan and led to US pressure on Pakistan to act decisively against Taliban. Until state has an exclusive monopoly over legislation, judicial arbitration and execution and provision of security, non-state actors will keep capitalizing over the power vacuum left by the state.

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