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# DRIVERS OF RADICALISM AND EXTREMISM IN PAKISTAN

*Khalid Aziz\**

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## **Introduction**

It may be asked whether there was a need for another paper on the drivers of radicalism and extremism in the presence of abundant earlier research. The following are the answers to this question.

Firstly, this study covers new ground when it concludes that the causes of radicalism and extremism have changed from what they were posited after the 9/11 upheaval. At that juncture the influence of religion in driving radicalism and extremism was high. However, over a period of time the place of religion has been occupied by criminality. This region is now occupied by large criminal “Mafias” who are now sustaining violence by using the revelatory canons as a façade to weaken the legitimate state authority and its security and enforcement capabilities, so that the weak regulatory framework allows the criminal syndicates to make colossal financial gains through sale of drugs, evasion of duties and smuggling of weapons besides other forms of deviance from the

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law. This assertion is supported by one of the most astute analysts on Afghanistan, Ahmed Rashid, who said that, "ISIL's largest gains have been only in one province - Nangarhar, which borders Pakistan. Here, there is an active civil war ongoing between the Taliban and former Taliban, who have switched sides to join ISIL. This fighting has less to do with ideological reasons than it has to do with control of the lucrative trade and smuggling of goods, money laundering, and most significantly, heroin that passes through the provincial capital Jalalabad to Peshawar and onwards to Western Europe. Jalalabad became a drugs transit centre in the early 1990s, even before the Taliban emerged."<sup>1</sup>

Secondly this study clearly links the anchoring of the Pakistani identity based upon religion as another source of fostering radicalism and extremism. It has not only encouraged the religious class to maintain a strangle hold over Pakistan's frame of reference for viewing the external world and its neighbors but permits its institutions to rely on proxy warriors to achieve foreign policy and internal security goals. Obviously, such an association compromises the state's enforcement capabilities and permits the proxies to use the crime Mafias as their logistic partners and at times they are used to quell dissent too.

Thirdly, this study reiterates that radicalism and extremism are anchored within the Pakistan Independence Movement ever since the British colonial masters advocated after 1857, that the Muslims and Hindus were separate people. It was then easy to make the next conclusion that since they were two separate people culturally, they were two separate nations.

The paper is divided into seventeen sections and attempts to trace the manifestation of radicalism and extremism in its various forms and nuances as it prevails in Pakistan today; 1) it is argued that its advent took place due the Hindu-Muslim trust deficit in India when secular parties like the Indian National Congress and the All India Muslim League began to mobilize followers by creating separate identities based on religion that was used as a unifying factor to argue for the establishment of Pakistan and India, 2) the paper studies the role played by the Pakistani narrative and its anchoring in religion as a unifying

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factor to recreate a Pakistani nation. It also substituted a perspective of history of the region in its binary form viz “us” versus “them”, where the national historians imaginatively reconstructed regional history of the sub-continent to suit the ideological purpose. Thus history has been reduced to providing material of a justified “us” ferociously attacked by an iniquitous “them”; a process that devolves into bigotry not against the outsider “them,” but to be used against the recalcitrant “us” within, 3) the paper also examines the key drivers of radicalism and extremism in Pakistan, 4) It studies the strategic role played by certain spaces (Fata and Baluchistan), due to their specific geography, where dangerous safe- havens appeared and led to the creation of the Afghan Taliban after the overthrow of President Najibullah,<sup>2</sup> and assisted in the creation of a formidable franchise in the form of the TTP (2007)<sup>3</sup>, who began to challenge the Pakistani state leading to threats to its survival, 5) the paper also examines the situation in the other provinces and how radical and extremist sectarian outfits have altered the demography in certain parts of the country, 6) the paper then makes certain recommendations for de-radicalizing the state based upon, a) actions proposed for the state, b) actions recommended for civil society, 7) the last section makes certain final remarks about what it will take to defeat extremism and radicalism in Pakistan? It will be beneficial to first clearly define radicalism and extremism;

A **radical** is someone who believes in extreme social and political solutions that are not shared by a majority in a community. There are various explanations why Muslims are more prone to radicalism. However, the most cogent reason is the nature of the Islamic identity. It has been argued that radicalism in Islam exists because it is a global religion and its universalism links Muslims anywhere to a struggle in which Muslims may be involved in any part of the globe. In a sense it creates bonds amongst people that goes beyond the principles of identity based on nation states advocated as a natural crucible of identities by the Western defined modernity.

While an **extremist** is someone who holds uncompromising political and religious views, and advocates illegal, violent, or other extreme action in fulfillment of his beliefs and values. They do not

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believe in diversity and usually have a conservative interpretation of religion modeled upon the times of the Prophet (PBUH) and the first four Caliphs of Islam.

### **Hindu-Muslim Relations as Driver of Radicalism**

The birth and growth of extremist radicalism in Pakistan was originally inspired by religion as the new identity creator, it preceded Pakistan's creation and can be traced to the rancorous arguments between the majority Hindu and the minority Muslims that frequently led to murder and violence.

By the late 1930s the Muslims were convinced that the Hindus would continue to impose their will upon the Muslim, it thus convinced a large number of Muslims to seek a separate state based on the Islamic ideology. It was this factor that ultimately led to Partition notwithstanding views of the Congress leaders to the contrary. Since religion had played such an important role in mobilizing the Muslims to seek a separate homeland based on Islam it was natural that those parties that wanted more Islamization in the new state were in the ascendant against a small cosmopolitan Muslim elite who believed in secularism; Pakistani Westernized elites have ever since homed in on Mr. Jinnah's 11th August speech, in which he spoke of his vision about the new state, that was to be formed only after three days, that all the people who would come to dwell within its boundaries, whatever their personal religious belief may be, were to be considered Pakistani. Easier said than done. How could that be when the religious differences were stressed as the paramount reason for partition of the sub-continent?

Given the benefit of doubt to Mr. Jinnah, that he saw the dangers of managing the future Pakistan on an ideological religious basis, he could only wish away the threat as a divisive factor splitting the unity of the new nation, but he could not put the genie of religion back into the bottle in Pakistan. A similar statement is valid in the case of India. After being in denial for many decades India's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has officially confessed itself to be an extension of the Hindu Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) before whom

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Prime Minister Modi and his cabinet appeared to give the progress report about his government's performance! So much for India's claim to be a 'secular' democracy! In India too the evil of religious hatred against non-Hindus is being actively espoused by the RSS that would be the mirror image of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) or Jamat-ud-Dawah (JD) in Pakistan.

After the creation of Pakistan a large percentage of its population who had been influenced by the religious narrative of the Muslim-Hindu divide, confronted a situation where a new state had to be formed; it lacked institutional structures and the religious inspiration of the population made the radical mind-set more empowered that had existed over a period of time and had even seen or had themselves participated in episodic religious violence that was condoned by inaction and a lax enforcement regime; these initial causes led to the birth of new drivers produced during the Cold War and the pervasive Indo-Pak rivalry as a result of frequent religious pogroms that saw multiple killings in which bands of Muslim zealots and Hindu extremist indulged in murderous sprees. These sentiments became deeply embedded due to the Kashmir dispute as a result of the flawed Partition of the sub-continent and the reiteration of the ideological narrative of Pakistan at the pulpit and in the media as well as on the floor of Parliament.

It can be said, that the main generator of radicalism in Pakistan, is thus the result of the inimical relations between Hindus and Muslims, who had lived with each other for over 700 hundred years in India but had latter begun to see themselves as two separate people. Although the Turkic-Persian-Afghan rule in India was often times contested, on many occasions it was preceded by a Muslim invasion that caused deaths of Hindus and created a set of grievances stretching over a long period of time. There was a parallel killing of Muslims at the hands of Hindus through the Rajput and Mahratta wars.

The delicate surface tranquillity between the Hindus and Muslims suffered when the British colonial administration punished the Muslim elites after the failed War of Independence in 1857. Subsequently, British administrators used the religious cleavage between the Hindus

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and Muslims to keep them apart. Clearly, Britain wanted the Hindus and Muslims to remain divided, so that it was easy to rule them. The British achieved this by spreading myths, one of these was about the Indian Muslims martial qualities and their absence in the Hindus.<sup>4</sup>

It was thus not surprising when this policy of divide and rule led to the ultimate division of India into a Hindu and a Muslim state. The Muslim League that demanded Pakistan had coined the, "Two-Nation Theory," that stated that India was inhabited by Muslims and Hindus as two separate nations and that each was entitled to its own state. This thesis is challenged by Jaswant Singh in his biography on Jinnah and the Partition of India, when he said that it is a histographic error made by many writers, when they referred to invasions of India as Muslim invasions instead of calling them Turkic or Persian or Afghan invasions. If the same logic was to be used for the British (or the Portuguese occupation of India) then they ought to be termed as Christian invasions!<sup>5</sup> On the other hand it has been conversely argued that the separateness of the Hindus from Muslims became inevitable, once the Muslims imagined that they were a separate community and a nation and that the Hindus would not allow them to live in India unmolested.<sup>6</sup> This fear has turned out to be correct with the recent launching of the forceful conversion of Muslims and Christians to Hinduism in which the RSS is taking the lead and since it is a component of the BJP the ruling party in India the rights of the minorities have suffered and they are facing high levels of oppression<sup>7</sup>. This seems to confirm the fears of the Muslims of India who began to believe in the 1940s that the Hindus will not allow them to live in freedom. This has now been confirmed by events in the 21st century. It would also contradict Jaswant Singh's thesis that the religious divide between the Hindus and Muslims was misconstrued. On the contrary it is a fact now.

### **The Pakistani identity**

The traumatic parting of ways between the Hindus and Muslims in 1947, ensured an acrimonious future for both the new dominions these were further aggravated by controversial division of territories and

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assets between them. Their relations were further marred by communal and religious divisiveness, leading to the creation of endemic problems like the ongoing Kashmir dispute that has so far resulted in four wars between the two states in less than a quarter century of existence.

Only recently the special status of Indian occupied Kashmir was confirmed by the Srinagar High Court. It held that Article 370 of the Indian Constitution is a permanent provision and cannot be abrogated, repealed or even amended. Under the Indian constitution, Article 370 grants special status to the disputed state of Jammu and Kashmir. "It (Article 370) is beyond amendment, repeal or abrogation, in as much as Constituent Assembly of the State before its dissolution did not recommend its amendment or repeal."<sup>8</sup>

This acrimony has not only led to low human development but in the case of Pakistan, created a downward growth spiral damaging Pakistan's promise and making it difficult for her to come abreast of her many problems. The main explanation for this is the centralism that Pakistan attached to its narrow identity narrative wholly based on being an Islamic Republic that was different from its founder's pronouncement who wished Pakistan to be a Muslim state based on secularism.<sup>9</sup>

The initial step that encouraged radicalism at the advent of Pakistan was the introduction of the 'Objectives Resolution,' that was adopted by the first Constituent Assembly of Pakistan in March 1949 on the advocacy of Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, the successor to Quaid-e-Azam.

A strong lobby of religious parties began to accelerate Pakistan's march forward as an Islamic ideological state after 1947. This militant advocacy was directed towards the demand for the new state to declare the Qadianis apostates under the Constitution. The unrest in Punjab and in Lahore that followed led to the declaration of Pakistan's first Martial Law in Lahore.

According to Justice Munir, who wrote the seminal report on the disturbances in the Punjab in 1953, stated, "That the object (of the agitators) was to establish a religious state... it was neither in Quaid-e-Azam's mind nor in that of Allama Iqbal's."<sup>10</sup>

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Although Justice Munir may have his reasons for stating as such, yet the historic record shows that the great majority of the Muslims of undivided India wanted a Muslim state. The first step towards turning Pakistan into an Islamic state were begun by the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) who began a well thought out proselytizing movement amongst the students and teachers to create a cadre of activists propagating in the educational institutions of Pakistan, particularly in the Punjab, for transformation of Pakistan into an Islamic state. Thus many of Pakistan's future generation of political, bureaucratic and civil society leaders learnt their politics by becoming members of the JI's student wing the Islami Jamiat-e-Tulaba (IJT).<sup>11</sup>

It can very well be argued that the real father of Islam in Pakistan was not Mr. Jinnah but Maulana Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi and the nation that we see today carries his design more than anyone else.

The Martial Law of 1977 declared by military dictator General Zia-ul-Haq further shaped the country on the lines of Maulana Maududi, he brought changes into the Pakistan Constitution 1973, that formally brought discrimination between Muslim and non-Muslim citizens. Identity cards and passports designated citizens into categories of Muslim and non-Muslim. General Zia-ul-Haq made the 'Objectives Resolution,' a substantive part of the 1973 Constitution, it made Islam the state religion and laid out an Islamic narrative for Pakistan. He also promulgated the Blasphemy Law, something that the Jamaat-e-Islami had demanded in 1949, he crafted a system of Shariat Courts, introduced Sharia compliant laws and devised a new system of Usher and Zakat creating religious tithes. He introduced an effective Islamic system of social welfare called Zakat that transferred considerable resources to the low income groups.

However, Gen Zia was quite primitive in the case of women's rights; women were marginalised as citizens, when the evidence law regarding rape was weakened, leading to the absurd result of converting a failed rape charge due to weak prosecution, into an adultery charge against a woman complainant, leading to a possible sentence of death by stoning! Thus Pakistan's ideology as it stands

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today is based on a conservative interpretation of Islam that opens it to many contradictions and challenges affecting negatively on the internal cohesion of Pakistan or the Westphalian design of statecraft and bounded sovereignty . It also makes it difficult for the law enforcement organs of the state to smolder the fire of Islamic extremist radicalism (after all the challengers claim to be following Islam); the radicals claim that they are advocating what is in the Constitution.

The adoption of a global Islamic identity has created many issues for an average Pakistani causing a crisis of state, where there is an ongoing strident debate as to the definition of who is a good Muslim? It has placed sects and different denominations into grave danger at the hands of sectarianism and terrorism who become targets of opposing sects; something that Justice Munir warned against in his 1954 report.

The profession of an Islamic identity by Pakistan has thus stoked the fires of radicalism and extremism, weakening state cohesion and citizen solidarity. The laments of Justice Munir are thus not misplaced, when he inquired how can there be peace in Pakistan, when there are 73 different religious sects each one advocating that it is the correct version of Islam and others are deviates, who must be ostracized as blasphemous?<sup>12</sup>

This has created a permanent sectarian war inside Pakistan and has led to the emergence of private armies belonging to religious parties who began to deliver private Fatwas that are enforced through armed persons. However, there is an exception to this exposition. For as explained at page 4, in one case radicalism and extremism may actually be a mechanism to protect the Islamic identity of the people of Pakistan.

One direct result of creating a narrow and exclusive Muslim identity in Pakistan is the surfacing of an equally violent Hindu identity as a counter to the Muslim "other." India began its journey towards its own form of radicalism and extremism with the founding of the Hindu Mahasaba (HM) in 1915, that began with the intention of creating a Great Hindu Association for the welfare of the Hindus of India but as

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tension of Hindu- Muslim acrimony mounted in India after the violent Hindu-Muslim relations, the (HM) changed its constitution in 1937 and demanded the establishment of a Hindu nation in India.<sup>13</sup>

The seed of Hindu extremist radicalism that mirrored Pakistan's also copied its 'Jihadist' outreach when the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak (RSS) became highly influential, akin to Pakistan's Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) when the RSS began to exercise control over the BJP that swept to power in 1998.

The RSS today has strong links to the current Indian leadership and is seeking to change India's existing historical narrative.<sup>14</sup> The RSS is an extremist radical body whose declared aim is to undo the Partition and form a united India, by reclaiming Punjab and parts of Sindh from Pakistan.<sup>15</sup> To anyone who is aware of the tragic history of India and Pakistan it is clear that unless there is a change in the narratives of both Pakistan and India, they are hurtling towards each other threatening another conflict that may be nuclear this time.

### **Contributory Factors**

While Pakistan suffers from thin layering of institutions that it inherited from the well structured part of British India with a primitive level of state penetration in areas now composed of Fata, KP, Baluchistan, parts of interior Sindh, and Southern Punjab; thus it not only faced the problem of establishing a viable state with a vast web of infrastructure but had to face security problems on its borders with India and in the West with Afghanistan, as the latter laid claims to the Pashtun inhabited belt in Fata and KP. Despite these challenges that would have been quite a chore for a more endowed state, Pakistan not only met these challenges but in the course of its growth also attained nuclear status, which by any standards is a remarkable achievement.

International experience has shown that radicalism and extremism grows in those countries that exhibit the following attributes;

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- a. Where societies are conservative with a low level of education/literacy
- b. The prevalence of an exclusive national narrative based on ideology
- c. Weak internal social cohesion
- d. Weak delivery of social services to the population
- e. Endemic corruption
- f. Poor enforcement of rule of law
- g. Presence of criminal, drug and land Mafias that challenge the state's governance and are entrenched
- h. Non-democratic approach towards politics
- i. Presence of safe-havens beyond control of state where extremists are trained and operations planned
- j. Complacent attitude of State towards private militias
- k. Weak local governance institutions
- l. Skewed income distribution.

However, this analysis of primary causes has thrown up an obvious exception, it is that a traditional and conservative society that fears the intrusion of a modernizing state as a threat to its way of life will rely on radicalism and extremism as a protective mechanism and will thus be open to the dangers of Fascism; if a healthy society is conceived as one, that has a high degree of social cohesion, then any change brought into the framework based on religion (with its myriad sects and variations), will weaken its social cohesion and threaten its continuous growth through replication. If that is the case, then radicalism and extremism become tools for sealing that social sphere against an intrusion. It will thus create a situation where radicalism and extremism become a protective mechanism; however while such an ideological state appears strong against outside influences/interferences it is prone to a higher degree of internal conflict from within and the danger of Fascism if such a society adopts a secular approach divorced from effective democratic practices.

The following are some of the other important historical events that have encouraged the growth of radicalism and extremism in Pakistan;

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- An initial multiplier of radical and extremist behavior amongst the Muslims of the sub- continent was the result of the extinction of the Caliphate as a result of Turkey's defeat in World War I. It led to the creation of the Khilafat movement in India, when more than 60,000 persons left India as they were living in 'Darul Harb', the land of war, since India was then under the rule of Britain. In such an eventuality scripture advised that Muslims must shift to 'Darul Islam', or the land of peace (Muslim ruled country), which in this case happened to be neighboring Afghanistan. The mobilization on the Khilafat issue thus increased radical thoughts amongst the Muslims.<sup>16</sup>
- Punjab, that is today the real epicentre of radical and extremist thought in Pakistan, and the birth place of the Punjabi Taliban, became radicalized when a group of activist Muslims decided to protect the Muslim population of Kashmir from the depredation of its Hindu Dogra ruler in the 1920s. A group of religio-nationalist Muslims, left the Indian National Congress and formed the Majlis Arar Islam, a Jihadist organization, for protecting the Muslims in Kashmir. This movement was led by Mazhar Ali Azhar of Sialkot. Many bands of Jihadis were sent into Kashmir and it fought the Dogra police that compelled the Maharajah of Kashmir to complain to the British. This led to the arrest of 45,000 Ahrars in Punjab and some 5,000 in other parts of India.<sup>17</sup>
- The ethnic and religious affinity of the Punjabis, who later formed the largest ethnic component of the population in Pakistan (more than 50% or 90 million), has thus provided the Kashmir cause a very strong lobby. Given the fact that the Punjab contributes more than 70% of the country's armed forces<sup>18</sup> and with the military's stronghold on the policy on Kashmir/India, no reduction of tension with India can be expected unless the Punjab for some reason decides to shift its discourse. It is not very likely.

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- After the creation of Pakistan in 1947 the dispute over Kashmir led to the first war between India and Pakistan in 1948. Since Pakistan had very few regular troops available to defend against the better organized Indian military, it encouraged the tribesmen from FATA to help defend Kashmir; the tribesmen formed Jihadi groups for Kashmir, they also included Afghan tribesmen from Khost and Pakhtia adjoining FATA. India objected to the Afghan government. It succeeded in obtaining a 'fatwa' from the Afghan Jamaat ul Ulami, declaring that the call for Jihad by Afghan tribes was illegal. However, this declaration was denounced by the renowned Afghan Islamic scholar Hazrat Shor Bazar who ruled the Jihad in Kashmir as a valid Islamic duty of the Afghan tribes.<sup>19</sup>
- Another important event that led to strengthening of radicalism and extremist thought in Pakistan was the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. Many of the traditional leaders of Afghanistan rebelled against the Communist take-over in Afghanistan and the Soviet invasion of their country. More than 5 million left their homes and became refugees in Pakistan, and settled mostly in the Pashtun areas of Pakistan in FATA, KP and parts of Baluchistan. This was the period of the Cold-War and an international coalition composed of Pakistan, the US, Saudi Arabia, China, Egypt and other Muslim and European nations supported a massive Jihad led by Pakistan and orchestrated by its intelligence services and amply supported by Pakistan's religious parties, particularly the Jamaat-e- Islami, eventually resulted in defeating the Soviet Union leading to its withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989. However, after the withdrawal the armed and trained Mujahideen extremists radicalized Muslims throughout the world but more particularly in Pakistan and Afghanistan.
- The Iranian Revolution in 1979 gave a fill- up to Sunni sectarian militant groups in Pakistan like the Lashkar e Jangvi and Sepah e Sihaba to apostate the Shias who formed about 20% of the population in Pakistan. To reduce their influence Saudi Arabia

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began to building up of supportt amongst the Deobandi leaning parties by supporting the construction of Madrassas particularly in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and KP but also in other parts. They also began funding of the Sunni religious political parties in Pakistan. Let us remember that this proxy war between the Saudis and the Iranians was being played out within the larger regional issue of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

- During 1979-89 ample private and government support was afforded to those Afghans, who had sought shelter in Pakistan. This show of hospitality was a natural continuation of past solidarity when similar events in history of the region occurred. During the Khilafat movement Muslims from India migrated to Afghanistan, before and after the Soviet occupation the Afghans sought refuge in Pakistan; it showed clearly that there was a lot of Islamic solidarity between the people of Afghanistan and Pakistan who act more in Islamic terms when confronting religious related events despite what their respective governments may wish to think at the secular level as nation states. It was this similarity of cultural thinking that led Pakistan's security managers to support the Mujahideen in Afghanistan after the withdrawal of the Russians in 1989 and that ultimately led to the coming of power of the Taliban in Afghanistan in 1996, with Pakistan's support as a continuation of its past policy of supporting the Afghan Mujahideen.
- Afghans particularly and others have criticized the Pakistani intelligence and military establishment for fostering a policy of "Strategic Depth," a type of Monroe doctrine in Afghanistan. However, if one examined the historical facts, it is the people of the region themselves who have exhibited solidarity when they feared that Islam or their way of life was under threat. The current secular narrative of Afghan nationalism is contrary to this conclusion, but as the past has shown, this solidarity will continue and matters will not be any different in the future.

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- Thus whenever any future event is considered to be a threat to Islam, the regional response in Afghanistan and Pakistan will be the same as in the past. It thus shows that the prevalence of Islamic radicalism and extremism is a defensive default position of an Islamic people to defend their way of life when under threat. The Afghan Taliban's struggle against the Soviets and later the US and NATO since 9/11 can be seen as a defensive war to protect their Islamic way of life. This also explains why the military and political plans of the recent past have failed in Afghanistan.
- Another element that has led to the strengthening of radicals in Pakistan is connected with the ongoing contest between the civil and military elite. It is the main reason for the instability and disharmony in policy and its implementation related to counter radicalism and extremism in Pakistan. It has led to a weakening of the state, adoption of questionable policies and destabilization of the State. Such moves are undertaken by the military due to alleged corruption and incompetency of the civilian elite, some of the critique is factual.
- After the fourth Martial law of General Pervaiz Musharraf, elections were conducted in 2008. Since then it appears that the civilian leadership is mentally prepared to manage the state in cooperation with the military. While this struggle for pre-eminence between the two institutions has been going on, Pakistan has progressed in the sense that other institutions have begun to weigh in like the Supreme Court, media and civil society. Thus there are silver linings to the Pakistan story.
- In the U.S Constitutions while there is a system of checks and balance between different organs of state viz the President, Congress and the Supreme Court (and the Media); in Pakistan the same principle is in existence through the check and balance by the institutions. In this case it is the Prime Minister, the political parties in Parliament, the military, as well as the powerful Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), the Supreme Court,

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Media and Civil Society that form temporary alliances to influence policies. The periodic disharmony sown by events like 'Memogate Controversy in October 2011,' or the aftermath for the violation of Pakistani sovereignty by the U.S in the raid on Osama bin Laden compound inside Pakistan by the US or the Imran Khan and Tahir-u- Qadri famous Dharnas were used in the ongoing tussle between the civil and the military elites to weaken each other.

- In 2013-2014, Imran Khan of the PTI and Dr. Tahir-u- Qadri of the Pakistan Awami Tehrik (PAT) disrupted the working of Pakistan government and brought it under intense pressure, by staging long protests on the roads of Islamabad, in which Imran Khan criticized the 2013 elections alleging that these were stolen through a well thought out strategy by the PML-N, the Judiciary and the Geo TV (Pakistan's premier TV network). It was latter conjectured that it was done to pressurise the Parliament's ascendancy.
- While Dr Tahirul Qadri endorsed a rural populism to mobilize farmers to seek their rights, Imran Khan's populism was meant to mobilize the youth in the country. The result was a reduced confidence of the Prime Minister by calling into question his mandate. It is a moot point whether the Dharnas could have occurred without the TV coverage? Its positive outcome was the political education of the Pakistani people. Another positive outcome of the 'Dharnas' was to build momentum for an agenda for change connected to;<sup>20</sup>
  - Electoral fraud
  - Corruption
  - Unemployment
  - Rights of women, peasantry, youth
  - It established the right to protest and can be seen as a democratizing move

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- It is another moot point that when the Pakistan state claims that its laws are Sharia compliant and Islamic, then why does a demand for Sharia made by the radical extremists, who have challenged the State in FATA, KP and other parts of the country? An answer to this dilemma was provided by the Munir Commission as far back as 1954, when it pointed to the existence of more than 73 variants of Islam in Pakistan. Their presence will always lead to disagreement on fundamentals, he said – thus the ‘Sharia’ that exists may not be in the form desired by some of the radicals like Mullah Fazlullah, Sufi Mohammad or the votaries of the TTP and the Jihadi Organizations.
- Under this scenario the extremist attack on the state will continue until only one religious school of thought will prevail. Does it mean constant strife in Pakistan?
- To better understand the challenge that radicals impose for the state in Pakistan, is exemplified in the case of Tanzeem Al- Akhwan, (The Brotherhood Organization), led by Maulana Akram Awan. The organization’s heartland is in district Chakwal, in the Punjab, one of Pakistan’s most prolific recruitment area for soldiers of the Pakistan military. The aim of this organization is to impose Sharia in Pakistan and that aim is to be fulfilled through the use of force via a Jihad if need be.
- In 1995, during the government of Benazir Bhutto, a coup attempt was made by Major General Zaheer ul Islam, Brigadier Mustansar Billa and Maulana Akram Awan. While the officers were arrested and tried by a court martial, Maulana Akram escaped reckoning, when his name was excluded from the charge reportedly due to influence exercised in his favour by some senior officers. But the charade of Awan continued because the state refused to arrest him.

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- Akram Awan next re-appears in 1998, when he rallied his radical Islamic group to seek the imposition of Sharia in Pakistan. He began a process of mobilization and he was not prevented and in December 1999, he announced the formation of Al - Akhwan Force, for participating in Jihad in Kashmir in collaboration with LeT.

For Akram Awan the Jihad in Pakistan was of higher priority than in Kashmir. He worried that Jihad activity in Kashmir led to brutal repression by the Indian Military and instead of being a positive process helping the Kashmiris, it caused them more misery.

- In December 2000, he announced to launch a sit-in in the federal capital, Islamabad, until the government agreed to impose Sharia. The writ of the state was compromised when Gen Musharraf decided to handle Awan with kid gloves and offered to negotiate with him rather than arrest him.
- On 24th December 2000, the Corp Commander, Rawalpindi along with the Minister for Religious Affairs, met Awan and asked him to extend the dead-line. He went back but laid down the precedent that latter on was followed by Maulana Ghazi of the Red-Mosque in his stand-off with Gen Musharraf in 2007 and by Maulana Tahir-ul-Qadri and Imran Khan when they disrupted life in Islamabad in 2013-2014.
- This trend of not enforcing the law against radicals and extremist was repeated when Maulana Sufi Mohammadd, who in 2001 led a Lashkar of Pakistanis from Dir and Swat to support the Taliban in Afghanistan against NATO forces (waging war against a foreign state is an offense), he was arrested in 2001 but was released without sentencing.<sup>21</sup> Lately, terrorism charges against him for waging war against the State were dropped (for his role in the violence in Swat in 2009-10).

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Similarly, Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi from LeT, who is the main accused behind the 2008 Mumbai attack was arrested but then released by a court in April 2015. India even took up this matter in the UN Security Council and wanted sanctions to be imposed on Pakistan for its inaction, a move that was vetoed by China.

- This soft approach towards radicals was repeated in Waziristan, when talks with the radicals were preferred over enforcement of criminal law. The first such talks were held with the militant commander Nek Mohammad, under the ‘Shakai Agreement,’ of March 2004, when as a result the military’s morale nosedived, after the Corp Commander (11 Corp), General Safdar, a senior and respected soldier, was asked by the rebel commander Nek Mohammad to disarm before the start of the talks and leave behind his ceremonial revolver.<sup>22</sup>
- There are three possible explanations why demand for Sharia persists and why radicals are willing to use force for its attainment are?

*The root cause of radicalism in Pakistan is well documented in the Munir Commission Report published in 1954.<sup>23</sup> It found a lack of unanimity on numerous issues related to Sharia and the management of a Muslim State. The report found that;*

- Although the common man believes Pakistan to have Sharia, yet the radicals say that Pakistan is not an Islamic state; such a belief is fuelled by religious parties that has encouraged demands for an Islamic state with Sharia.
- Many demand Sharia believing that it will bring back the glories of the 7th and 8th century Islamic supremacy. “...with the dead weight of centuries on his back, [he] is frustrated, and bewildered and hesitant to turn one corner or the other<sup>24</sup>.”

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- The Munir Commission opined that Islam could only be revived if its citizens would convert into, “a citizen of the present and the future world from the archaic incongruity that he is in today.”
- It is alleged that since the Pakistani institutions are sympathetic to Islamic Jihadis, it was an inheritance bequeathed to it by the Afghan Jihad (1978-1988) and the Islamization spree generated by General Zia-ul-Haq, in the 1980s. Such a mind-set is further fueled by hundreds of ‘Madrassas’ that have been funded by Saudi Arabia and other Gulf citizens. It is alleged that the Madrassas are used as a force multiplier by the radicals, and can be used anywhere in the world if desired; in a sense this provides Pakistan with a global capability and thus creates a nuisance value for her in international affairs.<sup>25</sup> It allows Pakistan leverage for negotiations on many defense, economic and security related matters.
- Before the Zarb-e-Azb operation was launched on 14th June 2014, Jihadis were considered an asset to be used if there was an Indian attack on Pakistan. Such a strategy becomes an issue for Pakistan when there is criticism from India or some other countries accusing the use of Pakistani territory for training or planning to launch any terrorist operation abroad.
- Some strategic thinkers in Pakistan believe that the Jihadis can be useful tools for fulfilling strategic foreign policy goals in India, Afghanistan or elsewhere since their actions can be denied. But now both Afghanistan and India are pressurizing Pakistan to come clean on sanctuaries in Fata and decry the non-enforcement of law against Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi etc.<sup>26</sup>
- It is the conundrum of these events that allows T.V Paul, to define Pakistan as a, “The Warrior State” that derives rentier income by exploiting its strategic space for foreign policy objectives; in the process it achieves modernization of its

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defense capacity, including building a nuclear capability and also obtains development funds. However, the later remain of secondary importance - thus Pakistan stagnates as a warrior state and unlike such states in Europe or Asia who have transformed into global players, Pakistan so far has failed in transforming itself like Japan, South Korea or Taiwan.

### **Imposition of Sharia**

It is another moot point that although Pakistan claims that its laws are Sharia compliant and Islamic as laid in its Constitution, yet this claim is contested by the radical extremists, who have challenged the State in Fata, KP and other parts of the country demanding the imposition of Sharia. An answer to this dilemma was provided by the Munir Commission as far back as 1954, when it pointed to the existence of more than 73 variants of Islam in Pakistan. The mind-set will always lead to disagreement on fundamentals, he said – thus the ‘Sharia’ that exists may not be in the form desired by some of the radicals like Mullah Fazlullah, Sufi Mohammad or other leaders of the TTP and the Jihadi Tanzeemats! In this situation it appears that the extremist attack on the state will continue until only one religious school of thought prevails. Does it mean constant strife in Pakistan?

### **Key Drivers of Radicalism**

A Crisis Analysis Framework for analyzing drivers of conflict in KP and FATA<sup>27</sup> found that there were four main types of drivers that generated radicalism normatively; it is apparent that this framework is valid for explaining the rise of radicalism for Pakistan as a whole. The following are the *key driving factors*;

**Economic**: it is noted that long term economic deprivation and hopeless poverty, below the national average, provides the radicals an opportunity to criticize the government for its failure to look after its population and creates a splintering of the social contract between the marginalized population and the state. While economic deprivation

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does not by itself lead to radicalism, but enables the militant groups to contextualize their appeals for popular support and to challenge the state under the slogans of social justice, equity and equal opportunity. Those of the religious bent support the mimicking of the Islamic model of the state as it existed in Islamic history during the period of the first four Caliphs of Islam as their preferred model for replication.

**Political:** lack of trust of the people in the state diminishes if the state does not **a)** provide basic services to the people in the health, education and drinking water sector, **b)** trust of the people and belief in the state is further diminished if avenues of political participation to the people isn't provided. This further breaks down the social contract and may encourage the citizens to seek support of the radicals, **c)** if a state fails to provide justice to its citizens also encourages people to demand imposition of an Islamic system of rule that is modeled upon the system of justice delivered during the rule of the four caliphs.

In a separate study by FES, Pakistan regarding the, "Social Contract in Pakistan", it is argued that the unit of the Pakistan state is withering away because of the following causes;<sup>28</sup>

- Lack of institutional coherence.
- States lack of capacity to deal with issues.
- Corruption.
- Weaponization of society.
- Weak justice system.
- Poor over all governance.

This paper confirms the finding of the social contract papers in its depiction of the contributory factors for radicalism and extremism in section 4. However, the impact of these deficits are serious as the presence of proxies and reliance on a core religious based identity, in a sense provides a "revelatory" justification for;

- Denial of political and civil liberties.
- Violation of human rights by state function arise.

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Resource capture from its federating units for funding the national agenda based on the religious identity with which Pakistan views the external world. These factors lead to the weakening of national cohesion and imperils the social contract.

**Security and Geostrategic** drivers could encourage the growth of radicalism by association. In 1979-88, Pakistan supported a 'Jihad' against the Soviets in Afghanistan. This increased the number of radicals as there was a fraternity of Jihadists from all over the world and this increased their influence in Afghanistan and Pakistan and generally throughout the world.

Pakistan's fear from a resurgent and radical Hindu India and Pakistan's un-requited claims on Kashmir, still remains unresolved after 67 years after Partition of the sub-continent, leading to the adoption of a policy that looks the other way when Jihadis undertake radicalization of the Kashmir population who are under Indian occupation. On the other hand sectarian organizations are waging a private Jihad against other sects of Islam within Pakistan; the conflict between the Sunnis and Shias is one good example.

**Social Drivers.** the final group of drivers of radicalism in the Crisis Analysis Framework is related to social cohesion. Weak social cohesion in Fata encourages the growth of radical thought that destroys social cohesion and without which a tribal society loses its mechanisms to prevent the weakening of its protected fraternal tribal system.

The presence or absence of social cohesion will indicate whether the situation in an area will be conducive or resistant to radicalism and extremism. Briefly the policy recommendations flowing out of a study of social cohesion inform us as under;

- Number of IDPs must not increase as those displaced call for vengeance and criticize the government for their predicament. Secondly when tribal society is absent the ground is occupied by the extremists; the military can weaken the fighting ability of the extremist but it cannot replace the civil society that

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has to dampen the influence of extremists. Unless the IDPs return to their areas the extremists will remain.

- Violence and military operations discourage the holding of social events and gathering that lead to greater social cohesion and discourage radicalism and extremist tendencies.
- With improvement in dispute resolution and revival of traditional mechanisms in Fata social cohesion has improved and that discourages radical thought and extremism.

It may be mentioned that Pakistan and Afghanistan have had disagreement over their international border in the West. It was one of the reasons for Afghanistan and India to be supportive of Pashtun Irredentism characterized by the Pukhtunistan Movement and it caused problems for Pakistan. It led Pakistani strategic planners to align with the Afghan Pashtuns so that Afghanistan had difficulty in using the Pashtun card in support of India's influence.

Another instance where radicalism was encouraged was the support provided to the Afghan Taliban who emerged in 1994 in Afghanistan; Pakistan's strategic planners thought that supporting the Afghan Taliban will give them influence over Afghan policy that would be useful for keeping India away. Pakistan allowed the Afghan Taliban to use its territory in FATA where they created safe- havens that were used to fight against NATO in Afghanistan, but their presence in Fata also radicalized the tribesmen and enhanced the ranks of the radicals, who latter on created their own movement called the Tehrik-e- Taliban Pakistan that was formed in 2007 to assist the Afghan Taliban and to resist the US operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan; they were also anti Pakistan military and launched many attacks on it in Fata and elsewhere. They also carried out terrorist bombings against the civilians and the military. They are Pashtuns and are aligned to the Deobandi version of Islam and thus are closely aligned to Maulana Fazlur Rehman's Jamiat Ulma-e-Islam (JUI) party.

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One point that is established by this discussion is the close link between Pakistan's identity as an Islamic state and the birth of extremism. It is but natural that if a nation's identity is based on religion then religious history and dogma will become the language of social response to circumstances. Clearly, given that the demand for creation of Pakistan was based on religion meant that radical thought and extremist action based on religious dogma would be a common occurrence once the new state came into being in 1947. There is also a strong link between ideology and strategy. It was thus not exceptional that the support was provided to the Afghan Taliban both at its birth and subsequently.

However one debilitating aspect of such a policy, based on a religious approach, was to weaken Pakistan's enforcement of the writ of the state due to the ambivalence in the use of force against Islamist radicals and extremist. It is only now during the implementation of National Action Plan that strict enforcement has led to the emergence of huge challenges in Fata, Swat and other parts. Not only did radicalism increase but the government had to spend huge resources to battle the consequent rise of terrorism and the simultaneous rise in criminality; for it is the presence of income from crime that feeds the extremist forces. This suggests close monitoring of the flow of funds from abroad to individuals, Madrassas, and political parties.

Since the government's focus has been on the extremist organizations and the criminal syndicalization of drug production and its trafficking, human trafficking, smuggling of goods, weapon smuggling and involvement of the extremist in other crimes has created a much deeper problem that has transcended extremism and it can be said that the income from crime has become a greater generator of extremism. It is thus correct to conclude that the criminal syndicates that have now proliferated in the region use the extremists to indulge in violence against the state to keep it involved in security matters so as to prevent it from undertaking enforcement against crime.

This phenomenon has as yet been little studied but to my mind is a much larger threat to state survival and its sovereignty than extremism.

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A partial theory of this mechanism is given below but more work is required to be done to fully understand its implication and to transform the 9/11 narrative of Jihadism that is now outdated. Criminal racketeering has penetrated Pakistan's cities like Karachi and is present in most of Pakistan's rural areas. The police and state organs have been weakened and it is very likely now that money, employment and economic growth is generated more by the illicit economy than the formal one. Globalization and the ease of transfer of information and funds as well as goods, makes the illicit economy very lucrative particularly for those who benefit from this form of activity and when the state is seen as a stopper rather than a facilitator of enterprise.

**Emergence of the new economy and convergence of extremists with crime syndicates**

Another explanation regarding the growth of radical and extremist sentiments in large tracts of Pakistan is not related to the normal base line presumption that such considerations have been generated as a result of post-colonial reconfiguration of state narratives anchored in religion and culture; an amalgam of a reality that can be called 'local' as compared with the previous 'metropolitan' import based economy dependent upon the previous Colonial states framework.

However this 'indigenization,' can also be viewed as the melt-down of systems, bureaucracies, and rule of law institutions. Its other associated attributes are a shift from a democratic form of governance to one based upon the domination by elite state institutions that since Independence have emerged as the new power centers in post-colonial states and is typified by a gelling of its military, intelligence and police functionaries who are supported by elements like political parties, criminal syndicates and war lords of sorts.

Over a period of time, while the strength of the legitimate state institutions and democratic institutions begins to fade either through military take-over or a deteriorating civil-military discourse, the post-colonial state begins to totter due to social dissonance. Normally at this stage the economic indicators also begin to decline. In such societies

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'Independence' has normally resulted in a galloping birth rate that adds pressure for jobs and employment; a large proportion of such populations belong to the 18-30 years age group. So the societies are prone to periodic spikes of collective action resulting in the regular out-pouring of street disturbance and protest that leads to a further decline in state coherence and economic growth.

The nature of such substitution of the legitimate state by increasing criminality that we have become used to witnessing in the last decade of the 20th century, thus leads to the states incoherence and replacement by criminal syndicates; this internal re-configuration of the balance in society between the different classes is further affected by globalization and the acceleration in trade and commerce leading to more corruption and the conduct of trade and businesses under the radar of the regulations. This cuts costs and brings down prices.

However, since there is extra-ordinary evasion of taxes and duties the revenues of the state dive despite a huge growth in the volume of trade. The profit from trade is ploughed back by the criminal syndicates into improving their capacities; for instance the profitable working of the port at Karachi led to the creation of huge profits for the local criminal and syndicates.

Recent news about Karachi exhibit a galloping criminalization and loss of state revenue.

As these criminal links grow the margin of profits for businesses and criminal Mafias increase, by by-passing customs and payment of duties and taxes. It clearly indicates that port cities and border regions in states will tend to have the largest compromises of state sovereignty, high presence of criminal activity, massive leakage of government revenues from taxes and duties; the growth of the criminal economy and employment generation by it for a majority of citizens provides it with acceptance and a form of legitimacy leading to its expansion and growth in recruitment. The state is further weakened and marginalized.

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How does this economy interact with the high levels of radicalism and presence of extremist who could be driven by religious motives or based on even secular manifesto as is the case of the Mutahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) in Karachi? The youth who are looking for livelihoods become a part of its armed force and act as its enforcers or drug sellers. However the difference in employment benefits for the youth working with a religious or a criminal syndicates or even with the illegal army of a secular political entity as in Karachi is worthy of further research.

This clearly shows the following trends emerging in Pakistan:

- Weakening of state sovereignty
- Strengthening of the Deep State
- Loss of legitimacy of regular state institutions like Parliament
- Weakening of rule of Law
- Emergence of powerful local Mafias in urban centers in Pakistan on the lines of Karachi
- Convergence of extremists and criminal syndicates
- A large % of global trade and services are being transacted below the radar of legitimacy and non-payment of taxes and duties
- The criminal enterprises mask their acts by using extremists and radicals when the need arises. It is always fruitful for their business to keep the state functionaries away from its management.
- The criminal syndicates have become regional and international to keep the illegal business of drugs, human trafficking, kidnapping and even regular trade outside the state sovereignty.
- The syndicates with the help of the radicals and extremists have neutralized local police and military capacities of the state to their comfort level, where they cannot interfere with the working of the criminal enterprises and fiefdoms

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but ensuring that the ports and trade are kept open for generating wealth. This economy becomes a local economy creating incomes and employment for a vast majority of the population.

Evidently strategic planners believe that radical fighters from Islamist groups may provide Pakistan with an instrument to assist her in case of a war with any country. It was this rationale that led to the growth of Pakistani rightist Jihadist parties that have now become a menace not only to the Pakistani state but to international security. These warriors served a dual purpose. They provided Pakistani strategists a tool whose cross border capabilities could be denied, or they could be useful to draw the world's attention to unresolved problem of Kashmir; they could also be used inside the country to deal with other 'security' concerns where legal problems could arise by superior courts exercising their human right jurisdiction. As an example we look at the Kashmiri Jihadis.

**Kashmiri Jihadi Structure**

The Jihad in Kashmir is led by a consortium of radicals under the leadership of 'The United Jihad Council,' also called the Muttahida Jihad Council (MJC). It is a radical militant group that was formed in 1994. It is currently headed by Syed Salahuddin, the leader of Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, the largest Jihad group operating in the Indian administered part of Kashmir. This organization was created to unify and consolidate efforts of various armed militant groups fighting against Indian rule in Kashmir. It streamlined support to them for continuing their fight against the Indian military.

Amongst the member organizations of (MJC) are: Harakat-ul-Ansar, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, Jamiat-ul-Mujahideen, Al-Jihad, Al-Barq, Al-Badr, Ikhwan-ul-Mussalmin, Tehrik-ul-Mujahideen. By early 1999, fifteen organizations were affiliated with the Council, though out of these only five are considered effective. They are: Lashkar-e-Toiba, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, Al-Badr and Tehrik-i-Jihad. Many of these organizations are proscribed by the United States and the UN.

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The main demands of the MJC for affecting a cease-fire in Kashmir are; 1) recall of Indian troops from Kashmir, 2) opening of trilateral talks between Kashmiris, India and Pakistan, 3) resolution of the Kashmir dispute.<sup>29</sup> The Jihad activities in Kashmir and its links with some Jihadi organizations in Pakistan led to four consequences for Pakistan;

As the Kashmir Jihadis were ostensibly adopting Pakistan's stance on Kashmir, the security and intelligence services considered them as non-hostile; erroneously as they soon discovered when the radicals began to occupy territory in Swat in 2009-10. Thus indicating their autonomy from the government of Pakistan. The Pakistan army had to wrest the writ of the state after undertaking bloody multiple operations in Swat; most of the Pakistani military operations have only one goal – to restore the writ of the state lost to Jihadists who began attacking their own compatriots!

The following operations were conducted by the Pakistan military to restore the writ of the state;

- 2007 Operation Rah-e-Haq
- 2007-09 Operation Rah-e-Rast
- 2009 Operation Sherdil (Bajaur)
- 2014 Operation Zarb e Azb

Similarly the Jihadists including a sprinkling of Kashmiris are linked with the Punjabi Taliban who had become a formidable network in association with Al-Qaeda that by 2005 had re-located in Fata, after its disintegration in Afghanistan. They also linked with the already existing Haqqani Network – and resurrected the previous links with the Central Asian and East Turkmenistan movements of the Soviet Jihad era, and hence became a formidable radical fighting machine established in N. Waziristan, after completely destroying the writ of the Pakistan state there. There was intense pressure on Pakistan to undertake an operation against this infrastructure in N. Waziristan; it finally launched an anti-terrorist operation called Zarb e Azb against these organizations in June 2014. The goal of this operation is to cleanse the region of the radical/terrorist organizations and to restore the writ of the state.

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After the defeat of the Taliban in Afghanistan in December 2001 many of them took refuge in North Waziristan, where the Haqqanis had previously developed a sanctuary near Miramshah and were reportedly close to Pakistani Jihadi infrastructure since 1978. A group of Taliban from Afghanistan found refuge in Quetta and began to be identified as, The Quetta Shura. Hanif Atmar, the Afghan Advisor for security has recently accused the Haqqani group in the Afghan Parliament, for having a role in the recent fighting in Kundaz.<sup>30</sup>

For these reasons Fata came to be referred as the most dangerous place on the globe! Pakistan's credibility as a serious counter- terrorism partner hit rock bottom, when in May 2011, a US Special Forces Operation killed Osama Bin Laden in Abbottabad, a town close to Islamabad. It was then that in the US mind Pakistan began to be referred as 'Frenemy,' a country that is an ally but acts like an enemy. It is indeed a dishonorable title to carry.

### **Pakistan's Extremist Organizations**

Pakistan's extremist organizations form a multi-faceted mosaic and merit a short description to understand how they are integrated with one another?

The radicals who are focused on Kashmir, include a cluster of Deobandi groups linked to the Jamiate Ulema-e-Islam of Maulana Fazlur Rehman and includes;

- Jaish-e-Mohammad,
- Harkat-ul-Ansar/Harkat-ul-Mujahideen
- Ahl-e-Hadith including;
  - The Punjab based Lashkar-e-Taiba
  - The Jamat-e-Islami influenced groups Hizbul Mujahideen and Al Badr
  - LeT and JeM have long operated in Kashmir and India. Recently JeM and other Deobandi groups have fought against the Pakistan military.

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- LeT and several radical Deobandi groups also operate inside Afghanistan against NATO/US forces and in Fata against the Pakistani state.
- Al Badr and Hizbul Mujahideen include ethnic Kashmiris and focus on Kashmir

Another group of radical entities focus on the sectarian strife against the Shias and other minorities and include;

- Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) and Sipah-e- Sahaba Pakistan (SSP); both are sectarian extremist groups that are pro Saudi and anti-Iranian and under the influence of the Deobandi JUI political party in the National Assembly.
- As explained earlier a new tribal consortium of radical groups emerged in Fata in 2007, called the Tehreek-e-Taliban, Pakistan (TTP); it is an amorphous group that changes leadership and allegiances when required, and is more of a net-work of tribal fighters aligned closely with the Afghan Taliban. Their demand is to make Pakistan Sharia compliant. They associate with Al Qaeda and the Punjabi Taliban; the radicals have used terrorism as a weapon and exchange assets including suicide bombers regionally on the pattern of any franchise.
- Before June 2014 Pakistan was confronting the radical outfits in Fata by appeasement rather than defeating them militarily and demolishing their infrastructure. Lately, this policy has changed after the Army Public School (APS) tragedy.<sup>31</sup>
- The policy of appeasement followed until June 2014, was based on a perception that the real aim of the U.S operations in Afghanistan was to de- nuclearize Pakistan. From Nov 2007 to Nov 2013, Pakistan's approach was marked by ambiguity and vacillation in its handling of radicals/terrorists in Fata and other parts of Pakistan<sup>32</sup>. After the launching of the National Action Plan in Jan 2014 there is more apparent coordination yet more needs to be done.

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The Afghans are pressurizing Pakistan to break its links with the Haqqani Network and the Quetta Shura and to end the safe-havens in Fata and Baluchistan before bilateral relations can normalize.

**The Radical Sectarian Nexus**

Since the Jihadi networks are rooted in religion it is no surprise that many of the sectarian radical groups are their off-shoots. In this respect the following comments will help explain the situation.

The Jihadi elements in Pakistan described earlier had very close sectarian linkage with Pakistan's anti-Shia organizations that were involved in a cross-border war on behalf of Saudi Arabia against the Shias in Pakistan. They are also reported to have carried out operations inside Iranian Siestan via the Balochistan border with Iran.

This radical infrastructure created a mirror image either through buy out of Pakistani agents or creating other support infrastructure by Indian, Afghan and Iranian intelligence services. Some Iranian revolutionary Guard operations and Indian Raw operations have also been reported in the Pakistan Baluch region.

Three other contributory factors may be added to the list of drivers of extremism in Pakistan. As stated earlier Pakistan developed an exclusive statehood narrative based on its Muslim identity. In foreign policy it led Pakistan to support all kind of Islamic agendas including becoming a strong supporter of Saudi Arabia in the multi-faceted conflicts of the Middle East. The rightist political parties of Pakistan who have members in Parliament thus in a sense, became the proxies of the larger conflicts prevailing in the Islamic world.

Riaz Mohammad Khan, a former foreign secretary of Pakistan in his analysis of the linkages between the Jihadi Tanzeemats found that, "They had Deobandi and Saudi Salafi inspiration, which permeated the Madrassas mushrooming in Pakistan during the 1980's and 1990's, with large donations raised locally and from the Gulf, especially from

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Saudi Arabia,” (Riaz Muhammad Khan; P.218). He also found that the Tanzeemat had close linkages with Al-Qaeda.

The Islamic identity was integrated into the defense strategy of Pakistan, after both India and Pakistan became nuclear powers in the mid- 1990s. One of the harrowing consideration discussed by military planners was the issue to find an answer to the question as *to what would happen the ‘day after,’ a nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan?* In this bizarre scenario it was iterated that the Jihadis will protect the territory.

Christine Fair, points out in her book, *“Fighting to the End: The Pakistan Army’s Way of War,”* (PP 226-260), that Pakistani military strategists assumed that a nuclear confrontation between India and Pakistan will spell an end to formal military operations, as both the militaries will be severally crippled after the first nuclear exchanges. If this was something that was likely to occur then what was the anti-dote to such a contingency? The expectation was that the Jihadi Tanzeemat will carry on the struggle against Indian forces (what remained of them) - this has been provided at times as the justification for the link between the Jihadists and the Pakistani state. Such thinking is not only absurd but raises the further question whether a state could even exist after a nuclear break out? Perhaps only the innocent can contemplate such a scenario.

Police investigations have discovered the presence of criminal syndicates amongst the radicals that has created an explosive combination of factors that will test Pakistan’s capacity to counter these new threats facing her and the region. It is only a matter of time before creeping radicalization reduces the military’s capabilities to neutralize the threats, through operations like Zarb-e-Azb that is now underway in North Waziristan. Thus the window of opportunity available to Pakistan is extremely narrow for putting its own house in order.

It is clear that the Jihadists in Pakistan have become autonomous and unless the writ of the Pakistani state is fully restored by the closure of all links with radicals and their eradication, the Pakistani state

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transformation into a growing modern economy, integrated fully into the global network of trade and commerce, will remain an aspiration at best making state failure a more likely result.

**Role of FATA in Radicalization**

The discussion so far has already identified the central role that FATA plays in the growth of radicalism in KP and other regions of Pakistan. However, while discussing this situation one cannot assume that changing the administrative and legal status of FATA will end radicalism. It will not, but progress towards allowing tribesmen to exercise fundamental rights and have representative government at the mid and ground level is a pre-condition for increasing social cohesion and strengthening local society. But as highlighted earlier in section 7 on, 'Emergence of the new economy and convergence of extremists with criminal syndicates,' these efforts will fail if simultaneous action against the criminal elements is not taken. Thus these efforts to clear extremism and criminality need to be taken together or they will be fail.

Pakistan's civil-military governing elite must recognize that the current inter-connected world is about economic growth and human rights; Pakistan is doing a dis-service to its potential by allowing radicals to cause insecurity internally as well as externally. It appears that a change for the better has been initiated after the new army chief took over. If the current direction of policy is maintained there is likelihood of Pakistan emerging as a promising country in the future. Some of the other matters that need to be addressed in FATA are;

- Strengthening legitimate civilian governance
- Withdrawal of the military and the early return of IDPs to their homes so that communal and tribal cohesion can be re-established, as a front against the radicals; it may be noted that the greater the degree of violence in Fata, the more strengthened the radical elements will become.
- FATA administration must remain alert and robust to deny

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the location of Jihadis inside Fata and the entry of the Punjabi Taliban and foreign nationals.

- There are two decisions that Pakistan government must make;
  - It must not assist any radical or Jihadi element for action in Kashmir or inside Afghanistan – Pakistani territory must not be allowed to be used as a sanctuary and there must be very strict enforcement of the law.
  - Under no circumstances should Jihadis be accommodated in Fata.

There is a need to address other drivers of radicalism like;

- Law enforcement must be strengthened
  - presently it has become very weak throughout the country but more specifically in Fata.
- All those who have violated the country's laws must be brought under the law and there should be no exceptions
- Increasing growth and development in Fata must be undertaken to end marginalization of the people
- Fata should have empowered local government so that the tribesman is master of his own destiny.
- Flow of private donations to Madrassas must not be allowed and the existing Madrassas ought to be converted into primary schools. The religious teachers should be capacitated to become teachers in government run primary schools. Thus Madrassas will be merged into the public education system
- More jobs should be created for tribesmen in the security and other fields.

### **FATA Reforms**

According to Art 247 of the Pakistan Constitution, Fata constitutes a special tribal area in Pakistan where the normal laws of the land and the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court do not operate but is an administrative system of hybrid sovereignty functioning under the joint jurisdiction of the communities and the state, through tribal councils (Jirgas). Fata adjoins Afghanistan and there are ethnic links between the various tribes that inhabit this border that stretches for some 450 kilometers. Fata has a total area of 27,200 square kilometers that is loosely administered. After the management of the tribal area was taken over by the British in 1849, they came into contact with the tribesmen. They built up a system of administering them indirectly under the loose supervision of a political agent responsible to the Governor NWFP.

After appreciating the difficulty involved in administering a well-armed people living in mountainous fastness, without roads as well as situated on the Afghan border, the British decided early on to administer the districts up to the foothills through a system of indirect administration by a combination of money and use of force. The British also created a legal fiction indicating that while the tribal areas were part of India, they were not a part of British India. By creating this distinction the British announced that the tribal areas would be administered in a different manner than other parts of India that were being gradually introduced to responsible democratic government. This meant that the political growth of tribal areas was denied.

After Pakistan got independence in 1947, Mr. Jinnah promised to the tribesmen that their region will be administered as a special area under the traditional system of administration and no changes will be introduced into tribal areas (Fata latter), without their consultation. He also withdrew the military units from tribal areas deployed prior to 1948.

As indicated earlier in this study, the creation of this separately administered territory, outside the normal purview of the Pakistan Constitution, led to its use as a sanctuary for the proxy warriors, who

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an election alliance of five religious parties the MMA, (Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal) was formed. It was encouraged by Gen Musharraf to form the government in KP and also became his partners in the federal government. The election of MMA candidate became possible when by a special enactment Gen. Musharraf amended the election rules and equated a Madrassa degree with that of a formal graduation degree. It prevented the disqualification of many of the extremists who were thus able to enter Parliament.

At the same time Gen Musharraf weakened the management and control of law and order in the districts, when under the so-called local government reforms, the post of the District Magistrate was transformed to a District Coordinating Officer, under elected officials. With these two master-strokes Gen. Musharraf reduced the writ of the state and allowed entry to radicals into KP and Pakistan. It led to the following results;

- The MMA encouraged its workers to challenge the state in Swat, that by 2005- 6 came under the control of Jihadists led by Maulana Sufi Mohammad of Dir and his son-in-law Mullah Fazlullah
- In this inter-regnum, many of the KP districts lying on the border with Fata, came under the influence of the Jihadist radicals and they armed themselves and also received state largesse from the MMA government and expanded.

The duality in state policy of first allowing space to radicals and latter deploying the army to reduce their strength, was seen as a ploy by the tribesmen, who stopped cooperating with the state and there followed many rebellions in Fata and KP districts. The number of terrorist strikes against the state increased manifold; it looked as if the state had decided to relinquish control of the country to the Jihadists. It was also rumoured that Al-Qaeda was ceded area to form an Emirate in Bajaur and North Waziristan agency.<sup>33</sup>

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Political pressure by the US on Pakistan to take robust preventive action in conjunction with drone operations and Special Forces raids in Fata, prevented such a take-over of parts of Pakistani territory by the radicals in 2007 - but it was a narrow escape. The average Pakistani feared a repeat of this pattern in the future and one way was to bring Fata into the national space so that the people of Pakistan could also learn what was happening in Fata? Most Pakistanis, are unaware of Fata and its peculiarities, the issue of Fata transformation is complex;

- If only special areas like Fata were the cause of radicalism, then there should have been no radicals in the KP districts or in spaces like Karachi; on the contrary evidence suggests that more stability can be achieved by enforcing the law rather than undertaking more complicated reforms.
- The quick turn-around in the security situation when the new army chief took showed that with resolve and a clarity of vision, matters can improve in Fata even without any reforms. It appears that it will be futile to blame Fata alone for enforcement failure; clearly the answer lies in application of counter-terrorism and rule of law across the board for maximum results. That this was compromised is an aspect of lack of accountability in political matters and enforcement that is a pivotal issue in weak states.
- The counter-narrative that is employed by many, argues that if Fata is absorbed or main-streamed into the Pakistani system the ills highlighted will disappear. It is argued by the supporters of this view that the poor development indicators of Fata are the real cause of radicalism and its subsequent spread to other parts of the country<sup>34</sup>.
- Findings from the 'Stability Index,' project<sup>35</sup> has indicated that creating greater social cohesion in Fata based on traditional pattern of governance, will provide greater peace dividend than any other factor.

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- Social Cohesion in tribal area is defined by the frequency of the tribes working together to resolve problems. If the tribes meet often to resolve their common issues then it can be said that they have a high degree of social cohesion.
- The second attribute of social cohesion is the frequency of meetings by the traditional elders to resolve problems affecting their tribes. If the element of collective decision making through Jirga is high, then that region can be said to have a higher degree of social cohesion.<sup>36</sup>
- If we accept the wisdom from the above indicators then the solution in Fata will be to invest in strengthening the traditional mechanisms of governance. This conclusion is supported by the lessons of the Jihad in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union, Pakistan did not deploy its military in Fata, despite the grave nature of the threat, and was able to conserve peace in Fata; why was this principle not followed after the 9/11 events?

From the foregoing analysis clearly the route for defeating extremism is to enforce the law through Fata's traditional mechanisms, rather than the deployment of the military – the latter disrupts traditional mechanism of governance and only helps the radicals and thus the presence of a military force is likely to assist in aggravation of the violence rather than helping in its amelioration.<sup>37</sup>

### **Regional Highlights of the Impact of War Against Terrorism**

While a part of the violence in Balochistan can be traced to the Baluch insurgency yet in parts of that province reportedly there is a contest going on between Iranian and Pakistani drug cartels. In some cases a Jihadist organization the Jundullah linked with the LeT is being encouraged by the administration to carry on its fight. There is another criminal organization also known as Jundulla that is linked with the Taliban and it takes part in crime in Baluchistan and in Karachi.

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The Iranian Hezbollah is also reportedly active in Baluchistan recruiting Baluch to fight against the ISIS. Reportedly the Iranians are recruiting Pakistani Baluch too.

- The Baluch border with Iran is full of illegal weapons and it will be impossible for it to stabilize. Lately, official Pakistani security forces allege that India is conducting operations in the province.
- It is also suggested that since there is disconnect between government and civil society in Baluchistan, it is alleged that the state links up with extremist organizations or mercenary organizations to do its bidding instead of mobilizing the citizens.
- The continuous sectarian violence against the Shias in Gilgit-Baltistan has led to the vacation of Shias from many villages on the Karakorum highway and their occupation by Sunni fighters.
- The National Action Plan is over reliant on enforcement but is weak on transformation of the radical mindset. This deficiency needs to be removed as without the transformation it will not be possible to bring the desired long term change.

### **Recommendations for De- Radicalization**

- *I would agree with the observation that, “the radicalizing ideology is a modern innovation; it has been engineered by the politically motivated Muslim clergy as a reaction to colonization of the Muslim world after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire and the termination of the Caliphate. This ideology is not part of the Islamic faith; it is evident from the clerics’ testimony [before the Munir Commission], that verses of the Quran, which reject their position, have been abrogated.”<sup>38</sup>*

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Pakistan's Parliament and its elite have decided to call an end to the devastation caused to the country by radicals and terrorists. There are also promising signs of collaboration between Afghanistan and Pakistan in the security field. However, more stringent action needs to be taken in disassociating ourselves from the Haqqani network and the Quetta Shura. They are nothing but a veritable collection of troublemakers and are also closely integrated with criminal and drug syndicates.

Pakistan and India must not allow the festering of the Kashmir issue and the previous aspirations of allowing both the Kashmir parts to live in peace based on free movement across their borders and enlarging the avenues of trade and commerce for the people will be perhaps the best outcome. At some stage we need to engage India actively to undertake policies that would ease the lives of their/our people in the region. One of the first steps will be to re-examine our respective narratives of statehood and our contentious histories. We must out-grow our delinquent short sighted policies. Now that the new Silk route is being initiated by China, Pakistan and the regional countries could all benefit from it and make it truly a South Asian century of the 21st century.

### **Actions Proposed for the State**

It would be true to state that many of the government policies against radicalism and extremism announced so far show a lack of rigor and budgetary support that is so essential for implementation.

For instance when the government announced its first "National Internal Security Policy," in Feb 2014, it was hobbled by the absence of a program and consequential budgeting.

- o Comparatively more commitment is seen in funding and implementing the "National Action Plan", after the December 2014, attack on the Army Public School where more than 140 students and some teachers were murdered by extremists belonging to Mullah Fazalullah's faction of the TTP.

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An examination of Pakistan's policy approach shows that more emphasis is given to counter- terrorism and very little to counter radicalization. The reason may be that while counter –terrorism can be implemented through better policing and enforcement, but counter radicalization is more difficult as it requires a whole of society approach, leading to societal reform including revision of its core tenets of national identity including it's exclusive revelatory features that would involve amongst other factors, curricula and Madrassa reform. These are difficult items to implement and have thus been ignored so far.

However, unless this approach is adopted it is difficult to foresee any major transformational change taking place to challenge radicalism and extremism.

The following are some of the other steps that the state must take to push back radicalization that has damaged Pakistani society;

- o Enforcement of law must be made the core policy with zero tolerance for breach of law. Peace deals between the state and radicals (masquerading as tribes) must be shunned. The government must work through traditional methods to resolve conflict and must never be portrayed as a party. Reliance on Lashkars is bad policy; instead use the tribes.
- o The tribes may be consulted before any new arrangements regarding their future is made.
- o In this connection, preventing the presence of non-Pakistani tribesmen in Fata will be the paramount responsibility of the tribes
- o The CT strategy contained in the National Action Plan announced by the government must be implemented faithfully and should be constantly reviewed to make enforcement better.

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- There should be a mandatory 6 monthly reporting of the state of enforcement of the law and agreements submitted by the Governor KP for Fata law enforcement to Ministry of Interior and State and Frontier Region.
- Pakistan needs to re-examine the old paradigm of attaching its national interest in the security field with Jihadists and proxies. It will be far better to be up front of its positions viz India and Afghanistan. In this context special attention must be paid to Fata and it should not be peripheral in national discussions. Pakistan must enunciate zero-tolerance for private armies and existence of sanctuaries on its territories.
- The close links between extremists and organized crime needs to be investigated and broken. The earnings of crime must be confiscated. An attempt must be made at track II level to develop new national narratives that are fraternal and not based on exclusivity but on a South Asian identity that accommodates diversity.
- The Jihadist arms of religious and secular parties must be outlawed as demanded by the Constitution. Simultaneously, the enforcement agencies must be strengthened and constantly reviewed and improved – the police must be strengthened to execute its functions under the rule of law and especially to protect the poor and the marginalized who are constantly the target of vested interests.
- As indicated in NAP zero tolerance must be shown to hate speech and extremist material included in text books for school should be removed.
- Ethnic minorities must receive state protection; those who have been dispossessed in Gilgit-Baltistan must be restored to their villages and recurrence of sectarian attacks against the Shias must be prevented by pro-active policing.

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- Code of conduct must prohibit glorification of extremist thought in media.
- Attempts must be made in Balochistan to achieve reconciliation with the Baloch.
- Indian and Iranian interventions in Balochistan must be noted and addressed bilaterally.
- The justice system must be strengthened to remove delays in the delivery of justice as a public good.
- Steps must be taken aggressively to make Pakistan into a liberal democracy and to prevent its conversion into a theocratic state under its ambitious

#### **Actions Proposed for Civil Society**

The following recommendations are proposed in this behalf;

- A strong watch and lobbying role should be undertaken by the civil society organizations to monitor the progress achieved against extremism as laid down in the NAP and the CT plan of the government.
- Strong advocacy be undertaken for promoting peace, tolerance, harmony and dispensation of fundamental rights to all those who live in Pakistan.
- Media must play an effective role in advocating inter faith harmony
- Media and educational institutions must encourage the spread of knowledge of the cultural heritage of various ethnic groups in Pakistan. Frequent cultural exhibitions should be encouraged

### *Drivers of Radicalism and Extremism in Pakistan*

- The growth of civil society organizations must be encouraged by the government so that they are enabled to undertake services to reduce extremism and radicalism.
- Civil Society must be consulted by the government generally regarding reform and transformation of society.

### **Conclusion**

The discussion above clearly shows that the future of Pakistan and the region depends in confronting in the monsters of religious extremism and radicalism identified in this paper. However, it may also be noted that similar de-radicalization approaches need to be affected in India and Afghanistan – it does not make sense for Pakistan to engage in de-radicalization alone; a regional approach will be needed especially now when there is the threat of revival of Hindu radicalism in India.<sup>39</sup>

It will also be important to establish certain indicators to measure progress against extremism and radicalism by civil society organizations so that progress can be measured and further improvements brought into the effect to meet the challenges resulting from extremism and radicalism. It is an uphill task that needs many years of hard work and sound governance. The government and its institutions must avoid appeasement of extremist recalcitrant who should receive the full treatment under the justice system.

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