

## Recrudescence of TTP Violence: Its Causes and Possible Remedies

Dr Raashid Wali Janjua, Muhammad Nawaz Khan, Shiraz Shaikh, Furqan Khan, and Noorulain Naseem, *Recrudescence of TTP Violence: Its Causes and Possible Remedies*; (Islamabad: Islamabad Policy Research Institute, 2024), 86.

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The authors in *Recrudescence of TTP Violence: Its Causes and Possible Remedies* trace the roots of insurgency to the Soviet-Afghan War (1979), during which the former FATA region served as a launching pad for anti-Soviet jihadist groups, planting the early seeds of militancy. In the aftermath of 9/11, several militant factions, including Maulvi Faqir Muhammad Group and the Maulvi Nazir Group, emerged in the area. These groups were unified in 2007 under the banner of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), led by Baitullah Mehsud, and launched what they termed as defensive war against Pakistan. The book presents Pakistan's kinetic and non-kinetic counterterrorism strategies through which the TTP's organisational structure has been dismantled. However, after the United States' abrupt withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021, the Afghan Taliban 2.0 took over the throne of Kabul. They have provided safe havens to the TTP, who resumed their violent terrorist activities from there against the armed forces of Pakistan. The book offers a comprehensive explanation regarding the emergence of terrorism and its resurgence, the FATA merger, the state's strategies to neutralise TTP, and remedies to tackle the resurgence of its violence.

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The authors have extensively worked on terrorism and devoted considerable effort to this study. They have employed mixed-methods in this book and collected qualitative data through interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). To ensure authenticity and enrich the book's content, they have contacted all the relevant authorities, including in-service and retired civilian and military experts, academicians, and journalists. Similarly, two field surveys have been conducted among the indigenous people in the merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) to gather quantitative data for this study. Since the language used is candid, and supported by data-based illustrations, it is easily comprehensible. The book is organised into six chapters. The opening chapter starts with the historical evolution of insurgency in ex-FATA, in which the ideology, organisational structure, and connections of the TTP with other militant outfits have been explicated. Similarly, the remaining chapters have comprehensively elucidated the causes behind the resurgence of TTP violence, the merger of the erstwhile FATA with the province of KPK, followed by the approaches to counter the menace of TTP. Finally, the book concludes by suggesting various unique and pragmatic solutions to address the grave threat of terrorism.

The work provides a wealth of information on the causes of the resurgence of TTP violence against the state. The essence of the book lies in its objective examination of the causes of the resurgence of violence. The authors have used a very balanced and impartial approach while explaining the causes of the revival of TTP violence. Both the external and internal causes are dispassionately observed.

The external factor was the revival of the Afghan Taliban 2.0 in Kabul which resulted in the resurgence of TTP. Several United

Nations Security Council (UNSC) reports have highlighted the operations of the TTP being conducted from Afghanistan, where it has safe havens.

The book has highlighted Pakistan's different strategies to neutralise the TTP. A detailed account of both the kinetic and non-kinetic measures, such as military operations, rehabilitation and reintegration, preventive and reconciliation measures, development initiatives, anti-terrorism laws, and narrative shaping, among others, has been provided that assists in the disruption of the command-and-control structure of the terrorist outfits. With the combination of both approaches, the armed forces of Pakistan have successfully minimised the threat of terrorism.

The authors have broadly covered the FATA merger. They have rightly pointed out that due to a lack of interest of the federal and provincial governments in the administrative and development reforms, the merged districts of KPK are lagging behind the rest of the districts in living standards, health, education, justice system, and other aspects. Similarly, absence of speedy justice, quality education, underdevelopment, marginalisation, and poverty are some of the major contributing factors that contribute to radicalisation and terrorism in the merged districts. The TTP is manipulating and recruiting people in the merged districts by exploiting all these factors.

The book offers the best practical solutions to root out the menace of terrorism. The pragmatic and realistic, conclusion-based recommendations, which mainly focus on the non-kinetic approaches such as winning the support of the indigenous people, economic integration and livelihood provision, resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), allocation of development funds, good

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governance, capacity building, social media scrutiny for counterterrorism, and others make the book worthwhile for the policymakers.

This valuable work is highly recommended for students of terrorism and counterterrorism. It is an invaluable source book for researchers and policymakers because it provides an in-depth study on terrorism and the most effective strategies to tackle terrorism. ■