

## **Terrorism in Pakistan: Pre & Post COVID-19 Analysis**

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### **Abstract**

Terrorism dominated global politics since September 11, 2001 till the emergence of global pandemic of COVID-19 that molded every state policy priority. The paper evaluates terrorism in Pakistan that hits the most after Afghanistan. This part of the study also examines COVID-19 as a turning point in terrorism in Pakistan that reduces intensity of terror attacks in Pakistan. The research utilizes the twin theory of non-traditional security threats and the theory of “Multiple Stream Model” of policy making to mark it an academic study. The study finds multiple factors that led to the reduction of menace but the most prominent is COVID-19 that totally reshaped global state policies including Pakistan. This research paper, therefore, through an analytical and historical approach strives to contextualize terrorism in pre-COVID-19 and post-COVID-19 period. In prescriptive terms, the research argues that policy priorities must be aligned with the transformed situation to defeat the twin issues of terrorism and COVID-19.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Pandemic, WHO, Terrorism, NAP, Pakistan

### **Introduction**

Gone are the days when states were battered only by traditional security threats. Recapitulating world history reveals that traditional security threats in the form of rebellion, aggression and wars and ethnic conflict have been the recurrent phenomena which pitted one section of society against another; pitted one state against another and pitted one ethnic community against another. In the process, the security situation of the

state was challenged. However, preoccupation with the traditional security threats is now fading and are giving way to new forms of threats which could be considered as non-traditional in nature for it does not involve direct conflict rather it is measured in terms of socio-economic costs for the states.

In the context of Pakistan, the traditional security threats from its hostile neighbor and the specter of terrorism have been more pronounced. Pakistan got its independence in 1947. The divergence in terms of ideology and differences over the geographical contours of the newly independent states led to the continuous cycle of crisis which continues till this day. It was India which forced Pakistan to become a national security state and in the initial years, defense was prioritized over social sectors in the country<sup>1</sup>.

Added to this security administration was the threat from the menace of terrorism. Pakistan grappled with the security challenges and after the 9/11 attacks, which set in motion a chain of events and which later culminated into the rise of indigenous terrorism in the country, compounded the security situation. After 2007, the security situation became murkier due to home-grown terrorism. It was only in 2009 when Pakistan embarked upon a full-fledged military operation to drive out the militants<sup>2</sup>. These efforts were further hastened after the APS attacks in 2014 in which almost 145 children succumbed to the dastardly act of terrorism<sup>3</sup>.

Besides the direct cost, which was afflicted, the indirect cost included decline in tourism, plummeting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), the lack

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<sup>1</sup> Lyon, P. (2008). *Roots of Modern Conflict*. Library of Congress.

<sup>2</sup> Feyyaz, M. (2013). Conceptualising Terrorism Trend Patterns in Pakistan: An Empirical Perspective. *Terrorism Research Initiative*, 73-102.

<sup>3</sup> Feyyaz, M. (2013). Conceptualising Terrorism Trend Patterns in Pakistan: An Empirical Perspective. *Terrorism Research Initiative*, 73-103.

of peace and tranquility, capital flight besides others created a hostile environment where the ultimate casualty was the economy of Pakistan. In a stag-flatted economy, Pakistan was unable to divert finances to the crucial areas like health, education, and social development.

### **Theoretical Basis**

The research undertaken has become more relevant in the context wherein the security issues have been sidestepped and instead more focus has been placed on the health issues. The policy priorities have been geared towards precluding the yet-to-come crisis and preventing the health infrastructure being overburdened. The research utilizes the twin theory of non-traditional security threats and the theory of “Multiple Stream Model” of policy making.

The concept of non-traditional security threat ordains that the security threats posed to a state emanate not just from the traditional sources like terrorism, armed conflict, rebellion or any hostile neighbors, rather the sources of the threats could also be found in other sources like the water, health, and population crises etc. The non-traditional security reckons the cost to the state in terms of socio-economic consequences. One of the features of the non-traditional security threat is also that it is transnational in nature<sup>4</sup>. Contextualizing the theory in present situation triggered by the pandemics could be well explained through this theory. In this regard, a few things are worthy to be reflected on. First, the pandemic has exacerbated Pakistan’s non-traditional security threats by increasing socio-economic costs. Secondly, many of the countries have been at the

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<sup>4</sup> Iqbal, A. C. (2016). *Contours Of Non-Traditional Security Challenges*. Criterion Quarterly.

receiving-end of the crisis which involve both developed and developing countries. Hence, the theory of non-traditional security can better explain the pandemics and the resultant crisis posed to the country<sup>5</sup>.

The “Multiple Stream Model” by Kingdon which was developed to arrive at the concept as to how policies could be formulated which are politically acceptable and looks feasible<sup>6</sup>. The model pertains to the situation where a propitious environment, which comes through the intersection of the presence of the problem, the need of the policy and the role of politics, which leads to the opening of the “Window of opportunity”<sup>7</sup>. The presence of policy entrepreneur captures that opportunity which in turn effect changes in policy which are more relevant to the given situation<sup>8</sup>. The Multiple stream model could be contextualized in terms of how feasible policies could be implemented to deal with the twin issue of COVID-19 and the terrorism. The twin issues have proved to be the presence of the problem. Now, the issue is how the political situation is made more relevant and how the political actor play an important role to deal with policy formulation through an inclusive approach.

### **Pre-COVID-19: Terrorism in Pakistan**

In retrospection, there is a long history of terrorism in Pakistan. The rise of terrorism has been the byproduct of various policy choices, and the

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<sup>5</sup> Sheikh, A. T. (2011). *Nontraditional Security Threats in Pakistan*. The National Bureau of Asian Research.

<sup>6</sup> Sheikh, A. T. (2011). *Nontraditional Security Threats in Pakistan*. The National Bureau of Asian Research.

<sup>7</sup> Sheikh, A. T. (2011). *Nontraditional Security Threats in Pakistan*. The National Bureau of Asian Research.

<sup>8</sup> Young, C. C. (2011). Public Policy And Administration. In M. B. John T. Ishiyama, *21st Century Political Science a Reference Handbook*. Sage Publications, Inc.

internal and external dynamics. In this regard, following things are important:

### ***Terrorism: Prologue***

Terrorism has been global and historical phenomenon. Although there are contesting claims as to what could be the universally accepted definition of the term terrorism, but all-in-all the phenomenon of terrorism embrace three things. First, it is perpetrated by some non-state actors. Though in some cases, states are also complicit of the state-sponsored terrorism, but it is covered through the concept that state has the monopoly of legitimate violence. Secondly, terrorism is always aimed to acquire certain political, religious, economic, or ideological gains. This aspect of terrorism keeps its pole apart from the general criminal which is more driven by personal choices. Thirdly, terrorism is driven by some collective fear-inducing mechanism. Terrorism strives to inculcate fear among the people<sup>9</sup>.

Historically, the phenomenon of terrorism existed in various manifestation. In the earlier times, terrorism manifested itself only in political terms of acquiring some kind of political goals like independence or representation in political dispensation, etc. It is only recently that terrorism is couched in religious terms. After the USSR invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the subsequent events catapulted terrorism at global level. It was the era of the rise of the global jihad espoused by Abdullah Azam and Al-Qaeda. The iconic example of terrorism attacks was the 9/11 incident which led to transformation at global politics and led to the alliance to kill off the

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<sup>9</sup> Nawaz, S. (2016). Countering Militancy and Terrorism in Pakistan: The Civil-Military Nexus. *US Institute of Peace*, 16.

scourge of terrorism once for all. However, the elimination of terrorism due to the flawed policies always proved to be *bête noire* for many states, both developed and developing.<sup>10</sup>

In the present context, terrorism has been a global phenomenon where each and every state has been afflicted with the terrorism-related incidents in the form of suicide bombing, target killings, mass killings, stabbings, etc. Though the number of terrorism incidents in many countries around the world have plummeted due to the COVID-19, yet it warrants that the history of terrorism needed to be recapitulated to contextualize terrorism in the present context already battered by a severe health crisis of unprecedented proportion.

### ***From the “Global Jihad” to the “War on Terrorism”***

Bruce Riedel in his book “What We Won” writes that the end of Afghanistan war (1979-1991) was not the end of the problem, rather it was the beginning of new phenomenon which was to occupy the world for years to come. This phenomenon was the issue of global Jihad which took its birth from the ashes of Afghanistan war. The various warlords and the foreign jihadist strived to extend the scope of jihad beyond the frontiers of Afghanistan and instead strived to utilize the same for the liberation of the Muslim world from the foreign occupation. Thus, global jihad was at the forefront of liberation of the Kashmir valley and Palestine<sup>11</sup>.

Similarly, the end of Afghanistan war and the exit of the USSR from the bipolar world order also triggered a litany of governance problems for

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<sup>10</sup> Riedel, B. (2014). *What We Won: America's Secret War in Afghanistan, 1979 –89*. Washington D.C: the brookings institution.

<sup>11</sup> Riedel, B. (2014). *What We Won: America's Secret War in Afghanistan, 1979 –89*. Washington D.C: the brookings institution.

Pakistan. In its aftermath, Pakistan was forced to look after the refugees residing on its territory and the porous border besides administrating the narcotics trade and Kalashnikov culture in the region which thrived in Pakistan after the opening of the porous border of the Durand line<sup>12</sup>.

### ***Terrorism Comes Home***

The global jihad culminated into the 9/11 attacks at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The attacks exhibited that even a superpower was not immune from the global jihadist network. In the aftermath of the attacks, Pakistan was thrown the challenge of abandoning its pro-Taliban policy and supporting the endeavor of the USA to drive out the menace of terrorism in every nook and corner of the world. However, after the USA invasion of Iraq clarified and led to the perception particularly among the Muslim states that the USA-led war on terror was mere a hoax which is used by the USA to spread its tentacles to the Muslim world and to capture its precious resources. It was in this context that anti-Americanism arose in majority Muslim countries. It directly led to radicalization in society. This perception was further exacerbated by the roll backing of pro-Taliban policy of Pakistan after the 9/11 attacks<sup>13</sup>.

In the context of Pakistan, a few things led to the terrorism being imported into the country. First, there was the 2001 Indian parliament attacks wherein after India military mobilization Pakistan was forced to devote its troops to the eastern border. The Durand line which was already a porous border was rendered more open for the terrorists to flow into Pakistan.

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<sup>12</sup> Shah, S. M. (2007). Pakistan and the War against Terrorism. *Pakistan Institute of International Affairs*, 85-107.

<sup>13</sup> Shah, S. M. (2007). Pakistan and the War against Terrorism. *Pakistan Institute of International Affairs*, 85-107.

Secondly, Pakistan took various military operations in the country which radicalize society and led to the support for the terrorist outfits in the country. Thirdly and the most importantly, after the Lal Mosque Operation in July 2007, a number of terrorist outfits thrashed out their differences and consolidated themselves into a home-grown outfit known as Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Within few months, they attacked Benazir Bhutto and within years it assaulted upon various civilian and government institutions. In the years to come, terrorism would grow in the country to unprecedented proportion<sup>14</sup>.

### **Impacts of Terrorism on Pakistan in Pre -COVID-19 Period**

In Pakistan, the war on terror is considered by general masses as someone else war which is played out in Pakistan. Pakistan joined the war on terror with the intents that it could be eliminated once for all. Instead, the war on terror has been mutated into radicalization, extremism and ultimately into a home-grown militancy in the country. Though, Pakistan has suffered through terrorism related incidents much earlier than the 9/11 attacks, but the 9/11 attacks and the resultant policy shift is considered as convenient point of reference which led to a spike in various terrorism related incidents in the country. Pakistan has suffered various casualties and endured various direct and indirect consequences because of terrorism in various hues.

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<sup>14</sup> Hussain, Z. (n.d.). *Battling Militancy*. In M. Lodi, *Pakistan Beyond the crisis state*. Karachi: Oxford University Press.



### *Economic Impacts*

The economy of Pakistan has always been alternated between a boom-and-bust cycle. In recent years, the economic situation was more ominous due to various factors. It was for the first time in the Economic Survey of Pakistan of 2010 that the economic costs of the war on terror was recognized. Since then, the economic cost of the terrorism has been the integral part of each economic survey of Pakistan<sup>15</sup>. Recent estimates put the economic loss at the tune of \$127 billion.

#### Pakistan Economic Survey 2017-18

Table 1: Summary of losses due to War on Terror				(US\$ million)
S.No		Years		Total
		2016-17	2017-18*	
1	Compensation to Affectees	90.64	39.25	129.89
2	Physical Infrastructure	272.32	111.61	389.93
3	Foreign Investment	1105.30	127.10	1234.40
4	Privatization	251.19	0.00	251.19
5	Industrial Output	494.300	449.600	1043.90
6	Taz Collection	2783.29	976.38	3459.67
7	Cost of Uncertainty	71.060	14.180	85.24
8	Expenditure Over run	593.72	345.65	939.37
9	Others	7.07	8.66	15.73
		5,468.89	2,074.43	7543.32

Map courtesy: <https://propakistani.pk/2018/04/27/terrorism-has-cost-pakistan-over-126-billion-since-2001/>

### *The Human Costs*

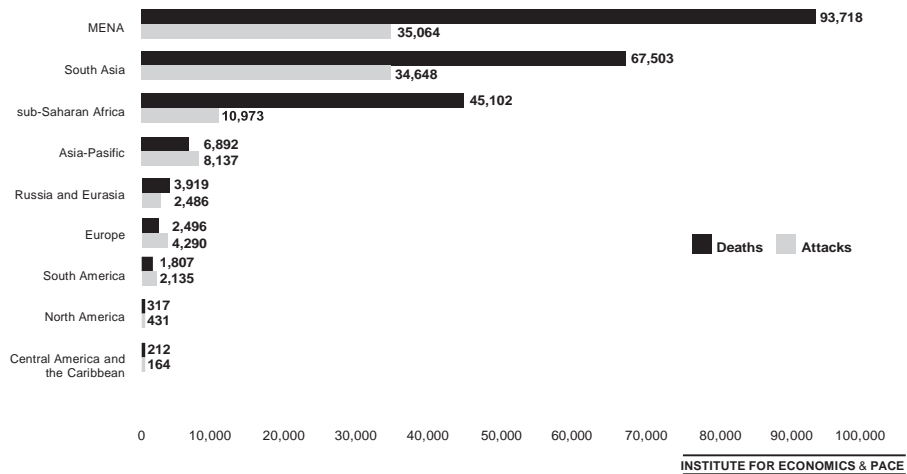
Terrorism in the country has not only resulted in the economic consequences for the country but also has created a severe law and order situation in the country. Since Pakistan became a partner in the war on terrorism and since the time of the home-grown militancy in the country, it has suffered human casualties both at civilian and military level. Many

<sup>15</sup> Ali, A. (2010). Economic cost of terrorism: a case study of Pakistan. *Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad*, 157-170.

precious human lives have been lost to various incidents of terrorism like suicide bombing, assassinations and target killings etc. In terms of terrorism in the country, the years 2008, 2009 and 2010 were the more severe<sup>16</sup>. The Global Terrorism Index is also emblematic of the human cost in the country. The Global Terrorism index is published each year to bring to light the human cost due to terrorism around the world.

### Attacks and deaths from terrorism by region, 2002-2018

The largest number of deaths was recorded in the MENA region, with over 90,000 deaths from terrorism since 2002.



Map courtesy: <http://visionofhumanity.org/indexes/terrorism-index/>

### *The Indirect Costs of Terrorism*

Besides some direct cost in the forms of economic and human costs, there are also various ways in which terrorism has indirectly impacted the country. In this regard, a few things are needed to be mentioned. First, the terrorism has created various law and order situation in the country which has resulted in the reducing tourism and foreign direct investment.

<sup>16</sup> Abbasi, N. M. (2013). Impact of terrorism on Pakistan. *Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad*, 33-68.

Secondly, the issue of terrorism has created a hostile environment where the socio-economic costs in the form of poverty, impacts on the health sector and other social sectors have been exacerbated<sup>17</sup>.

### ***Security Threats and the Lack of Social Budgeting Thereof***

The twin factors of security threats from India and terrorism have created various socio-economic problems for the country at large. No aspect of the state has been immune from the worst outcomes of terrorism in the country. The preoccupation with security concerns and the subsequent efforts to stem these twins' issues of security created various problems for the country. As far as security threat from the India is concerned, the defense budget has seen an increase with each passing year, and this has been a recurrent phenomenon since independence. It was meant to ensure parity with India in terms of security. As far as the issue of terrorism is concerned, the military operations and the various logistical needs have created a hostile environment for the socio-economic landscape of the country besides accruing economic costs. Hence, the security concerns for Pakistan existed both at its external and internal dimensions<sup>18</sup>.

These issues created various problems for the social budgeting in the country. It has been argued and it also has been counter-intuitive argument that the country progress is determined by its social budgeting. The social budgeting refers to the spending on the social sectors like health, education, Human Development Index (HDI), etc. However, the security issues forestalled Pakistan efforts to invest in the social sector. According

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<sup>17</sup> Gupta, D. K. (2008). Review: Costs and Consequences of Terrorism. *The International Studies Association*, 804-806.

<sup>18</sup> Leonie Huddy, Stanley Feldman, Theresa Capelos, Colin Provost. (2002). The Consequences of Terrorism: Disentangling the Effects of Personal and National Threat. *International Society of Political Psychology*, 485-509.

to the UNDP report entitled as “Beyond income; beyond average; beyond today” the Human Development Index of Pakistan presents a very dismal picture. This has been the byproduct of the lack of social budgeting which has been characterized by the fact that education spending has been 2.3 of GDP and health spending a paltry less than 1%. According to the report quoted by the Human Rights report of Pakistan, Pakistan is one of those countries where the social spending is low. This low social spending besides other factors could be attributed to the rise of terrorism in the country<sup>19</sup>.

### **The emergence of COVID-19**

The COVID-19 is a respiratory viral disease. There are many perspectives as to what caused the spread and emergence of the virus in first place, but the fatality rate and the speed with which the virus spreads have transfixed the world. This one-in-century pandemic has played havoc with every aspect of the states and has thrown novel challenges to the world at large. According to the Economic Survey Report of the 2020, the pandemic has unleashed an economic crisis, a public health crisis and commodity crisis, but the pandemic is more than that as it has brought about transformational changes in the political, social, economic and technological realms of the state. The world is grappling to keep the track of those transformation and driven it to positive direction where the breakdown could be kept at minimum and where the policies could be oriented to keep pace with the transformed situation<sup>20</sup>. The emergence of the virus made it first headlines in the month of February. The Chinese city of Wuhan in the Hubei

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<sup>19</sup> Quantifying fear: The social impact of terrorism. (2015). *Journal of Policy Modeling*

<sup>20</sup> (2020). *COVID-19 – Pakistan Socio-economic Impact Assessment & Response Plan*. UNDP.

province was at the limelight for having the first of its kind of Novel virus known as Corona Virus scientifically named as COVID-19. After preliminary investigations carried out the World Health Organization (WHO), the virus was declared as issue of global concern in the month of January.

### **WHO on Pandemic**

The World Health Organization (WHO) is global health organization which deals with the issues of global health concern and provides a platform where through the coordinated efforts of various states many health issues like pandemics, endemics, infectious diseases like Ebola, polio and many other diseases could be wiped out. The organization is run through the contributions made by various states with the largest contribution coming from the USA, and many other developed countries. The WHO got wind of the situation after many cases were reported in many countries and on 11 March 2020 declared the virus as pandemic<sup>21</sup>.

Pandemic refers to the situation where many countries and huge population is impacted through a disease. In the case of the disease, the disease is communicable which can spread through various medium. In the case of the COVID-19, the virus spreads through human interaction. This is the reason that the WHO had recognized a set of various Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) which are to be ensured in social interactions. The USA also criticized the WHO for its dereliction to stem the tide of the pandemic in the initial stages and warned of cutting off its funds.

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<sup>21</sup> (n.d.). *Novel Coronavirus*. American Society for Microbiology.

### **Global Response to Contain the COVID-19**

There are various discrepancies in the world in terms of political system, economic structure, and the level of economic development, policy priorities, and the role which a state can play at regional and global level and what not. This is the reason that the response to deal with the virus is to be contextualized in terms of the peculiar milieu of the stated. In this regard, there are two trends which are coming to fore, and which could be analyzed in the term of World System Theory according to which two set of countries characterize the world scene. These countries are developed and developing countries.

The response of the developed countries from the outset differs from one country to another however when it came to the developing countries maintained that lockdown would have severe repercussion for their developing and nascent economies.

### **COVID-19: Transformation and Shift in Policy Priorities**

The COVID-19 and the resultant disruption to the global economy has brought about various challenges for the world at large. The transformation of the COVID-19 is spanned over many spheres of the state activities.

### **Terrorism in the Context of Post-COVID-19**

Terrorism was a buzzword which was used to characterize the security situation in the country. Prior to the COVID-19, some high-profile incidents took place in the country which led to the perception that terrorism was the bona fide threat to Pakistan existence as sovereign status and its economic standing and as to how to deal with the terrorism would

determine its image at global and regional levels. Pakistan was pressurized to take decisive actions against terrorism in all its manifestations. The most important issue was the implementation of the NAP. All those changes once the COVID-19 brought about the transformation in that policy priorities. However, as to how terrorism is dealt with in the present context could be instrumental in the post-COVID-19 situation. The menace of terrorism, therefore, could be contextualized in the situation which prevails in the country. In this regard, following things are important.

### **The Context**

#### ***Shrinking global and domestic economy***

An effective fight against the twin issues of terrorism and public health crisis in the form of pandemic could not be driven to its logical conclusion in the presence of shrinking of global and domestic economy. For an effective implementation of policies regarding these areas, a sound economic base is required. However, the global travels and economy have been closed down which will impact the economy of many of the countries which in turn will impact both security and social policies in the long run<sup>22</sup>.

#### ***The Rise of Social Problems***

The rise of terrorism is due to the presence of various social problems in the country. Much has been written about various social problems like poverty, unemployment, gender discrimination, extremism and child labor in the country. In this regard, a few things are worthy to be reflected on. Terrorism is the byproduct of the increase in poverty and increase in the

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<sup>22</sup> Sheerani, S. (2020). *Economic costs of Covid-19*. The Dawn.

unemployment rate in the country. It must be remembered that various prognostications made by the International Financial Institution (IFI's) portend a gloomy environment for the country. In Pakistan, poverty and unemployment has been used as recruitment-tool by the terrorist outfits to lure the frustrated youth into its fold. Secondly, the pandemic has also led to disruption of the educational activities around the world. Within their homes there has been an increase in violence and their education halt have led to increase in the domestic violence. Given the presence of these situation, the role of the social problems which could increase will determine the course of terrorism in the country<sup>23</sup>.

### **Non-Implementation of NAP**

Since its inception in 2015 after the Army Public School attack, there has been a perception in the country that the National Action Plan could not be implemented in its true letter and spirit which slowed down the pace of its targets achieving. Contrary to such assumptions the government within its limited resources implemented top priority policies and chalked out strategies for the implementation of NAP.

However, in the present context, it is the COVID-19 which has shifted the policy priorities from the security concerns to the one dealing with the pandemic in an effective manner as could be possible. From the outset, the UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, also called upon states to abandon their conflicts and urged for the global ceasefire. In recent years, the incidents of terrorism have been declined, but the incident like attack

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<sup>23</sup> Rehan Rafay Jamil , Kabeer Dawani. (2020). *Rethinking Pakistan's welfare systems after Covid-19*. The Dawn.



on Pakistan Stock Exchange Karachi evinces the fact that terrorists are still looking for opportunities and are lurking in the dark to mount attacks upon state institutions<sup>24</sup>.

### **Exploitation by the Terrorist Groups**

It is the very nature of the terrorists' groups that they exploit the perverse environment to its advantage. Given the health crisis which prevails in the country, the possibility of the exploitation of the situation cannot be ruled out. They can exploit the prevailing situation in a number of ways. First, as the policy priorities have been shifted from the security issues to that of containing the COVID-19, there has been the consolidation of the terrorist groups. The security arrangements in the country have been relaxed in the country. This situation is likely to be exploited by the terrorist groups in the country. Secondly, the rise of social problems is likely to be exploited by the groups and many of them will lure the poor and unemployed youth to its fold<sup>25</sup>.

### **The Rise of Extremism and Radicalism due to Closure of Educational Institutions**

The rise of extremists in the country is always the byproduct of the extremism masquerading as faith healer to inculcate extremist in the country. The COVID-19 has disrupted the educational activities in the country. The role of education in the promotion of enlightened ideas cannot be ruled out. The closure of educational institutions and the decline in the economic activities in the country is likely to bring about the emergence of various problems for the students in the long run. In this

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<sup>24</sup> Rana, M. A. (2020). *Terrorism under Covid-19*. The Dawn.

<sup>25</sup> Rana, M. A. (2020). *Terrorism under Covid-19*. The Dawn.

regard, the role of the terrorist groups and the rise of extremist in the country cannot be over looked.

### **The Way Forward**

Extraordinary situation demands extraordinary efforts through the responsible role played by the various stakeholders. Such efforts must be driven by a holistic approach and by taking into account the transformation and the context in which a phenomenon occurs. The situation and challenges created by the COVID-19 are transformational in the sense and that an effective response during this time will lead to changes in the dynamics of the terrorism in the country.

### ***Increasing Social Budgeting***

The pandemic need the government to draw its attention like many other developing states towards social budgeting to deal with the problem. If the developing countries are failing to deal with the COVID-19, it is due to the lack of social budgeting in the previous years. The government must deal with the problems by increasing the social budgeting which besides dealing with the acute health crisis will lead to the elimination of the terrorism in the long run.

### ***Focus on Social Aspects of the COVID-19***

The COVID-19 pandemic is not to be viewed merely as public health crisis rather it is the event which has created various social problems. The pandemics must be viewed through the lens of tis social aspects. When many of the social consequences of the COVID-19 are taken into account, it must be realized that the social consequences of the COVID-19 must be

analyzed in true perspective to ascertain as to how social problems could be prevented.

### ***Provincial Coordination***

From the get-go, there had been a mismatch in terms of policy coordination among different provinces. After the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment in the country, health department has been the provincial subject. But in these extraordinary circumstances there ought to be provincial coordination to contain the virus. Secondly, the law enforcement agencies also come within the domain of the provincial government after the 18<sup>th</sup> amendments. Through provincial coordination and concerted efforts of each stakeholders the twin issue of terrorism and COVID-19 could be handled effectively.

### ***Strengthening the Anti-terrorism structure***

This is also the most propitious time to strengthen the anti-terrorism structure in the country. In the recent years, the issue of terrorism related incidents has seen marked decline. It was in this context that a benefit must be taken out of this event to strengthen the anti-terrorism structure in the country. With the exception of major incident like the Pakistan Stock Exchange attacks, no major incident could happen in the country. In this context, the role of anti-terrorism structure ought to be improved so as to bring to light the sleeper cells who might be operating behind the scene.

### **Conclusion**

The specter of terrorism and the resultant crisis in the socio-economic sector created various problems for the country. The rise of terrorism in the country is not the offshoot of a single event or policy choice rather it

has been the byproduct of various factors in which the state policies both at internal and external level, the role of Afghan jihad, and USA involvement played a big deal of role. The consequences of the terrorism exhibited itself in the form of security threats to the country besides resulting in decrease on the social spending of the country. The health, education, social development and other various social sectors were impacted. In the initial years, the twin issues of security threats from India and terrorism compounded the already neglected social sectors in the country. The policies in the initial years were preoccupied with the security concerns. Later on, various other issues sidestepped the social sectors which impacted the progress of society. This dereliction and the subsequent policies later on culminated into non-traditional security threats to the country. The low expenditure on the health sector translated into various problems like lack of doctors, non-observance of preventive measures in health sector, and lack of other supportive staff, etc. As a result, the problems of both terrorism and poor health thrived in the country in parallel.

The issue of terrorism in the pre-COVID-19 period directly affected the economy of Pakistan and indirectly impacted the political, administrative and social sectors of the state. Pakistan has suffered the economic to the tune of the \$127 billion since it joined the war on terror. Besides, the direct cost the others are the dropping of FDI, impacts on terrorism, military operations and the social breakdown and the rise of the IDP's phenomenon also thrived in parallel due to terrorism. The end-result was Pakistan dismal performance in the social sector. The security concerns compelled Pakistan to spend huge finance on the security, which impacted spending on health sector.

The dereliction of the health sector compounded Pakistan non-traditional security threats like the spread of the diseases, and most recently the outbreak of the COVID-19. Pakistan was unprepared to deal with the pandemic in an effective manner due to the past policies choices which were preoccupied with security concerns. Soon after of independence, Pakistan faced security threats from India. After the nuclear explosions, the threats of eastern neighbor subsided and terrorism reared its head. The roots of terrorism as exist could be found in Afghanistan war, but the 9/11 attacks catapulted terrorism and global jihad into prominence. After the attacks, Pakistan was asked to join the war on terror come what may. The consequences were severe for the country because the war on terror was botched up from the beginning due to the perception that it did equate terrorism with a particular religion. The issue of terrorism was the burning issue throughout the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. No issue grabbed as much attention as this issue which was the natural corollary of the strengthening of terror groups to mount attacks on different places of highly sensitive nature. However, initial concerns with security issues led to the negligence of these emerging threats. These threats manifested itself in the form of water crisis, health crises and exponential population growth etc. Many countries were caught napping when the pandemic hit their borders. It led to the closure of the whole world economy and disruption of economic activities within the states.

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