



THE UNHOLY WAR

Religious Militancy
and Sectarian
Violence
IN **Pakistan**

THE UNHOLY WAR

**Religious Militancy
and Sectarian Violence
in Pakistan**

THE NETWORK PUBLICATIONS

Title: The Unholy War: Religious Militancy and Sectarian Violence in Pakistan
Author: Zaigham Khan

All rights reserved. Any part of this publication may be reproduced or translated by duly acknowledging the source.

First published September 2004
ISBN 969-8807-13-6

Acknowledgement

This publication was made possible with support provided by
The Asia Foundation and the U.S. Agency
for International Development. The opinions expressed
here are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of
The Asia Foundation or the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Cover designed by Abdul Hameed
Layout by Madiha Sandhu
Printed in Pakistan by Khursheed Printers (Pvt) Limited, Islamabad

Published by
Centre for Democratic Governance
The Network for Consumer Protection
40-A Ramzan Plaza, G-9 Markaz, Islamabad, PAKISTAN
e-mail: cdg@thenetwork.org.pk
websites: www.cdg.org.pk
www.thenetwork.org.pk

Contents

Preface	
Executive Summary	1
<hr/>	
From Religion to Politics to Violence	4
<hr/>	
Seeds of Decay	11
Madressah Factor	
Foreign Influence	
Role of the State	
Social and Economic Factors	
Weak Criminal Justice System	
Lack of Democratic Governance	
<hr/>	
Jihad at Home	18
<hr/>	
Allah's Army	24
Case Study	
<hr/>	
Life after 9/11	28
<hr/>	
Conclusions and Recommendations	31
<hr/>	
Notes and References	34

Preface

Fifty seven years ago, when the people of Pakistan won independence from the British, they awaited a great metamorphosis. From being the subjects of a powerful and brutal empire, they were to become citizens of a free country, a homeland that was to be shaped by their dreams and aspirations. Independence, however, soon turned into a "false dawn" and people realized that it meant little more than a change of masters. The promise of equitable development and democratic rule in the country has eluded the people ever since, with the ruling elite faithfully sticking to its colonial mindset and methods of subjugation.

As the world discovers the importance of good governance in solving some of the most pressing problems confronting the developing world, the civil society in Pakistan is also increasing its involvement with key public issues. It is cognizant of the fact that meaningful development effort must pay attention to issues of public policy, governance and citizen's rights. Moreover, "good politics" must precede and reinforce good governance.

This paper is eleventh in the series of publications intended to contribute to the larger civil society struggle for realizing the cherished dream of development and democracy. These publications are aimed at raising people's awareness on vital political, social and economic issues. They seek to break the silence, ignite public debate and open a serious dialogue, thereby strengthening the demand for democracy and good governance.

The paper systematically explores the dynamics of religious militancy and sectarian violence in Pakistan, explaining the interplay of various factors at the heart of this menace. It aptly recalls Pakistan's birth amidst a communal bloodbath and its violence-ridden history: the carnage in former East Pakistan, ethnic slaughters in Karachi, military operations in Balochistan and Sind, and now the Wana operation. The last two decades have witnessed a marked surge in sectarian violence that has no end in sight. Recent 'quid-pro-quo' bomb blasts in Shia and Sunni mosques remind us of this painful reality.

Even though religio-political parties in Pakistan have a long tradition of political and social activism, it was only in the 1980s that certain groups and factions got radicalized, militarized and ultimately turned to sectarian violence - that assumed a logic and cyclic momentum of its own. The military and its agencies used religiously motivated youth, both conventional and madressah-educated volunteers, for their own specific ends, with devastating consequences for peace and security of the society at large.

Not only domestic but also regional and international factors coalesced promoting religious militancy and igniting sectarian violence in its present form. In the aftermath of 9/11, a clash of fundamentalisms between radical Muslims and influential Jewish-Christian-Corporate lobbies has further aggravated this situation.

The learned author, Mr. Zaigham Khan, a renowned commentator in the field, puts together a wealth of information and valuable insights into this paper. His recommendations include domestic measures including rule of law. However, they also point to the need for democratic reforms and human rights in the mostly authoritarian Muslim states, as well as just resolution of the festering Muslim issues around the world that fuel Muslim rage and militancy. The paper should be of interest to both policymakers and concerned citizens in comprehending this crucially important issue confronting Pakistan.

I appreciate the partnership and support of The Asia Foundation for this project, and hope that it will mark the beginning of a long association. The project team led by Zaigham Khan has done a commendable job and I congratulate him and his project colleagues, Raja Ehsan Aziz, Mohammad Najeeb, Haniya Aslam, M.Y. Khan and Madiha Sandhu. We are also thankful to SDDP (Supporting Democratic Development in Pakistan) project partners who contributed in the initial discussions that brought clarity to our efforts.

Dr. Zafar Mirza
Executive Coordinator
The Network for Consumer Protection

Executive Summary

The areas now constituting Pakistan have witnessed large-scale violence over the past three centuries. Emergence of Pakistan accompanied one of the worst communal bloodbaths in history. Post-independence Pakistan confronted ethno-regional tensions and violence, culminating in a brutal civil war that led to the separation of East Pakistan and a humiliating military defeat in 1971.

In earlier years of Pakistan, religious violence was largely confined to a few anti-Qadiani incidents. Shia-Sunni violence was unheard of, except for occasional tension during Muharram processions. However, religious violence in the present form is a new phenomenon that started in the 1980s. Underlying this violence are several complex factors that include the Iranian revolution, military takeover by Gen. Zia, his Islamization agenda, Afghan jihad against the Soviets (including Western - particularly American and the oil-rich Arab - particularly Saudi backing of Afghan jihad), Kashmiri uprising, and Pakistan's involvement in the second jihad in Kashmir.

Organizations involved in religious violence can be broadly categorized as religio-political groups, though only a small number of these groups are directly involved in acts of violence. In the last two decades, however, religio-

political groups have undergone a metamorphosis, changing them beyond recognition. This change includes a mushroom growth in their numbers and a changed worldview linked to a rising trend of militancy. Except for JI, almost all Islamic parties and groups in Pakistan are based on some specific sect, sub-sect or school of thought. As a result, a sectarian party is the prototype of Islamic organization today.

Madressahs are an important religio-social institution in Pakistan that provide free education, boarding and lodging to children from mostly underprivileged families, besides orphans and destitutes. The number of madressahs in Pakistan increased from around 700 in both East and West Pakistan after independence to 3,874 in the whole country in 1995. In 2002, more than 5,000 madressahs were supposedly functioning in Pakistan.

Only a small number of madressahs are directly involved in religious militancy, but their influence on the state of religious violence in the country is enormous. Most of the religious militants come from madressah background and their violent actions are rooted in indoctrination at these madrasahs.

Religious extremism in Pakistan is primarily home-grown, even though significantly strength-

“*Religious extremism in Pakistan is primarily home-grown, even though significantly strengthened through extended foreign support. In 1980s, Saudi Arabia supported Sunni extremists while Iran supported Shia groups in the backdrop of Islamic revolution and the Iran-Iraq war.*”

““ *The state in Pakistan has often exploited ethnic and sectarian divisions to serve its limited interests. Military rulers and secret services are particularly blamed for fomenting religious differences and using religious militancy for internal and foreign policy objectives.*””

2

ened through extended foreign support. In 1980s, Saudi Arabia supported Sunni extremists while Iran supported Shia groups in the backdrop of Islamic revolution and the Iran-Iraq war. Alleged involvement of Iranian diplomats in Pakistan's sectarian politics and their patronage of Shia groups made them prime targets of Sunni extremists. Arabs, on the other hand, mostly supported Sunni extremists through generous funding.

The situation further complicated after the Taliban came to power in Afghanistan. Pakistan's Sunni extremist organizations gained newfound strength from their mutually supportive Taliban connection. Some of the most wanted sectarian terrorists from Pakistan found ready refuge in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. Meanwhile, both Indian intelligence agencies have often been blamed for supporting cross-border terrorism.

The state in Pakistan has often exploited ethnic and sectarian divisions to serve its limited interests. Military rulers and secret services are particularly blamed for fomenting religious differences and using religious militancy for internal and foreign policy objectives. Political governments have also formed alliances of convenience with extremist sectarian organizations. Thus Benazir Bhutto government entered into an alliance with the Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) and even dished out a provincial ministry to an SSP leader.

The state has been providing

immunity to militant organizations involved in Kashmir. In mid-nineties, when the government resolved to move decisively against sectarian groups in Pakistan, it was still supporting Sunni extremists operating in Afghanistan and Kashmir.

In order to control religious violence and sectarian militancy, there is a need to go beyond law and order solution and tackle their root causes - which are numerous and multi-faceted, including social and economic causes. Generally, ethnic and religious strife worsen during dictatorships, whereas democracy is considered a pre-requisite for enduring internal peace. In essence, a well functioning democracy can work as a non-violent form of internal conflict management.

Due to absence of democracy in much of the Muslim world, legitimate channels of dissent are denied. Consequently, people turn to violence as a means of opposition to authoritarian regimes that lack legitimacy. Civil society and political forces must struggle together for democratic transition and establishing democratic culture in Pakistan and other Muslim countries.

Sometimes states manipulate people's religious sentiments to serve narrow political ends, disregarding long-term consequences. In this regard, Pakistan's establishment has hard lessons to learn from its use of religion to serve short-sighted foreign policy objectives.

Recent upsurge of religious violence is directly related to Mus-

lim outrage against perceived injustices perpetrated on fellow-Muslims around the world. A lasting solution to religious violence requires just and expeditious solutions to all these problems. Muslim governments and organizations must vigorously pursue these issues and extend political and humanitarian support to oppressed Muslims. The international community is also obliged to ensure justice to Muslims. Lest this is done, excesses against Muslims will continue to translate into Muslim rage, extremism and religious violence.

Pakistan is a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual state representing a mosaic of cultural, sectarian and religious diversity, where imposing a uniform 'national culture' or religious interpretation can create serious problems. The country's diversity needs to be duly recognized and respected.

There is a need to educate misguided Muslim youth that violence is not a solution to their aspirations, generating an endless and costly cycle of violence to nobody's advantage. Whereas peaceful strategies could bear positive pay-offs and promise better alternatives.

Research centres in conflict resolution can serve as whistleblowers and inform policymakers on conflicts which could turn into serious problems. Our universities and research organizations should undertake research in conflict resolution focusing on religious and sectarian violence.

Proliferation of small arms

increases the risk of violent conflict between dissenting groups. The Afghan war, Darra Adam Khel arms bazaar and free flowing arms in tribal areas has led to small arms proliferation throughout Pakistan. Both supply and demand of weapons need to be effectively checked.

Hollywood thrillers and American soap operas have become increasingly popular with our youth. These genres are increasingly reproduced in Indian and Pakistani entertainment industry. The impact of such movies in promoting societal violence needs to be critically assessed.

Madrassahs should be mainstreamed to include vocational training and some regular subjects in their curricula to enable their graduates to be productively absorbed in the job market. Despite the ban student unions since 1980s, campus violence in Pakistan has gotten worse. There is the need to revive healthy debates, dialogue and leadership-grooming role of public universities and colleges rather than let them degenerate into breeding grounds of violence.

Finally, problem of violence is directly related to state's failure to establish rule of law and create a viable system of justice. The problem cannot be tackled without an efficient, credible and affordable judicial system. The state, civil society and public at large must join hands to counter rising crime and precarious law and order situation in Pakistan, allowing violence to flourish.

“Research centres in conflict resolution can serve as whistleblowers and inform policymakers on conflicts which could turn into serious problems. Our universities and research organizations should undertake research in conflict resolution focusing on religious and sectarian violence.”

From Religion to Politics to Violence

““ *Religious violence in earlier years of Pakistan was largely confined to a few Qadiani-related incidents. Shia-Sunni violence was unheard of, except for some rare tension during Muharram processions.*””

4

The areas now constituting Pakistan have witnessed large-scale violence over the last three centuries. As the Mughal Empire weakened in the seventeenth century, the region attracted marauders and raiders from nearby lands. Fragmentation of Mughal Empire divided the region into a large number of chiefdoms and princely states that were at each other's throats and kept fighting among themselves. The early period of the British and the resistance to the alien rule added a new dimension of violence to an already conflict-ridden society.

However, the British were able to establish their monopoly over violence, thus creating a relative semblance of law and order in areas under imperial control. Simmering beneath the iron fist of the Empire were the ethnic and religious differences of myriad communities that the British colonialists often used to divide and rule the natives, resulting in disastrous consequences for the society.

Thus Pakistan was born amidst a bloodbath of communal violence and the generation that

witnessed the partition has not been able to shake off the bitter memories of that period. The creation of two separate sovereign states did not put an end to political violence on both sides of the divide. In Pakistan, ethnic agitations soon erupted due to the Bengali majority's reaction against exclusive dominance of West Pakistani elite in the newly emergent state. This conflict culminated in a bloody civil war, and ended with traumatic separation of East Pakistan and a humiliating military defeat.

Refusing to learn any lesson, residual Pakistan once again found itself executing military operations in Balochistan in the 1970s, and in Sindh in the 1980s. The eighties also saw Karachi mega-city engulfed in a ruthless and long-drawn cycle of ethnic violence, which still keeps resurfacing.

Religious violence in earlier years of Pakistan was largely confined to a few Qadiani-related incidents. Shia-Sunni violence was unheard of, except for some rare tension during Muharram processions. However, religious violence in the

present form is a new phenomenon that started in the 1980s. The last two decades have witnessed a marked upsurge in religious and sectarian violence in Pakistan. Recent religious violence is targeted at individuals and groups whose beliefs are antithetical to those who perpetrate violence. Presently, extremism in Pakistan is 'bolder and fiercer than ever, its tentacles spread from Waziristan to Karachi.'¹ This violence has reached such proportions that, according to some experts, it can tear down the very fabric of society. It has already left a deep impact on the civil society as well as democratic and economic development of the country.

The organizations involved in religious violence can be placed in broad category of religio-political groups, though only a small number of religio-political groups are directly involved in acts of violence. According to Saeed Shafqat, religio-political groups, like other interest group, are groups based on "association, solidarity and belief". He adds: "In most cases, their membership is open and encourages formal and informal association. They articulate the interests of those who are associated with them and aim to influence the public policy process and the government."²

The broad goal of these groups is the supremacy the

Quran and enforcement of Shariah (Islamic laws) and they present Islam as the panacea of all ills facing Muslim societies in general and Pakistan in particular. To most of these groups, the state and territoriality is superficial and transient for the community of believers. They rather aim at transforming the society according to their own doctrine of Islam.³

Religio-political groups have existed in the sub-continent since the later half of the nineteenth century when revivalist movements started organizing in the form of modern associations. Some of these groups were in the forefront of the struggle against the British rule and some later played valuable role in providing relief services to the people. In the last two decades, religio-political organizations have undergone a metamorphosis that has changed them beyond recognition. Two important aspects of this change are a mushroom growth in their numbers and a changed worldview linked to a rising trend of militancy.

However, not all religious groups support violent means or 'privatized' jihad to forcibly change the society or the world order. Stephen P. Cohen defines radical Islamist groups, i.e. groups that believe in violence as "those that seek major changes in Pakistani political and social order and support vio-

“ Presently, extremism in Pakistan is 'bolder and fiercer than ever, its tentacles spread from Waziristan to Karachi.' This violence has reached such proportions that, according to some experts, it can tear down the very fabric of society.”

lence to achieve those changes."⁴

Religio-political organizations have lately turned themselves into guardians of 'Pakistan Ideology', 'Islamic ideology' and the nuclear bomb and taken upon themselves the mantle of patrons of jihad in Kashmir, Afghanistan and everywhere in the world. Some of these groups have developed a strong hatred against non-Muslim minorities, while others are committed to fighting the "bigger evil" of other Muslim sects. Activities of militant religious groups have caused the death of thousands of people, mostly innocent citizens, destabilized the country and turned it into an international pariah. Pakistani

after the creation of Pakistan, religio-political groups mainly focused on societal change and reforming the morals of the individuals. Some of these groups gained respectability during this period by opposing the Ayub regime and supporting Miss Fatima Jinnah in presidential elections against the former.

During the Bhutto era, religious groups turned into a powerful opposition. Bhutto's own rhetoric of Islamic unity and recourse to Islamic symbolism played no small part in giving people an imagination of an Islamic order. He made an effort to capitalize on religion for his own political objectives but ironically, he became a victim to a movement that started to protest rigging in general elections of 1977, but turned into a nationwide mass movement for enforcement of Shariah (Nizam-e-Mustafa). This Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) movement brought the country to a standstill and paved the way for Gen. Zia ul-Haq's military takeover.

The Islamization process became the most identifiable feature of the Zia regime and increasingly its *raison d'etere*. Zia's Islamization intensified sectarian divisions within Islam in Pakistani.⁵ It was during the Zia era that Pakistan became involved in the Afghan war, which changed the nature of Pakistani politics, particularly religious politics. It was during this period that the religious par-

“ Bhutto's own rhetoric of Islamic unity and recourse to Islamic symbolism played no small part in giving people an imagination of an Islamic order. He made an effort to capitalize on religion for his own political objectives but ironically, he became a victim to a movement... ”

militant have been found involved in religious extremism in Xingiang province of China, Uzbekistan, and elsewhere, often seriously straining Pakistan's diplomatic relations with those countries.

During the first two decades

ties turned to jihad, shifting their emphasis from proselytizing and reformation to jihad and violent activities. Some of the mainstream religious parties either formed their jihad/militant wings or entered into close association with one such group. Both the number and ranks of militant organizations swelled and more and more splinter groups emerged out of existing militant organizations.

Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), Pakistan's most influential religious party, for example, went through a metamorphosis due to its involvement in Afghanistan. Soon after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Zia brought the Jamaat on board his Afghan policy. This helped him depict the Afghan war as jihad against Communist Soviet Union and enhance his own stature as a "Mujahid". The Jamaat benefited from the huge flow of funds from Saudi Arabia and money pouring from other sources. The Afghan war was advantageous for the Jamaat because it promoted its close ties with the army and its agencies. The Jamaat played a crucial role in the Afghan jihad as large sums of money were channeled through it in the early years of the Jihad to the mujahideen. This connection with the military establishment further enabled the Jamaat to press the Zia regime to undertake Islamization in Pakistan, in line with the Jamaat's vision of Islam. The jihad for Zia served as a means

of making use of the Jamaat's and other religious forces' energies and diverting them away from domestic politics.⁶

Many religious groups, which had no tradition of radicalism, turned to violence in 1980s. Many armed splinter groups emerged out of these groups, which were organized in a clandestine framework. The nature of relationship between the splinter groups and the mother organizations remains unclear. It is therefore difficult to discover the extent to which such groups are wholly autonomous or whether, on the other hand, their links to their parent organizations persist.⁷

Involvement in Afghanistan changed the orientation of political parties altogether. Societal reform became subservient to aim of jihad. The image of religious leader changed from a humble looking khaddar-clad gentleman to a tough looking person riding a Pajero and followed by half a dozen Kalashnikov toting bodyguards.

Youth wings of religious parties were militarized following their exposure to guerrilla warfare.

Mohammad Waseem makes a distinction between two generations of Islamists in Pakistan's history in these words:

The first-generation Islamists, who were generally supra-sectarian, aimed at changing the law of the land, struggled to enter the state

“Many religious groups, which had no tradition of radicalism, turned to violence in 1980s. Many armed splinter groups emerged out of these groups, which were organized in a clandestine framework.”

“ The insurgency in Kashmir provided these parties a chance to carve out a new post-Afghan jihadic role for themselves. The new battle cry became: *"Ham Jashn-e-Kabul mana chuke, ab ao chalo Kashmir chalain"* (We have already celebrated victory in Kabul; now let us go to Kashmir). ”

8

through elections, operated through the printed word and dabbled in conceptualizing the West, modernity, science, public morality and statehood. The second-generation Islamists were sectarian, localist and militant. They lacked intellectual tools for understanding the dynamics of the state, the region, and the world at large. They focused on simple polarities such as Islam and the West as good and evil, respectively. They prepared themselves for war against the perceived domination of Christians and Jews over the Muslim World.⁸

According to Saeed Shafqat, the CIA-ISI collaboration in pursuit of the Afghan war had two consequences for religio-political groups. First, it led to factionalism and fragmentation of the religious parties, because religious groups began to jostle for procuring funds and training. This tension produced personality centric factions among the religious groups. In 1980-88, the JUI (Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam) got split into about 11 factions, while the JUP (Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Pakistan) got divided into 5 factions.⁹

The fact that Afghan jihad led to proliferation of small arms in Pakistan played no small part in increasing religious violence in Pakistan. The extremists of the two warring sects, namely, Shias and Sunnis, tried to settle doctrinal differences with Kalashnikovs. As Syed Wali Reza Nasr

puts it, Afghan jihad led to "Islamization of criminal activity and criminalization of segments of Islamism in Pakistan."¹⁰ A link was forged between drug smugglers, jihadi elements and segments of Pakistan's ruling establishments. Later when this relationship weakened, sectarianism terrorists also turned to other criminal activities.

As Soviet Union neared collapse and the Geneva peace process set in, the USA disengaged from Afghanistan abruptly, without bothering to dismantle the jihadi infrastructure it had helped put together over a period of a decade, with resources of billions of dollars. USA, in a paradigm shift, started looking at the holy warriors as terrorists. The mujahideen, too, adopted an autonomous position and became increasingly anti-American.

When Afghan jihad against the Soviets ended in the late eighties, religious parties found it difficult to redefine their role. The insurgency in Kashmir provided these parties a chance to carve out a new post-Afghan jihadic role for themselves. The new battle cry became: *"Ham Jashn-e-Kabul mana chuke, ab ao chalo Kashmir chalain"* (We have already celebrated victory in Kabul; now let us go to Kashmir).

With the help of Hikmatyar's Hizb-e-Islami, JI formed "Hizbul Mujahidin", a militant organization of Kashmiri freedom fighters in which Pakistani young

men were inducted. While some jihadi groups turned their attention from Afghanistan to Kashmir, others remained active on both the fronts, engaging in holy war while serving foreign policy objectives of the Pakistan's secret services. Some jihadi groups even opened a third front - against Shias in Pakistan. These groups operated in a truly amphibian manner, easily moving between different militant identities. Thus, for instance, Harkat-ul-Ansar fighters were known with this name in Kashmir, as Pakistani Taliban in Afghanistan and as Sipah-e-Sahaba militants in Pakistan.

Veterans of the Afghan war and new recruits, mainly belong-

Encouraged by the West and Pakistan during the Afghan war, many of the foreign militants settled in the NWFP during the eighties. Official sources claim that over a period of eleven years, about 20,000 Arabs poured into Pakistan and received military training in the tribal regions bordering Afghanistan to fight against the Soviet-backed Afghan regime. Many of these were Wahabi groups, already engaged in struggle against their own authoritarian, repressive and supposedly 'unIslamic' governments.

When the Pakistan government finally woke up to fact that certain Arab groups had been

“Encouraged by the West and Pakistan during the Afghan war, many of the foreign militants settled in the NWFP during the eighties. Official sources claim that over a period of eleven years, about 20,000 Arabs poured into Pakistan and received military training in the tribal regions bordering Afghanistan”

ing to small towns of Punjab, but not excluding other ethnic groups, joined the Kashmir jihad in large numbers. This seriously undermined the indigenous nature of the Kashmir struggle and international credibility of the Kashmiri uprising.

misusing Pakistani hospitality and that their activism had pushed this country to the brink of being declared a terrorist state by the United States, it decided to flush them out. The crack-down against the militants was initiated during the first tenure

of Nawaz Sharif (1990-1993), resulting in the JI falling out with his government. The same policy was vigorously pursued by the later governments of Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif.¹¹

The involvement of religious parties in jihad and violence and their patronage for armed militias and *lashkars* proved a political disaster for them. The political performance of these parties deteriorated from bad to worse during the eighties and nineties. At one point, most religious parties boycotted the elections to

the National Assembly (17 percent of the total). MMA was also able to form its government in NWFP and a coalition government in Balochistan.¹² Despite this ambiguous success, which many analysts ascribe to the "Mullah- Military Alliance", no single religious party has yet been able to win more than five percent of the total votes.

On the positive note, this limited success has brought religio-political parties back to the mainstream of Pakistan's politics. It could result in these parties concentrating more on politics

“On the positive note, this limited success has brought religio-political parties back to the mainstream of Pakistan's politics. It could result in these parties concentrating more on politics and less on jihad. They could also be more responsive to military's changing geo-political perceptions in this region.”

save themselves from the embarrassment of an ignominious defeat. They seemed to have partially recovered in October 2002 elections, when the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), an alliance of six religious parties pooled 11 percent of votes, which translated into 53 seats in

and less on jihad. They could also be more responsive to military's changing geo-political perceptions in this region. This may, however, have a limited impact on religious militancy as mainstream religious parties have lost influence on jihadi and sectarian organizations.

Seeds of Decay

Pakistan became a hub of sectarian and jihadi violence due to a complex interplay of internal and external factors. Some of these factors have been discussed below.

Madressah Factor

Madressahs are important social institutions in Pakistan that provide free education, boarding and lodging to children from underprivileged background. The number of madressahs in Pakistan increased from around 700 in both East and West Pakistan after independence to 3,874 in the whole country in 1995. In 2002, more than 5,000 madressahs were supposed to be active on the ground in the country.¹³

The Zia regime, in an effort to create a support base for itself, supported establishment of new madressahs and provided monetary support to the old ones. The Zakat money was used in large amounts to further this cause. Due to madressahs' involvement in Afghan jihad, generous donations were made available by Saudi Arabia and some other Arab countries for old and new madressahs. Iran, on the other hand, provided support to Shia madressahs in the country. This sudden influx of money increased madressahs' importance as socio-political institu-

tions and strengthened their ties with vested political interests. The number of students studying at these madressahs also rose phenomenally. While the madressah students were estimated at 100,000 in 1975, their numbers swelled to 570,000 in 1998. In Punjab alone, their numbers were estimated at 220,000.¹⁴

The JUI, during the Afghan jihad, chose to set up thousands of madressahs throughout the country and especially in the NWFP and Balochistan where Afghan refugee students were enrolled and a large number of mujahideen recruited. Students from these institutions later formed the Taliban and established control over most of Afghanistan.

On the demand side, madressahs have sprung up to cater to an ever-growing demand for education by low income groups in rural Pakistan, particularly Punjab. Many parents who cannot afford to send their children to schools, hand them over to the madressahs where they get free food, lodging, clothes and some pocket money. This background of madressah graduates plays a crucial role in the formation of their outlook on life. They tend to grow up with a feeling of aversion and indifference towards the society, particularly the more

““ *While the madressah students were estimated at 100,000 in 1975, their numbers swelled to 570,000 in 1998. In Punjab alone, their numbers were estimated at 220,000.*””

“ Both Benazir and Nawaz Sharif balked over the issue of regulating madressahs for the fear of inviting the wrath of Islamist groups. The Musharraf government issued a Madressah Registration Ordinance in June 2002 to control foreign funding, improve curricula and disallow training in the use of arms.”

well off sections.

Deeni (religious) madressahs confine their teaching to religious education and memorization of the Quran. Syllabi include systematic memorizing of the Holy Quran; *tajweed* (correct pronunciation of the Quranic verses); *tafseer* (interpretation of the Holy scripture); *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence); *Shariah* (Islamic laws); *Ahadis* (life and decisions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) on various issues brought before him by the believers); *mantiq* (logic); *riazi* (mathematics) and *falkiat* (astronomy); *tabligh* (spreading the word of God) and a smattering of modern subjects.¹⁵

After eight years of education, students can take *Dars-i-Nizami* course, which leads to *Saanvi-i-Allamia* (equivalent to Matric), *Darja-i-Mutwasat* (equivalent to Intermediate), *Darja-i-Alia* (equivalent to B.A.), and *Darja-i-Alamia* (equivalent to M.A. Arabic/Islamiyat). Madressahs follow different curricula in accordance with their denomination. In 1979, Zia regime granted recognition to sanads (certificates) of certain madressahs equivalent to university degrees. However, the University Grants Commission (now Higher Education Commission) was not given any authority over the syllabi of these madressahs.

Though only a small number of madressahs are directly involved in religious militancy, they exert an enormous influence

on the state of religious violence in the country. Most of the religious militants come from madressah background and their violent actions are rooted in indoctrination at these madressahs. It is not unusual for these militants to take refuge in madressahs before and after carrying out their violent acts and, at times, they are provided logistic and intelligence support by their madressahs as well.

Some madressahs have particularly come to prominence for involvement of their students in violence. For example, according to a report in the daily *Dawn*, a number of students from the Jamiatul Uloom Islamiya, a madressah in Karachi, are being held at the US detention facility in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Students from this madressah have also been found involved in a number of violent acts in Pakistan and abroad. The founder of Harkat-ul-Mujahideen was a student of this madressah. Another student is Maulana Masood Azhar and so was Maulana Azam Tariq. According to the report, Karachi police had traced the May 7 bombing of a mosque in Karachi to another former student of the madressah, Qari Ghulam Murtaza.¹⁶

Both Benazir and Nawaz Sharif balked over the issue of regulating madressahs for the fear of inviting the wrath of Islamist groups. The Musharraf government issued a Madressah Registration Ordinance in June 2002 to control foreign funding,

improve curricula and disallow training in the use of arms. An umbrella organization of madressahs, Jamiat Ittehad-e-Ulama (JIU), rejected the Ordinance and opted for a general strike. Its predecessor organization had been active against all official attempts at regulation of madressahs from 1995 onward.¹⁷

Foreign Influence

Religious extremism in Pakistan is primarily home-grown. However, it was accentuated and made powerful due to constant support from the foreign countries and charitable non-governmental organizations. In 1980s, Saudi Arabia supported Sunni extremists while Iran supported Shia groups. During the first Gulf War, Sunni extremist groups sought to complicate relations between Tehran and Islamabad and to portray Pakistani Shias (having strong pro-Iran leanings, partly shared by many Sunnis too) as agents of foreign powers.¹⁸ Shia-Sunni violence turned into a proxy war between the two warring sides which virtually extended the Iran-Iraq war into Pakistan. The extremist groups began to do bidding of their respective foreign patrons and a steady flow of resources helped them swell their ranks, improve their organization and enhance their fire-power.

Alleged involvement of Iranian diplomats in Pakistan's sectarian politics and militancy and their patronage of Shia

groups made them prime targets of Sunni extremists. Since 1990, Sunni sectarian groups have assassinated Iranian diplomats and military personnel and attacked Iranian Cultural Centres in Lahore and Multan. Attacks on Iranian targets have been launched in retaliation for sectarian attacks on Sunni targets. These attacks are meant to openly implicate Iran in attacks on Sunni targets.

Arabs, on the other hand, have mostly supported Sunni extremists through generous funding. Proof of Private Arab funding for Sunni extremists came to light when killers of Ashraf Marth, a senior Police officer, were apprehended. Ashraf Marth had taken some bold actions in arresting the killers of Agha Mohammad Ali Rahimi, Iranian Cultural Attaché in Multan in February 1997.

When Taliban came to power in Afghanistan in August 1990, Pakistan's Sunni extremist groups were able to forge strong links with the student militia. Thousands of Pakistani activists crossed the border to fight alongside Taliban. This had a nod from Pakistan's military establishment, which wanted a friendly Taliban regime to stay in power for its own geo-strategic objectives. Taliban militancy has served as a model to many religious outfits and some groups, particularly in Pashtun tribal areas, have emerged emulating the Taliban model. The Tehreek-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi

“ Since 1990, Sunni sectarian groups have assassinated Iranian diplomats and military personnel and attacked Iranian Cultural Centres in Lahore and Multan. Attacks on Iranian targets have been launched in retaliation for sectarian attacks on Sunni targets.”

“ Religious groups were first exploited by the state during the Bangladesh movement for separation from Pakistan. Al-Badr and Al-Shams, the Jamaat-e-Islami organized youth groups in former East Pakistan, were armed by Pakistan army to assist and fight alongside it...”

(TNSM) led by Sufi Muhammad in Malkand region of NWFP is one such organization.

Besides, Indian intelligence agencies are often blamed for supporting violent activities in Pakistan, while Pakistan's secret agencies are accused of supporting terrorism inside India. Though these accusations are difficult to verify, some analysts describe terrorism in the region as the fourth and ongoing war between India and Pakistan.¹⁹

Lastly, in the aftermath of 9/11, the international Islamic networks finally provided a global agenda for the movement in terms of endemic anti-Americanism. The unresolved conflicts around the world involving Muslims, especially in Palestine, sharpened the boundaries of the conflict. Accordingly, state policies, regional instability and non-resolution of conflicts involving Muslims in the region and the world at large have become the leading determinants of the nature and direction of Islamic militant organizations in Pakistan.²⁰

Role of the State

Many states, including Pakistan, tend to exploit ethnic, sectarian and other societal divisions to serve their political interests. Pakistan's military rulers and secret services are particularly blamed for fomenting religious differences and using religious militancy for internal and foreign policy objectives. Military regimes have provided patronage

and institutional linkages to religious-political groups that have reciprocally endowed them with legitimacy.²¹ An unholy nexus has existed between Pakistan's ruling military establishment and religious groups, particularly jihadi organizations and religious parties patronizing them. In the contemporary jargon, this linkage is popularly known as the "Mullah-Military Alliance".

According to Stephen P. Cohen, "Paradoxically, it has almost always been the state, especially the Pakistan army, that has allowed most radical Islamic groups to function on a wider stage - equipping and training them when necessary and providing overall political and strategic guidance for their activities. Arguably, therefore in Pakistan, radical groups have been more of a tool of the state than a serious threat to it."²²

Religious groups were first exploited by the state during the Bangladesh movement for separation from Pakistan. Al-Badr and Al-Shams, the Jamaat-e-Islami organized youth groups in former East Pakistan, were armed by Pakistan army to assist and fight alongside it against Bengali insurgency and the Indian invasion. Both these pro-Pakistan Razakar (volunteer) groups and the pro-Bangladesh Mukti Bahini have been accused of committing atrocities on civilians of the opposing sides. The cadres of the former were mainly drawn from the Urdu speaking Behari community, which later

suffered heavily for this involvement. While JI Pakistan owns up the two organizations and eulogizes their sacrifices, JI Bangladesh seeks to distance itself from these groups.

Democratic governments in Pakistan have also supported militant organizations to gain short term benefits. In 1995, for example, the PPP government was supporting most militant sectarian forces on both sides: the diehard Sunni SSP (Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan) through JUI and the diehard Shia SM (Sipah-e-Mohammad) in order to weaken the TJP (Tehreek-e-Jafaria Pakistan) and maintain a foothold in Shia community.²³ In the period 1993-96, PPP even gave the position of a provincial minister to SSP member Sheikh Hakim Ali. During this period, SSP enjoyed virtual immunity from prosecution.

Successive rulers have also tried to use the state to safeguard the interests of the West and have not hesitated from using religion for the purpose. Under the Zia regime, Pakistan not only became the frontline state against Communism but also invented its own brand of "Islamic jihad". For this particular jihad, the guns kept flowing in from the West, particularly the United State, while the holy warriors flocked to Pakistan from all over the world.²⁴ The state also gave immunity to militant organizations for their involvement in Kashmir.

In mid-nineties, when the

government decided to move decisively against sectarian groups, it was still supporting the Sunni extremists operating in Afghanistan and Kashmir. Ironically, these groups enjoyed strong links with Pakistani sectarian groups. In 1994-96, for example, Pakistani establishment was supporting Harkatul Mujahidin (HUM), earlier called Harkat-ul-Ansar (HUA) in Afghanistan, while activists of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi got training in their camps and also took refuge there after carrying out massacres in Pakistan. It is also reported that the activists of Lashkar who carried out Mominpura massacre and those who tried to blow up the car of Nawaz Sharif had got training at these camps.

In August 2001 and then January 2002, Gen. Musharraf's government banned a number of sectarian and militant organizations that included Lashkar Jhangvi, Sipah-e-Muhammad, Tehreek-e-Jafria Pakistan, Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish Muhammad, and the Tehreek Nafaz-e-Shariat Muhammadi. All organizations, both Shias and Sunnis, were barred from using terms such as "Lashkar", "Jaish" and "Sipah" (i.e. collectivity of soldiers or defenders) with the name of their organisations. However, it soon transpired that the 'bans have had no impact on either the membership or leadership of these groups, nor have they stopped the Pakistan government from using

“ “ Successive rulers have also tried to use the state to safeguard the interests of the West and have not hesitated from using religion for the purpose. Under the Zia regime, Pakistan not only became the frontline state against Communism but also invented its own brand of "Islamic jihad". ” ”

them for its own purpose.²⁵

Despite this ban and his being implicated in a large number of criminal cases, the government allowed Maulana Tariq Azam to contest elections in 2002. After his electoral victory, the SSP was renamed Millat-e-Islamia Pakistan. In October 2002, the government allowed Azam Tariq to contest elections from Jhang, though his party had been banned and he was implicated in sixty serious cases including murder and incitement

groups against various political forces identified with the Left, ethno-linguistic communities, provincial autonomy activists and the liberal intelligentsia.²⁶ It is commonly believed that secret services use sectarian violence to pressurize democratically elected governments. These divisions are also used to divert public attentions from important issues facing the country.

Social and Economic Factors

Social and economic factors

“ It is commonly believed that secret services use sectarian violence to pressurize democratically elected governments. These divisions are also used to divert public attentions from important issues facing the country ”

to violence.

The army-dominated state apparatus in Pakistan has militated against providing social, cultural, economic and political space to the civil society in general and public representatives in particular. On the other hand, since the Zia era, Islamic parties and groups enjoyed a relatively free hand to operate in the educational, cultural and, increasingly, political fields. Even more significantly, the state elite sought to provide a role for Islamist

have also played an important role in spreading violence in general and religious violence in particular. Researchers have noted that a number of distinct kinds of demographic changes can lead to increased risk of internal violence and ethnic conflict.²⁷ These changes include rapid growth in the labour force in slow growing economies, a rapid increase in educated youth aspiring to elite positions when such positions are scarce, unequal population growth rates between different

ethnic groups, urbanization that exceeds employment growth and internal migrations that change the local balance among major ethnic groups.

Urbanization and economic change coupled with social mobility has diminished the importance of older identities based on caste and clan, particularly for those on lower rungs of these hierarchical systems of social stratifications and created a need for new identities. The state, on the other hand, has failed to promote and legitimize the national identity. This has created space for religio-political groups to promote sectarian identities.

Weak Criminal Justice System

A weak and dysfunctional criminal justice system, especially in cases of religious violence, has emboldened the extremists who feel that they can operate with impunity. On the other hand, it has pushed aggrieved groups to take law into their own hands in the name of revenge. This has created a cycle of violence that has spiraled out of control.

Along with other factors, this denial of justice is based on institutional collapse of the state. Law and order institutions are neither equipped nor trained to deal with sophisticated world of terrorist crimes. Judges dealing with such cases have often been terrorized, and even murdered, and the state has manifested a lack of political will in

effectively handling the issue.

Lack of Democratic Governance

Generally, ethnic and religious strife worsen during dictatorships, whereas democracy is considered a pre-requisite for enduring internal peace. In essence a well functioning democracy can work as a non-violent form of internal conflict management.²⁸ Successive military dictators in Pakistan have claimed that internal conflicts were one of the reasons for their taking over the reigns of power. Ironically, ethnic, linguistic and regional problems have invariably worsened during military dictatorships. On the other hand, democracy is generally considered a pre-requisite for enduring internal (and also international) peace. However, Pakistan still

“ Generally, ethnic and religious strife worsen during dictatorships, whereas democracy is considered a pre-requisite for enduring internal peace. In essence a well functioning democracy can work as a non-violent form of internal conflict management. ”

remains in the throes of continuing ethnic and religious violence, and in search of genuine democratic governance.

Jihad at Home

“Iran's drive to 'export' its Islamic revolution combined with growing Sunni resistance to its Shia character produced sectarian conflict. It also radicalized a part of the Shia community and pitched it against the Sunni-majority Pakistani state.”

18

Except for JI, almost all Islamic parties and groups in Pakistan are based on some specific sect, sub-sect or school of thought. As a result, a sectarian party is the prototype of Islamic organization today.²⁹ Religious extremism, particularly sectarianism, has exploded in Pakistan in the last two decades. According to Syed Wali Reza Nasr, a leading scholar, sectarian is a form of religio-political nationalism, and as such, its root causes are directly related to identity mobilization and ethnic conflict.³⁰

Sectarian organizations claim to be fighting on behalf of their respective communities, whom they perceive as communities of 'real Muslims'. They sometimes believe that some of the other sects are heretic or all of their members deserve to be slain. Jihadi organizations, on the other hand, make a wider claim of struggling for the Ummah's interests - rising above sectarian divisions.

Sectarian violence started in the Jhang district of Punjab and the province remains the hub of sectarian violence. However, brutal sectarian violence has been taking place in the other three provinces also. Militant groups commit random acts of violence, targeting worshippers in mosques of rival sects, indis-

criminatingly killing innocent people. Targeted killing of known members of rival sects is also common.

Trajectory of sectarianism in Pakistan can be traced back to Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979. Iranian revolution had a deep impact on the sectarian situation in Pakistan. Iran's drive to 'export' its Islamic revolution combined with growing Sunni resistance to its Shia character produced sectarian conflict. It also radicalized a part of the Shia community and pitched it against the Sunni-majority Pakistani state. The more lasting impact of Iranian revolution in the region has not been promotion of Islamist activism, but deep division between Shias and Sunnis, a sectarian discourse of power, and deepening of social cleavages in the region.³¹

This conflict has been fed on regional struggles for power between Iran and its Arab neighbours. The first Gulf War that started in 1980 and continued for eight years initiated a competition for influence between Iraq and Saudi Arabia on the one hand and Iran on the other. Pakistan, as a result, turned into a turf for the proxy war between warring nations in the Gulf.

Iranian emissaries, fired with a newfound zeal, tried to organize Shia community to

export their revolution to Pakistan. Iranians were also unhappy with Zia ul-Haq, whom they considered an American stooge and whose Sunni model of Islamization conflicted with their radical Shia model. For Saudis, Iran had turned into a military and ideological threat and it started a campaign to contain the Iranian influence. Saudi Arabia worked to harden the Sunni identity in countries sur-

This tension blew into an open conflict when Zia ul-Haq tried to enforce Sunni laws of inheritance and Zakat (obligatory Islamic alms tax). Tahrik-e-Nifaz-e-Fiq-e-Jafria (TNFJ) was formed in 1979 to demand enforcement of separate Shia fiqh (jurisprudence) for the Shias in Pakistan. In 1980, TNFJ started a campaign against compulsory collection of Zakat by the government and in July that

“ For Saudis, Iran had turned into a military and ideological threat and it started a campaign to contain the Iranian influence. Saudi Arabia worked to harden the Sunni identity in countries surrounding Iran. ”

rounding Iran. It financed madressahs and supported militant Sunni organizations. The Afghan war gave Saudi Arabia a unique opportunity to influence sectarian organizations in Pakistan.

Though Zia ul-Haq claimed that his regime was pursuing a universal Islamic vision, the Shias and other smaller sects perceived his Islamization as a Sunni interpretation of theology and law. This in fact created a siege mentality among Shias who wanted to push forward their own interpretation.³²

year Shia demonstrators from all over the country besieged the Civil Secretariat in Islamabad for two consecutive days. Zia ul-Haq government caved in under pressure by conceding to exempt Shias from mandatory Zakat deduction by the state. This incident was resented by Sunni scholars and the Sunni population backing Zia's initiative.

Seven years later, in 1988, TNFJ was turned into a political party under the leadership of Arif Hussain al Hussaini. In August, the same year, Hussaini

“ SSP activists retaliated by setting ablaze the Iranian Cultural Centre in Lahore on January 19, and staging a massacre at the Iranian Cultural Centre in Multan the following month, murdering seven employees of the Centre.”

was assassinated.

The increasingly confrontational and aggressive posture of TNFJ, however, led to a Sunni backlash through the formation of Anjuman-i-Sipah Sahaba (ASS) in 1985 by Deobandi ulema and former members of JUI. The organization was later renamed Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), which means Soldiers of the Prophet's Companions.³³

Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), the Sunni sectarian organization, was formed in Punjab's city of Jhang. It could soon assert its influence in the adjoining areas. A number of reasons have been cited for its sudden prominence. It is argued that SSP marked the resurgence of Sunni middle classes in the urban centre of Jhang against the political hold of Shia landed elite that has dominated politics of the area for a long time.³⁴ Seen in this light, sectarianism emerged as a tool to contest the authority of the traditional ruling elite.

The party has faced a major setback due to assassination of its leaders. SSP's founder Haq Nawaz Jhangvi was murdered in February 1990. His assassination sparked a campaign of violence that continued till December that year and leading to assassination of Sadiq Ganji, head of the Iranian Culture Centre in Lahore. Jhangvi's successor, Israr ul-Haq Qasmi was killed in 1991. Zia-ur Rehman Farooqi was killed in 1997 and the last notable leader of the group, Maulana Azam

Tariq, also a member of the National Assembly, was assassinated in October 2003.

The two sectarian organizations gave birth to a number of splinter groups. Sipah-e-Mohammad emerged as the militant offshoot of the organization. In 1994, a group of younger Shia militants broke away from the mainstream TNFJ and formed the Sipah-i-Muhammed Pakistan (SMP), or Soldiers of Muhammed. The most prominent act of SMP's terrorism was the January 1997 bombing of the Lahore High Court that killed the SSP leader, Maulana Zia-ur-Rehman, besides a journalist, and twenty-two police constables. SSP activists retaliated by setting ablaze the Iranian Cultural Centre in Lahore on January 19, and staging a massacre at the Iranian Cultural Centre in Multan the following month, murdering seven employees of the Centre.

Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LJ) was formed in 1990 by Riaz Basra, who came to prominence by killing Iranian diplomat Sadiq Ganji, controversial Director General of the Iranian Cultural Centre in Lahore. Basra escaped from a summary trial court in 1994 and was later sentenced to death for murder of the diplomat. Many consider LJ a cover for SSP. It is argued that since the SSP leaders wanted to transform the organization into a political party, they wanted a different front to take responsibility for violence. The organization con-

sists of small cells of five to eight who normally operate independently without any central command. This makes it virtually impossible for the authorities to penetrate into the organization. Almost all activists of the LJ are veterans of the Afghan war. A decentralized and compartmentalized group, it had several dozen dedicated assassins based in Afghanistan till 2001.

LJ has a strong anti-Iran agenda and has claimed murder of Iranian diplomats and military cadets. It has also carried out massacres at Shia mosques and claimed responsibility for murdering senior Shia police officers, government officials, lawyers, doctors and clergymen.

observers feel that these factions, particularly Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Sipah-e-Mohammad Pakistan, were created as militant wings of these organizations because SSP and TJP wanted to follow a more political agenda.

SSP and TJP turned themselves into mainstream parties and became part of the electoral alliances. In 1990, TJP contested elections for the first time, but could not win a single seat of the National or Provincial Assembly. In terms of its electoral strength, SSP has not been able to increase its influence beyond the city of Jhang where it has won both provincial and national elections.

“ Till 1995, sectarian extremists targeted community leaders and activists of the opposite sects. Later, they started targeting judges, police officers and senior government officials to intimidate the state machinery. Since 1997, sectarian extremists have committed massacres of common citizens ”

The underlying factors behind emergence of these groups remain a mystery. Some of groups broke away from their parent organizations because they felt that the organizations were not radical enough, while others were expelled from the parent organizations. Some

The violent activities of the religious extremists have progressively escalated beyond control. Till 1995, sectarian extremists targeted community leaders and activists of the opposite sects. Later, they started targeting judges, police officers and senior government officials to

intimidate the state machinery. Since 1997, sectarian extremists have committed massacres of common citizens of the opposite sect, mainly inside mosques and imambargahs and during religious rituals and processions.

Situation of sectarian terrorism worsened after Pakistan's support of the Taliban movement in Afghanistan. Pakistan supported the Taliban to further its strategic and foreign policy interests. The Pakistani establishment hoped that with the

istan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif accused the Taliban of involvement in sectarian violence inside Pakistan. With the fall of the Taliban, Afghan connection of Pakistan's sectarian terrorism came to an abrupt end and a large number of sectarian terrorists were apprehended or killed during or after escape into Pakistan.

The Shia-Sunni violence has mostly become a contest of body counts among rival sectarian death squads, claiming 1,287

“ The Shia-Sunni violence has mostly become a contest of body counts among rival sectarian death squads, claiming 1,287 victims between 1990 and 2002. In the year 2003 alone, at least 76 people were killed during sectarian violence, mostly carried out by unidentified gunmen who were believed to belong to organized sectarian groups. ”

help of the Taliban, it would be able to maintain its influence over Afghanistan. This situation took an ironic turn very soon. While Pakistan's influence on the student militia remained limited, the Taliban started exerting influence on Pakistan's madrasahs and religious movements. It provided sanctuary to some of Pakistan's worst sectarian terrorists, including Riaz Basra, wanted for the murder of an Iranian diplomat. In 1999 Pak-

victims between 1990 and 2002.³⁵ In the year 2003 alone, at least 76 people were killed during sectarian violence, mostly carried out by unidentified gunmen who were believed to belong to organized sectarian groups.³⁶

Apart from religious violence, sectarian organizations have also been involved in other crimes including extortion, robberies and kidnappings. A number of reports by Special Branch

of the Punjab government point to the involvement of religious activists in unlawful activities and also the fact that criminals wanted by the police often took shelter as workers of religious organizations.³⁷

The government has mostly responded by coming up with more and more "innovative measures" that failed one after the other. During the second tenure of Nawaz Sharif, the government seriously tried to combat sectarian menace through stringent laws, but the exercise got badly misdirected.

In 1997, Nawaz Sharif government adopted the Anti-Terrorism Act, aimed mainly at sectarian problem at that time. The law gave the Police sweeping powers and introduced speedy trials. This Act, however, attracted strong criticism from human rights groups and was censured by the Supreme Court of Pakistan. In September that year, a number of courts were set up under the law to provide speedy trial in terrorism related cases. After a year, failure of these Anti-Terrorist Courts (ATCs) became apparent since these were able to give verdict on only a fraction of cases sent to them.

In November 1998, Nawaz government came up with another remarkable law, the Pakistan Armed Forces (Acting in Aid of Civil Power) Ordinance, 1998. The law, which was applicable only to Sindh province, extended broad judicial powers

to the military. The Ordinance granted military officers at the rank of Brigadier and above the right to convene as many courts as may be deemed necessary to try offenders. Such courts could try civilians. Appeals against conviction by such courts lied only with such appellate tribunals as the military authorities deemed necessary to establish. Moreover, cases pending before other courts (regular courts and ATCs) could be transferred to such newly established military courts. The courts had jurisdiction to award sentences, including death penalty, for specified crimes. The Ordinance also created a "new crime" of "civil commotion," punishable with a penalty of up to seven years of rigorous imprisonment.³⁸

According to Charles H. Kennedy, a leading analyst on South Asia:

*If the purposes of establishing an anti-terrorism regime are to lessen terrorism, punish terrorists, improve the efficiency of the legal system, and dispense speedy justice, Pakistan's anti-terrorism regime has been a complete failure. Conversely, if the purposes of an anti-terrorism regime are to improve one's position relative to one's domestic political opponents, or to improve public relations, or to rehabilitate one's standing with the international community, then Pakistan's anti-terrorism regime has generally been a success.*³⁹

Allah's Army

Case Study

Nearly 100,000 people listened in awed silence as a 60-year-old shopkeeper from Bahawalpur addressed the gathering, describing how both his sons, Abu Sufian and Abu Yasir, gave up their lives fighting in Indian-held Kashmir. "When my first son was martyred in Kashmir, I went to my second and told him it was his turn to sacrifice his life", the old man, now called Abu Shahidain, told a stunned audience. "I too have received training and want to join my sons as soon as possible." By this time, many were moved to tears, and sobbing could be heard from within the crowd.

This remarkable scene was played out at the annual meeting of the Markaz Dawa wal Irshad (centre for preaching), a religious organisation based in the town of Muridke, some 30 miles North of Lahore. Its activities are focused in two areas, education and jihad (holy war).

The Dawa wal Irshad works to propagate an austere, "purified" version of Islam, and has set up schools across the country for this purpose. Meanwhile, its militant wing, the Lashkar-e-Taiba (army of the pure), is an organisation of highly trained militants who are willing to go to war wherever and whenever the Amir (leader) orders.

A unique event by any standards, the Muridke gathering, held amid tight garrison-like security, brings together young militants currently fighting inside Indian-occupied Kashmir and those who wish to do so. Also attending the meeting in the thousands are the relatives of Lashkar soldiers, as well as the families of men who have died in Kashmir. This year, nearly

100,000 people attended the three-day event, a manifestation of Lashkar's increasing popularity and power.

The venue itself is a symbol of the Lashkar's growing strength, as well as that of its parent organisation. At its Muridke headquarters, the Markaz is housed in a complex of buildings sprawled across more than 190 acres of land. The complex includes a huge Jamia mosque, garment factory, iron works factory, wood works factory, stable for horses and a swimming pool. Also within the compound, a university is under construction, along with residential colonies.

The Markaz was founded in 1987 by three university teachers, Zafar Iqbal and Hafiz Mohammad Saeed from the University of Engineering and Technology (UET) in Lahore and Abdullah Azam of the International Islamic University. Abdullah Azam was killed in a bomb blast in Peshawar in 1989, but both Zafar Iqbal and Hafiz Mohammad Saeed still teach at the UET and continue to lead the organisation.

The Markaz, its two surviving founders claims, was set up to combine what they believe to be the two primary missions of Islam—preaching and jihad. "Many Muslim organisations are preaching and work on the missionary level inside and outside Pakistan, but they have given up the path of jihad altogether," says Hafiz Mohammad Saeed. "The need for jihad has always existed," the Amir insists, "and present conditions demand it more than ever."

"Jihad is a path which brings success to those engaged in it," adds Professor Zafar Iqbal, co-

founder of the Dawa wal Irshad. "It is because of jihad that we have achieved the kind of success you witness here."

While the Dawa wal Irshad is involved in various areas, including religious education and social welfare, it is mainly through its militant wing that the organisation is known throughout the country. The Lashkar-e-Taiba provides military training to its members and prepares them to wage Jihad. Although the Lashkar was initially involved in Afghanistan as well, its activities are now restricted to Indian-held Kashmir. Today, it is Pakistan's largest so-called "jihadi" organisation.

There are many other jihadi groups operating inside occupied Kashmir, but their members are mainly local men, assisted by fighters from other countries, such as Pakistan and Afghanistan. "Eighty percent of Mujahideen (holy warriors) in other jihadi groups operating in Kashmir come from that area," an office bearer of the Lashkar confirms. "But the case with the Lashkar is exactly the opposite," he adds, explaining that 80 per cent of the Lashkar soldiers belong to Pakistan.

The Lashkar prefers not to reveal the exact number of men it has currently deployed in Kashmir. "The Amir decides how many mujahideen should be sent to the valley," is all that one office-bearer will reveal. "The decision depends on the number of deaths that have taken place. It also depends on the requirement and capacity of the organisation inside Kashmir to absorb new fighters. "What is known, however, is that the Lashkar recruits and trains many more men than it actually requires to fight in Kashmir at any given time.

Compared to the other similar organisations, the Lashkar-e-Taiba has proved to be a resounding success. Since its inception, it has managed to

attract thousands of committed young men to its fold. The driving force behind its massive success in recruitment is deceptively simple: using its impressive organisational network, which includes schools, social service groups and religious publications, to stir up outrage against the injustices meted to Kashmiri Muslims, the Dawa wal Irshad creates a passion for jihad.

Those who join the Lashkar undergo one of two kinds of military training. The first is 21-day standard course, called the Daura-e-Aama. A more intensive, three-month special programme called the Daura-e-Khasa, is geared towards guerrilla warfare and teaches the use of small arms, survival and ambush techniques. "These courses change your life for ever," says Abu Haidar, a young man who has just completed his training. "When you go you are one man and when you return you are quite another."

Indeed, three months rigorous commando training, conducted in isolated areas of Kashmir, brings about a metamorphosis in the recruit. The newly enlisted soldier discards the old name and begins to use a kuniat, or arabic-style nickname. These names are reminiscent of the kuniats of the companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and later Islamic heroes. It is with this name that the recruit will be known within the organisation and remembered after his death in occupied Kashmir.

After joining the Lashkar, the recruit also undergoes a physical transformation. He will no longer shave or even trim his beard, and will allow his hair to grow long. In a style that has long been typical of ultra-religious men in this society, the Lashkar's members also wear their shalwars above their ankles.

After they are trained, not all recruits are sent directly to fight in Kashmir. Some work for the organisation in various capacities, running local

offices and performing assorted duties, including recruiting and fundraising. Interestingly, few of the Lashkar's recruits come from a madressah or religious school background. Most are educated at regular schools and some have even attended college or university. For instance, one Lashkar fighter, Azhar Sawar, now called Abu Zar Basri, had completed his college education and was looking for work. He decided to join the Lashkar-e-Taiba after attending a few of their meetings. He received military training and was sent to occupied Kashmir, where he was killed.

But while Abu Zar Basri was educated and unemployed, many of his comrades in Lashkar are gainfully employed but choose to give up their careers. Abu Shahid, a 21-year-old from Vehari, joined the Lashkar after attending a public meeting where Major Must Gul, a Hizbul Mujahideen militant fighting in Kashmir, addressed the crowd. Before joining the Lashkar, Abu Shahid ran a music centre, which he burnt to ground soon after entering the organisation. He and his younger brother have both received military training, while their eldest brother is ready to follow suit. In their case, the passion for jihad was fuelled by listening to Mast Gul, a charismatic figure hailed by many as a hero. There are, however, no direct links between the Lashkar and the Jamaat or other religious parties.

Similarly, a 34-year-old Manzoor Ahmad, now called Abu Hamza, was a mechanical draftsman in Hafizabad district before he quit his job to join the Lashkar. He fought in occupied Kashmir for one year after completing his training in August 1996. During this time, his group was involved in more than 10 separate encounters with the Indian army, which resulted in the death of 10 of his comrades. But Abu Hamza remains undeterred. "I will keep going back to Kashmir," he says, "until I too embrace shahadat (martyr-

dom)."

Apart from young men such as these who abandon their lives in the mainstream to join the jihad, the Lashkar also takes in those who have been rejected by the society. The Lashkar-e-Taiba is proud of the men who have given up a life of crime or quit an addiction to become part of the organisation.

Abu Abdullah, now in charge of prisoners' welfare at the Markaz, was in prison for murder when he decided to turn over a new leaf and join the Lashkar. Now on parole, Abdullah is a dedicated Lashkar worker. Similarly, Abu Shahid Mohammad Tariq, a heroin addict from the low income Shadbagh locality of Lahore, cleaned up his act to enlist in the Lashkar. Married, with three children, Tariq was recently killed in Kashmir.

As a matter of policy, the Lashkar allows only those men to fight in Kashmir whose parents give them permission to do so. Recruits are also required to convince their families about the importance of their mission. It is perhaps for this reason that the death of a son in Kashmir is not usually met with sorrow. Such news is brought to the family by a group of Lashkar leaders who congratulate the family on the 'martyrdom' of their son. In nearly every case, rather than mourning, the family celebrates the occasion by serving guests with food and receiving greetings.

"I am proud of my son," says Mohammad Sarwar, father of Azhar Sarwar, a former bank manager who was killed fighting in Kashmir. "I am happy that he did not die in this dirty society where people are killed in cases of karo kari, or die in accidents or incidents of terrorism."

Hafiz Abdul Ghafoor, an elderly man from Lahore whose two sons were killed in Kashmir, goes one step further. "I wish I could become young once again," he says, "so that I could join my sons who are fighting with the Lashkar-e-

Taiba."

Most of those who die in Kashmir are buried there, and Kashmiris are known to carry out the necessary rites with the utmost respect and full honours. When a Lashkar member is killed in combat, the Border Security Force or the Indian army hands over the body of the so called *mehman shaheed* (the guest martyr) to the area police station from where the local people take custody of the deceased. After a usually well attended *namaz-e-janaza* (funeral prayer), the militant is buried in a separate graveyard set aside for 'martyrs'. Such graveyards are located outside almost every village in occupied Kashmir, and are said to be the final resting place of no less than 350 members of Lashkar-e-Taiba.

In Pakistan, meanwhile, the last rites of a Lashkar fighter are held in the absence of his body. For those devoted to the cause, the *ghaibana namaaz-e-janaza* (funeral prayer in absentia) becomes another occasion to hammer home the necessity of jihad. Indeed, every such funeral produces new recruits to the Lashkar. In many cases, relatives of the 'martyr' have been known to present the Lashkar with another young man from the family. In fact, it is not uncommon to find all the able bodied men of a single family joining the Lashkar. For instance, four of Abu Haider's six brothers have already received Lashkar training and the remaining two are expected to join as soon as they are older.

As a matter of policy, the Lashkar soldiers prefer death to capture. This is apparently because those taken alive are routinely tortured by the Indian authorities. "Only those of our men are captured who faint during the fight," says Khalid Walid, an office-bearer of the Lashkar.

"Otherwise, we fight until death and do not surrender at any cost." Seventeen members of the Lashkar-e-Taiba are in Indian prisoners at the moment.

In the field of combat, however, it is said that Lashkar fighters give as good as they get. Since it is not possible to bring their captives back to Pakistan, and the Indian government does not bargain for the return of hostages, all Indian prisoners are killed in occupied valley. The Lashkar soldier will usually execute an Indian soldier by slitting his throat. However, beheading and disemboweling are also common tactics, employed mostly for psychological reasons. In at least one case, a Lashkar fighter, Abu Haibat, brought the head of an Indian soldier back with him to Pakistan. "The Quran orders us to hit them on every joint," says Abdur Rehman al Dakhil, commander of the Lashkar in occupied Kashmir. "We are instructed to treat the enemy the way they treat us."

Al Dakhil claims that the Lashkar's soldiers are highly organised and remain in contact with one another inside occupied Kashmir. He does not agree with the common argument that fighters from outside the region are complicating the situation in Kashmir and causing problems for the local population. "Nothing could be further from truth," he says. "The Kashmiris consider the *mehman mujahideen* (guest fighters) to be angels that bring God's blessing", he explains. "Their presence gives moral support to the Kashmiris and their woes are mitigated."

Will the 'guest fighters' force India to resolve the Kashmir problem once and for all? "We should not build too many hopes too soon," warns Hafiz Mohammad Saeed, Amir of the Lashkar-e-Taiba. "It is a long, long battle."

Source: Zaigham Khan, "Allah's Army", *Herald* (monthly), Karachi, January 1998.

Life after 9/11

“ Alongside these old hands at jihad, the last three years have seen a new breed of Pakistani militants emerge from nowhere. Young and upwardly mobile men, educated at some of the best universities in Pakistan and the West, have turned to Islamic militancy and terrorism due to their outrage against what they perceive as American-backed injustices against Muslims.”

9/11 changed relationship between Pakistan's ruling establishment and the Taliban as well as other radical Islamist groups operating from Afghanistan. Under pressure from the United States, Pakistan government opted to change its Afghan policy within hours of attack on the World Trade Centre. After supporting Taliban for many years, even at the cost of Pakistan's internal security, Pakistan joined America's 'war on terror' that started with an attack on Afghanistan. This was seen as a sell out by those supporting Pakistan's earlier Afghan policy, and also by a large number of religiously inclined people and ethnic Pashtuns who had developed strong affinity towards the Taliban.

Pakistan's 'unstinted' support to the American war on terror also turned militants trained by ISI to fight in Kashmir into the sworn enemies of the Musharraf government overnight. Pakistan had extended support to the United States against the Taliban in Afghanistan believing that it will be able to continue its support for jihadi organizations in Kashmir. This, however, was not to be the case. The US forced Pakistan to ban the militant orga-

nization involved in Kashmir and radically curtail its support for freedom struggle in Kashmir. This scenario was foreseen neither by establishment nor by jihadi organizations. The result has been the jihadis' disaffection with the government and a souring of relationship between the establishment and the jihadis. Frustrated by Musharraf domestic and foreign policy actions, thousands of Islamic militants trained by ISI to fight in Kashmir are ready recruits of new religious militancy targeted against American interests as well as the staunchly pro-American Musharraf government.

Alongside these old hands at jihad, the last three years have seen a new breed of Pakistani militants emerge from nowhere. Young and upwardly mobile men, educated at some of the best universities in Pakistan and the West, have turned to Islamic militancy and terrorism due to their outrage against what they perceive as American-backed injustices against Muslims. Dozens of new splinter groups have emerged which have made it impossible for the security forces to keep a track of their activities. Some of them are involved in sectarianism, while

others target Western assets. Some security experts feel that a Pakistani version of Al Qaeda has also come into existence that may be behind some of these attacks.⁴⁰

What is even more alarming is the fact that militants appear to have penetrated into the ranks of army, police and intelligence agencies. Several military personnel were arrested in the wake of suicide attack on General Parvez Musharraf. At least three policemen have acted as suicide bombers in attacks on Shiite mosques in Karachi and Quetta.⁴¹

The targets and tactics of

the places of worship including churches, mosques and imam-bargarhs and killed large number of people including some noted individuals. The terrorists have also targeted some of the most powerful people in the country. General Parvez Musharraf was targeted twice near the Army House in the heart of Rawalpindi Cantonment and the Corps Commander Karachi was attacked in June 2004.

Some of the government's actions against the militants have proved extremely controversial and may have serious future consequences. The ongoing Wana

“Suicide bombing, which was unheard of in this part of the world, has become a hallmark of the religious militants. This also shows linkages of the new breed of religious militants with the international networks of terrorism.”

militants have also changed radically. Suicide bombing, which was unheard of in this part of the world, has become a hallmark of the religious militants. This also shows linkages of the new breed of religious militants with the international networks of terrorism. Going by international experience, suicide bombing is extremely hard to contain.

During the last two years, incidents of sectarian violence have once again risen dramatically. Religious militants have carried out devastating attacks at

Operation in Waziristan is one such example. Pakistan army started its action in Waziristan in March this year in search of Osama bin Laden and Ayman al Zawahiri. The troops are facing stiff resistance from militants and their tribal supporters in the Waziristan Tribal Agency and they have so far failed to capture any high value Qaida targets.

In one of the most unpopular military actions in the nation's history, more than 30,000 Pakistani troops are engaged within their own border. This strength is

much bigger than US presence in the entire Afghanistan. Both Pakistan Air Force and the army's aviation power are being employed in support of the ground operation. According to official figures, Pakistan Army and the Frontier Corps have lost 171 troops, killed 246 militants included 100 foreigners and arrested 579 militants in 35 military operations launched since March 2004.⁴²

The military operation, synchronized with the ongoing American operation across the border, has resulted in many civilian casualties, large-scale civilian population's displacement, extensive damage and destruction of civilian property and crippling effect on the local economy through repeated economic blockades and the practice of "collective punishment" under the archaic colonial law called Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR). It is pertinent to note here

that collective punishments are strictly prohibited under contemporary humanitarian law. Meanwhile, the geographic scope of this 'internal war' is extending into Mehsud tribal areas, with potential to spread further along Pakistan's Western borders. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been repeatedly requesting the Government of Pakistan for access to these "troubled areas", which could further 'internationalize' the ongoing situation.⁴³

Though the government has made tall claims of successes against terrorism, the incidents are terrorism seem to be on the rise. Religious militancy and terrorism are not a short-term problem related to law and order, but a serious issue involving social, political, legal and governance related measures. The state and the civil society need to do a lot more if this problem is to be tackled effectively.

“ Religious militancy and terrorism are not a short-term problem related to law and order, but a serious issue involving social, political, legal and governance related measures. The state and the civil society need to do a lot more if this problem is to be tackled effectively.”

Conclusions and Recommendations

■ Except for a few countries, the Muslim world is largely ruled by dictatorships that lack legitimacy. These regimes are mostly sustained through denial of universally recognized rights, including legitimate channels of popular dissent and political change, besides state oppression. In the circumstances, people often turn to violence as the only available means of opposing authoritarianism and agitating their differences. Here, democracy can play a critical role in containing conflict and coping with societal violence. There is a dire need to promote democratic culture of dialogue and debate instead of bullets and bloodshed through much of the Muslim world including Pakistan. The civil society and political forces must struggle together for such democratic transition.

■ State manipulation of religion for political ends, both internal and external, is not an uncommon phenomenon through history and across civilizations. Exploitation of religious divisions or sentiments is highly tempting and a very effective tool for public mobilization and generation of mass hysteria. Some of the worst crimes against humanity have been committed through such manipulation. The establishment in Pakistan has

had its own share of using people's religious sentiments to achieve political ends, especially in national security and foreign policy realms. Pakistan's post-9/11 policy collapse, its subsequent policy U-turn, and the emergent security challenges in the wake of its US-led war against terror, bring home many bitter lessons in terms of such manipulative policies over the past many years. It is therefore important not to repeat the mistake of exploiting religion for short-sighted policy goals.

■ Pakistan is not just a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual state but represents a significant mosaic of cultural, sectarian and religious diversity. Efforts to impose a uniform 'national culture' or to promote interpretation of one particular sect or religious tradition over the others can create serious problems, including social conflict and fueling of violence. This diversity needs to be adequately recognized and respected.

■ Recent upsurge of religious violence is directly related to Muslim outrage against perceived injustices being perpetrated on fellow-Muslims all over the world. In this age of information and globalization, educated Muslim youth are increasingly sensitive to the

“ Here, democracy can play a critical role in containing conflict and coping with societal violence. There is a dire need to promote democratic culture of dialogue and debate instead of bullets and bloodshed through much of the Muslim world including Pakistan. ”

“ The international community has a major obligation to provide long overdue justice to Muslims, as also to other segments of the oppressed humanity. Lest these problems are addressed earnestly and forthwith, excesses against Muslims will continue to translate into Muslim rage, extremism and religious violence.”

plight of Muslims around the world. A long-term and lasting eradication of religious violence requires that just and expeditious solutions must be found to all these problems. Muslim governments and organizations need to take up these issues more vigorously and extend effective moral, legal, political and humanitarian support to Muslims under oppression. The international community has a major obligation to provide long overdue justice to Muslims, as also to other segments of the oppressed humanity. Lest these problems are addressed earnestly and forthwith, excesses against Muslims will continue to translate into Muslim rage, extremism and religious violence.

■ There is a need to educate misguided Muslim youth that violence is not a solution to their aspirations or demands. It often leads to an endless and very costly cycle of violence to nobody's advantage. Whereas peaceful strategies could bear positive pay-offs and promise better alternative to violent means.

■ Conflict resolution has emerged as an interdisciplinary field of study that seeks to train academics, activists and practitioners in resolving different types of conflicts, including religious and sectarian violence. Research centres in the field serve as whistle-blowers and inform policymakers on conflicts having the potential to aggravate into serious problems. However, no such specialized centres, university departments, or

even research programmes presently exist in Pakistan. Our universities and social science research organizations should be encouraged and supported to undertake research in conflict resolution focusing on religious and sectarian violence, that has taken such a heavy toll so far. (To see Ulster University's programme on the web and add one sentence)

■ Government's prolonged neglect of social sector has led to the exclusion of a large section of the population from education and other basic amenities. The resulting poverty, deprivation and insecurity feed all forms of social instability and violence. Ensuring free and compulsory universal education up to at least primary level, together with extra facilities and incentives to children from poor households and various income-generation/ employment creation measures, will help in arresting the spiral of violence in Pakistan.

■ Proliferation of small arms increases the risk of violent conflict between dissenting groups. The Afghan war resulted in large-scale proliferation of weapons in the Pakistani society. Our situation is rather unique in so far as Darra Adam Khel, between Peshawar and Kohat, remains a thriving free market for all kinds of small and even medium arms, produced by the local cottage industry since ages. Moreover, the tribal areas traditionally enjoy a free flow and acquisition of arms. Despite

numerous check posts, many of these arms readily find their way into settled areas and beyond to every part of Pakistan. Both supply and demand of weapons need to be curtailed to prevent such free flowing situation.

■ Violence and crime in movies is a recognized source of real world crime and violence. Hollywood thrillers and American soap operas have become increasingly popular with our youth. Though their effects on Pakistani society are not known, research exists in the United States that establishes linkages between increasing trend of violence and these movies in the American society. Unfortunately, there is a trend of reproducing these genres in Indian and Pakistani entertainment industry. The impact of such movies on Pakistani youth remains understudied and need to be critically evaluated.

■ Reform of madrassah education is important to mainstream madrassah graduates rather than relegating them to peripheries of society. Madrassahs should be encouraged and helped to include vocational training and some regular subjects in their curricula to enable their graduates to seek productive employment in the job market. A thorough analysis of their curricula is also required to prevent spread of hatred against other sects, religions and societies.

■ Religious scholars of different orientations need to work collec-

tively to help diffuse religious hate and violence and promote the underlying message of peace, tolerance and love for humanity espoused by Islam.

■ Mal-administration and partisan policies in public universities and even colleges degenerate into student violence, assuming both ethnic and religious colour. While focusing on madrassahs, one must not overlook the long and bloody history of campus violence in Pakistan. Given the frequent use of firearms in which members of rival factions sometimes get killed, our regular educational institutions also serve as breeding grounds of violence in the country. Despite the ban since 1980s on student unions, campus violence over the years has gotten more lethal and pervasive. It is time to reassess how healthy debates and dialogue and leadership-grooming role of these institutions can be rehabilitated.

■ Last, but not the least, problem of violence is directly related to state's failure to establish rule of law in the land and create a viable system of justice. The problem cannot be tackled as long as people do not have an efficient, credible and affordable judicial system in the country. All institutions of the state, civil society and public at large must join hands to counter the alarmingly high rise in crime in all major cities and precarious law and order situation throughout Pakistan, allowing every kind of violence to flourish.

“...problem of violence is directly related to state's failure to establish rule of law in the land and create a viable system of justice. The problem of violence cannot be tackled as long as people do not have an efficient, credible and affordable judicial system in the country.”

Notes and References

¹Ayaz Amir, *Dawn*, June 18, 2004.

²Saeed Shafqat, "From Official Islam to Islamism: The Rise of Dawat-ul-Irshad and Lashkar-e-Taiba" in Christopher Jafferlot (Editor), *Pakistan, in Pakistan: Nationalism without a Nation?*, Manohar Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 2002. p. 132.

³Ibid.

⁴Stephen P. Cohen, "The Jihadist Threat to Pakistan", *The Washington Quarterly*, Summer 2003. p. 14.

⁵Ian Talbot, *Pakistan: a Modern History*, Vanguard Books (Pvt) Ltd., 1999. p. 270.

⁶Syed Wali Reza Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution*, University of California Press, California, 1994. p. 195.

⁷Mariam Abou Zahab and Oliver Roy, *Islamic Networks: The Pakistan-Afghan Connection*, C. Hurst & Co, 1993. p. 21.

⁸Mohammad Waseem, "Origins and Growth Patterns of Islamic Organizations" in Satu P. Limaye, Mohan Malik and Robert G. Wirsing (Editors), *Pakistan in Religious Radicalism and Security in South Asia*, The Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies, 2004. http://www.apcss.org/Research/research_publications.html

⁹Saeed Shafqat, "From Official Islam to Islamism: The Rise of Dawat-ul-Irshad and Lashkar-e-Taiba". p. 132.

¹⁰Syed Wali Reza Nasr, "Islam the State and the Rise of Sectarian Militancy" in Christopher Jafferlot (Ed), *Pakistan: Nationalism without a Nation?* p. 95.

¹¹*Herald* (monthly), Karachi, December 1995.

¹²Stephen P. Cohen, "The Jihadist Threat to Pakistan", *The Washington Quarterly*, Summer 2003. p. 9.

¹³Mohammad Waseem, "Origins and Growth Patterns of Islamic Organizations".

¹⁴*Annual Report, Human Rights Commission of Pakistan 1997*, Lahore: HRCP, 1998. p. 222.

¹⁵Kamal Mutinuddin, *The Taliban Phenomenon: Afghanistan 1994-1997*, Oxford University Press Karachi, 1999. p. 15.

¹⁶*Dawn*, May 4, 1994; *Washington Post*, June 13, 1994.

¹⁷Mohammad Waseem, "Origins and Growth Patterns of Islamic Organizations".

¹⁸Saeed Shafqat, "From Official Islam to Islamism: The Rise of Dawat-ul-Irshad and Lashkar-e-Taiba". p. 93.

¹⁹Mariam Abu Zahab, "The Regional Dimension of Sectarian Conflicts in Pakistan", in Christopher Jafferlot (Ed), *Pakistan: Nationalism with-*

out a Nation? p. 115.

²⁰*Dawn*, May 4; *Washington Post*, June 13, 1994.

²¹*Ibid.*, Saeed Shafqat, "From Official Islam to Islamism: The Rise of Dawat-ul-Irshad and Lashkar-e-Taiba". p. 134.

²²Stephen P. Cohen, "The Jihadist Threat to Pakistan".

²³Saeed Shafqat, "From Official Islam to Islamism: The Rise of Dawat-ul-Irshad and Lashkar-e-Taiba". p. 106.

²⁴*Herald* (monthly), Karachi, December, 1995.

²⁵Stephen P. Cohen, "The Jihadist Threat to Pakistan". p. 15.

²⁶Suroosh Irfani, "Pakistan's Sectarian Violence: Between the "Arabist Shift" and Indo-Persian Culture" " in Satu P. Limaye, Mohan Malik and Robert G. Wirsing (Editors), *Pakistan in Religious Radicalism and Security in South Asia*, p. 168.

²⁷Jack A. Goldstone, "Population and Security: How Demographic Change Can Lead to Violent Conflict", *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 56, no.1, Fall 2002.

²⁸Gjermund Saether, "Inequality Security and Violence", *The European Journal of Development Research*, Vol. 13, No, 1, June 2001.

²⁹*Dawn*, May 4; *Washington Post*, June 13, 1994.

³⁰Saeed Shafqat, "From Official Islam to Islamism: The Rise of Dawat-ul-Irshad and Lashkar-e-Taiba". p. 87.

³¹Vali Nasr, "Sectarianism and Shia Politics in Pakistan, 1979-Present". <http://cemoti.revues.org/document604.html>

³²Saeed Shafqat, "From Official Islam to Islamism: The Rise of Dawat-ul-Irshad and Lashkar-e-Taiba". p. 88.

³³Suroosh Irfani, "Pakistan's Sectarian Violence: Between the "Arabist Shift" and Indo-Persian Culture". p. 158.

³⁴Nasr , p. 97.

³⁵Saeed Shafqat, "From Official Islam to Islamism: The Rise of Dawat-ul-Irshad and Lashkar-e-Taiba". p. 157.

³⁶*Annual Report 2004*, Amnesty International.

³⁷For example see Azmat Abbas, *Sectarianism: The Players and the Game*, South Asia Partnership-Pakistan, Lahore, 2002.

³⁸Charles H. Kennedy, "The Creation and Development of Pakistan's Anti-terrorism Regime, 1997-2002", in Satu P. Limaye, Mohan Malik and Robert G. Wirsing(Editors), *Religious Radicalism and Security in South Asia*.

³⁹*Ibid.* p. 393.

⁴⁰*Herald* (monthly), Karachi, August 2004.

⁴¹*Newsline* (monthly), Karachi, August 2004.

⁴²Press conference of Corps Commander Peshawar Lt.Gen. Safdar Hussain in *Dawn* and *The News*, October 20, 2004.

⁴³*The Nation*. Islamabad, September 28, 2004.


About The Network

The Network for Consumer Protection was formed in 1992 with a focus on public health, later expanding its attention to consumer protection. Since then, the organization has become an effective advocacy group, working at the grassroots, national and international levels. The Network activities include public policy advocacy, community mobilization, research and publication.

The Network's programme seeks to assist citizens-consumers to influence public policies in order to meet their livelihood needs and to develop informed opinion on relevant policies. The Network enjoys a track record of compiling and disseminating information for citizens and mobilizing action around key issues.

To join activities of The Network and receive its publications, consider becoming a member of the organization.

For more details contact:
051-2261085



“ Presently, extremism in Pakistan is ‘bolder and fiercer than ever, its tentacles spread from Waziristan to Karachi.’ It has already left a deep impact on the civil society as well as democratic and economic development of the country.

“Many religious groups, which had no tradition of radicalism, turned to violence in 1980s. Many armed splinter groups emerged out of these groups, which were organized in a clandestine framework...Pakistan became a hub of sectarian and jihadi violence due to a complex interplay of internal and external factors.”

The paper advocates democratic culture of dialogue and debate in place of political repression and crisis of legitimacy through much of the Muslim world including Pakistan. The civil society and political forces must struggle together for such democratic transition.”