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The Pakistan Army's Experience with Counterinsurgency



Shuja Nawaz

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The Pakistan Army's Experience with Counterinsurgency

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Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_showing_NWFP_and_FATA.png



Executive Summary

Despite having entered the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in force to support the coalition invasion of Afghanistan under Operation Enduring Freedom, the Pakistan Army did not undertake real counterinsurgency operations till much after 2001. Most of its early operations centered on the conventional use of dominating force against irregular opponents in this rugged region. It was hampered as much by lack of training and equipment as it was by its outmoded approaches to fighting in the frontier region. Gradually, its officers began learning by doing, and the Swat operation in 2008 probably marked the turning point in the doctrinal shift to serious counterinsurgency (COIN) operations, regardless of the fact that the army called it Low Intensity Conflict (LIC).

In the two years since the Swat operation, the army has made a rapid shift toward introducing COIN training and seeking help for its efforts against the internal insurgency. COIN (or LIC) training is now part of the Pakistan Military Academy and the School of Infantry and Tactics, and is studied at the Command and Staff College and the National Defence University. The Pakistan Army now appears to be on an inexorable path toward developing and maintaining a COIN capability, and is not only familiar with but also implementing to some degree the continuum of Clear, Hold, Build, and Transfer. It is also formalizing its experience in a doctrine that will allow it to better fight the insurgency. This may well become General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani's legacy. While the army still retains its conventional force structure and stance vis-à-vis archrival and neighbor India, it appears to have used the insurgency to rotate its forces in and out of FATA and Swat in such a manner as to expose most of its regular troops to irregular warfare. The

Frontier Corps (FC) is being trained in-country now by U.S. trainers at Warsak in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The army will benefit indirectly from this training, and is supplementing it with overseas courses for its officers.

In the process of shifting to improved COIN operations, the army has learned to fight the Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) that are increasingly being used by the Pakistani Taliban. However, the focus has been largely on detecting and disabling such devices. The army's technical capacity for detection of explosive devices appears to be limited to wand detectors of dubious worth, and it seems to have limited data-collection and forensic-evidence collection on each IED incident. Also noticeably absent is the ability to work closely with civilian counterparts in addressing the root causes of unrest among the insurgents in FATA. A more-holistic approach to COIN and the countering of IEDs would produce better results.

There is also an obvious lack of collaboration between the civil government and the military on counterterrorism (CT) issues, and little evidence of the importance of studying the nexus between COIN and CT. CT occupies a minor place in the tool kit of the military, while the civilian administration has dissipated its efforts in this field among various actors. The effort to enact a law in support of the National Counter Terrorism Authority continues to be delayed as a result of bureaucratic inertia, infighting, and a lack of coordination with the military.

In the final analysis, Pakistan's COIN efforts will only succeed if the civilian authorities raise their game to meet and support the army, and if the army is willing to integrate

its COIN and CT efforts with its civilian counterparts. Both sides have a lot to learn about COIN and CT operations—especially the need to see the population as the true center of gravity. Addressing socioeconomic and political issues in the affected areas will likely produce longer-term and more sustainable results. Military action can only address the symptoms, not the causes of the insurgency.



Main Report

Introduction and Background

Pakistan has had very limited experience in counterinsurgency, and not all of it has been very successful. In 1971, the Pakistan Army was used in East Pakistan to quell a domestic insurgency in support of the Bengalis of East Pakistan gaining independence from West Pakistan. Indian support and sanctuary allowed the insurgents to grow and become very sophisticated. Many of them were former Pakistan Army officers and men of the East Bengal Regiment or paramilitary forces. Pakistan's army used military force against civilians in a population that was largely against them. It lost that war, largely because of massive Indian intervention in December 1971 and the reliance on military power to deal with a political problem.

In 1973, an on-again, off-again insurgency in Balochistan erupted against the heavy-handed centralized rule of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Again, the army went in with a heavy hand, and using conventional weapons and tactics, managed to roust most of the rebels from Balochistan into their safe havens in Afghanistan. But they did not root them out of Balochistan; even today, this insurgency remains a part of the political landscape of that province. Meanwhile, Pakistan gained much experience in fomenting insurgency abroad by its support of the Afghan “jihad” against the Soviet Union in the 1980s, and then, once the Soviets had exited Afghanistan in 1989, in Kashmir against Indian occupation. These operations were largely organized by the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) Directorate and not by the regular army, between whom existed a wide gulf. That gap has been somewhat diminished today but is still evident. The regular army over time has failed to prepare itself to fight an insurgency at home. Now it seems to be learning its lessons fast.

The invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 by the United States and its allies to oust the Taliban regime that harbored Osama bin Laden, the mastermind of the attack on the United States of September 11, 2001, contributed to the conditions for unrest inside Pakistan's borders. Bin Laden and Al-Qaeda's other leaders fled into Pakistan to their traditional havens in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), where there was no regular Pakistan army—only poorly equipped, trained, and officered local tribal militia, or the marginally better Frontier Corps. Afghan tribal leaders who had earlier fought against the Soviets and had tribal links inside Pakistan's borders also returned to those bases for support in their fight against the foreign invaders, using their Pakhtun links to garner support from local populations. When the United States succeeded in persuading Pakistan to send in its army to clear the tribal region of these insurgents and to try to seal the Pakistan-Afghan border, a local uprising began against the Pakistani forces.¹ The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), under its charismatic young leader Baitullah Mehsud, became the focal point of rebellion for various groups in FATA and the North West Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), starting in 2006. Suddenly, Pakistan had a hot border region on its hands, and the army had to relearn how to fight a homegrown insurgency (although they called it a “Low Intensity Conflict”).

This difference in nomenclature was significant, since it reflected their view, articulated in 2008 by former

1 A limited number of studies have appeared recently on Pakistan's counterinsurgency efforts. *Counterinsurgency in Pakistan* by Seth G. Jones and Christine Fair (RAND, 2010) offers a detailed history and survey of literature of the various Pakistani operations and the background to the rise of militancy in the border region. *Pakistan's Security Paradox: Countering and Fomenting Insurgencies* by Haider A. H. Mullick (Joint Special Operations University, December 2009) provides useful data and timelines. *FATA: A Most Dangerous Place*, principal author Shuja Nawaz (CSIS, 2008), offers an initial briefing on the issues leading to the insurgency and the rise of militancy in the frontier regions of Pakistan.

Director General Military Operations, then Major General Ahmed Shuja Pasha, that “all you need is a well-trained infantry soldier”—a view that he and his fellow officers have now changed to recognize a broader approach to fighting irregular warfare inside one's own borders.² That important transition over time reflects the nub of Pakistan's trajectory: learning by doing is the key to their approach to counterinsurgency warfare. Though the lessons are not yet fully understood nor fully implemented, the Pakistani military has made very rapid progress in a matter of two years. It was not an easy transition for a force that has a history of conventional warfare and that inherited a mixed bag of doctrines from the British when Pakistan achieved independence in 1947.

The British in India maintained a largely conventional force that was trained for long campaigns and relied on a huge land force to protect the British Indian Empire and British interests elsewhere in the world. The only real difference lay in the North West Frontier region, where a buffer zone had been created between the kingdom of Afghanistan and British India. This territory is now known as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan, comprised of tracts of land along the Afghan frontier that extended from near Peshawar southward into Balochistan. It was inhabited by tribes, some of which straddled the Durand Line, and constituted the border between the British and Afghan king Abdur Rahman Khan on November 12, 1893.³ Modern Afghanistan challenged the validity of that deal, especially the area where the line cut the Mohmand tribal territory in two.

This frontier region operated under its own law, the Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR), separate from the rest of British India (and later Pakistan), under which entire tribes were held responsible for any crimes committed in their territories. No political parties were allowed to operate there. Essentially this was a no-man's-land, forgotten by government except when its people rose up against the civil authorities. Economic and social development lagged well behind the rest of the country. The literacy rate today for FATA as a whole is 17.42 percent, with female literacy at only 3 percent. Whereas Pakistan has one doctor for every 1,226 persons, in the FATA the number is one for every 7,670.⁴ The rough terrain provided little sustenance, and the people of the tribal territories relied on smuggling,

robbery, and kidnapping to eke out a living. Periodically, they would infringe on British sovereignty and provoke a punitive expedition. The only road and rail links constructed by the British were to facilitate troop movements from India to the frontier, or from military cantonments and forts constructed inside the territory to enforce peace. The local tribes resented the British military presence and attacked garrisons or kidnapped individuals connected with the British forces. As a result, various frontier campaigns by the British were launched with great regularity against tribal rebels, who often chose to coalesce in the name of Islam and under the banner of religious leaders.

The first reference to the Taliban (meaning “religious students”) was made in the late nineteenth century, when Mullah Powindah took on the title of *Badshah-e-Taliban*, or “King of the Taliban” in 1894, in the area that is now North Waziristan. His example was followed by the legendary Fakir of Ipi, who also fought the British in the 1930s and '40s, provoking a number of Waziristan campaigns by the British.

To conduct operations against irregulars who benefited from their knowledge of the local terrain and were expert marksmen, the British came up with a Doctrine of Frontier Warfare and introduced tactical training for operations in that region. The first major analysis of the region for military purposes came from a young British officer in 1898, and appeared in a commercially released book. A well-known manual was produced for use by the British Indian Army and British regiments that continued to be used in one form or another by the Pakistan Army well into the 1960s.⁵ Then it lost its status to manuals on other forms of fighting, including mountain warfare that was to be fought in the high mountains of the Karakoram against India. Gradually Frontier Warfare faded into the background until the fighting began in FATA in earnest in 2006 and 2007, and the TTP emerged onto the scene in FATA under the leadership of a relatively junior member of the Mehsud tribe of South Waziristan named Baitullah Mehsud. Now, it has staged a comeback in the training establishments of the Pakistan Army.

4 Imtiaz Sahibzada, *Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Strengthening and Rationalization of Administration)* Draft Report 206 (Islamabad: April 2006), 63–65.

5 Superintendent Government Printing Office, *Frontier Warfare* (Calcutta: 1901). Its precursor was *Indian Frontier Warfare* by Captain and Brevet-Major George Francis Younghusband (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, and Trubner, 1898), who published his review of twenty years of operations in the border region with Afghanistan.

2 Major General Ahmed Shuja Pasha, interview by author (Rawalpindi, Pakistan, August 2008).

3 For full text of Durand Line Agreement, see Appendix I.

Captain George Francis Younghusband, the author of the 1898 book, described this “theatre of war” as “a mass of mountains, amidst which wind deep and rapid torrents, whilst here and there may be found small open valleys with sufficient supplies only to maintain their inhabitants.”⁶ Little has changed in the century-plus since that time, except for the fact that the technology of war has now improved for both the tribesmen and the forces of the new state, Pakistan, which inherited the British mantle of government. Pakistan chose to calm the tribesmen’s fears that they would be subjected to military domination along the lines of the British. The founder of Pakistan and its first governor general, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, issued orders immediately after independence in August 1947 for military forces to decamp from the border region in a planned withdrawal ironically named Operation Curzon, for the British viceroy of the nineteenth century who had favored a so-called “Forward Policy” for the British Empire in the region.

This left the region isolated once more. It operated more or less under its own archaic system of tribal custom, or *Riwaj*, mixed with a rudimentary knowledge of Islam that was later to be erroneously reflected in its own interpretation of *Sharia*, or Islamic practices. A dominant characteristic of tribal custom was *Pakhtunwali* that includes courage (*tora*), hospitality (*nanawatai*), and asylum (*melmastia*), although over time it lost its strict original meaning of hospitality, whereby those that brought conflict to the host tribe or had committed murder or other serious crimes did not qualify for protection. Another element was *badal*, or revenge or justice emerging from blood feuds, which led to intertribal and interfamily conflicts that divided the people of the region and allowed them to be exploited by the British, and later, the Pakistani governments. Tribal identity played a huge role in this society, with great attention paid to keeping tribal purity by restricting marriage outside the immediate tribe or sub-tribe (*khel*). Loyalty stemmed from tribal affiliation, which did not respect international boundaries. So the Durand Line between Afghanistan and Pakistan became just a mark on a map. Locals were allowed easement rights on both sides of the border and could travel at will, although sometimes they were provided a *rahdari* (travel document) by the local administrator in lieu of a passport or visa in order to travel across the border.

Pakistan continued the British practice of governing the area through civil servants, called political agents. Most of them spoke Pashto, the language of the region, and

many followed the tradition of the British by becoming involved in the study and documentation of local customs and activities in detailed reports that captured the essence of the tribal system and its activities. Their main lever, apart from the threat of the FCR, was the use of government handouts to select local leaders or tribal maliks. This local expertise helped quell unrest and often forestalled it. Gradually the deterioration of the Pakistan civil service and its politicization by successive autocratic civil and military rulers produced a weaker crop of government representatives. Corruption also set in, and the governmental handouts led to favoritism and lack of respect for the authority of the state. Meanwhile, the locals found easy money in the U-turn Afghan trade that allowed landlocked Afghanistan to import duty-free goods across Pakistan, only to see most of those goods smuggled back into Pakistan to be sold, duty-free. Pakistan has an estimated loss of \$2 billion a year from this illegal trade.⁷ Local tribal leaders profit from this smuggling. Also, poppy cultivation and the rise of the drug trade helped to increase the wealth of well-placed tribal leaders.

In the 1980s, the war against the Soviet Union established its base camps in this border region. An influx of Afghans, escaping the conflict across the border, settled here in large camps that became the base for the recruitment of religious warriors, or *mujahideen*. The United States and Saudi Arabia provided financial support and weapons for the fight via the Pakistani Inter Services Intelligence Agency, whose agents quickly became expert in the tribal systems, and used their knowledge to exhort and train the tribal warriors in the name of Islam. Over time, religious schools (*madrassas*) became the breeding ground for these warriors, and as the war drew support from across the Arab and Muslim world, a fresh batch of recruits arrived from abroad, some of whom married locally and took root.

The religion-based war, assisted by U.S. expertise and production of Islam-based curricula, created a steady stream of support for the war against the Soviets. It also gave prominence to the religious leaders (or mullahs), who traditionally had a subservient role in tribal society and did not participate actively in tribal councils, or *jirgas*. In Pakistan, the government of then president Zia ul Haq, who attempted to Islamicize Pakistani society and its army, appointed *Nazim us Salaat*, or prayer leaders, and put them on the dole, thus elevating their status in the

⁶ Younghusband, op cit.

⁷ Erum Zaidi, “Afghan Transit Trade Costing Pakistan Billions” (*The Nation, Pakistan*, December 9, 2010): <http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Business/09-Dec-2010/Afghan-Transit-Trade-costing-Pakistan-billions>.

tribal region. Thus was born a new movement that allowed religious leaders to supplant tribal maliks over time. By the time the Soviets were defeated and the U.S. had left the region in a precipitate manner, religion had become a major force in this region. Meanwhile, the Arab fighters had become part of the local landscape. The rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan and their emergence as the rulers in Kabul created an ideal atmosphere for the development of a pan-Islamic movement that came to be known as Al-Qaeda. Its leader, a youthful scion of a wealthy Saudi-based Yemeni family, Osama bin Laden, used the protection of the Taliban government to build a base for his pan-Islamic vision.

Meanwhile, inside FATA, an emerging conflict between the *kashars* (the disaffected poor) and the *mashars* (the traditional tribal elders, and the agents of the government) polarized society and created the basis for unrest. FATA has had limited political representation in Pakistan. Unlike the rest of the country that had adult franchise at independence in 1947, until 1997, tribal elders in this region selected their representatives to the National Assembly and the Provincial Assembly (when West Pakistan was a single unit in Pakistan, balancing East Pakistan, now Bangladesh). After 1997, FATA sent twelve members to the National Assembly and eight to the Senate on the basis of adult franchise. But they had no provincial assembly, having been kept separate from the North West Frontier Province. The Pakistan Political Parties Act, which legalized the formation of political parties, did not apply to FATA. It still has not been implemented despite the passage of a resolution by the National Assembly to that effect.

The Post-9/11 Landscape

The September 11, 2001, attack by Al-Qaeda on the United States drew the U.S. back to the region, this time to invade Afghanistan and oust the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. Although Pakistan had recognized the Taliban government, now, under political and military pressure, its military ruler, General Pervez Musharraf, suddenly switched sides to become a U.S. ally. Musharraf offered the U.S. logistical assistance in its attack on Afghanistan and promised to move Pakistani troops into the border region to help seal it so the U.S. and its allies could deal with the Taliban expeditiously, a near-impossible task under the best of circumstances. This put him at odds with Al-Qaeda and the locally established Islamic groups in the FATA and the North West Frontier Province.

The only Pakistani forces inside FATA on 9/11 were the 70,000 Frontier Corps (FC), now close to 80,000, a locally raised paramilitary force that was officered by Pakistan Army staff and retained in their local tribal areas. Their regiments or wings were operating under names of local tribes or areas. The FC was poorly equipped and trained, and over time, even the officers had become the dregs of the army. In the past, when young Pakistan Army officers selected formations for their Extra Regimental Employment (ERE), many chose the FC as a place for adventure and its rich tradition. Gradually, this stopped happening, and many officers now were being “volunteered” for the FC. They had little incentive to perform well or to improve the operations of their troops and formations. The equipment was also antiquated. They had little personal protection gear, and still ran around in loose-strapped sandals or “chappals” in the rough terrain of the frontier region, wearing a dark “militia gray” shalwar kameez (baggy pants and loose shirt) as their uniform.

The commanding officers of FC wings were majors, compared with lieutenant colonels in the regular army. By all accounts, this was a second-class force, stuck in the past. The FC was supported in maintaining law and order in the FATA by the Frontier Constabulary and community police, called *khassadars*, whose training and compensation levels were even lower than those of the FC. They operated under the political agent, who represented the writ of the State. Interestingly, recruitment from FATA into the Pakistan Army had seen an upswing in recent years. Traditionally, Mehsuds, Khattaks, and other tribes were well represented in the army, including some who attained general officer rank. The number of officers from FATA rose considerably, from 63 during the period of 1970–89 to 147 in 1990–2005. The number of soldiers also increased greatly.⁸

Arrayed against these official troops were tribal militias under local warlords—often established maliks, but increasingly new leaders who had used their links to the drug trade or smuggling to attain a position of authority within the tribal hierarchy. Many had ties to their Afghan relatives and empathized with the Afghans at a time of invasion by the United States and the coalition forces. When the Pakistan Army rolled into FATA after 9/11, they faced a wall of resentment as an “alien force” doing the bidding of a foreign power, the United States. Locals said that even their uniforms were “American,” referring to

⁸ Pakistan Army general headquarters data obtained by Shuja Nawaz, 2006.

the camouflage pattern of the shirts and pants that the Pakistan Army sported. In Balochistan, according to one former inspector general of the Frontier Force, the locals often said that these Pakistani soldiers were not Muslims since they urinated while standing up (as opposed to the local custom of squatting, to prevent oneself from being soiled by urine, making one impure for prayers according to Islamic tradition).

The Pakistan Army responded quickly to meet U.S. demands for support of the Afghan war, moving troops into the area in large numbers in an attempt to secure the border. In doing so, they employed forces that were deployed close to FATA in the military cantonments (reservations), such as Peshawar, Bannu, and Kohat. Interestingly, these forces, the XI Corps of the army headquartered in Peshawar, were traditionally part of the strike force against India, and trained in the border region on the eastern frontier rather than the western one. Both the 7th and the 9th Divisions of XI Corps had little operational knowledge of the terrain or the people of nearby FATA. Moreover, given the population distribution of Pakistan as a whole, which was dominated by a huge province of Punjab, most of the army was comprised of Punjabis (some 60 percent).

Pakhtuns only made up 14.6 percent of the army, roughly in proportion to the population of the North West Frontier Province at that time in Pakistan's total population. The Punjabis did not speak Pashto, the local language, and had a hard time operating and interacting with the locals, and thus felt foreign to the region. Had the army taken more time to plan the movement of troops into FATA, they could have achieved greater effect by first selecting and moving those regiments of the army that had 50 percent Pakhtuns. (This was a carryover from the British times when a number of regiments were integrated with 50 percent Pakhtuns—or Pathans, as the British called them—and 50 percent PMs, or Punjabi Mussulmans [Muslims]. All officers of such regiments had to learn Pashto, and received a special allowance for this language ability.)

The lack of language skills and knowledge of the local customs was a drawback for the Pakistan Army. Moreover, as they established border posts along the lengthy frontier with Afghanistan, in very rough terrain, they discovered the difficulty of visually policing a terrain that was characterized by tall mountains and deep ravines. In short, it was impossible to effectively seal the frontier even with the roughly one thousand posts that Pakistan had set up. Moreover, since these isolated posts were often located in

territories under the sway of local tribal leaders—including the Afghan resistance leader Jalaluddin Haqqani, in North Waziristan—they had to make deals with these warlords to allow Pakistani forces to be supplied. A strange situation emerged in such cases, with Pakistani forces making peace with the very same tribal forces that they were trying to prevent from using the FATA as a sanctuary from the war in Afghanistan.

The Pakistan Army was neither well-equipped nor properly trained for frontier warfare. It lacked mobility both on the ground and in the air. A limited helicopter fleet, including a squadron supplied by the United States that was based in Tarbela—far from the FATA, and responsible for supporting a wide arc of close to 800 miles of territory abutting Afghanistan—was inadequate for the task. Since 2001, under Coalition Support Funds, the United States has provided twenty-six Bell 412 utility helicopters (although jerry-rigged with machine guns, pilots still find it difficult to operate them at height even in Swat and Malakand during the summer months), and four Mi-17 multi-role helicopters, with another six loaned at no cost. The United States is providing Pakistan with twenty AH-1F Cobra attack helicopters via its Excess Defense Articles inventory.⁹ This will enhance Pakistan's COIN capacity, but the need for helicopters especially is far greater. The army generally relied on thin-skinned vehicles for transport on the few and narrow roads of the FATA. (Meanwhile, the insurgents had four-wheel-drive pickups that they used for cross-country operations, which allowed them to swarm isolated posts in rapid attacks by small groups that then slipped away before reinforcements could arrive.) The initial supply of limited night-vision devices supplied by the U.S. was of 1970s vintage and could not operate in moonlight, limiting their usage to a few nights each month. The U.S. also demanded that these devices be collected and brought to a single location periodically so U.S. staff could verify that they had not been moved to the eastern frontier with India. Apart from fueling mistrust between the "allies," these measures reduced the efficacy of the equipment. (In recent years, the United States has attempted to fill these gaps, with a notable improvement in local capacity to operate at night and to protect Pakistani forces.)

Between 2001 and 2010, the army conducted a number of major and some minor operations in FATA and the Malakand and Swat areas. The early efforts in South Waziristan were not very successful, and involved cordon-

9 U.S. Department of Defense, courtesy of Alan Kronstadt, Congressional Research Service.

and-search operations during which the army lost men through ambushes and also surrender. The United States helped their effort by drone strikes against selected targets, mainly suspected Al-Qaeda hideouts. These early strikes, growing in number and accuracy over time, led to civilian casualties that helped the militants' recruitment of local fighters. Eventually, however, the military operations weakened the local tribal maliks' sway over the territory, and allowed new, young leaders to emerge and the militancy to take hold.

The major operations were:

- 2001–02: Operation Al Mizan (The Balance) in South Waziristan
- 2007: Operation Sherdil (Lionheart) in Bajaur
- 2008: Operation Zalzala (Earthquake) in South Waziristan
- 2008: Operation Rah-e-Haq (The True Path / Faith) in Malakand and Swat
- 2009: Operation Rah-e-Rast (The Correct Path) in Malakand and Swat
- 2010: Operation Rah-e-Nijaat (The Path to Salvation) in South Waziristan

Initially the Pakistan Army was deployed in FATA but did not conduct aggressive operations, relying more on attempts to dominate the space by its presence, or through deals with local leaders. General Musharraf relied on his governor of the NWFP—who was titular head of FATA on behalf of the president of Pakistan—to decide on operational strategy. The governor at the time was a retired general who came from the frontier region but failed to understand tribal dynamics. The other key individual was the corps commander in Peshawar. Between them they came up with various approaches to local warlords to try to quell any disturbance in FATA. They ignored the local civil administrators in the process and even bypassed the tribal maliks, reducing their influence even further.

They also underestimated the ability of the tribal militia to fight on their home turf. Lacking knowledge of the terrain and having forgotten the lessons of frontier warfare, a large contingent of the army was ambushed by the forces of Nek Mohammed, at Kalusha, South Waziristan, in March 2004, and suffered heavy casualties. Subsequently, deals were signed with the militants at Shakai in April 2004, Sararogha in February 2005, and in Set in North Waziristan

in 2006. This basically sidelined the tribal elders.¹⁰ In one case, the corps commander made a “peace” deal with Nek Mohammed in South Waziristan by going to Nek Mohammed's home base at Shakai and exchanging garlands. In Pakhtun tradition, you travel to the victor's home to make such a deal. Nek Mohammed saw this as the military surrendering to his strength.

The fighting in FATA had an effect on other militants in the settled areas of the NWFP. In the Malakand and Swat area, unrest had been present since the 1990s when locals had coalesced under a Wahabi orthodox group known as the Tehreek-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (the Movement for the Imposition of the Prophet Mohammad's Traditions, known as the TNSM). Among other things, they were rebelling against the poor administration that the government of Pakistan had in place in Swat after that princely state was absorbed into Pakistan proper. They wished to introduce a mixture of custom and fundamentalist religious ideology in place of the Pakistani government system. Led by Sufi Mohammad, the TNSM launched an operation in 1992 and forced the government of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto to allow them to effectively manage parts of the region under their idea of Sharia law.

In 2001, Sufi Mohammad used the allied invasion of Afghanistan to raise a tribal force to fight in Afghanistan, and was arrested. His son-in-law Maulana Fazlullah, also known as Maulana Radio (because of his use of pirate FM radio stations to broadcast his messages), took over the helm, attacking girls' schools and governmental installations. His operations took on greater momentum after the July 2007 government attack on the Red Mosque in Islamabad that had been taken over by radical Muslim students and followers of the TNSM. Many of the people killed in the attack on the Red Mosque came from Swat. Fazlullah used the attack as a rallying point to gain support in the Swat and Malakand area, and made alliances with other Taliban groups. To break his hold, the government released Sufi Mohammad in April 2008 under a peace deal approved by the new civilian government, headed by the Pakistan Peoples Party of Ms. Bhutto's husband, Asif Ali Zardari. Fazlullah broke with his father-in-law and went on the warpath, prompting the induction of new army troops into Swat and Malakand. Fazlullah aligned himself with the TTP, making it a regional organization that posed a serious threat to the state of Pakistan.

¹⁰ Shuja Nawaz, principal author, *FATA: A Most Dangerous Place: Meeting the Challenge of Militancy and Terror in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2009), 24–25.

The Early COIN Experience, 2008: Malakand, Swat, North Waziristan

Pakistan's army conceived its operations against the militants inside FATA, Malakand, and Swat as a Low Intensity Conflict demanding strict application of traditional military force. It moved regular troops into the region and tried to engage the militants by aggressive patrolling and use of artillery and even air support to attack targets. It was largely unprepared for the fluid attacks of the militants, or for the use of suicide bombings and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), and as a result, suffered some setbacks. On one such occasion, a large number of its soldiers and a few officers were captured by the militants in FATA when a poorly planned convoy was stopped in a ravine, surrounded, and forced to surrender. A review indicated that standard operating procedures for movement in hostile mountainous terrain had not been followed. The heights were not secured, nor was there adequate reconnaissance. There was also no use of locals as guides or pioneers—all lessons that had been drilled into every young subaltern during British times.

No attempt was made to conceive of a holistic approach to the battle by involving the local population and civilian administration, or by building on their superior knowledge of the local physical and human terrain. Even the psychological elements of military planning seemed to have been forgotten. The only persons involved with psy-warfare were officers assigned to the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) Directorate, the media arm of the military, most of whom had no formal training in these tasks. An earlier operation in Swat was dubbed Operation Mountain Viper, a name that meant nothing to the locals. The new division commander, Major General Nasser Janjua, who entered the battle with his 17th Infantry Division, immediately changed the operation's name to Rah-e-Haq, or the True Path, to show how the army saw its operation relative to the insurgents. When the rebels broke a truce with the provincial government and the army was called in to retaliate, he avoided approaching via the main road since that would have meant fighting in the towns and cities, with heavy damage to civilian property and lives. He chose instead to take what he called the "ridgeline approach," moving his troops along the mountaintops that ran parallel to the road and cutting off different segments of the road to prevent the militants from moving easily. When locals approached him to enter towns where the militants hid, he said he would refuse to do that because

that would mean "entering your homes and violating the *purdah*" (or modesty) of their inhabitants, especially the women. Instead, he encouraged the locals to try to push the militants out to the east, and more-open territory, where he could then take them out with his ground and air assets. This was COIN on the fly. There were no manuals or any doctrine employed in the Pakistan Army to fight such a war against its own people.

Indeed, army officers told me they found it difficult to understand the constant pressure from the United States and other outside experts to do more against the insurgency. "We are fighting our own people," they said. "We cannot risk having large civilian casualties." Traditionally, the army is seen as the most respected and popular national agency, and it takes great pride in that respect. The Pakistan Army was loath to lose that position.

In the neighboring Bajaur Agency of FATA—where many militants fled, and which also served as a supply route from Afghanistan—the Frontier Corps, under its inspector general, Major General Tariq Khan, mounted a different kind of campaign in August 2008 under Operation Sherdil (Lionheart), a popular Pakhtun name. It basically cleared the area of the civilian population and then went in with air and artillery assaults to destroy the militants that remained, in the process killing, among others, an Al-Qaeda commander named Saeed al-Masri (the Egyptian). A basic dictum of COIN is to separate the insurgents from the civilian population. This approach of evacuating the civilians was an extreme interpretation of that rule, and created a huge challenge for the administration, which was not prepared to house or feed the displaced people.

Meanwhile, large swathes of Bajaur were reduced to rubble in an effort to rout the militants who had dug deep tunnels and bunkers. The whole process lasted nearly eight months, during which the FC also gained support from local tribes, especially the Salarzai, who had traditionally ruled the area and wanted to regain their lost position of strength. The Inspector General Frontier Corps (IGFC), General Khan, was credited with rejuvenating the FC by bringing in new officers; elevating the rank of the commanders of the wings to colonel, the same rank as in the regular Pakistan Army; and showing up on the front lines with his forces. An armor officer who was himself a straight-shooting, tough-talking Pakhtun from Tank, the area bordering FATA, General Khan took seriously the job of transforming the FC into a modern fighting force. His experience with the U.S. forces at U.S. Central Command

(CENTCOM) allowed him to understand the American psyche and to push for more resources. And his special relationship with his own army chief, General Kayani, helped him to not only get good officers from the army, but also, over time, to return them to the army on promotion. In April 2010, one of his brigadiers and fellow armor officer Nadir Zeb was promoted to major general and sent to command the 1st Armored Division in Multan, which gained prominence helping civilian authorities in central Punjab to fight the floods. This was the first such promotion in the recent history of the FC, testifying to the elevation of the corps in the eyes of the military high command in Rawalpindi. (Zeb later returned to command the FC when Khan was promoted to corps commander.)

With the improvement of the FC came U.S. assistance for further training of FC personnel, a move to which the Pakistan Army reluctantly agreed. (It chose not to accept similar training for its regular troops.) After much complaining by the Pakistanis, the U.S. began replacing some of its outmoded night-vision goggles with newer models that were more effective. Additional U.S. helicopters gave the army a little more mobility, yet not enough to make it effective in the rugged terrain of FATA, Swat, and Malakand.

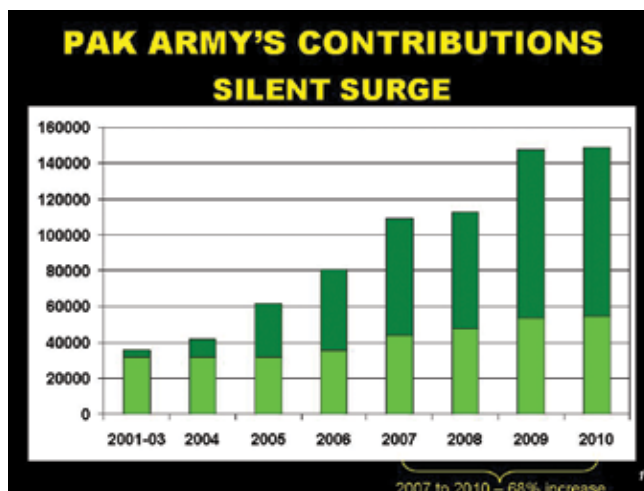
In other parts of FATA, the military presence did not lead to active battles. South Waziristan remained largely the domain of the TTP, as it used its tribal Mehsud area as a staging post. In North Waziristan, the land of the Ahmedzai Wazir and the Daur tribes, and home also to the Haqqani group of the Afghan Taliban, the army adopted what a senior military officer derisively called a policy of “sitzkrieg”—meaning, sitting in camps without any aggressive actions. The army described the policy as “dominating space.”

The operations in Swat managed to push the TNSM from the Swat valley to their lair in the northern Paochar valley. But, as a new peace deal was approved by the central government and signed by the provincial government of the NWFP, they crept back. The army was back in its camps. The TNSM and its other Taliban supporters began asserting control over parts of Swat, eventually taking over administration of much of Buner. This raised the specter of Taliban control of territory that was some sixty miles from the capital, Islamabad. Soon after this incident, a cell-phone video of a young girl being whipped by Taliban for alleged indecent behavior went viral inside Pakistan and around the world, engendering a wave of

public unhappiness, and giving the army much-needed approval by the general public of Pakistan to go on the offensive. In the process, the army would also retrieve its position of respect that had been lost by association with an unpopular military ruler, General Musharraf.

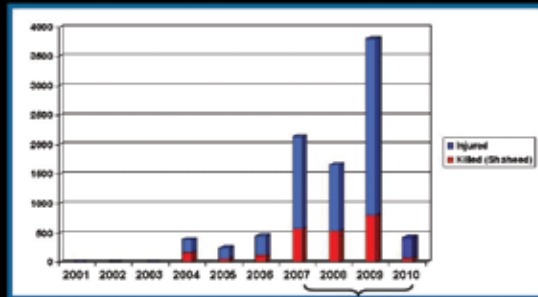
This time the army went in with a heavier force in support of its Operation Rah-e-Rast (the Correct Path), dividing Swat into two areas, north and south, and injecting one and a half divisions (troops from the eastern frontier with India) into each area. Many of the units were cannibalized from other formations. An estimated 52,000 troops were employed, including commandos of the Special Services Group and at least two wings of the FC. But before the military operations began, the military cleared the area of its civilian population, much along the pattern of the Bajaur operation. Approximately 3 million persons were displaced and had to take refuge in other parts of the country, with relatives and friends. Only 200,000 were moved to official camps. The military began its assault with aerial bombardment for a week, followed by infantry attacks. Having numerical superiority, they swept into the valley and cleared it rapidly; however, they failed to capture the TNSM leadership, who were believed to have fled into Dir and then Afghanistan. It was not an easy fight by any means. The TNSM used its knowledge of the terrain, and employed IEDs and booby traps to inflict casualties on the regular forces. Soon after the area was cleared of the militants, the army helped to relocate the displaced persons. It had apparently learned the lesson of fighting an insurgency: helping civilians is as important as fighting and killing insurgents.

Figure 1: The Pakistan Army in FATA¹¹



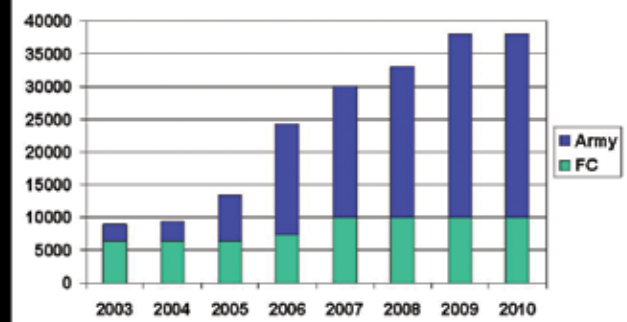
11 Slides provided by the Pakistan Army.

PAK ARMY'S CONTRIBUTIONS MILITARY CASUALTIES

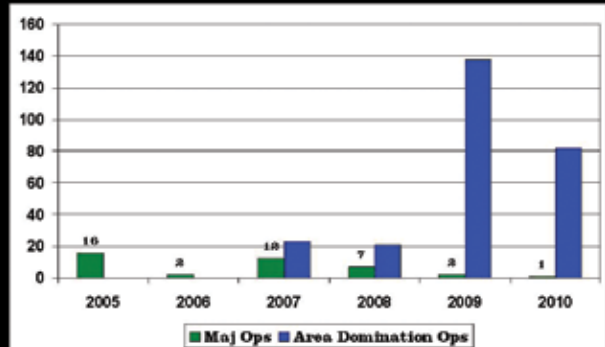


86%
Killed (Shaheed) 2334
Injured 6804
Total Casualties 9138

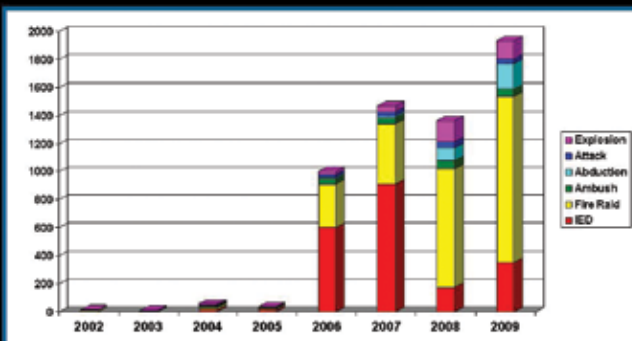
TROOPS SURGE - NWA



OPERATIONS CONDUCTED - NWA

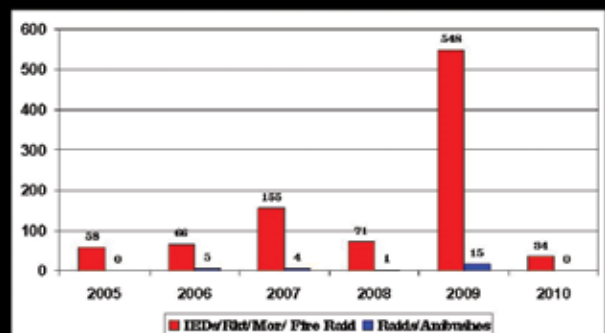


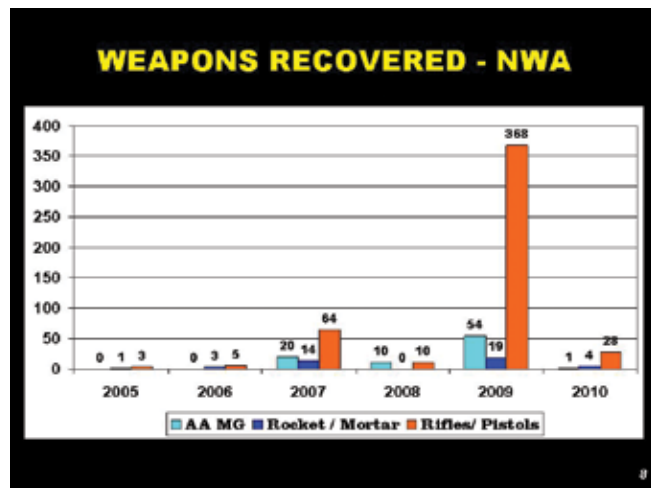
MAJOR TERRORIST INCIDENTS



More terrorists incidents in Pakistan than in Afghanistan and Iraq

THREAT SPECTRUM - NWA





Progress and Challenges

Instead of relying on the provincial government and the tattered civilian bureaucracy to deliver services, the army chose this time to handle reconstruction and rehabilitation in Swat and Malakand by itself, and then to *hand it over to the civilians* (emphasis added), going well beyond what their U.S. counterparts had been able to achieve in Afghanistan. Adopting a policy of “Each One. Teach One” to partner with locals, it had completed over 435 projects worth more than 515 million Pakistani rupees (Rs.) by the spring of 2010, with another 995 projects (of various sizes) worth Rs. 420 million still under way. These projects included the repair of 198 schools, some in collaboration with governmental bodies, most of which had been attacked and destroyed by the TNSM and their Taliban allies, and the repair of 75 mosques. A survey was also conducted of damage to private houses, and a Spring Plantation Campaign was launched to plant 374,000 saplings with local participation. Meanwhile, meeting the needs of the local population for medicine remained critical. Three million rupees’ worth of medical supplies was distributed, and an estimated 30,000 patients were treated in medical camps. The army also donated Rs. 1.5 million to the Saidu Sharif Hospital, and set up training centers in collaboration with other entities to prepare youth for employment. They also undertook the repair and rehabilitation of infrastructure in Swat and Malakand, restoring bridges and building roads. And in an effort to win back the youth, they opened a new school named *Sabaon* (“Early Morning Breeze”) in the Malakand division in September 2009, to serve as a model for similar schools

to be run by nongovernmental organizations.¹² Clearly, a COIN doctrine was being designed on the fly and being tested as these operations progressed.

The army became involved in training community police, around 2,700 in all of Swat, and 2,300 in lower Swat alone. (Each police recruit signs a two-year contract and is posted in local villages, receiving a salary of approximately Rs. 10,000 a month.) The army also helped district administrators in enrolling 500 police officers each in Malakand and Swat levees (paramilitary), with army officers participating in the interviews. Nonetheless, their confidence in the civilian justice system remained low. Some 3,000 prisoners, suspected TNSM and Taliban militants, were kept by the army and not handed over to the civilian authorities for fear that they would be let go. The 37th Division under Major General Ishfaq Nadeem Ahmad was responsible for Lower Swat. He felt strongly that a deradicalization program was needed in order to turn the youth away from the Taliban. He assessed the local situation in economic terms: 33 percent of the population was tied to tourism, which had been destroyed by the TNSM and Taliban; 55 percent of the population consisted of people between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four; and 30 percent of the population was between the ages of twenty-five and forty. With jobs being scarce, recruitment into the Taliban ranks was easy. Based on detainee interrogation reports, 40 percent of the recruits did it for the money, which was around Rs. 6,000 to 10,000 per month. Most recruits had an education that fell below the eighth-grade level.

General Ahmad calculated that half the funding for Taliban operations came from outside Pakistan, often unwittingly from sources in the Persian Gulf and Saudi Arabia. The challenge that he saw was the army’s ability to hold and build, while winning the hearts and minds of the people. Peace, he said, “will not last if we [all agencies of the state] do not deliver.” He pointed out that the army had contributed 515.48 million rupees’ worth of completed projects to the development effort, including those with the provincial government. It had also distributed its own rations, and was providing cheap bread to the locals. Regarding COIN operations in general, he said, “It is incorrect to say that if you know the highest rung of infantry operations you can fight an insurgency.”

¹² This information has been taken from an informal booklet on the results of the operations in Malakand and Swat, produced by the 37th Division of the Pakistan Army.

Units are now involved in training for COIN a year in advance. The army headquarters team evaluates this pre-training, with both infantry and armor operating as infantry, and involving engineering units. Officers who rotate out of the operations train others. Meanwhile, the army is learning to work with the locals. When the IDPs (internally displaced persons) returned, the intelligence capacity of the army increased. The locals were more than willing to inform when TNSM or Taliban returned into the area.

Once the Swat operations had wound down, the military turned its attention to South Waziristan, where the TTP had its base, and where a sizable number of Al-Qaeda and Central Asian militants had their lair. By October 2009, a pattern similar to Swat was seen in operation. Leaflets were dropped in the agency telling local tribes that the army had no quarrel with them, but rather with the militants. This led to an exodus from the area, though much smaller than the number of displaced persons from Swat. One week of aerial bombardment preceded the land assault, but a back door was left open through Wazir territory to the north, and many of the leaders of the TTP escaped after making deals with surrounding tribes. The army had relied on other tribes to help cordon the Mehsud members of the TTP in their tight space; however, it failed to take into account the possibility of bribes. Some escaping militants entered North Waziristan, while others made their way to Orakzai and Mohmand agencies to fight another day.

In North Waziristan, the militants found shelter with the fringes of the Haqqani group, among others, and continued to launch the odd attack on military formations, but nothing of a magnitude that would have provoked a large-scale military response. This created much unhappiness among some regimental commanders, who lost their men in such attacks and gradually percolated up the ranks to the army headquarters. The army began assembling a sizable force in North Waziristan: 24,000 regular army and another 7,000 FC troops are estimated to be in this agency, more than in South Waziristan. The expectation is that it will mount serious cordon-and-search operations in due course, once a decision is made on how to handle Haqqani, and once the Orakzai operation is ended.

For the time being, the army chief has persuaded the U.S. government to provide rapid aid to open up South Waziristan by constructing roads and repairing infrastructure. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton obliged

under the framework of the new Strategic Dialogue with Pakistan. Work on the roads was begun in spring 2010 by the army's Frontier Works Organization, which had earlier built the Karakoram Highway and other difficult roads in the frontier region. While this may be an effective way of linking South Waziristan with Pakistan proper, there still remain huge opportunities for the military to involve the youth of FATA in these projects. At 17 percent of the male population, the youth bulge of those between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five numbers some 300,000 in all of FATA. Roadways, small dams, and repair projects offer the fastest method of creating jobs for them and reducing their incentive to be recruited by the Taliban.

Lessons from the Frontier Corps

During most of 2010, the Frontier Corps was engaged in "the last battle" in Orakzai, where many of the TTP had found refuge. According to the IGFC General Khan, the operations in FATA had been divided into two: the army taking the lead in North and South Waziristan and the FC acting under its command, and the FC taking the lead in the other five agencies: Mohmand, Kurram, Orakzai, Bajaur, and Khyber, and in Dir. In Orakzai, General Khan cleared a portion of the agency of the local population and then encircled the area where the militants were hiding, cutting off their egress into Tirah Valley in Khyber. He then began tightening the noose, with the expectation that when the stronghold of Daburi fell in late spring 2010, the fighting would be over. But the battle continued into the summer.¹³ Under a new IGFC, Major General Nadir Zeb, operations continue in Orakzai, where insurgents have occupied territory on the western border with Kurram Agency, linking them with territory under their control in the neighboring Tirah Valley of Khyber Agency. This delay in wiping out the TTP leadership and its local allies in these northern agencies of FATA is cited by the military as a major reason for their delay in moving against Afghan Taliban and their local allies in North Waziristan, where the military has over 35,000 troops in place but has yet to launch operations against the Afghan Taliban group of Jalaluddin Haqqani and his local partners. With winter setting in, operations are likely to be delayed into spring 2011 at the latest.

Clearly, the ability of the army and the FC to seal the borders of FATA is not as well established as they would

13 "Army Claims Victory in Orakzai Operation" (*The Express Tribune, International Herald Tribune*, June 2, 2010): <http://tribune.com.pk/story/18078/army-claims-victory-in-orakzai-operation/>.

wish it to be. Lack of mobility and helicopters remains a huge drawback. The rugged terrain gives the militants an edge, as they can easily hide or slip away. But new aggressive approaches by the FC, involving night patrols and ambushes, seem to be producing results, as was evident in a meeting of the IGFC with his force commanders in Orakzai in April 2010.¹⁴ “When you operate at night you’ve won! They don’t have the capacity to counter. Not hard kinetic operations but fighting patrols” are needed, he said. “You also have the advantage since you have night vision. He doesn’t.” The IGFC also asked his commanders, “Are you just sitting there or are you sitting in anger?,” urging them to go for the militants with ambushes rather than waiting for the militants to attack them. The IGFC estimates that there are approximately 1,000 hard-core Taliban fighters in Orakzai today, but feels confident that he has them on the run. “Their battle is survival. Our battle is success!”

What is missing from all this is the civilian component. The political agent is not part of the planning process; he listens, but does not actively participate in discussions. Having been sidelined earlier by successive military commanders, he is reluctant to offer his views, and speaks only when asked to. General Khan urges him to bring the local elders on board by informing them of what the army has done, and getting them to organize themselves to keep the militants out. “No rifles. No ammo,” he says. When the PA suggests that ammunition is important, and that if possible, the locals should get it from the dumps that the Taliban has left behind, General Khan agrees. But he is cautious about giving the local tribes heavy weaponry, or trying to organize them on a military basis. The PA suggests that the local *lashkars* (or posses) will keep the military informed about any unwanted people in the area.

The FC and the Pakistan Army may be missing something in this process. There is an absence of the National Solidarity Program development approach that has been successful where employed in Afghanistan. Joint military and civilian teams could be much more effective in designing and implementing a COIN strategy that would work in Pakistan. The army may want to develop a special cadre of soldiers and officers who have knowledge of local language and customs, to work with their civilian counterparts in the battle areas and to follow up after operations conclude.

The IGFC takes pride in the fact that the FC has improved rapidly. It has body armor and improved fortifications. New permanent and well-fortified posts have been set up on remote peaks where none previously existed. And it has been effective in managing the COIN operations with only \$111 million given to it over five to seven years, “compared with billions spent in Afghanistan.”¹⁵ To improve security, General Khan suggested a number of steps:

- Better management of FATA;
- Ratification of the Afghan border; and
- Removal of the Afghan refugees: most of the local *khateeb*s (religious leaders) are Afghans; the ones removed from FATA have gone to the settled areas.

The security apparatus, according to General Khan, is multilayered: The first tier is the village, with volunteers permitted by the political agent to man checkpoints and report on any untoward activity. They are paid Rs. 10,000 Rs a month. The second tier is a proposed force of some 15,000 levees. But no action has been taken. The U.S. insisted on building a center for their training, but it lies empty. Levees have to be local to their area to be effective. The FC is the third tier. Tactical training is now going on, but it must not be seen as a regular army. The army is mission-based, Khan says. The FC is here to stay. “We anticipate . . . we have tribal bonds.” The FC is now receiving sniper training by the Special Operations Group. Some training has been conducted in the United States, but they still need help: better night vision, more helicopters, etc. General Khan insists, “This is not an insurgency. This is a militancy [based on] economic reasons,” adding that “we do not need outsiders [meaning the Americans] to teach us. Their signatures are too huge. We are light.” Yet he does appreciate the help from SOCOM and the \$1 million cash available for FC use. And he approves of a fusion cell to allow real-time sharing of information across the border. To institutionalize knowledge General Khan is personally documenting the experience of fifty-nine operations with maps, pictures, and lessons learned. He feels that rotating officers in and out of FATA helps, but has yet to see a real effort at assimilating experience and knowledge. For example, he explains that his IED casualties are low “because we walk the road.” Patrols operate five to six kilometers ahead of troops on the move, and traffic is cleared only after patrols give the okay.

14 Author was invited to sit in on the meeting at an undisclosed site in Orakzai, April 2010.

15 IGFC Major General Tariq Khan (now Lieutenant General), interview with author, Bala Hisar Fort, April 2010.

Nonetheless, resources are still tight in FATA. The cost of the fighting is \$230 million a year, according to General Khan. The budget is only \$88 million for routine operations. The difference has to be made up by the army. He also states that he told then U.S. National Security Advisor General James Jones that negotiations are not possible with the Taliban alone. You must negotiate with the Pakhtuns as a tribal base, as a whole. They will throw Al-Qaeda out. The task the FC faces is huge. Some 2,500 kilometers of rough border, seven FATA agencies, Dir, Chitral, and Buner, and easy access to Afghanistan for the militants makes for a tough situation.

By late 2010, with the reported withdrawal of major allied forces in the Konar and Nuristan areas of Afghanistan, many of the Pakistani insurgents and their Afghan supporters had begun regrouping in Konar province, according to Frontier Corps officers. Some insurgents had also begun infiltrating back into the Malakand and Swat area, and in early December 2010, soft targets were subjected to suicide attacks inside FATA and in neighboring towns and cities in the settled areas of Pakistan. IED attacks were on the rise, according to FC officers, with some 93 percent taking place in the border area.

Interior Minister Rehman Malik stated, "We have broken the back of their [TTP] parallel state, broken them into factions. The trend lines are going down. Local *lashkars* are helping."¹⁶

Training Changes Inside the Pakistan Army

From all accounts, the Pakistan Army has rapidly learned many lessons from its experience with this recent bout of insurgency and militancy. It has adopted new methods of operating against insurgents, and is trying many techniques for handling civilian populations before, during, and after military actions. It has accepted training of Frontier Corps trainers by the United States, and expects to have these trainers impart further lessons to their colleagues in the Corps. There is still marked reluctance to accept foreign training for regular army officers inside Pakistan, except for limited training by the U.S. Special Operations Command of the FC at Warsak in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

¹⁶ Minister of Interior Rehman Malik, interview with author (minister's residence, December 7, 2010).

Work on the establishment of the FC Training Center started in 2008, with one sector serving as headquarters and another providing training for the corps, including command and control. The largest course is the Wing Development course (an FC wing translates to a regiment in the regular army). A Special Operations group has been set up along the lines of the Special Forces. Four companies have been raised of some 150 soldiers each. There has also been training of snipers; at least three cadres of thirty to forty snipers were inducted into the program, leading to the graduation of twenty trained snipers. In addition, the training program includes counter-IED and bomb-disposal training, and the training staff now includes SOCOM and Pakistan Army master trainers. FC officials maintain that the wand detector is the only equipment they have for detecting explosives, and were surprised to hear about its dubious value. The wands are of Chinese origin, and there has been no other detection equipment received from the United States. Schiebel mine detectors from Austria are also in use. FC officers maintain that the "best counter-IED [device] is the soldier." Walking the route is considered the best measure. FC officers articulated a demand for jamming devices with longer ranges to prevent use of cell-phone detonators that can be operated from longer distances by insurgents.

IED activity has increased in the settled areas of Pakistan, from 646 to 1,308 attacks in 2009, and now covers large numbers of cities across the country, with Islamabad suffering the most attacks, followed by Peshawar. Suicide attacks are the most common, followed by timed devices. The numbers of dead as a result of IED attacks in the period of 2006–09 rose from 222 to 1,104. Suicide attacks have been most frequent in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with a maximum of 27 in 2007, followed by Punjab, with 11 attacks in the same year. The number declined in 2008 to 6 in both provinces.¹⁷ (See Appendix III for more information on IED activity.)

Pakistan Military Academy, Kakul

The premier officer-training institution in Pakistan is the Pakistan Military Academy (PMA) at Kakul, near the city of Abbottabad in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Set in an idyllic valley inside the curve of a mountain range, PMA was started soon after independence in 1947 as the training school for officer cadets, with the first intake being cadets from the Indian Military Academy in Dehra

¹⁷ Directorate General Civil Defence, Islamabad, courtesy of Frontier Corps headquarters. See Appendix III on IED activity.

Dun, India. Its courses now have expanded in size and nature. About 40,000 nationwide applicants try out for the 300 spots in each regular course at the PMA, held twice a year. This is still a volunteer force, and service in the army officers' corps is highly regarded. Training is imparted by three battalions comprised of twelve companies: the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Pakistan Battalions (known as the "Quaid-i-Azam's Own"—a reference to Mr. Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, who honored the 1st Battalion by presenting it with the national flag). Each battalion has four companies, named after military heroes from Islamic history. Apart from the regular two courses a year that enter the academy for a two-year period, and whose 300-odd graduates are commissioned as second lieutenants, there are three other types of courses that are run at the PMA to meet the rising demand for officers, and especially to meet the technical needs of the army. An additional graduate course—designed for those with an advanced graduate degree, and restricted to one year of training—has now been stopped. The current courses are:

- A one-year Technical Graduate Course, for those who have completed the military's own colleges of Signals, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering (EME), and Engineering. These cadets are commissioned directly as captains.
- A six-month Integrated Course, for graduates of the Army Medical College and the Army Education Corps, and those who possess a master's degree. These cadets are also commissioned as captains.
- A six-month Lady Cadets Course for women with advanced professional degrees (started in 2006); they are also commissioned as captains, but not in combat arms or units.

Apart from traditional training in military tactics and operations and inculcating discipline, teamwork, and leadership qualities, the PMA has sharply focused on realigning its training toward irregular conflict, including COIN operations. Under its current commandant, Major General Raheel Sharif—who was commissioned himself from PMA in 1976 into the 6th Frontier Force Regiment, and then served as Adjutant of the Academy in the mid-1980s—a number of changes have been made to highlight the new face of war for which the academy prepares its cadets.

A key element in this training is the Quick Reaction Course that has been set up recently at the academy. The course

has been laid out in a circular track and comprises, among others, seven fundamental examples of room-clearing operations, a maze, and an electronic firing range (of German origin). Cadets are introduced to this training in their third six-month term. The course is festooned with painted axioms of COIN/LIC operations. Even the female cadets are put through this training. In the fourth or final term, cadets are also introduced to live-fire exercises.

To broaden exposure to COIN operations, guest speakers are invited to lecture on the "softer side" of COIN. Cadets are exposed to negotiation techniques, and are advised to use the "buddy system" to operate against militants and insurgents. The military exercises or war games have also been amended at PMA, shifting the focus from the traditional stereotype of "India as the enemy" to a profile of a mullah leading a group of insurgents. LIC principles and lessons have been summarized in a brief handbook for cadets, and cadets are being exposed, as part of the Quick Response Course, to different types of IEDs. Bomb experts from army headquarters—or GHQ, as it is better known—come in to explain different forms of IEDs, with cutouts showing how they are constructed and how they can be defused or countered. The critical importance of such training has come home to many cadets who have gone straight into fighting the insurgency in FATA. According to the commandant, they have done very well as a result of the training. One recently commissioned officer was even awarded the Sitara-e-Juraat (Star of Valor), the second-highest gallantry award in the army, for operations in FATA.

School of Infantry and Tactics, Quetta

The School of Infantry and Tactics in Quetta, Balochistan, was begun as the Infantry School in 1947, and then expanded in 1957 to include the tactical wing of the Command and Staff College (also at Quetta). It has a battalion of the Baloch Regiment (currently the 55th Baloch Regiment) to support its training activities, and processes 3,000-plus trainees a year, most of them officers with two to three years of service. Officers from allied countries also train at the school. Sri Lanka, for example, has had 837 graduates of this course. The school is mandatory for officers from all arms of service, and not just those from infantry. The aim is to develop junior leadership on a common platform. The school offers a range of courses for junior and mid-career officers, and for Junior Commissioned Officers¹⁸ and Non-Commissioned Officers.

Training is module- and scenario-based, and benefits from lessons learned from leading schools around the world, including Fort Benning in the United States and training establishments in Germany, Turkey, and Australia. Apart from practical training in hand-to-hand combat—which has staged a comeback as a result of engagement with insurgents in FATA and Malakand and Swat—judo, karate, and bayonet drills also reflect an increased emphasis on irregular warfare. Clearing operations and rapid-reaction exercises have been introduced, mimicking the operations in the field.

An extensive course has been laid out for training in clearing operations against insurgents in both urban and rural settings. High-walled mud houses typical of those in FATA are used to train soldiers in penetration and clearing methods, using frontal assault as well as mouse-hole approaches (involving blowing a hole in a wall away from the entrance and then entering a compound). Similar to the PMA, an indoor electronic firing range simulates anti-insurgent firing tactics, employing fast-moving targets on a film screen. Trainees use live ammunition to react to the targets.

Practical training is supplemented by seminars and syndicate-based training. Instructors lead groups of ten to twelve officers in each syndicate in discussions of different aspects of COIN and LIC. Sitting in on these discussions yields the impression that most of the instructors have already been exposed to LIC and COIN in FATA. Much of the focus of discussion in the syndicates that I attended was on psychological warfare and understanding the mind-set of religious ideologues that foment unrest. Interestingly, conversations with the cadets indicated that most of the trainees have also been exposed to FATA operations. The resulting interaction provides a rich exchange of theory and practice.

To supplement in-class training, the cadets are taken into the countryside to participate in a Tactical Exercise Without Troops (TEWT). Instructors divide them into manageable groups and, using the local topography that resembles FATA, walk and talk them through various options in dealing with ambushes and COIN operations. Discussions with instructors and students at the school focus heavily on COIN operations and the need for the army to prepare

for this type of warfare. The school has rewritten many of its manuals to reflect this change, and the entire syllabus has been updated as a result. It has also created a “sand-model” approach to use when countering IED threats, and has a complete set of exhibits showing different types of IEDs and how they are constructed.

Apart from COIN, the school also focuses its training on bacteriological and chemical warfare, and prepares large contingents of army officers and soldiers for UN peacekeeping missions. These missions, in turn, provide experience in irregular warfare in new and difficult terrain. In the past two years, as the tempo of COIN operations has picked up, there has been encouragement from army headquarters to produce more-relevant and better training to counter the threat of insurgency. The former commandant of the infantry school, Major General Agha Umer Farooq (now promoted to lieutenant general and heading the National Defence University), was been instrumental in changing the thrust of the training program to “keep in mind the new threat” of insurgency and to correct the balance “from conventional to unconventional warfare and from theoretical to practical.”¹⁹

Command and Staff College, Quetta

The staff college in Quetta, Balochistan, was one of the few training institutions that Pakistan inherited from British India. It has a long and rich history and has recently been reconstructed as a modern training establishment that graduates 362 officers each year, including 30 officers from 22 countries. The United States traditionally has sent one officer each year to the college. This is being doubled to two officers.

The Staff College runs a sixty-four-week course divided into three major segments. A sixteen-week pre-course segment prepares students for the course, followed by a four-week technical orientation course that introduces them to the use of technology in military operations. The forty-four-week core course then is divided into professional, developmental, and research studies, with the student body divided into syndicates of ten to eleven officers, each with at least one allied officer. Low Intensity Conflict exercises form part of the operational training.

Australian experts have been invited to share their knowledge of LIC operations. Students now use

18 The JCO is an intermediate category of seasoned NCOs who are promoted to JCO rank to serve as interlocutors between the ordinary soldier and the officer class. This is a vestige of the British Indian Army, where native JCOs helped to translate ideas and orders to native soldiers for the British officers.

19 Major General Agha Muhammad Umer Farooq, Commandant of School of Infantry and Tactics (now Lieutenant General, President of National Defence University), interview with author.

educational TV to present their ideas on how to tackle “miscreants” (militants) and to help with law enforcement. Allied officers play the role of “chief miscreant,” presenting strategies; they also play the role of allied force commanders in the region. The first LIC exercise was held in 2006, and the LIC course was started as an integral part of Staff College training in 2009.

The coursework is supplemented by visiting lecturers. In recent years, the focus has been on learning from the experience in FATA and Malakand and Swat. Division commanders from those operations have been invited to share their experiences with the trainees. The commandant in April 2010, Lieutenant General Khalid Nawaz Khan (now commander of X Corps, Rawalpindi), spoke at length about the increase in LIC training at the College. (The new commandant is Major General Khalid Rabbani, another infantry officer.) There is renewed emphasis on frontier warfare, LIC, and COIN. The LIC package of training is designed for eighty-seven instructional hours, and also includes lessons on countering IEDs.

National Defence University, Islamabad

The National Defence University (NDU) in Islamabad is the leading training institution for senior officers of the Pakistan Army, imparting training through a variety of courses. The flagship course is a combination of the former war course and the national security course that runs for some forty-eight weeks, and is required for promotion to higher ranks for lieutenant colonels. This course has approximately 166 members, of which some 20 are Grade 20 civil servants; 43 are officers from thirty-one allied countries (two each from the United States, China, and Saudi Arabia). The NDU also includes the Armed Forces War College, the National Security College, and some 400 students in different faculties covering, among other topics, strategy, nuclear issues, and conflict and peace studies.

In 2004–05, the NDU introduced new subjects, including COIN and LIC. Training comprises workshops, seminars, scenario-based training, and mini- and “one-sided” war games. According to the current president, Lieutenant General Agha Umer Farooq, formerly head of the School of Infantry and Tactics in Quetta, “the first threat is internal now.” National security is also heavily biased toward meeting the internal threat, even while India remains a “bigger concern.”²⁰ There is also the view among the military that India “gives direction” to the internal security threat. This is supported, in their opinion, by India’s focus

on fomenting trouble in Balochistan from consulates in Afghanistan and Iran, and by targeting of attacks inside Pakistan. They cite the attack on the army headquarters in Rawalpindi and attacks on senior military officers away from the front lines. They also refer to intercepted satellite conversations of militants on Thuraya satellite phones with India, the United Kingdom, and Afghanistan. General Farooq referred to the rise of Wahabism but considered it less of a threat. He saw a situation of “no war, no peace,” allowing Al-Qaeda and the Taliban to take advantage of unrest, and also saw a nexus between the Afghan Taliban and the local TTP. Escapees from South Waziristan who have sought refuge in North Waziristan are believed to have been involved in Taliban attacks on Pakistani forces in North Waziristan. But he also decried the lack of coalition forces on the Afghan side of the border with that agency, and wondered why forty-eight kilometers of border could not be shut off from the Afghan side.

General Headquarters, Rawalpindi

Chief of Army Staff General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani on Saturday said that [the] Pakistan Army has developed a full range of counterinsurgency training facilities tailored to train troops for such operations. “Therefore, except for very specialized weapons and equipment, high technology, no generalized foreign training is required,” the COAS said in a press statement issued here. Owing to its vast experience, Pakistan Army remains the best-suited force to operate in its own area, the COAS said.²¹

General Kayani was reacting to suggestions from external commentators that Pakistan needed to undertake COIN training. He issued a statement through the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) Directorate that was widely reported in Pakistan and abroad. His basic point was:

²⁰ President of National Defence University, interview with author.

²¹ News report, *Associated Press of Pakistan*, May 19, 2009.

Strategic decisions regarding where, when and how many troops are deployed in each operation or sector is always a Pakistani decision based on objective analysis and our full understanding of [the] threat spectrum. These decisions are undertaken in accordance with our national interest by our leadership, keeping in view the aspirations of [the] people of Pakistan. Any outside advice / subjective comments towards this end is counterproductive and divisive in effect rather than helpful.²²

While the basic thrust of the army chief's views remains the same, indicating an autarkic bent of mind, GHQ has led the shift in recognizing COIN and the internal insurgency as the key threat to Pakistan, while maintaining its traditional conventional posture of guarding against a hegemonic and more-powerful India to the east. At least three major LIC training facilities have been set up—at Jharri Kas (near Kharian), Mangla, and in Pabbi Hills—for army-wide training. A phased training program introduces troops to the terrain and operations in FATA and Malakand and Swat. Replicas of local housing and streets are used to train in clearing operations. Each division of the army now has its own LIC training facility, and it is mandatory that all units undertake this training before they are inducted into the fight against the insurgency. The LIC module has four weeks of regular training followed by four weeks of specialized training.

General Janjua, formerly in Swat, is now vice chief of general staff at GHQ, and has been involved in sharing his experience army-wide and in all the training institutions. The broad lessons that have been learned from fighting in Swat and FATA are now being actively shared and used to update training manuals. In brief, these lessons are:

- Take the heights rather than rely on traditional roads and direct approaches to towns and cities.
- Avoid collateral damage.
- Let the insurgents collect in one place and isolate and take them out.
- Use multiple thrust lines.
- Troop ratio should not be bare minimum but as much as you can afford.

- Use the local people as your front line to be able to separate “black” (bad guys) from “white”; isolate, weaken, and then take the insurgents.
- Public support is paramount.
- Avoid disconnect between the federal and provincial governments on approaching the insurgency.
- Use Quick Impact Projects to win over local population; governance issues are best tackled by good governance, not force.
- Build local social structures.
- Political follow-up is critical once the army succeeds in clearing an area.
- A national effort is needed to fight militancy, not tactical military operations.

Conversations with senior officers at GHQ, including the army chief General Kayani, indicate a realistic view of the need to train the entire complement of combat troops in the Pakistan Army. As a result, centralized training facilities have been set up to simulate the battle environment in the North West frontier region, and training courses have been started at the lowest levels as well. All divisions now have their own LIC training facilities, and all incoming officers are exposed to LIC combat training at the military academy. Discussion of LIC and COIN has permeated all stages of military training, including the highest levels at the National Defence University. The army is still a top-down structure, and it will take some time for it to fully accept the urgency of COIN methodology at the expense of conventional fighting. If political conditions with India improve, the army may be better prepared to shift more to COIN and CT operations.

A policy of troop rotation has been strictly followed to expose the maximum number of troops and officers to COIN operations. This is similar to the policy followed during the active phases of battles in the mountains of Kashmir, when most young officers were expected to do a rotation with the Northern Light Infantry. General Kayani is a strong believer in the training of troops and officers. Upon taking over the command of the army, he immediately focused on improving the lot of the soldier. The Pakistan Army declared 2008 to be the “Year of the Soldier,” increasing compensation and improving living conditions and training. The army declared that 2009 was the “Year of Training,” which culminated in the holding of army-wide

²² ISPR Directorate, Pakistan Army, Rawalpindi, Pakistan, May 16, 2009.

exercises in the center of the country to emphasize the conventional response to an attack from the east (from India). Increased collaboration between the army and the air force is also evident in COIN operations inside FATA. Since August 2008 some 4,250 air sorties in support of COIN operations were launched by the Pakistan Air Force, and some 4,200 targets destroyed. No public criticism of these attacks has been heard, according to the air chief, Air Marshal Qamar.²³

LIC or COIN training is now an integral part of training in the Pakistan Army. Its rapid acceptance, despite the overbearing paranoia about an Indian attack, indicates the importance that the army attaches to the battle inside Pakistan against a rising militancy. Yet there are important parts of a comprehensive strategy to fight militancy that are missing.

Both LIC and counterterrorism training focuses to a large degree on purely military operations, and is self-contained. The influence of psychological and social factors—including the need to take into account that the army is fighting its own people, and therefore must avoid collateral civilian casualties and damage to property—is discussed at all levels of training, but there is a marked absence of formalized plans to involve the local civilian administrative structures in the detailed planning or execution of LIC or COIN operations. Despite the presence of an Apex Group in Peshawar that involves the governor, the Corps Commander XI Corps, and the head of the FATA Secretariat, civilian involvement in LIC and COIN is left to the initiative of local commanders, and their relationships with local civilian leaders. There are no apparent standard operating procedures for this interaction.

For its own part, the army relies primarily on its public relations arm, the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) Directorate, to provide broadcast and other informational support for its work in the areas where it is fighting the militants. Very few of these ISPR officers have specialized training in COIN operations. Some are now being exposed to such operations, and have been sent on visits to coalition operations in Afghanistan. But the concept of civilian-military joint teams is still not evident.

On the civilian side, the government of Pakistan has talked the talk about CT but has yet to walk the walk. A National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) was to be set up under the Ministry of Interior. A highly trained and regarded

police officer, Tariq Pervez, was selected to head it, and he was rehired after retirement to launch this new operation. During his police service he had developed an extensive system of tracking all persons who had had any contacts with terror or banned outfits. But the law to get the NACTA into operation was delayed and has yet to be issued. Meanwhile, Pervez was denied access to resources, largely due to professional jealousies and reported differences with the Minister of Interior about the location of the NACTA, with Pervez favoring direct reporting to the prime minister, and the minister favoring a role for his ministry in managing the NACTA operations. Pervez resigned this summer before the government's ostensible decision to activate the Authority.

A draft of the NACTA legislation has been filed with the Ministry since April 2010, but has not yet reached the presidency, to be enacted first as an ordinance and then presented for ratification into law before parliament. (See Appendix II for selected text of the draft law.)²⁴ The draft law of NACTA has been amended by the new head to make the prime minister the chair of the governing body, with the Minister of Interior serving as vice chair. It is not clear if the military would have readily cooperated with this Center, but it is likely that had the NACTA proved itself, the army would have been prepared to work with it on specific programs and projects, provided it was not located inside the Ministry of Interior. The government has also dragged its feet on updating the legislation for the Anti-Terrorism Act, to give the law some teeth in tackling cases brought before the courts. Most terror suspects walk free because the law is poorly constructed, and because evidence and forensics are lacking.

As attention shifts from the northwest to central and southern Punjab as a hub of terrorism, the army will need to study that situation and work much more extensively with civilian authorities to counter the rise of militancy in the heartland. The fact that this is a Punjabi territory and the army is 60 percent Punjabi will complicate the battle. Punjab Law Minister Rana Sanaullah stated that the terror masterminds captured after the attack on army headquarters came from Faisalabad in central Punjab.²⁵ If and when the government decides to proceed against the militant headquarters in the Punjab, it will need to follow the cordon-and-search approach used in Sindh in the

²³ Interview with author, Air Headquarters, Islamabad, December 2, 2010.

²⁴ Minister of the Interior Rehman Malik explained in early December 2010 that the draft was being readied for the president's approval.

²⁵ Khaled Ahmed, "Is South Punjab a Hub for Terrorism?" *The Friday Times*, October 30–November 5, 2009.

1990s. But the civilian side will have to come up with an extensive (and expensive) program for de-weaponization and deradicalization in order to remove weaponry from the area, with incentives of cash and jobs training. Bringing the family of the individual into the process will be essential, since family ties matter a great deal in this region. Militant groups offer “insurance” payments for families of militants or terrorists killed in action.

A complicating factor in COIN operations in the Punjab will be the fact that military recruitment has been shifting from northern Punjab to central and southern Punjab, and from rural to urban areas.²⁶ Central and southern Punjab have many big towns and cities, so both the military and the militants are now recruiting in the same areas. The Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT), the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), and the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) are a few of the major organizations operating in the Punjab. They have set up franchise arrangements with the TTP and Al-Qaeda, and have even participated in anti-Shia sectarian battles in Balochistan and FATA, specifically in the Kurram Agency. They are reported to have helped train TTP militants in building IEDs and suicide vests. Members of the LeT were once trained by the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) for operations in Kashmir. The government of the time missed an opportunity to demobilize these groups when Musharraf ordered a cooldown of the battle against India in Kashmir. They were simply let go, which allowed them to form new alliances and become part of the terror network inside Pakistan and even across South Asia. LeT was involved in the attack on Mumbai, according to the evidence reportedly collected from Ajmal Kassab, the surviving gunman from the Mumbai attacks.

Now that the army has concluded major operations in Swat and Malakand, South Waziristan Agency, and Orakzai, the militants do not have any major base in FATA. They will therefore resort to IEDs and suicide attacks inside FATA against those who are seen to be collaborating with the army and government, and against soft targets in Pakistan. Attacks in Lahore against a Sufi shrine and in Wana, South

Waziristan, on August 23, 2010, during prayers at a mosque are an indication of this trend. A more-holistic COIN operation may now be needed, especially to enroll locals in fighting the IEDs.

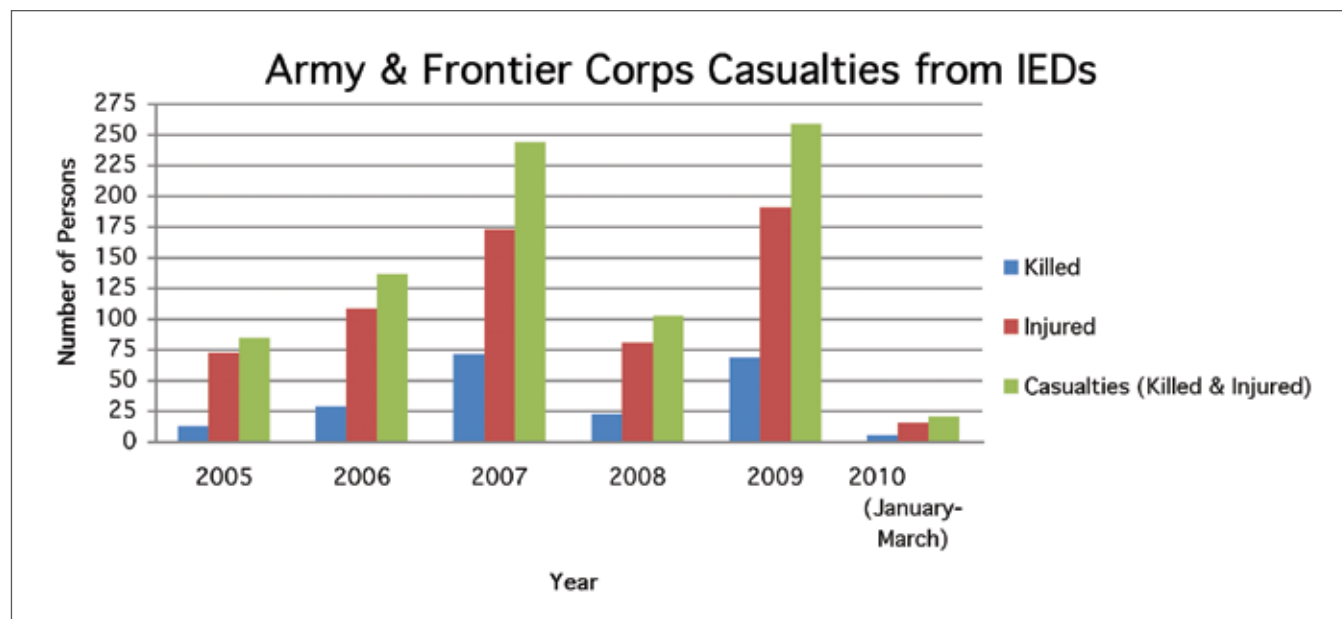
Fighting IEDs: Methodology, Data Collection, and Shortcomings

Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) arrived on the battle scene in FATA in 2005, after being used successfully by the Taliban in Afghanistan. While the approach may have been imported from Afghanistan, it appears that some of the training in making bombs could have come from the Punjabi militant groups that had explosives training at the hands of the ISI for the Kashmir theater. According to a former senior intelligence officer, at one time, an African-American U.S. retired noncommissioned officer, who was a Muslim, approached the ISI and offered his services as an explosives expert in the 1990s. He went on to train the Kashmiri militants in producing bombs and timed devices, using, among other things, light-sensitive triggers that allowed rockets to fire remotely hours after they had been set up. Initially, for instance, the rockets were set to go off during hours of darkness. When Indian forces became aware of this timing issue, the fuses were changed to go off in daylight, and could be planted during hours of darkness.

Casualties from IED attacks on the Frontier Corps and the Pakistan Army began rising, with about a dozen deaths in 2005, rising to more than twice that level in 2006 and 2007, before dropping to below 25 in 2008, but rising again to their highest level of close to 70 deaths in 2009. The drop in 2008 was probably a result of enhanced army activity and the injection of regular army forces into FATA and Swat and Malakand that may have affected the supply of bomb-making materiel into these areas. The numbers of injured were much higher, rising from around 70 in 2005 to about 190 in 2009. See Figure 2 on the next page.

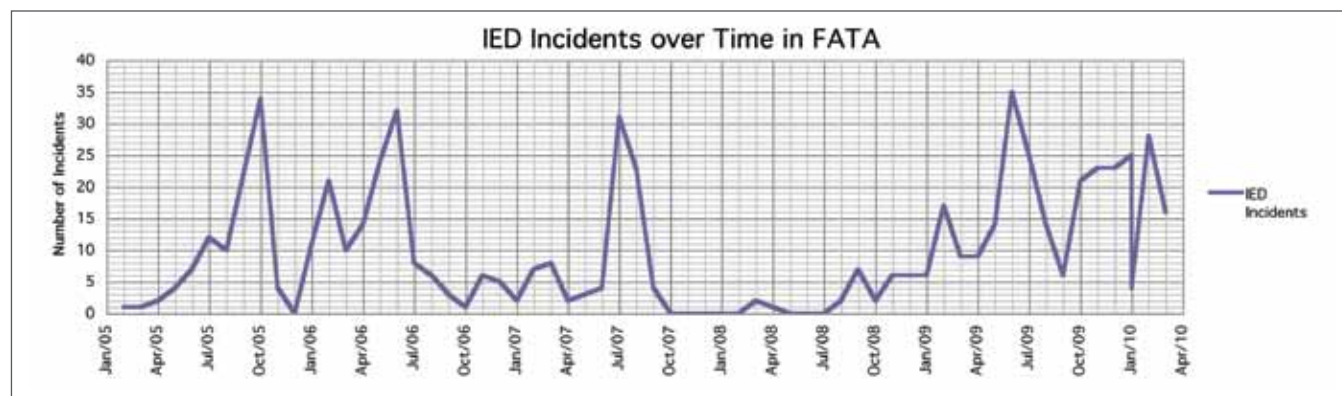
²⁶ For details, see “The Changing Pakistan Officer Corps” by Christine Fair and Shuja Nawaz, upcoming in the *Journal of Strategic Studies*, based on data collected by Shuja Nawaz from Pakistan Army GHQ in 2006. Advance web version can be found at <http://www.acus.org/highlight/changing-pakistan-army-officer-corps>.

Figure 2: Army & Frontier Corps Casualties from IEDs



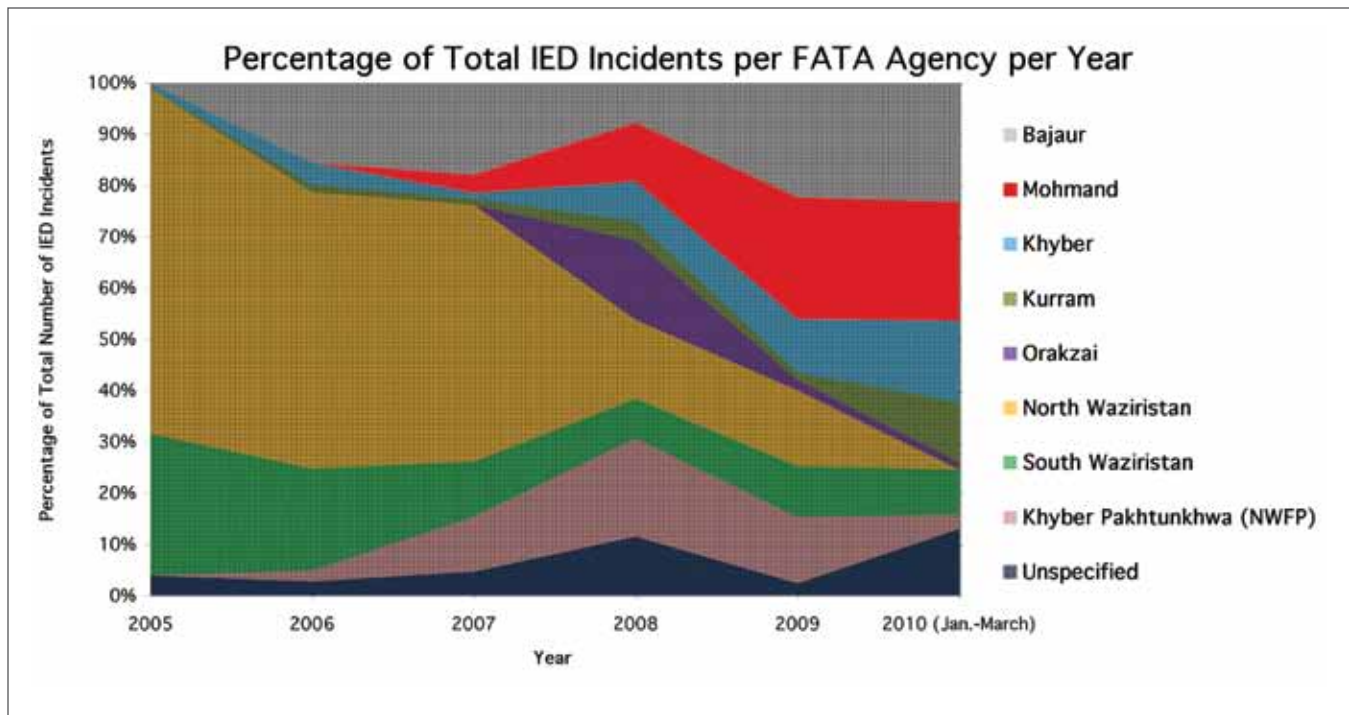
There is also a seasonality to the IED attacks. After an initial jump in October 2005, spikes occurred in the following years around June/July in 2006, 2007, and 2009. The generally low level of activity in 2008 was marked by a short spike in September. Again, this is related to heightened army activity in FATA and neighboring areas, and the opening of difficult mountain passes in the summer months that allowed materiel to come from Afghanistan. See Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: IED Incidents over Time in FATA



Interestingly, the IED incidents first occurred heavily in North and South Waziristan and Bajaur until 2008, after which they moved farther, to Mohmand and Khyber. The Waziristans were the base of Afghan and local Taliban activity and had many direct links to Afghanistan, as did Bajaur, where the insurgency was headed by an Afghan, and which was on the route to supplying Swat and Malakand with materiel and manpower. See Figure 4 on the next page.

Figure 4: Percentage of Total IED Incidents per FATA Agency per Year



The army and the FC had very little experience against IEDs, and relied heavily on traditional anti-mine methodology. They lacked jamming devices to protect against remote-controlled devices that were often exploded by cell-phone triggers. Their vehicles were light-skinned and susceptible to heavy damage. Each division has a company of engineers designated as a bomb disposal unit (BDU), whose main task is to defuse discovered bombs, or IEDs. There appears to be little evidence collection for forensic purposes, or for gathering data that might help develop bomb-design signatures or to link attacks and their patterns to individual bomb makers. As a result, there is a lack of analysis on distribution patterns of IED attacks, and no attempt to try to predict and prevent them from taking place. The best approach that appears to have worked is taken by the current IGFC, who believes in encouraging his troops to “walk the path” on foot patrols to detect IEDs by visual inspection. No evidence exists of recruiting locals to help spot unusual activity or changes in local terrain that might point to IED activity. In the forested areas of Swat and Malakand there were reports of IEDs being planted in tree limbs that overhang roadways. In some cases, a series of IEDs is planted in a row on the same stretch of road, so if one goes off or is detected and a convoy proceeds, the others would then be activated. I saw eight craters in a row between Malakand and Saidu Sharif on one stretch of the road.

The Pakistan Army is relying on suspect wand detectors against bombs and IEDs, similar to the ones that have been the subject of much debate in the Iraq theater.²⁷ The telescopic antenna on the wand is supposed to swing when it “detects” any explosive material or residue nearby. Desultory sentries at various checkpoints stand in the roadways, pointing these wands at all passing traffic and persons. When questioned about the efficacy of these devices, some army officers swear by them. It seems some of these wands were initially imported from the West but now are being supplied from China, and even manufactured locally. If that is the case, then the military may be the victim of a massive scam.

Officers in FATA and Swat and Malakand have expressed a desire to get better jamming devices, and especially those that could be used effectively against FM pirate radio broadcasts. They also want better technology to intercept communications and to track their transmission sources. Training institutions have been trying to set up a collection of IEDs for instructional purposes, and to help identify them by their shape and location in certain types of terrain. Clearly more expertise is needed in this area, especially

27 The British ADE-651, which sold for \$40,000 and above per piece, and relied on an RFID card inside it to “detect” explosives, was discredited in many reports, including a BBC investigation. See one story at <http://gizmodo.com/5455692/ade+651-magic-wand-bomb-detector-is-a-fraud-probably-killed-hundreds>. The Pakistani wand is similar in appearance.

now that massive army and FC operations have disrupted regular militant activity, forcing the militants to rely on IEDs and remote bombs.

Looming over the Pakistan COIN and LIC effort is the war across the border in Afghanistan. There is deep concern among Pakistan Army and Frontier Corps officers of all ranks about the trajectory and outcome of that war. At the same time, there is a lack of verifiable information, especially about the relationship between India and Afghanistan, and how that affects the insurgency inside Pakistan's borders. As a result, rumor and Internet-based factoids prevail and influence thinking, especially on the extent of the Indian presence in Afghanistan, and attempts by India to support Baloch and other insurgencies inside Pakistan. Adding to the complexity of the situation is the clash of historical narratives between the United States and Pakistan. The U.S. sees Pakistan as being duplicitous, starting with General Zia ul Haq's lies about the nuclear program, while Pakistan sees the U.S. as a fickle ally that engages in short-term relationships for its own advantage before departing the scene in a hurry. The precipitate U.S. withdrawal after the war against the Soviet Union ended in 1989 is often cited as an example of how the U.S. treats Pakistan like a "used condom."²⁸ The overwhelming view among officers is that the United States may well depart on its own rapid timetable once again, leaving Pakistan to handle the detritus of the war inside Afghanistan, and to cope with the spillover effects on the Pakistan side of the border with Afghanistan.

Lessons Learned

A review of the recent Pakistani experience with COIN and LIC operations indicates that the Pakistan Army has made significant progress in shifting its focus from conventional to irregular warfare. But it is being held back by a persistent fear of India to its east and the desire of its leadership to retain a strong conventional capability—all this while recognizing the urgency of the war within Pakistan, a war that it must win. But it cannot win it alone. It will need the active and total cooperation of the civilian government and other political actors. And it will need to fight the insurgency in a holistic manner, using the population as a weapon on its side. The army appears to recognize the need for political and economic solutions to the causes

of violence and insurgency. But the focus on military operations creates a thought dynamic of its own, under which those operations tend to become self-contained solutions. This is tempting because such operations often are discrete and contain activities that are within the control of the army. But it is what they do not control that often determines the outcomes: the civilian aspects of COIN, and how populations behave.

In early 2008, soon after the new civilian government took over, the army chief and the director general of the ISI briefed the political leaders of all parties together on the insurgency, asking them to come up with direction for the military, to which there was no response. After much cajoling by the military, the new civilian government managed to get all parties in the National Assembly and the Senate together to support unanimously a resolution passed on October 23, 2008, which spelled out a policy against insurgency and terrorism inside Pakistan. Having passed the resolution, the various parties withdrew from public view, and little was done to support the government's efforts in this direction. Party politics took over and the effort fizzled, leaving it to the military to bear the brunt of the COIN effort. Until a joint system of policy deliberations and actions emerge, COIN efforts will remain constrained and limited to military action. The military complains that they cannot get the civilians to engage on strategic issues.

Meanwhile, the training regimen of the Pakistan Army appears to be heading in a new direction now by raising issues related to the human terrain and the motivations of key societal players. But the army still lacks the capability to operate in the human terrain with strong data sets and deep knowledge. It lacks the capacity to make the shift at the same speed at which it has moved from conventional training to COIN or LIC training. As it occupies greater territory in the FATA and evicts the TTP from its tribal bases, the insurgents will resort to disruptive warfare, using IEDs and suicide bombings of both military and soft civilian targets.

In the final analysis, COIN and IED operations depend heavily on the human terrain and knowledge of local conditions, language, mores, and social structures. While military operations can help disrupt militancy and insurgents' bases, they cannot eliminate them. Military action attacks the symptoms, not the causes of insurgency and militancy. Only an effective sociopolitical approach—based on economic incentives, among others—can help

²⁸ A phrase used by a Pakistan press attaché at the embassy in Washington, D.C., during the early 1990s; subsequent references often clean it up with the alternate wording, "a used Kleenex."

bring together an effective network of CT and COIN operations to thwart militancy and to reduce its ability to take root and spread.

Pakistan's army has learned by doing in its fight against the insurgency and militancy that has challenged the writ of government. It has very rapidly shifted its focus to better training and response to the challenge. But a political and civilian strategy has been largely confined to rhetoric. Unless the civilian and military approaches mesh and become mutually supportive, the army will need to fight and re-fight its battles for years to come. Given the tenuous civil-military relationships of the past and the frequency of *coups d'état*, it is urgent that the government of Pakistan take very seriously the need to develop its civilian capacity in the CT arena, and to better understand COIN so it can successfully work with and represent the people's wishes and direct and work with its army. If it does not do this, history may repeat itself.



Appendix 1: The “Durand Line” Agreement¹

Document demarcating the border between Afghanistan and British India; signed by Sir Henry Mortimer Durand and Amir Abdur Rahman Khan in Kabul, Afghanistan, November 12, 1893

Whereas certain questions have arisen regarding the frontier of Afghanistan on the side of India, and whereas both His Highness the Amir and the Government of India are desirous of settling these questions by friendly understanding, and of fixing the limit of their respective spheres of influence, so that for the future there may be no difference of opinion on the subject between the allied Governments, it is hereby agreed as follows:

1. The eastern and southern frontier of His Highness's dominions, from Wakhan to the Persian border, shall follow the line shown in the map attached to this agreement.
2. The Government of India will at no time exercise interference in the territories lying beyond this line on the side of Afghanistan, and His Highness the Amir will at no time exercise interference in the territories lying beyond this line on the side of India.
3. The British Government thus agrees to His Highness the Amir retaining Asmar and the valley above it, as far as Chanak. His Highness agrees, on the other hand, that he will at no time exercise interference in Swat, Bajaur, or Chitral, including the Arnawai or Bashgal valley. The British Government also agrees to leave to His Highness the Birmal tract as shown in the detailed map already given to His Highness, who relinquishes his claim to Chageh.
4. The frontier line will hereafter be laid down in detail and demarcated, wherever this may be practicable and desirable, by joint British and Afghan

commissioners, whose object will be to arrive by mutual understanding at a boundary which shall adhere with the greatest possible exactness to the line shown in the map attached to this agreement, having due regard to the existing local rights of villages adjoining the frontier.

5. With reference to the question of Chaman, the Amir withdraws his objection to the new British cantonment and concedes to the British Government the rights purchased by him in the Sirkai Tilerai water. At this part of the frontier the line will be drawn as follows:

From the crest of the Khwaja Amran range near the Psha Kotal, which remains in British territory, the line will run in such a direction as to leave Murgha Chaman and the Sharobo spring to Afghan outpost known locally as Lashkar Dand. The line will then pass half-way between the railway station and the hill known as the Mian Baldak, and turning south-wards, will rejoin the Khwaja Amran range, leaving the Gwasha Post in British territory, and the road to Shorawak to the west and south of Gwasha in Afghanistan. The British Government will not exercise any interference within half a mile of the road.

6. The above articles of agreement are regarded by the Government of India and His Highness the Amir of Afghanistan as a full and satisfactory settlement of all the principal differences of opinion which have arisen between them in regard to the frontier, and both the Government of India and His Highness the Amir undertake that any differences of detail, such as those which will have to be considered hereafter by the officers appointed to demarcate the boundary line, shall be settled in a friendly spirit,

¹ Education Branch of the Frontier Corps. *Frontier Corps NWFP*. Informational brochure containing full text of the 1893 “Durand Line” Agreement. Pakistan, 2009.

so as to remove for the future as far as possible all causes of doubt and misunderstanding between the two Governments.

7. Being fully satisfied of His Highness's goodwill to the British Government, and wishing to see Afghanistan independent and strong, the Government of India will raise no objection to the purchase and import by His Highness of munitions of war, and they will themselves grant him some help in this respect. Further, in order to mark their sense of the friendly spirit in which His Highness the Amir has entered into these negotiations, the Government of India undertake to increase by the sum of six lakhs of rupees a year the subsidy of twelve lakhs now granted to His Highness.

H. M. Durand Amir Abdur Rahman Khan
Kabul, November 12, 1893

The signed original of this agreement is kept in the archives of the Pakistan Foreign Ministry.



Appendix 2: Selected Excerpts From The Draft

National Counter Terrorism Authority Pakistan Ordinance 2010

An Ordinance

WHEREAS, the menace of terrorism and extremism is becoming an existential threat to the state and needs to be responded to and addressed comprehensively;

AND WHEREAS, in order to eliminate this menace, a focal institution to unify state response by planning, combining, coordinating, and implementing the Federal Government's Policy through an exhaustive strategic planning and necessary ancillary mechanism is needed;

AND WHEREAS, the President is satisfied that circumstances exist which render it necessary to take immediate action to set up such an institution in the country;

NOW, THEREFORE, in pursuance of Article 89 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is pleased to make and promulgate the following Ordinance, namely:

3. Establishment of the Authority.

- (1) As soon as may be, but not later than 30 days after the promulgation of this Ordinance, the Federal Government shall, by notification in the official gazette, establish an Authority to be known as the National Counter Terrorism Authority Pakistan for carrying out the purposes of this Ordinance.
- (2) The Authority shall be a body corporate having perpetual succession and a common seal with powers, subject to the provision of this Ordinance, to acquire and hold property, movable and immovable, and to sue and be sued by its name.

- (3) The headquarters of the Authority shall be at Islamabad, and it may set up offices at such place or places in Pakistan, with the approval of the Federal Government.

4. Functions of the Authority.

The Authority shall have the following functions, namely:

- (a) to receive and collate information/intelligence and coordinate between all relevant stakeholders to formulate threat assessment with periodical reviews to be presented to the Federal Government for making adequate and timely efforts to counter terrorism and extremism;
- (b) to coordinate and prepare comprehensive National Counter Terrorism and National Counter Extremism Strategies, and review them on a periodical basis;
- (c) to develop Action Plans against terrorism and extremism and report to the Federal Government about implementation of these plans, on a periodical basis;
- (d) to carry out research on topics relevant to terrorism and extremism, and to prepare and circulate documents;
- (e) to carry out liaison with international entities for facilitating cooperation in areas relating to terrorism and extremism; and
- (f) the Authority shall have administrative and financial powers as approved by the Federal Government.

5. Board of Governors.

- (1) The Authority shall have a Board of Governors comprising the following, namely:
 - (a) Prime Minister – Chairman
 - (b) Minister for Interior – Deputy Chairman
 - (c) Chief Ministers of 4 Provinces and Gilgit/Baltistan – Members
 - (d) Prime Minister of AJK – Member
 - (e) Minister for Finance – Member
 - (f) Minister for Foreign Affairs – Member
 - (g) Minister for Education – Member
 - (h) Minister for Information – Member
 - (i) Minister for Defence – Member
 - (j) One Senator (recommended by Chairman Senate) – Member
 - (k) One MNA (recommended by Speaker National Assembly) – Member
 - (l) Secretary, Ministry of Interior – Member
 - (m) DG ISI – Member
 - (n) DG IB – Member
 - (o) DIG Special Branch (4 Provinces, AJK and Gilgit/Baltistan) – Members
 - (p) DG FIA – Member
 - (q) National Coordinator – Member
 - (r) Any person can be invited by special invitation.
- (2) The National Coordinator shall act as the Secretary to the Board.

6. Procedures of the meeting of the Board.

- (1) The members of the Board shall participate in the meeting, and 50 percent of the members would form a quorum to hold a meeting.
- (2) The Board may meet as and when required, but it shall meet at least twice a year.
- (3) In the absence of the Chairman of the Board, the Deputy Chairman shall preside over the meeting.
- (4) No act or proceedings of the Commission shall be invalid by reason only of the existence of a vacancy in, or defect in the constitution of, the Board.

7. Powers and functions of the Board.

- (1) The Board's powers and functions shall include, but would not be limited to, the following, namely:
 - (a) The Board shall exercise all the power and functions of the Authority;
 - (b) To provide strategic vision and oversee activities of the Authority;
 - (c) To make rules and regulations and approve policies and manuals in order to carry out the purposes of this Ordinance;
 - (d) To approve the annual budget of the Authority.
- (2) The Board may, through a majority decision of its Members and subject to such conditions as it deems necessary, delegate any of its functions and powers to the Chairman and National Coordinator. All actions taken in the exercise of all such delegated functions and powers shall be submitted to the Board for information in the subsequent Board meeting.

8. National Coordinator.

- (1) There shall be a National Coordinator of the Authority to be appointed by the Federal Government, on the recommendation of the Ministry of Interior.
- (2) The National Coordinator shall have the following powers, as delegated by the Board, and instructions issued by the Federal Government from time to time:
 - (a) To execute the policies and plans approved by the Board and instructions issued by the Federal Government;
 - (b) To determine terms and conditions of the employees and to grant additional allowances or any other incentives to them by making rules and regulations to that effect in accordance with the Federal Government policies;
 - (c) To take appropriate measures for effective administration of the Authority;
 - (d) To engage any person or entity on a contract basis with the approval of Ministry of Interior to carry out assignments, or for the consultancy in accordance with the acclaimed best practices;
 - (e) To establish administrative structures at the field level for the efficient implementation and accessibility of the Authority;

- (f) To submit quarterly progress reports to the Board on the financial and functional aspects of the Authority;
- (g) Secretary Ministry of Interior shall be the Principal Accounting Officer of the Authority, and the National Coordinator will be the Drawing and Disbursing Officer;
- (h) To perform such other functions as may be delegated by the Board;
- (i) Any other assignment given by the Federal Government in the respective field.

11. Delegation of powers.

The National Coordinator may by special order delegate his powers and functions to the Deputy National Coordinator. However, the powers and authorities delegated to the Chairman by the Board, through special or general orders, shall not be delegated.

16. Annual Report.

The Authority shall compile and submit an annual report on its activities and accounts to the Ministry of Interior.

17. The officers of Federal, Provincial, Area, and Local Governments to assist the Authority.

The officers of Federal Government, Provincial Governments, Area Governments, and Local Governments, including the Islamabad Capital Territory Administration, shall assist the Authority and its officers in the discharge of its functions under the provisions of this Ordinance, and the rules and regulations made thereunder.

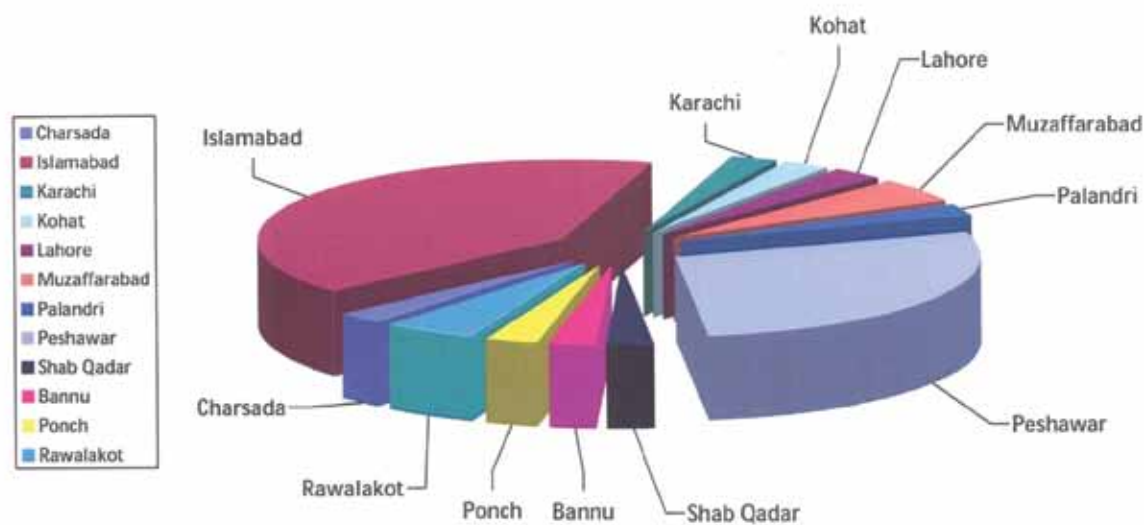
Asif Ali Zardari
President



Appendix 3: IED Activity in Pakistan

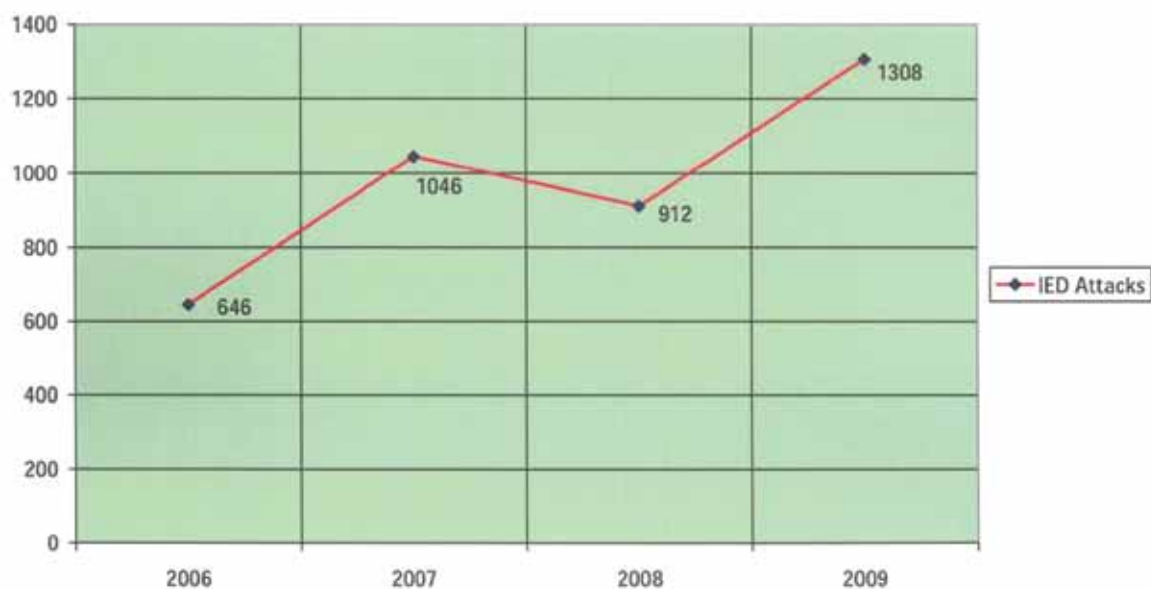
Target Cities

Directorate General Civil Defence, Islamabad



IED Attacks (2006-2009)

Directorate General Civil Defence, Islamabad



Details of IED Incidents (According To The Received Reports)

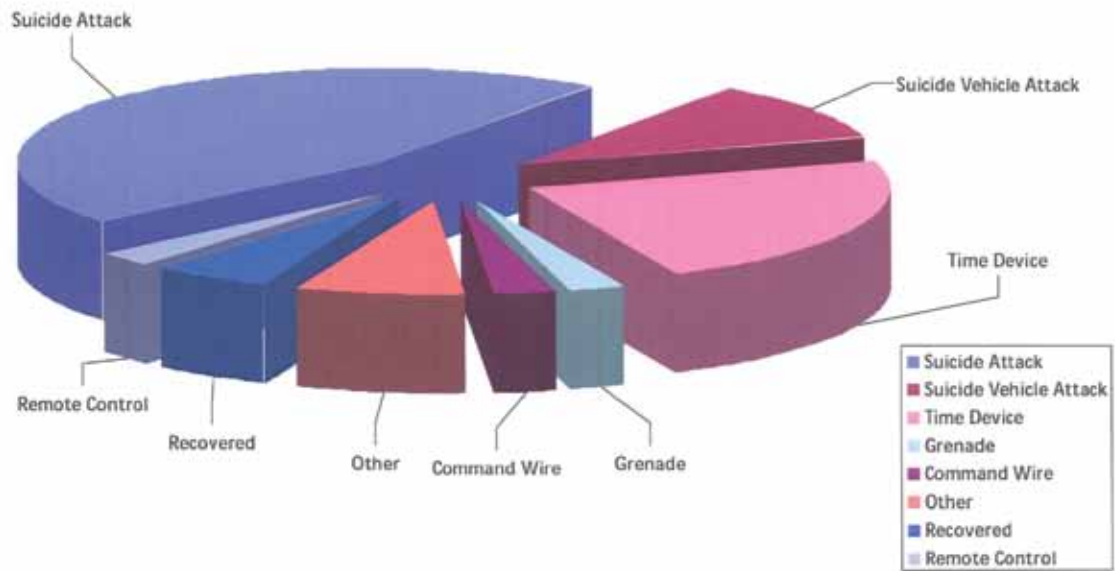
Directorate General Civil Defence, Islamabad

Received reports also include the previous year's incidents.

Area	Types of IED Used								No. of Incidents	Dead	Injured
	Suicide Attack	Suicide Vehicle Attack	Time Device	Grenade	Command Wire	Other	Recovered	Remote Control			
Charsada	1								1	27	55
Islamabad	11	3	1	1					16	139	501
Karachi	1								1	47	80
Kohat		1							1	18	76
Lahore						1			1	0	0
Muzaffarabad	2								2	10	53
Palandri						1			1	3	12
Peshawar	2		6				2	1	11	34	79
Shab Qadar			1						1	0	0
Bannu			1						1	0	0
Ponch					1				1	0	0
Rawalakot	1					1			2	1	12
Total	18	4	9	1	1	3	2	1	39	279	868

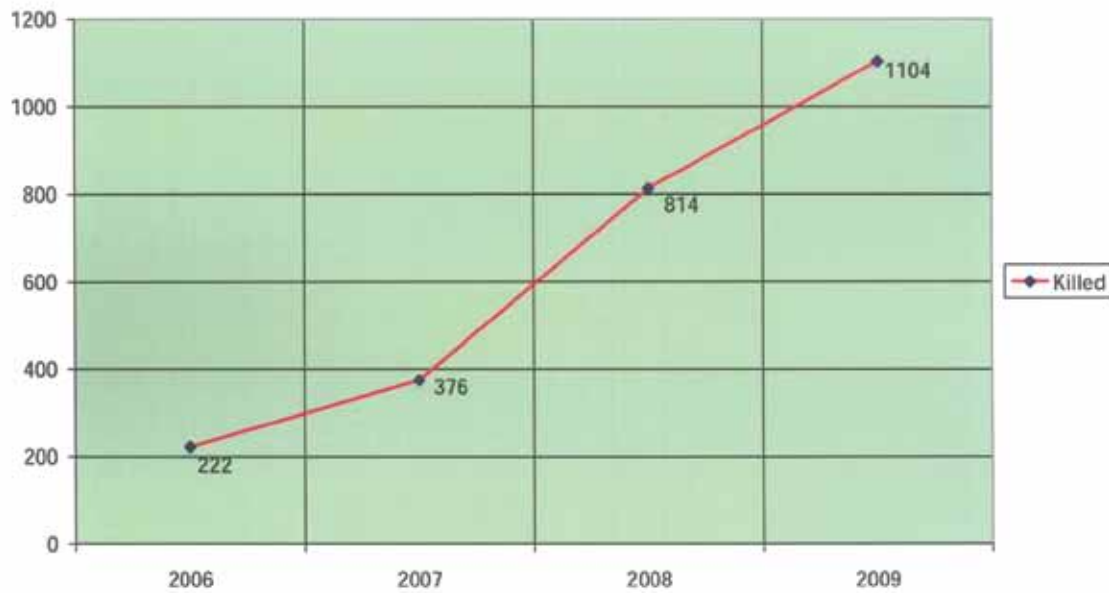
Directorate General Civil Defence, Islamabad

Types of IEDs Used



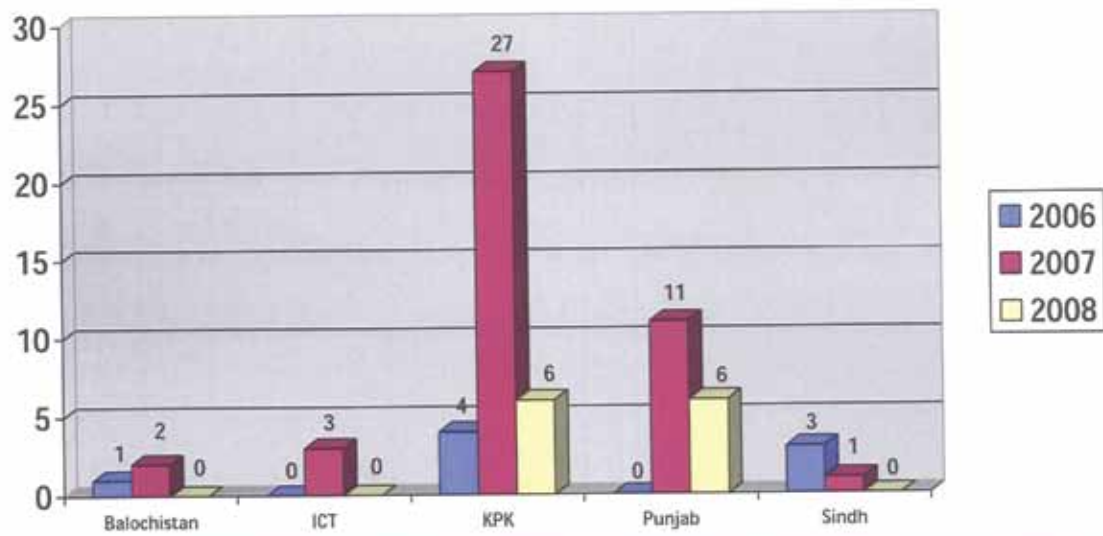
Directorate General Civil Defence, Islamabad

Killings in IED Attacks (2006-2009)



Directorate General Civil Defence, Islamabad

Suicide Attacks (2006-2008)



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