

“Creating an environment that counteracts militant ideologies and radicalism in Pakistan”

By Pak Institute for
Peace Studies (PIPS)

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Introduction

A growing realisation among various states that counter-terrorism efforts to kill and capture militants will not in themselves suffice to check the militant onslaught has prompted them to evolve “soft” approaches and strategies to win the hearts and minds of the people and eliminate hatred, intolerance and extreme interpretations of religion. Such soft approaches are at the heart of various counter-radicalisation and deradicalisation programmes that are being implemented in various Muslim-majority and other countries. The Egyptian, Yemeni, Jordanian and Indonesian models essentially developed as ideological responses to terrorism and extremism, while the Saudi model emphasised rehabilitation through psychological and social modules, along with ideological responses. Most of these programmes are based on the assumption that religious extremism is a matter of ideology originating from a (mis) interpretation of religion that leads to deviant social and psychological behaviours, and there is sufficient evidence available to indicate that this assumption is valid for Pakistan.

The dearth of ideological responses in Pakistan to counter militant ideologies not only confuses public opinion, but also makes people vulnerable to what militants offer them in the name of religion. Militants are far ahead of their enemies in propagating their ideologies through their publications and electronic media campaigns. Nonetheless, irrespective of the debate about the extent to which militants and their ideologies are entrenched in the sociocultural fabric of Pakistan, it is hard to gloss over the fact that the Pakistani people do not yet appear to be fully convinced of the need to oppose the perpetrators of militancy and violence. A positive role for the state and society in Pakistan is thus indispensable for creating an environment that helps people resist the appeal of militant ideologies and contributes to developing prevention and response strategies.

Against this backdrop, the Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) and the Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre (NOREF) jointly held a seminar in Islamabad on October 11th 2013. With an overarching goal of contributing towards creating an environment that reduces the appeal of militant ideologies and consequently the risk of violence in Pakistan, the seminar had the following linked objectives:

1. to explore and debate ways that could be used to strengthen the Pakistani media’s progressive role in reporting on conflict and countering the appeal of militant ideologies;
2. to assess and suggest education-related interventions that could enable Pakistan’s mainstream and madrasa education systems to become more responsive to sociocultural needs and imperatives for achieving peace and harmony in Pakistan; and

3. to discuss the prospects and methodologies for disengaging militants from militant ideologies, rehabilitating them and reintegrating them into society.

The focus on the educational, media and reintegration aspects was deliberate. Firstly, Pakistan’s education system has apparently failed to inculcate desirable socio-cultural values among the people and provide an alternative narrative to counter the violent sectarian and militant groups’ justification of violence in the name of religion. Some scholars and researchers hold mainstream and madrasa educational systems in Pakistan almost equally responsible for promoting intolerance and extremist views in Pakistani society.¹

Secondly, most media researchers and analysts assert that Pakistan’s mainstream media have been a source of considerable confusion among the people regarding militancy and extremism (Din, 2010). Some believe that a section of the Pakistani media has been following an approach that is very close to that of the militants, as reflected in the latter’s media output (Naqui, 2009).

Thirdly, until very recently – before the launch of a rehabilitation programme for detainees in Swat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP)¹ – the use of soft approaches to disengage militants from violent ideologies was unknown in Pakistan. The country still needs to learn from rehabilitation approaches pursued by various countries and design and implement one that is appropriate to the local context.

Introductory session “Introduction to objectives and scope of seminar”

Amir Rana

This event is jointly organised by the Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre, better known as NOREF, and the Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS). The purpose is to enrich the ongoing debate on how to counter militant ideologies and related challenges facing Pakistan in terms of this issue. Prominent scholars from across the country and elsewhere will discuss various aspects of this issue.

Marco Mezzera

I will start with a brief introduction to my organisation, NOREF, which was established in 2008 and has since been working on peacebuilding. With its prime aim that of closing the gap between research and policy practices, NOREF focuses on special areas like Afghanistan and Pakistan. Its collaboration with PIPS, in particular in the holding of this joint seminar, aims to enhance our understanding of the issues of radicalisation and extremism in Pakistan and ways to respond to these and other similar challenges.

¹ See, for instance, Hoodbhoy (2009: 58-64); Hafeez (1991: 256); Rana and Sial (2012: 18, 90-96).

² The Pakistani army launched an initiative to rehabilitate detainees in the conflict-affected Swat region of KP in 2009 after a successful military operation against extremist militants there.

Athar Abbas

Chair's remarks

In Pakistan we have a highly polarised society with innumerable cleavages and fault lines. Like many other countries, Pakistan also faces many internal challenges in terms of its security and economy. External factors are also impinging on the internal situation. One cannot wait for all these factors to subside, whether they emerge on the western border, the eastern border, or beyond our borders, before starting to address the internal security situation. We have to focus on the immediate threat, which is growing. Our chances of solving these problems will increase if we create a cooperative environment around us instead of the confrontational mode of the recent past.

I think the major problem at the moment is the physical onslaught launched by all those groups that have refused to submit to the state's writ and are expanding their space. Simultaneously, these groups are exploiting a deformed misinterpretation of religion and ideology and are abusing people's simplicity and religious feelings. The Pakistani state has been using both hard and soft power without a clear strategy to counter terrorism. This creates a vacuum. Compared to the extent of the militants' propagation of their ideology, the Pakistani state is virtually absent and there is thus no counter-narrative. Therefore, we are operating in an environment that lacks a state strategy. The result is a total disconnect between the state and any kind of programme or policy to deal with extremism. In such a context, the chances of moving ahead are extremely slim.

The Swat military operation was launched in 2009 when the state was on the verge of complete erosion under the threat of the collapse of its institutions and the breakdown of law and order. Militants had created a space for themselves in Swat and were gradually consolidating their position, so a military operation was launched there to restore the writ of the state. Before the operation we tried to create a niche or space for the state's counter-narrative. Initially we did not know how to counter militant ideologues such as Shah Doran and Fazlullah, so we contacted religious scholars who were not physically threatened, e.g. Maulana Ghamidi, Sarfaraz Naeemi and other scholars, who became involved in a debate on the subject. The people were thus free to draw their own conclusions. We replicated the model in South Waziristan and were able to isolate Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) before starting the military operation there. Military methods can to an extent create an environment or space for manoeuvre and result in local success stories, but the state is a very large organisation of which the military is only a part. Unless and until the political leadership of the state takes over the model and develops it, it will not give sustainable results.

I personally think that TTP is not an ideological group but a group of thugs and criminals who have borrowed the name "Taliban" from across the border. We have to use hard power to create a space for soft power in the short

term. In the longer term we need to apply this soft power in various forms. Unless and until we are given special powers, the problems will persist, because the other side is not bound by rules and regulations and can thus more easily undermine any madrasa and education reforms instituted by the state. Finally, I would like to say that the state and state functionaries are responsible for causing the situation we currently find ourselves in. Civil society should pressurise the state to undo the knot of terrorism. However, one should also acknowledge the past mistakes of the military, which must shoulder its share of the blame because of its involvement in politics and its past strategy of supporting jihadis.

Dr Hassan Askari Rizvi

Keynote address

Pakistan faces intense internal strife that threatens the country as a coherent and functional state and fragments Pakistani society. The state is unable or unwilling to protect the individual in parts of Pakistan. If citizens have to negotiate their security with non-state armed groups, then the primacy of the state is significantly undermined. Unless we address this issue, Pakistan could degenerate into a dysfunctional state. Two types of challenges are relevant here: firstly, how to re-establish control over some of the territories that effectively have been lost to certain groups and, secondly, how to build popular support for the state's centrality in term of power and authority in society.

The central issue is one of winning people's hearts and minds. If we talk about the intellectual, societal and political underpinnings of the war against terrorism, I would regard those underpinnings as weak, confused and contradictory. This is the most serious and weakest element in Pakistan's efforts to counter terrorism. What could be more tragic for Pakistan than the fact that, after losing over 40,000 civilians, military and paramilitary personnel, and police, it is still known as an epicentre of terrorism. A number of political and religious leaders in Pakistan express regret that the military is killing our own people, but they are silent about the people being killed by militants. This is one-sided narrative and represents a failure of the state and society.

Ideological extremism, intolerance and terrorism do not emerge overnight, but are the consequence of a long process. The tendency in Pakistan is not to talk about problems. Unless something hits us right in our faces we are not prepared to take up a position. The dominant societal narrative of what is happening in and around Pakistan seems to reflect the one offered by far-right, Islamist and militant groups. The key tendency is to blame terrorism either on the faulty policies of the Pakistani state, on its willingness to play the U.S. game in the region, or on outsiders. Why has this narrative – i.e. the one we are trying to counter – become society's dominant perception? The first reason is the religious conservatism and militancy of the 1980s and 1990s, which were part of the Pakistani

state's strategy. This included civilian leaders, the military and external partners like the U.S. and the West. Even after the departure of the U.S. in 1990, the Pakistani state continued to pursue this strategy.

The state has more opportunities to affect the situation in a particular country because it controls rewards and punishments that affect the propagation of particular ideas. Pakistan's foreign policy was partly outsourced to private militias, or militant groups, in the 1980s and 1990s, and this is an important factor. In junior and high schools concepts such as citizenship and the obligations of an individual towards society were not taught. High school textbooks taught the characteristics of an ideal Muslim society, not those of Pakistani society. In other words, the emphasis was on Islamic movements and Ummah, or the community of Muslim nations. Along with madrasa education, state education was also responsible for this process, but madrasas proliferated in the 1980s, especially in KP and the tribal areas. The University of Nebraska in the U.S. undertook a major study of the focus of education in the madrasas that were established in Pakistan close to the Afghan border.

In the second decade of the 21st century we have created a "lost generation" of people under 40. So I was not surprised when the governor of Punjab, Salman Taseer, was assassinated, which was a direct result of the Pakistani state project and the involvement of the state and its political institutions with far-right and militant organisations. Whenever there was a need to pressurise the U.S., these militant groups would become very active. Some examples are the agitation organised against the Kerry Lugar Bill; the memo issue; and Osama bin Laden's killing. From here the whole debate shifted to the violation of Pakistan's sovereignty after the Salala incident. The establishment of the Defence of Pakistan Council is another example. This gives space, legitimacy and credibility to a particular point of view that has not always been the state's point of view. The problem is that the military is soft on some groups, especially Afghan groups, because of the uncertainty surrounding the post-2014 scenario in Afghanistan. Simultaneously, the civilian leadership is undermined because of political considerations, i.e. the fear of losing votes and popular support.

There are no quick fixes for Pakistan. The reform of the national mindset will take at least a whole generation, both in terms of causes and remedies. The military requires popular and political support. Unfortunately, political support is missing for the military's counter-terrorism initiatives. All three political parties that supported the military and anti-terrorism policies lost ground in the 2013 elections. This trend has to be reversed because it results in the brutalisation of society. The killing of two people is no longer a front-page story; only if fifty or sixty people are killed will anyone take any notice. This creates anxiety and psychological problems among people.

Counter-insurgency comprises four elements: (1) political means (dialogue); (2) military means; (3) economic reconstruction and development; and (4) mindset, i.e. building a positive narrative that emphasises the primacy/centrality of the state. If civil strife persists in any society and becomes intense over a period of time, it will always attract international attention because of the spillover phenomenon affecting neighbouring states as parties to the conflict seek external support. Other states become involved because they want to pursue their own agendas. Consequently, all insurgencies have attracted international attention, and external involvement is not unique to Pakistan. What *is* unique to Pakistan is that we are using this external involvement as an excuse for non-action. We have to contain the role played by international players, and the linkages between insurgents and international players have to be cut off. How you go about creating a deradicalisation programme is very important because some people will attempt to exploit this process. A comprehensive alternate narrative is needed and this will require an equally comprehensive effort on the part of the government. And the most important thing in this regard is unity of mind and direction. If state leaders are confused, this will confuse the common people even more.

First session

"Ways to strengthen the Pakistani media's progressive role in reporting conflict and countering the appeal of militant ideologies"

Tariq Khosa

Chair's remarks

Ladies and gentlemen, most of you must have read that the Pakistani state is weak; however, Pakistani society is still strong and resilient, although confused, divided and chaotic. This is the context in which we are holding our present discussions. The Pakistani state is weak because of its own policies. I will start with what I call the three P's: politicians, police on the front line and the public. The politicians in this country have still not emerged from the traditional patronage and kinship system. Unless we address this, unless good governance is provided, unless justice is both done and seen to be done, more terrorism and other core problems will be the eventual result. So the basic issue is the politicians. In terms of police on the front line, Pakistani law enforcement agencies were conceived on the model of the Irish constabulary, i.e. as a military force, not as line agencies. The police force has to be an operational instrument in the hands of the state, which is why I say that the police in this country are victims rather than villains. The third "P" is the public. Members of the public are confused as what the state is up to. What policies are being adopted on specific (particularly controversial) issues? It is not clear. The people of Pakistan find the social contract between the state and society becoming weaker and weaker because of the lack of an adequate constitution and the rule of law, and the frequent imposition of martial law. The politicians have also not provided good governance and there is distrust in the minds of the country's

citizens, who are totally disappointed with the state. So, practically speaking, the Pakistani state and society are effectively at war with each other.

Now let me come to the three M's: mullahs, the military and militants. This is where our problem lies. Muhammad Ali Jinnah's August 11th 1947 speech in the Constituent Assembly defined our national purpose: Pakistan would be a democratic state based on the principles of Islamic justice. But a tolerant version of the state that protects minorities and guarantees equality for all citizens was sacrificed in favour of expedient policies adopted in line with the Objectives Resolution. "Mullah" is basically a mindset characterised by religious extremism and a refusal to listen to another's perspective. Let us now come to the military. It says, "we can fix all problems. The civilians cannot handle it, the politicians fight with each other and the system does not work, so let's intervene and fix it". It is an undoubted fact that the frequent military interventions the country has seen are the reason for where Pakistan finds itself today. They divided Pakistan and made it a security state where society is basically at the receiving end of whatever the military decides, rather than the other way round. So the term "military" is once again a mindset. And military leaders also led us into war. Democrats eventually find solutions through reconciliation and not by starting wars. Currently the "mullah-military nexus" is the reason for the presence of militants in this country. The encouragement of militants was part of a deliberate design to wage a proxy war, adopt a non-traditional approach to dealing with the situation in the region and outsource violence. Militias were created despite specific constitutional provisions that forbid them. So militias were blatantly created among us by the state. In my view these three M's are responsible for the problems we face today.

The 1980s was a decade of decadence. Hypocrisy was institutionalised, proxy wars were fought and eventually jihad became an instrument of state policy. Internal factors are currently involved in this process, but external players are also involved. You must have read *The Thistle and the Drone* by Akbar Ahmed, in which he says that what is currently going on is basically a conflict between Pakistan's centre and its periphery (Ahmed, 2013). Look at the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Balochistan peripheries, where the rule of law is weak and various parallel systems are running the administration. This will help us understand how the conflict has evolved between tribal Islam and the progressive, modern centre. This is a clash of values between the old and the new, change versus the status quo, and a weak periphery versus a strong centre. Ahmad concludes that the U.S. is fighting a war in the totally wrong way. Whether it is in Yemen, Somalia, Iraq, Kuwait, Afghanistan or other countries, this fight against tribal Islam is basically alienating the whole population, which is not the right strategy to follow. The issue that is often raised is "Is it their war or is it our war?"

This nation must know that external factors are involved. The U.S. is fighting an undeclared war on our soil whether through drones or by other means. We must recognise this and face it. As a result we face the challenges of sectarianism, ethnic divisions and insurgency.

My thesis is that should a crisis arise it is the militants who are going to unravel the state of Pakistan. The state is strong – it has the sixth-largest army in the world, it is the seventh member of the nuclear club and it has a population of 200 million people. How can we be a weak state? Indeed, we should not be a weak state. So society must develop a narrative in which we say that "we will tackle these divisions". We are talking about this narrative in this seminar. In light of this, I wish to pose some questions to my friends here who are journalists. What are the motives of the terrorists? Why do they spread fear and insecurity? How do you deal with such a situation? Article 9 of the constitution deals with freedom of expression, but reasonable restraints must be imposed on this freedom. The state should take the broad society and other stakeholders on board and needs to discuss/reflect on how to deal with terrorists. There can be no compromise on life and liberty, which are absolute concepts, and it is the state's absolute responsibility to protect the life and liberty of its citizens.

Saleem Safi

Factors that constrain the Pakistani media's progressive role in conflict-sensitive reporting and analysis

The extent to which the Pakistani media are being used by extremists for their purposes is unique. Militants are exploiting the media so skillfully that the media might claim that they are fighting courageously against the militant mindset, but on the whole they are being used for the spread of Talibanisation or militancy. I think the reasons for the militants' effective use of the media are the media's failure to respond to militant ideologies and create awareness among the people, and should be seen on three levels: the sociocultural environment and constraints faced by the media, the media's internal dynamics and problems, and contradictions in the state's official policies.

Pakistan has a strong culture of feudalism and tribalism. No one can present his/her independent analysis while living in such a culture, particularly in FATA, southern Punjab, Balochistan and the interior of Sindh. When we look at the situation of the media in the large cities, various pressure groups are present there. These pressure groups might be very educated and claim to be liberal thinkers, like our political parties, but their attitude towards the media and journalists is harsher than that of the feudal and tribal elders. Then there is the prevalent "fatwa culture" in our society, or the practice of putting bad and humiliating labels on institutions and people, including the media and journalists, which constitutes a major obstacle to free reporting and analysis. And the most powerful weapon in the hands of religious fanatics is that of declaring someone a "kafir" (disbeliever) or "murtid" (apostate), which makes

certain issues no-go areas for journalists. The *fatwa* culture has various other garbs as well. Nationalists, for example, instead of relying on facts and logic, might declare you an agent of the army, ISI, etc. The establishment is also using the *fatwa* culture badly. In the media, too, you are either declared to be a “Talib” (singular of Taliban) or a “liberal fascist”. So, the major obstacle regarding the Taliban issue – or virtually any other issue, for that matter – is the collective culture of *fatwa*. A related obstacle, which I think does not exist in the developed world, is our personal relationships, friendships and traditions, in terms of which, if I am dealing with a particular issue, someone brings my elder brother to me or someone talks to my mother. For instance, to stop me from reporting on various issues, people went to my mother and asked her to stop me. And on such occasions I felt helpless. Then there is the issue of hypocrisy, which undermines professionalism in the media. Writers and journalists hardly express in their reporting and analysis what they tell you in private. No doubt an element of fear adds to this hypocrisy.

Regarding the media’s internal dynamics, I feel that the most important factor that undermines the media’s role in reporting a conflict objectively and progressively is the “rating syndrome”. The media do not report issues and events on the basis of merit or significance, but to earn ratings. The issue that is debated and written about is the one that has an interest and appeal for most people, and unfortunately debates on terrorism and militancy do not enjoy the interest of most people. When I am on television (as anchor), management constantly argues with me over why I always talk about the Taliban, Afghanistan and FATA. Eventually I have to shift my focus to Karachi, Lahore or some other issue with better ratings, because managers feel people are not interested in the issues of militancy, the Taliban, FATA, Afghanistan, etc. Another major problem facing the media is the lack of experience and professionalism of its staff. Most journalists do not have enough professional training on how to report and analyse conflict. And there are multiple pressures on journalists from their own organisations, society, pressure groups, the security establishment and the militants. Another issue is the lack of resources, particularly for reporters working in conflict zones. Similarly, we present analysis of the situation in Afghanistan daily, but at the moment, except for two channels, there is no reporter from any Pakistani channel in Afghanistan.

On the third level, I see journalists’ ability and capacity being hampered by the confusions and contradictions that persist in state policies. This is the main reason why the Pakistani media cannot educate the nation on the issues of extremism and militancy. For instance, what should I tell people: are the U.S. and Afghanistan our friends or our enemies? Similarly, how should I convince people that the Afghan and Pakistan Taliban are two different entities when there is no difference between their ideology and viewpoints on the enforcement of

Islamic law, jihad, minorities, other sects, women, etc.? (At least, I do not see any difference.) Then if reconciliation with the Afghan Taliban is good, why is it bad with the Pakistani Taliban? All this is because of the confusions and contradictions in state policy, which in turn confuse both journalists and the wider public.

Shahzada Zulfiqar

Educating people about militants and their cause: a critical review of Pakistan’s mainstream and alternative media
As a journalist, it is not my duty to promote the agenda of any group or party, but to present facts. The media are a reflection of whatever is happening in society. The Pakistani media are either influenced or threatened by the persistent jihadi culture or militant landscape of the country. I read recently that over the past 20 months the government banned 28 religious and ethnic groups. The total number that is currently banned is over 80, but half of them are still engaged in promoting their agendas using various means like the internet. Some days back I was in the earthquake-affected Awaran district of Balochistan. The welfare or charity wings of various jihadi groups were the first to reach the stricken area. While no one from the government or army was interacting with and accommodating journalists, these militant groups’ charity organisations were providing journalists with food and shelter.

In Balochistan the media are caught between the security establishment, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and the Balochi militants. The media are impressed by Lashkar’s people. They live in cities; they call us from their mobile and landline phones and send threatening messages. Media managers are prepared to provide live coverage of Lashkar’s activities. Balochi militants also pose a serious threat. A journalist working for the BBC in Quetta had to move to Islamabad because the Balochi militants were not happy with his reporting. This is a really serious matter because several journalists have been killed in Balochistan and other parts of the country.

Khuzdar is a currently a militant hub. There is no reporting from Khuzdar because most reporters have gone underground or moved to other places like Quetta, Karachi or the interior of Sindh. A similar situation exists in Kohlu and even in Quetta.

In addition, militants are smart and avoid communicating their radical opinions to the public through the media. They maintain a more moderate public image, while in private they hold very extreme beliefs.

While militants demand more coverage and threaten journalists if the latter’s coverage is not “up to the mark”, government institutions want journalists not to report militants’ statements. The Quetta High Court has advised the administration that according to the law the media should not carry the statements of banned organisations, under pain of prosecution. Currently six or seven cases

have been opened against various media organisations, including against editors, publishers and bureau chiefs, for carrying news of banned organisations. Although no arrests have been made so far, the threat remains.

In my opinion, the main problem is the weakness of the state and state institutions. Journalists, editors, subeditors and media people, including reporters and cameramen, operate in an insecure environment. I think it is the responsibility of the state, NGOs, civil society, and media support organisations to ensure the security and safety of journalists and the media so that they are able to report independently and progressively.

Second session

“Mainstream and madrasa education: needs and imperatives for achieving peace and harmony in Pakistan”

Zahid Hussain

Chair's remarks

The previous session dealt with suggestions to promote and support a rational and progressive media narrative on conflict and militancy in Pakistan. This is an important issue. At the moment, Pakistan is the main centre of terrorism and militancy and is effectively in the midst of a war in which 50,000 people have been killed and where we see terrorist attacks daily. Yesterday, for example, all four provincial capitals were attacked. The problem is not only that we are in a state of denial, but sometimes terrorist or militant narratives dominate discussions in the media. I am not saying that all the media are involved in this, but in my opinion a large number of the media are responsible for propagating the militants' narrative.

It is difficult to say precisely why this is happening. Partly it does so because of a sense of fear. We are living in a society where journalists are caught in a kind of cross fire. Some very courageous journalists have been killed, particularly in the tribal areas, where reporting is not really possible. Some of these incidents have never been fully reported or investigated. But I think that the country cannot resolve this problem without some kind of public mobilisation, and when we talk about public mobilisation, one of the major roles is basically that of the media. While there may be many opinions on this subject, one key question I will put before the other speakers start speaking is: Is it right to wittingly or unwittingly propagate the views of militants or of people who have been directly involved in killing people? I work for various international newspapers and other media groups. One thing I have learnt about other countries is that no media house will publicise the views of people who are involved in or responsible for terrorist acts in the way that we do in Pakistan. We have recently seen Hakeemullah Mehsud's interview on television, for example, which went on and on, and was interspersed with naïve “expert” comments. People seem to have completely

forgotten this person's role in violent acts of terrorism. I think this is quite unprecedented. I could go on and on with similar examples, but I would like the other speakers to present their views. Dr Rubina Saigol will start the discussion on the role of education in achieving peace and harmony in Pakistan.

Dr Rubina Saigol

Factors that make Pakistan's mainstream education ineffective in countering militants' ideological onslaught

I have been examining textbooks and curriculums starting from the early 1950s and extending to 2008-10. There is a consistency in these texts and in the official curriculum prepared by the state of Pakistan in the sense that social studies and history textbooks tend to be focused on the state's official narrative of the two-nation theory. The education system's entire social knowledge system is organised around this theory, despite the fact that it has been seriously challenged, particularly after the creation of Bangladesh in 1971. But it continues to be reproduced in textbooks in various forms and one can therefore see this dominant religious narrative – or religious-nationalist narrative – in textbooks that appeared after 1971.

In the textbooks on citizen education, civics, history and social studies from the 1950s, interestingly there is a great deal of praise for and whole chapters devoted to Rama, Buddha, Jesus Christ and others. As time passed, and particularly after the 1965 war and even more so after the 1971 war, all these figures unceremoniously exit the textbook discourse. This happened more strongly after the 1971 fall of Dhaka, when a massive exclusion took place from school textbooks of “outsiders” – i.e. those who do not belong to the nation or are not seen as part of the nation – and the strong inclusion of religion became the dominant textbook narrative.

Certain devices, which I call rhetorical devices, are used to create a specific picture of the past based on current rhetorical imperatives. For example, one thing that I noticed consistently in the textbooks – post-1971 in particular – was that the subject of history is divided up in terms of religion. Most of the descriptions that I came across describe Saudi Arabia in terms of the periods before and after the advent of Islam. The interesting thing in this division is that everything that happened before Islam is presented as very bad, while all the vices were to be found among Christians and Jews, who wanted all the wine shops, practised usury and charged high interest rates. All the bad things like lying and cheating are attributed to the time before Islam. Then the advent of Islam happens and everything becomes good and wonderful. So this prejudice is created by dividing time and history in terms of religion. There is also largely a similar negative treatment of pre-Islamic Arabia and pre-Islamic India. Particularly in the 1980s you come across descriptions in textbooks that are focused on the two-nation theory discourse, while the nationalist discourse is focused on India.

Another rhetorical device appears in all these textbooks that can be described as the division of space and geography in terms of religion, where a whole chapter in a textbook describes the climate, mountains, rivers, seas, etc. of the Muslim world as if the weather and physical features of that world are different from those of non-Muslim areas.

Furthermore, this division of space in terms of religion creates a systematic prejudice against other religions. For example, Hindu temples are described as dark, narrow and complicated, to suggest that there is something dark or evil about Hindus and Hinduism. On the other hand, Muslim mosques are described as open, wide spaces that are beautifully lit and have tall minarets jutting into the sky. The same discourse also applies to architecture and houses: Hindu architecture is described as very narrow and complicated and lacking the wide and beautiful features that were later introduced by Muslims in India.

Because these are state textbooks, it would seem that the state is obsessed with India. While this obsession underlies the entire curriculum discourse, there is glorification and denigration of “destruction” at the same time. Muslim emperor Mahmood Ghaznavi’s 17 attacks on the Hindu Somnath temple or Muhammad Bin Qasim’s attack on the temple of Deebal are glorified, while the destruction of the Baberi mosque is decried in the strongest possible terms. Is it right to teach children that the destruction of places of worship is good?

Recently there has been some recognition that the internal enemy is dangerous, but this enemy, the jihadist, was created to fight India. Contrary to the anti-India obsession in state textbooks, madrasa literature was quite different, being less focused on India and more on the West. Madrasas are obsessed with Western values and refute secularism, democracy and women’s rights.

Education is a fundamental right as enshrined in article 25-A of the 18th Constitutional Amendment. But how should we interpret this article? Do we merely see access to education as a right or do we see that this right involves being exposed to the kind of curriculum that creates the values of tolerance, interfaith harmony, justice and democracy? It is not just a question of access, but also one of content, curriculum, pedagogy and the examination system. The recent controversy over the inclusion of comparative religion and sex education in the syllabus has clearly demonstrated the mindset we have created through our state textbooks. The alternative curriculum is itself a problem because most madrasas and schools run by NGOs and private organisations also use state textbooks, because these organisations prepare children for the same state-run examination system.

My fundamental suggestion is that we need a core curriculum across all provinces based on fundamental rights. We

have a chapter on fundamental rights in articles 8 to 28 of the constitution, while Pakistan is also a signatory of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We should therefore have a core curriculum called civic or citizenship education that teaches these basic rights, which every province should follow so that no province can resort to ethno-chauvinism. Without this we cannot fight the militant ideology that is being taught in the madrasas – and in the largest madrasa in Pakistan, which is the state education system.

Dr Dietrich Reetz

Madrasa and public education and the challenge of ideology

What I want to say is more a contribution to the discussion than a lengthy view or lengthy paper. My perspective is more that of a social scientist who has been studying culture and religion in South Asia, not only in Pakistan. I have done some research on madrasas and some other schools, but I am not an educationalist in any sense.

We are dealing with a number of clichés with regard to the topic we are discussing and there is a communication problem in terms of which many things are misunderstood and misinterpreted. We need to understand that Islamic ideology is not a prerogative of religious education in Pakistan and South Asia, and we know perfectly well that ideological structures and mindsets can be found in many different contexts. With regard to Pakistan, we know that recent studies of radicalisation patterns have established that as many radicals and militants have come out of public schools as out of madrasas, with perhaps even a slight majority coming from the public school system. So there is no unique connection between the madrasas and a particular ideological mindset.

This brings us to the point that has often been the subject of my research about the plurality of Islam and the madrasa system in Pakistan, South Asia and the Muslim world as a whole. When we follow the debate in the media we get the impression that about 80% or 90% of the students in Pakistan attend madrasas, or a huge majority in any case. But this is not true, since the actual figure is only 3%. In this 3% there is a huge variety of systems and institutions, and that, just like attending a public school, attending a madrasa is no guarantee of being fed any particular point of view. We know we have people coming out of madrasas who have ended up working in business, banking, handicrafts and even government services, or who have gone on after madrasa education to another round of education in the public system. This is very common in other parts of the Muslim world, like Malaysia or Indonesia, for instance. So I would advise people to be very cautious about making simplistic assumptions about what it means to attend a particular type of school, because it depends very much on the type of education that is provided, the qualities and options the students have once they leave the school, and how they

employ themselves. And even when we know the contents of a particular curriculum, this does not mean that students will automatically accept these values, because, as we know perfectly well, students can be very resistant to what they are being taught – and rightly so. Education in Pakistan is thus highly complex, not easy to predict or manage in a simple way, and even less easy to influence. This is why I normally plead for as little intervention in religious education as possible, and would prefer a general improvement in all schools, private and public, no matter whether they are religious or no matter to what religion they belong, in order to ensure a specific quality standard, a specific level of knowledge, and a specific ability to use and implement that knowledge once children leave school, which I think would be much more effective. We should not only ensure that madrasa students do not carry weapons, but that no students carry weapons. This is perhaps the most desirable development that one would like to see.

One more small point I would like to add is that we should also not forget that religious schools as much as non-religious private schools are part of a market situation and that to a large extent competition for students influences how these schools present themselves. And this process is in turn framed by the situation in Pakistan. For instance, if we are talking about sectarianism and its rise after the 1970s and 1980s, we should not forget that religious schools became part of the market situation that pertained at that time. They were competing for students, and in many ways schools used their sectarian affiliation as a form of branding. This branding has become highly competitive and has virtually no limits, because each school is saying that “we are the best school, we are offering the best education and we are the only one following the true Islam”. So the regulation of this market requires more thought, greater levels of maturity and setting the right incentives. For instance, madrasas could be given funding to offer additional qualifications. But I stress that this would have to be voluntary, because administering it top-down has obviously not worked, since it ignores the market situation. Also, you cannot single out one particular school sector and ignore others, because, as we have seen, the problems of education basically cannot be limited to one sector and form a much wider issue. Hence my plea is to understand and interpret the issue of ideology in the widest possible sense. Ideology is a perspective; it is a world view; basically there is no ideology-free area anywhere on Earth. In one way or another all of us hold a particular perspective on or selective view of the world, and this is effectively our ideology. So it would be useful to try to disaggregate what exactly we mean when we talk about ideological challenges. Thank you!

Maulana Muhammad Ammar Khan Nasir

Madrasa education: the sectarian and traditional outlook and its implications for peace and harmony in society

After looking at the broad scope of the topic and the time available, I am just going to discuss one or two dimensions

of it that I think are important. The previous speaker explained that terrorism has no link with the curriculum that is taught in schools or madrasas, but we try to improve the situation by thinking that if we include a few things in the syllabus or remove a few things, maybe we can get rid of particular radical minds. However, the situation is far more complex than this. It is true that if we teach students in madrasas a world view that is 400 years old and present it as a state of perfection, it will undoubtedly create a certain ideology, but the strategic and political aspect of a religiously conservative mindset lie far deeper than mere curriculum issues. Changes in the curriculum may partly contribute to the overall outcome, but we need to keep the root causes of the problem firmly in mind.

Effectively, Muslims’ pride in their religion’s past glory and history and their failure to understand and adjust to the dynamics of the rise and fall of nations and civilisations lie at the heart of all the problems they are currently facing. We can neither tackle religious extremism, nor address our concerns over madrasas, nor understand and respond to the structural or foundational aspects of a religious mind, whether moderate or conservative, by using existing political, strategic and sociocultural frameworks alone. The religious mindset of most Muslims is strongly identified with ideas about the past glory of Islamic civilisation and history and is disconnected from emerging modern realities, so there is a need to initiate an intellectual and academic debate among clergy with a view to revisiting traditional concepts of Islam and reconstruct them so that they become relevant to the modern world.

In this context I would like to mention a book written by a liberal writer, Mubarak Haider, entitled *Tahzeebi Nargasiat (Civilisational Narcissism)*, which tries to understand the religious mindset. I read this book with a great deal of interest because it highlighted the things that frustrate the religious mind. We can disagree with many things mentioned in the book, but the author skillfully analyses religiously conservative minds.

As I mentioned earlier, when we talk about religious extremism or terrorist ideology and especially when we think of a counter strategy, we have to analyse the root causes of extremism and terrorism. It is not government or army policies that generate radical minds. Such minds are present already, and these policies merely reactivate them. People like Maulana Maudoodi or Syed Qutab did not add new things to Muslims’ religious mindset, but represented a mindset that already existed. In the minds of the entire Muslim world there is the sense that they have lost their rightful position in the world and in order to maintain their legacy the most popular model available is that of the unity of all Muslims (i.e. the concept of Ummah).

But a change in this mindset would come about only through intellectual and academic debate within the religious discourse that would also bring change in society.

In the academic or intellectual discourse of Islam, Muslims' connectivity with their traditional roots and culture needs to change. This could happen through an individual's own effort and not just through pressure from external sources. Academic and legal dialogue existed among Muslims, mainly religious scholars, before the partition of the subcontinent. For instance, there was an extensive debate among the clergy about what Muslims' stance should be once the British left the region. At that time the path suggested by traditionalist religious scholars was completely different from that offered by their liberal religious counterparts. Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madni, who represented the former grouping, led the narrative that Muslims did not need a separate homeland to survive and that they could live with Hindus and support a country comprising both Muslims and Hindus. Indeed, Maulana Akbar Kashmiri issued a categorical religious decree (*fatwa*) in support of this narrative. But such an environment that is conducive to dialogue does not exist in Pakistan today.

Dr Qibla Ayaz

Prospects for and ways of collaboration between government and madrasa educational boards to update curriculums

It is true that the syllabuses of the madrasas do not necessarily contribute to extremist thoughts. The history of madrasas indicates that in the past, particularly before 1980, their role was not the same as the one they played after that date. This means that the problem does not lie in the syllabus, but somewhere else. But this also does not mean that the syllabus is totally free from some deficiencies and shortcomings and does not need revisiting. The present syllabus does not develop a creative mindset and is almost exclusively focused on books that have been under study for a very long time. Madrasa books emphasise issues such as *wazu* (ablution), *haji*, *zakat*, *ghusl* (bath), and various prayers. The jurisprudence studied in madrasas is focused on agriculture, because in the early and medieval periods of Islam, when most of the academic work was done on Islamic jurisprudence, or *fiqh*, the economy was largely based on agriculture, but today we are part of a very sophisticated economic system. This syllabus therefore does not give religious graduates any guidelines on how to give legal or religious advice to an ordinary citizen. Madrasa students study *meeras* (inheritance) – which is just a matter of mathematics – at considerable length, but new technology could reduce the time spent on this subject. The study of Hadith focuses on irrelevancies, while many important issues are left unattended to. There is a need to change this approach by adding new material and reducing some current areas of study. It is also necessary for philosophy, history and the social sciences to become part of the syllabus. There is also a need to understand the West, e.g. how it became so involved in international affairs, how it became industrialised, how it became involved in colonisation, what its problems are and what it has contributed to humankind. It would also be useful to try to understand the contemporary West: Western universities

and educational systems, the UN, how the West has developed critical thinking, and what it means by the principle of the separation of church and state. All these discussions need to be included in the syllabus to better understand the West.

Madrasas are more likely to be open to dialogue if you speak to them in language that they understand and accept, but unfortunately the Pakistani government has been using language that is derogatory and counterproductive to talk to and about madrasas. The government has spoken of the need to “reform” religious seminaries, which was not appreciated by madrasas, which believed that the government needs reform, not madrasas. Similarly, the government said it wanted to bring the religious seminaries into the “mainstream”, which was again derogatory for madrasa administrators and religious education boards, which said they were already in the mainstream, while the government was not.

It is also unfortunate that the various federal and provincial governments do not understand the significance of religious institutions such as madrasas. It is very difficult to convince the Higher Education Commission (HEC) that madrasas should come under its jurisdiction. The HEC has issued a notification that the graduates of madrasas can become teachers, can teach at universities and colleges, and can be admitted to research programmes, including the MPhil and PhD. But the HEC does not recognise that madrasas should fall under its jurisdiction,

The madrasas' syllabus does not necessarily lead to terrorism and extremism, but the extracurricular activities of madrasa students are of concern. It is important to know what these students do after their *zuhr* (afternoon) prayer, what extracurricular and co-curricular activities they are involved in, and what kind of sermons they listen to in their free time. Volleyball used to be a very common sport among madrasa students, but it is gradually disappearing, leaving space for the writing and singing of songs about Kashmir, Afghanistan and Somalia. The HEC and the madrasas should work together to introduce new extra- and co-curricular activities for madrasa students, like at universities. But the representatives of these religious schools do not trust HEC officials.

Another important factor is the training of madrasa teachers. Since madrasa students respect and honour their teachers, unlike at universities, it is very important that the HEC be involved in the training of these teachers. Currently madrasa teachers do not have a formal university education.

Third session

“Rehabilitation and reintegration of Pakistani militants: prospects and methodologies”

Talat Masood

Chair's remarks

A deradicalisation programme is very important if we really want to bring people who have gone astray back into the mainstream as responsible members of society and citizens of the country. It is a great weakness that Pakistan has not seriously applied any of the deradicalisation approaches that have been instituted and implemented by many countries. There is a lot of work to be done in terms of radicalised individuals' psychological treatment and religious indoctrination, as well as the provision of economic opportunities, if we are to reintegrate them into society. After all, the failures in these areas are one of the reasons why they joined militant organisations in the first place. It is to be hoped the government will look into this very important subject.

The military ran a deradicalisation programme in Swat, but the whole of the tribal belt has not been touched. Even in Swat we have to be careful that people who have been rehabilitated do not regress. So we should keep an eye on that as well.

Simultaneously, the state needs to offer a counter-narrative, but is failing to do so. Religious leaders and clerics also have a responsibility in this regard, but are failing to fulfil it. Civil society, political parties and the government also all need to work on this. And there has to be a synthesis in the approach of political parties to such a narrative, but the government and media are doing nothing along these lines. There is not only failure to produce a counter-narrative; there is failure all around. I do not think that we are taking the problem seriously. How and when militancy will end will depend very much on the response of the government, civil society, clerics and political leaders to the problem. Thus, if the government is serious and formulates a comprehensive policy that covers all the areas we have talked about this morning, I am sure we will obtain results. If the Saudi model was successful, then I think it was mostly due to the fact that the Saudis have greater resources at their disposal and that they were more brutal and coercive than anyone has ever been. But whether the success of the Saudi programme will be lasting is yet to be seen.

The fact is that the state has to change its policies if it wants to deradicalise society, because a policy that promotes terrorism is obviously not going to assist deradicalisation. This is another important subject that we have not touched on at all, and it is a very serious one. We also see that currently non-state actors are competing with us financially, ideologically and on every other front. We do not know if the state really wants to overcome this problem and gain control of not only its territorial space, but also the

country's ideological space. We need a comprehensive programme that covers all these aspects.

Safdar Sial

An appraisal of deradicalisation approaches in Muslim-majority and other countries and their relevance for Pakistan

Until very recently – before the launch of a rehabilitation programme for detainees in Swat in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – deradicalisation was an alien phenomenon for the Pakistani state, which had focused solely on countering militancy and terrorism either militarily or by making peace deals with the militants that lacked broad political and societal support.

Several Muslim-majority states have evolved and implemented a variety of soft approaches and models for counter-radicalisation and deradicalisation. Several terms and concepts are used in the discourse on deradicalisation, such as “desertion”, “demobilisation”, “defection”, “rehabilitation”, “reintegration”, “reconciliation”, “dialogue”, “disengagement”, etc. However, despite their context-specific attributes, the conceptual framework of most of these programmes has been to counter the appeal of militant ideologies, change participants' attitudes and views, and reintegrate deradicalised individuals into society.

Saudi Arabia has the best-known deradicalisation programme in the Middle East, which has three components: prevention, rehabilitation and after-care. The counselling programme and social support initiatives for the prisoners are the main strength of the programme. The programme's overall success has made it a model for “soft” counter-terrorism approaches, yet the recidivism of deradicalised individuals continues due to a variety of internal and external factors.

Deradicalisation in Egypt refers essentially to the renunciation of violence by leading Egyptian jihadi organisations, mainly al-Jihad al-Islami (Islamic Jihad) and Gama'a al-Islamiya (Islamic Group). Their rehabilitation involves a rereading of the ideas propagated by these groups in the past. Once this process has started within the groups, the Egyptian government supports and facilitates the revision process among the groups' imprisoned leaders and members.

Algeria's deradicalisation programme was built on two referendums, one in 1999 and the second in 2005, and revolved around three central themes: restoring peace through pardons, amnesties, sentence reductions and the dropping of charges; supporting national reconciliation, solidarity and reintegration; and preventing the recurrence of violence by barring all those from political activity who exploited religious sentiments that led to the civil war of the 1990s.

The deradicalisation programme launched in Yemen in 2002 comprised a Dialogue Committee made up of Yemeni

clerics and judges who were meant to enter into dialogue with jihadis. Besides dialogue it focused on reintegrating former militants into society. Morocco launched an extensive religious reform programme following the 2003 and 2007 bombings in Casablanca with a view to countering radicalisation and the appeal of violent ideology in society. It did so by strengthening the official religious establishment and key religious institutions of the state. Civil society has also played a very vibrant role in counter-radicalisation efforts in Morocco.

The deradicalisation programme in Indonesia aims to neutralise militants' ideological fundamentals. It focuses on moulding jihadis' mindset in terms of two fundamental issues: the killing of civilians and the need for an Islamic state. The Religious Rehabilitation Programme, which is the main deradicalisation initiative in Malaysia, is guided by the Internal Security Act of 1960. It relies on re-education and rehabilitation. Coercion and threats are also resorted to in order to deter the militants from re-engaging in militancy and terrorism.

Pakistan has a great deal to learn from the soft approaches to deradicalisation pursued by the Muslim-majority and other countries to counter terrorism and militancy. Firstly, Pakistan needs to focus on soft approaches for both deradicalisation and counter-radicalisation. The elements of reconciliation, counselling, dialogue, rehabilitation, reintegration, etc. imbedded in the deradicalisation approach will provide the space and opportunity to the militants, either detained or at large, to consider alternatives that are currently largely missing for them and disengage from violent extremism. The counter-radicalisation approach will ideologically counter extremist narratives and prevent further radicalisation at the individual and societal levels. Secondly, Pakistan requires simultaneous initiatives at both the state and civil society levels in order to achieve better results.

Thirdly, the use by most deradicalisation approaches of religious scholars and clergy in various activities such as dialogue with and counselling of detainees and the production and dissemination of counter-extremism arguments and literature could also be of benefit to Pakistan.

Pakistan could also learn crucial lessons from the deradicalisation models of non-Muslim states, particularly the development of accurate threat perceptions at the policy and implementation stages.

Qazi Jameel

A review of Pakistan's Swat and Punjab models of militant rehabilitation

My presentation deals with the deradicalisation efforts of the Pakistani army in Swat. The aim of this project is to provide an environment conducive to restoring detained radicals' self-respect and remove their psychological burden either by psychological reorientation or coercion so

as to make them and their families useful members of society. We understand that many people joined the Taliban of their own volition, but we also know that many were forced to join the organisation. So the purpose is to provide them with an environment where they can pause and reflect on what they were doing and whether it was correct or not, and then confront them with the realities of their situation and the true Islamic perspective so that they understand the situation and try to reconcile themselves with it.

There are objections that the programme only deals with low-level cadres while the real aim should be to engage the hardliners. But these low-level cadres were the backbone of the Taliban army who had developed a mental bond with the Taliban, so allowing them to run loose is inherently dangerous.

The Swat programme consists of three components: one is called Sabaoon, which is for juveniles; the second, Mashaal, is for the adults; while the third, Sperlai, is for female militants.

The deradicalisation process has four phases. In the first phase possible candidates are screened to ascertain which individuals should be included in the process. The purpose is to identify killers and criminals, because society and the government want them to be brought to justice and prosecuted. The second is the rehabilitation phase, which is totally different from the reintegration and post-reintegration phases. Rehabilitation involves four basic modules: the psychological, educational, vocational and social modules. In the psychological module participants undergo extensive sessions with psychiatrists and psychologists. The purpose is to channel their hopes and anger in a positive way. Then comes the educational module, which includes both formal and religious education. Particularly teenagers in the Sabaoon programme are given formal education. At this level their distorted perception of Islam is also corrected through counselling. The vocational module, which is very important, trains the detained individuals in a variety of vocational and occupational skills. The social module entails preparing individuals to go back to their families and communities by participating in community-level activities aimed at promoting their self-respect, dignity and sense of personal honour.

Then come the reintegration and post-reintegration phases, which start when participants are ready to reintegrate into society. This is done using a three-month syllabus involving curricular and extracurricular activities. In this period the family is prepared, the community is taken on board, and the person is assessed to see whether he is deradicalised and ready to be rehabilitated.

A study was conducted in 2011 to evaluate the impact of the Swat programme. The findings revealed that it was a step in the right direction and prevented participants from

experiencing continued radicalisation and alienation. The study also found that the programme may have prevented many youngsters from acquiring a radicalised world view. Because they had been fed with a distorted version of religion, they were given a counter-narrative in the form of nationalism. One could clearly see that beneficiaries had been given a different and more beneficial discourse than the flawed religious one. Community attitudes also underwent a change because the previous habit of naming, shaming and blaming impacted negatively on the programme. After-care is extremely important. Financial support is also important after participants have been deradicalised and have returned to society. They cannot be left unprotected and unsupported. The community should be supportive and it should have a sense of ownership over the deradicalised elements, so that it effectively treats them as their children and supports them.

The process of radicalisation is happening in our society. The government, civil society and the community have to help prevent this process, taking their lead from the Swat model introduced by the army. The government should follow up on this programme, expand it, and make it comprehensive and sustainable. Although this is an effort to win recruits back from the distorted perceptions of their militant groups, some people have genuine grievances. We have to talk to them to see if they can be won back and won over.

In conclusion, a series of workshops were conducted as part of the Sabaoon programme at the National College of Arts, and one of the themes was, "No matter how dark the past, you can change the future with your own hands".

Muhammad Amir Rana

Pakistan's diverse militant landscape: challenges, prospects, and methods for militants' rehabilitation and reintegration

Pakistan's militant landscape is diverse and offers multi-fold challenges for the processes of counter-radicalisation and deradicalisation, which are so far conspicuous by their absence. The militant landscape can be divided into four groups: classic militants, who were involved in Afghanistan and Kashmir in the 1980s and 1990s; the Pakistani Taliban; sectarian militants; and the Punjabi Taliban. These four categories are based on militants' operational and structural similarities in each category. There is also a fifth category that includes foreign militants such as al-Qaeda, the Afghan Taliban, Central Asian militants, etc.

Pakistani militant groups comprising the first four categories have established links with foreign militants, although to a varying degree and at different levels. They seek political and ideological support from foreign militants.

Classic militants are quite important and an interesting phenomenon. They tend to detach themselves from the other militant groups in the country, while their links with foreign militants are quite weak. Local connections among

the four categories also develop through these classic groups. They play a significant role in the overall radicalisation of Pakistani society, particularly in terms of an anti-West perspective.

But the classic groups behave quite differently from militants in the other categories. As I mentioned earlier, the classic groups try to be seen as being detached from the Pakistani Taliban or other violent actors, whether they have sectarian objectives or global ambitions. Their basic focus is on the external fronts of the jihad, and they seek legitimacy from the narrative of externalisation. Compared to the Pakistani Taliban and the sectarian or Punjabi Taliban groups, classic groups like the Jamaatud Dawa and Jaish, have well-established structures, networks and assets, such as welfare and charity organisations, chains of schools, media outlets, and property, which in a way constrain them from becoming involved in violent or anti-state activities because it could put their investments and assets at risk. This is the main reason why their behaviour differs from that of the militant groups in the other three categories, i.e. that they try to preserve their resources and infrastructure. They are therefore willing to sacrifice their primary objective in order to secure their organisation and the physical assets they have built up over time.

Most of the violence that occurs in Pakistan is carried out by sectarian groups or the Punjabi Taliban because they have nothing to lose, since they have a very fluent organisational structure. If we look at the nexus between the Pakistani Taliban and the foreign Taliban, it can be seen that the tribal Taliban groups have close links with al-Qaeda. All these groups are closely linked in a relationship of brotherhood and they have a single motive.

Any strategy that is adopted to counter the threats of radicalisation and extremism and/or deradicalise individuals should take into consideration the anatomy of the various militant groups operating in Pakistan. One strategy will not work for all these groups. Nonetheless, the most difficult task for the government would be to break Pakistani militants' links with foreign militants. Sectarian groups, which are very fluid and have a small number of militants in each group, might be dealt with through an appropriate security policy, but the classic and tribal Taliban would require a comprehensive and long-term strategy. It should be noted that counter-terrorism and deradicalisation are interrelated, but should be studied and dealt with separately.

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