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## Issue Brief

*(Views expressed in the brief are those of the author, and do not represent those of ISSI)*

# Gains of Radd-ul-Fassad

August 18, 2017

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## **Four personnel of the Pakistan Army, including a major, lost their lives while attempting to foil a terrorist attack in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Upper Dir district on August 9, 2017.<sup>1</sup>**

The commitment of Pakistani nation to fight the menace of terrorism can be determined by the statement made by Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, "Each drop of blood of our heroes is a testament to the fact that we all are united as a nation to cleanse our beloved motherland from terrorist elements."<sup>2</sup>

In February 2017, the Pakistan Army had launched "Operation Raddul-Fasaad" across the country. The aim of this operation is threefold: eliminating the residual threat of terrorism; consolidating the gains made thus far by military operations under Zarb-e-Azb; and de-weaponization of the society. Pakistan Air Force, Pakistan Navy, Civil Armed Forces (CAF) and other security and law enforcement agencies (LEAs) will continue to actively participate and intimately support the efforts to eliminate the menace of terrorism from the country.

The new Operation came as a response to a series of at least six back to back attacks in Pakistan within a week in mid- February, killing more than 100 people in different parts of Pakistan. One of the deadliest attacks in this string of terror attacks took place on February 16 when a suicide bomber blew himself up amongst the devotees in the Shrine of Sufi saint Lala Shahbaz Qalandar in the town of Sehwan in Sindh province. At least 88 people were martyred when a suicide bomber attacked the crowded Sufi shrine, injuring up to 343 people at the shrine. The responsibility of the attack was claimed by Daesh. It was a deadly week for Pakistan, and the security forces launched a major crack down following the attack on the Sufi shrine.

Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad is unique, as for the first time the government has allowed the armed forces to deal with the militants and sleeper cells in the Punjab with an iron hand. The daily *DAWN* reported on February 22 that following the announcement of the operation, "Punjab had requested the federal government to deploy over 2,000 para-military personnel of the Rangers in the province, who would be given policing powers to conduct intelligence-based operations (IBOs) against militants, wherever required, with full authority."

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.dawn.com/news/1350539>

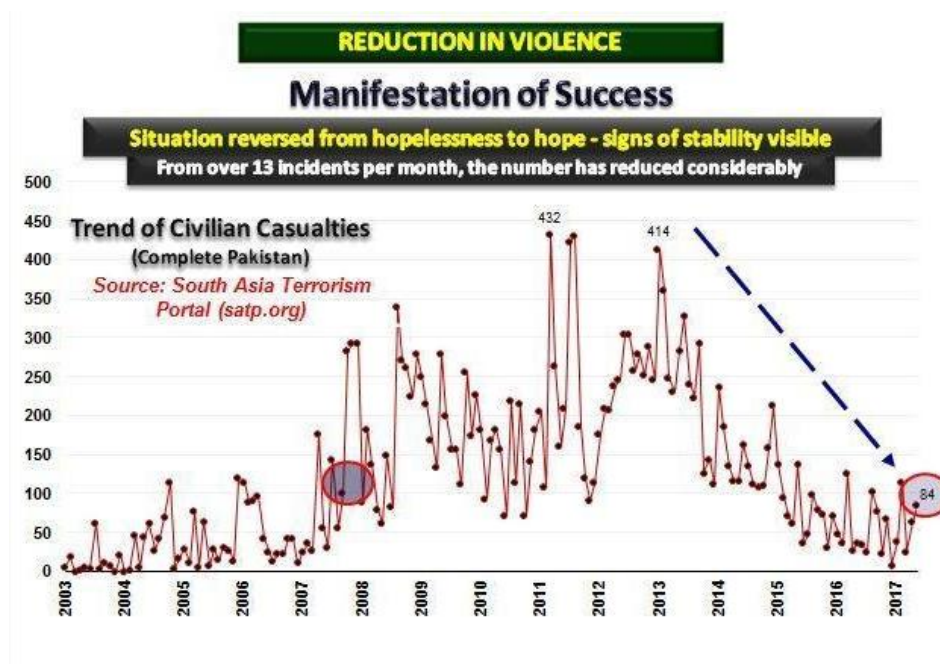
<sup>2</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-pakistan-militants-idUSKBN1A0KH>

Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad is a continuation of the National Action Plan (NAP) which was formulated after the 2014 attack in Peshawar on the Army Public School. The NAP was criticized for its slow implementation and half-hearted approach in dealing with terrorism. The gains made under operation since February have been tremendous. The Frontier Constabulary (Baluchistan) foiled a major terrorist activity in Baluchistan and recovered 2000 kg of explosives from a vehicle through a special IBO in Spin Tezha, Killa Abdullah.<sup>3</sup> In addition to this, Pakistan Rangers in Punjab along with the provincial Counter Terrorism Department (CTD), police and intelligence agencies carried out joint search operations in surrounding areas of Mandi Bahudin and Nilore, Islamabad. During the operation, 7 suspects were apprehended and illegal weapons, ammunition were recovered.

Since the launch of Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad, the Pakistan Army has conducted around 9000 intelligence-based operation across the country which led the army to launch 46 major operations against terrorists across the country.<sup>4</sup> The operation is carried out in coordination with police and other law enforcement agencies uniformly all across the country and the decreasing trend in the civilian casualties is an indicator of the fact that the operation is going on successfully in all parts of the country.

### Graph

#### Decreasing Trend in Civilian Casualties



<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ispr.gov.pk/front/main.asp?o=t-radd-ul-fasaad-archive>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.dawn.com/news/1350539>

Operation Khyber 4 under Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad is another success story of the Pakistan Army in the Rajgal valley along the Pak-Afghan border. During this operation, the capture of a strategic mountain top by the military has now denied the militants a position from which they can target Pakistani security forces easily. In addition to this, the vigilance along the Pak-Afghan border through check posts and fencing is now becoming a reality through this strategic move by Pakistani soldiers.

The consolidation of gains made during previous operations in the past, tightening the security of our borders and the eliminations of residual terrorists threats are the targets achieved by Operation Radd-ul-Fassad. One of the major strength of this Operation is that beside military, the local law enforcement agencies are now equally taking part in the process of hunting down the terrorists. The uniform application of the operation all across the country has weakened the terrorists network, but they are not completely dysfunctional yet. To get rid of this menace of terrorism, beside military operations a renewed focus on National Action Plan (NAP) is absolutely essential.