

Operation Neptune Spear: A watershed in the war against terrorism

Amna Yousaf Khokhar*

Osama Bin Laden, the head of al-Qaeda terror network and world's most-wanted terrorist, was killed in an operation code-named Neptune Spear (NS) by the U.S. Special Military Force Unit in Abbottabad on May 2, 2011. The operation was carried out very near one of Pakistan's best military training academies. The killing was a victory for the United States but presented a huge dilemma for Pakistan; the American people woke up in a festive mood to celebrate, while Pakistanis anticipated more suicide bombings and attacks.

Osama's killing has opened a Pandora's Box not only for the Pakistani army, but also for policy makers, analysts and the government as to how the country needs to tackle the new challenges and devise future security, economic, and foreign policies. Operation NS was a clear violation of Pakistan's sovereignty and the fact that the country was not taken into confidence before launching the operation is a major setback to Pak-U.S. joint counter-terrorism efforts; moreover, the legality of the operation remains debatable.¹

This paper is aimed at analysing the post-Osama situation with a focus on its impact on the war against terrorism and Pakistan. It discusses the following questions: (1) Is Operation NS a watershed in the war against terrorism? (2) How has it affected Pakistan-U.S. relations? (3) Has the operation changed the strategy of conducting anti-terrorism operations? (4) Has the unilateral operation undermined Pakistan army's role as a partner of the U.S? (5) Has the trust deficit between Washington and Islamabad led to change in the U.S. policy? (6) And, eventually, how will it affect Pakistan-China military ties?

This paper is divided into three sections. The first section will analyze the post-Osama al-Qaeda and its fallout for Pakistan; the second will deal with Pak-U.S. relations, and the third will analyse the impact of recent events on Pakistan's relations with China. As such, it moves from description to analysis and tries to give a theoretical framework to the unfolding developments. It is also pertinent to mention here that while

* The writer is Research Fellow, the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI).

analysing al-Qaeda, the paper's focus will remain on Pakistan and Afghanistan.²

Al-Qaeda after Osama

The sub-continent has a unique history of guerilla warfare and insurgencies.³ They have largely been village-specific with limited but focused objectives and have always been short-lived; as soon as they achieved their targets, the wars died out.⁴ However, with the passage of time and technological development, new dimensions and characteristics have stepped into such movements across the world. The internet has helped insurgents promote their causes and propaganda to wider audiences. This has thus facilitated the 'involvement of citizens of other countries' into the movements;⁵ al-Qaeda and the Taliban movement are no different.

The Taliban was one of the many irregular freedom fighters' groups that had grouped together to achieve a collective but a specific goal i.e. their country's independence. Their ethnic composition was mainly Pashtun inhabitants of Afghanistan and the bordering areas of Pakistan, which share historic ties.⁶ After the Soviet Union's withdrawal, the Taliban retained their formation and emerged as a nation-binding force, filling the gap of governance to curb growing and alarming lawlessness in the war-torn country when it embraced al-Qaeda, which in turn was an incongruous assembly of religious-minded Muslim youth from across the world and, hence, had a global agenda.

With the withdrawal of the Soviet Union, the Taliban had achieved their goals but al-Qaeda had achieved only the first success of its larger global agenda. In the years to come, it sophisticatedly hijacked the Taliban's resources in the Pak-Afghan region to not only achieve its goals but also to clear any obstruction in its way.

Initially, the Taliban welcomed al-Qaeda as their guests - the local tradition demands full protection and warm hospitality to any guest. However, it later became a source of finances for the cash-starved country.⁷ With the withdrawal of the Soviet Union, the Taliban had achieved their goals but al-Qaeda had achieved only the first success of its larger global agenda. In the years to come, it sophisticatedly hijacked the

Taliban's resources in the Pak-Afghan region to not only achieve its goals but also to clear any obstruction in its way.⁸

The role of personality- for instance of Mullah Omar or Osama Bin Laden - remained an integral ingredient to attract new recruits for both Taliban and al-Qaeda groups. After the U.S. invasion in 2001, the Taliban further fragmented into smaller groups that, with the passage of time, started operating independently but retained their allegiance to the Taliban supreme commander, Mullah Omar. Al-Qaeda remained integrated⁹ and, in tandem, built up a personality-cult as well; Osama Bin Laden's leadership was incontestable within the terror network as every member of the group not only swore allegiance to him but also acted on his instructions.

The differences between the Taliban and Al-Qaeda are frequently analysed and their methodologies and goals reveal a strong relationship. Recent developments expose how sophisticatedly and tactfully the al-Qaeda has utilised the splintered Taliban groups and penetrated deep into the sensitive security network of Pakistan by winning over Taliban affiliates. Recent reports suggest that the growing militancy in the region swears allegiance to Mullah Omar but follows al-Qaeda's instructions. Such is the penetration and doctrinarian strategy of al-Qaeda that most of its planned terrorist acts are executed by the Taliban splinter groups.¹⁰

According to statistics compiled by the Federal Interior Ministry of Pakistan, a total of 3433 Pakistanis were killed in 215 suicide attacks between July 2007 and July 2010 across the country. Almost all attacks were claimed by the Taliban, whereas al-Qaeda took credit for only two attacks: the assassination of Benazir Bhutto in 2007, and the bombing of the Danish embassy in 2008. Even the May 2011 attack on the Mehran Naval Base in Karachi was claimed by the Taliban. The attack took place about three weeks after Operation NS and a purported spokesman for Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) claimed that it was "the revenge of martyrdom of Osama bin Laden. It was the proof that we are still united and powerful."¹¹

The attack was planned by al-Qaeda and executed by Taliban-linked Punjabi militant group, Ilyas Kashmiri's¹² 313 Brigade, which had been fighting in Indian-held Kashmir as well.¹³ Also, it recently came in the press that TTP chief Baitullah Mehsud was targeted by CIA in a drone strike only after the discovery of his meeting with Ayman al-Zawahiri in 2008. Pakistani officials had been pointing at collusion between Al-Qaeda and Taliban but it was only after this meeting that the U.S. began to see

the Taliban as a potent threat once again.¹⁴ The growing U.S. presence in the region partly explains why Taliban groups and affiliates have been following al-Qaeda's plans; they want to exhaust U.S. patience, resources, and political will to maintain a strong military presence in this region and the Middle East as well.¹⁵

Saleem Shehzad in his now famous book on terrorism insightfully gives details of close links between al-Qaeda and the Taliban. He argues that 'al-Qaeda wants to take the complete ideological control over all Muslim resistance movements worldwide. It wants these movements to fight their wars within the broader Al-Qaeda parameter and perceive the United States as the root of all problems that affect the world.'¹⁶ Penetration of extremist elements into Pakistan's military is another worrying development that has recently come into limelight.¹⁷

Pakistan has had to bear the fallout wafted from the Afghan battlefield. Al-Qaeda has been using Pakistan, the bordering tribal belt, as its base to hatch terror plans and has fully indoctrinated the Taliban although a slight element of defiance exists.¹⁸ In 2006, it issued a fatwa for Jihadis to fight against the Pakistan army due to its cooperation with the United States in Afghanistan and inside Pakistan.¹⁹ It has also penetrated into lower-cadre armed forces of the country through religious organisations such as the Hizb-u-Tahrir (HuT).²⁰

This brief discussion is vital to understand the survival and the future strategy of al-Qaeda in the absence of its leader Osama Bin Laden, and the possible fallouts for Pakistan. It also requires us to question how closely Osama Bin Laden was connected with his organization; indeed, it has been suggested that his role had been reduced to symbolic leadership.

Al-Qaeda leadership

Before Operation NS, it was largely perceived that Osama Bin Laden was only a symbolic leader of al-Qaeda since the U.S. invaded Afghanistan. One leading Pakistani newspaper described the situation by noting that "the ailing Osama did not figure any more in operational and day-to-day specific operations. With his status of a leader on the run, he naturally could not keep his organization intact and over time, it splintered into smaller and independent factions and spread elsewhere in North Africa and the Middle East. More or less, the terror activities of these groups are now independent albeit with Osama's tag."²¹

However, his hideout in Abbottabad city and the material confiscated during the raid clearly indicate that he was well in control of his organisation and was passing on instructions through electronic messages. He may not have been involved in day-to-day operations but was active in implementing al-Qaeda's agenda and strategies.²² He was a symbolic leader only for the groups scattered over the lawless areas of Africa and the Middle East, as distance had restricted his outreach and electronic messages were the only

As al-Qaeda wants to take ideological control as well as credit for resistance movements in the Muslim world, with such groups swearing allegiance to al-Qaeda, it comes as a boon for the organisation's international agenda.

source of communication. As al-Qaeda wants to take ideological control as well as credit for resistance movements in the Muslim world, with such groups swearing allegiance to al-Qaeda, it comes as a boon for the organisation's international agenda. In such a scenario, will Osama's death affect the working of al-Qaeda?

Al-Qaeda without Osama

To understand the impact of Osama's killing on al-Qaeda and, ultimately, the war against terrorism, we need to analyse the group itself on the pattern of any organisation. Al-Qaeda may have started as an incongruous assembly of Muslim youth from across the world but it has evolved into a dynamic organisation that adapts to its environment. It has been acting as an open system organisation that continually interacts with its environment and maintains the state of dynamic equilibrium. One of its characteristics has been its ability to swiftly fill leadership gaps that often arise due to the killings of its top commanders in drone strikes or military operations.

The killing of a leader naturally has an effect on any organization's overall performance. However, a series of intermittent terrorism waves across Pakistan reflect the ability of al-Qaeda and associated Taliban groups to evolve dynamically and adapt to the changing environment. Each new wave has been more lethal; the pattern has been the same but the strategy and execution are more sophisticated. Similarly, the killing of Osama Bin Laden did not dent the al-Qaeda leadership dramatically as there was an immediate replacement. Ayman Al-Zawahiri, who ranked second within al-Qaeda but was considered its true soul, was soon declared Osama's successor.²³

Although Osama's killing naturally affected the group and its members' morale but the way in which he was killed is likely to act more as a boon than a bane. As expected, it did not reduce terrorism in Pakistan; the day Osama was killed, two suicide explosions took place in the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province and two deadly attacks on paramilitary forces²⁴ in Shabeqadar area and the naval base in Karachi also took place soon after. The Taliban claimed responsibility for both attacks.

Al-Qaeda is waging 'religious terrorism'²⁵ in Pakistan. Its sub-category 'religious-extremist terrorism'²⁶ could be employed to understand its appeal among Muslim followers across the world. In 2004, Steven Reiss developed a comprehensive psychological theory of religion, arguing that people are not drawn towards religion just because of fear of death or any other singular reason, but there are sixteen basic human psychological needs that motivate them to seek meaning through religion. These include: power, independence, curiosity, acceptance, order, saving, honour, idealism, social contact, family, status, vengeance, romance, eating, physical exercise, and tranquillity. Idealism, power, independence and other needs related to social and economic security, directly mould people's religious behaviour. Bin Laden thus had natural followings in the underdeveloped swathes of Pakistan and war-stricken Afghanistan. Not all followers were terrorists but he enjoyed their sympathy as he had been propagating the spread of Islam, liberation from tyrant leaders and an Islamic system, which will bring social and economic security and hence, order, honour, eating, status, and tranquillity. It is this 'sympathy factor' that al-Qaeda is likely to manipulate to keep up the momentum of its activities and attract further recruits.

Operation NS: Watershed in War against Terrorism

Based on our preceding analysis, it can be established that Osama's killing may not have an overall impact on the al-Qaeda or the Taliban. However, it is likely to have serious and inevitable effects on Pakistan's future.

First, the fact that Osama had been hiding in Pakistan for five years raises several questions: Did he have the patronage of people within the armed forces? Was the military really unaware of his hideout? If yes, then does the military lack the capacity to effectively fight terrorism and protect the sovereignty of the state? This also indicates towards deep penetration of al-Qaeda in Pakistan, infiltration into its armed forces and close correlation with Taliban groups²⁷.

The available information might be just the tip of the iceberg and has still made life difficult for Pakistan. It substantiates Washington's claims that key al-Qaeda leaders and commanders are hiding in Pakistan; indeed, Ayman Al-Zawahiri is also said to be hiding somewhere in the bordering tribal belt.²⁸ This implies that Pakistan's sovereignty will be compromised more frequently by the United States, whether or not Islamabad launches an action against militants in North Waziristan, as has been proposed. The U.S. is already discussing options for expanded unilateral that will ultimately increase resentment against the government and the military.²⁹

Second, the sympathy for militant groups, due to religious and other factors, is going to increase in the under-developed areas of Pakistan, particularly in Southern Punjab and FATA. By creating an 'aggression-frustration' phenomenon, another reason has been given to loosely-connected criminal and Taliban militant groups to group-together under one umbrella.

Third, as the leadership of any group or organization reflects its strategy, the new al-Qaeda is likely to see changes. Osama was fond of fighting 'the far-enemy' and his speeches focused on fighting against the 'crusaders and Jews' with very less emphasis on fighting local regimes.³⁰ Al-Zawahiri, on the other hand, is focused more on fighting 'the near enemy'. According to a data compiled by Murad Batal Al-Shishani, a London-based analyst of Islamic groups and terrorism, about fifty percent of al-Zawahiri's speeches focus on 'the near enemy', in contrast to fifteen percent on 'the far enemy'. He is likely to rely more on operatives who prefer to target near enemies. This implies that al-Qaeda will further tighten its connection with local Taliban and former Kashmiri Jihadi groups and intensify attacks on the Pakistani military and the government.³¹ This does not state that the far-enemy would no longer be on al-Qaeda's agenda as the United States remains a primary target but Pakistan will have to bear consequences as well.

Pak-U.S. relations

Operation NS has created serious fissures between Pakistan and the U.S. It has not only highlighted the fragility of two states' anti-terrorism alliance but also the changing combat strategy and tactics of the United States in its global fight against terrorism.

The main source of friction is the conflicting but sometimes overlapping strategic interests. States are preoccupied with their security, power and position, and therefore anarchy and competition inhibits their

willingness to cooperate, even when they share common interests.³² Pakistan and the U.S. are also locked in such a situation with both trying to maximize their security and economic gains. Pakistan is locked into a security dilemma owing to its perilous and uncertain surrounding environment and the United States is pursuing a security and economy driven expansionist agenda, inadvertently causing regional instability.

The wider strategic vision of the U.S. demands not only a peaceful Afghanistan but also an economically thriving base located at the crossroads of North-South and East-West Trade routes – this ultimately demands security

The wider strategic vision of the U.S. demands not only a peaceful Afghanistan but also an economically thriving base located at the crossroads of North-South and East-West Trade routes – this ultimately demands security.³³ The pledged drawdown has already begun but reports about secret talks between Kabul and Washington for long-term security agreements have started surfacing as well.³⁴ Such agreements also include the U.S. establishing more permanent bases in Afghanistan, which means that it will maintain thin but meaningful presence in the country beyond 2014,³⁵ thus legalising its presence in the country.

Pakistan too has its security, strategic and economic interests in Afghanistan. It wants a peaceful neighbour but not at the cost of its own security and strategic interests. Pakistan and the U.S. are in a chicken-and-egg situation when it comes to the pursuance of their individual strategic interests. Despite the realization that a peaceful Afghanistan is strictly tied to cooperation with Pakistan, Washington has been ignoring the ground realities. By keeping Pakistan in the dark about Operation NS, the U.S. achieved a symbolic victory but it has seriously dented the anti-terrorism alliance.

The United States has been pressuring Pakistan to expand its war while Islamabad lacks a coherent and constructive anti-terrorism strategy. Since the operation, the American pressure has increased and different pressure tactics, such as a cut in military aid³⁶ and repeated anti-Pakistan rhetoric in the Congress, are being employed to extract military concessions. For Pakistan this is important since it seriously compromises its sovereignty and intensifies resentment against the government and the military at home. Such concessions include lenient visa policies that led to

an increase in the number of CIA covert spies in Pakistan,³⁷ and an increased number of U.S. trainers.³⁸

The U.S. is following a policy of ‘offensive-defensive realism’ that drives its expansionist agenda but seriously threatens the security of Pakistan. Although the theory suggests that instability is inadvertently created when a state seeks to maximize its security, Washington is well aware of its policy repercussions for Islamabad. Defensive realists³⁹ see conflict as unavoidable when the security-seeking state’s motivations are uncertain as well as when security and other interests create differences that are irreconcilable between an aggressor and a security seeking state.⁴⁰ Consequently, relations between the U.S. and Pakistan are likely to further deteriorate in the coming days.

Pakistan remains far inferior in power and hence cooperative (as neoclassical realism demands) as compared to the United States’ offensive realism. Offensive realists hold that the link between systemic imperatives and the actual foreign policies states pursue is relatively direct. Relative capabilities largely shape the intentions of states. As a state becomes more powerful, it will attempt to maximize its influence and control its international environment. This places it in direct conflict with all other states. Wars result not because of the mutual pursuit of security, but because one, if not both sides, is aggressive.⁴¹

The Pak-US relations after Operation NS can be summed up in the following points:

- (a) The changing U.S. combat strategy and tactics (increasing reliance on technology) show that Pakistan as an ally in the war against terrorism is becoming less-preferred. Technology is the most unambiguous element that affects the offence-defence balance. There has been an increase in drone strikes and the U.S. has already indicated that, if needed, more NS-like operations will be launched; this in turn implies less reliance on Pakistan⁴².
- (b) Despite Pakistan’s cooperative approach, the U.S. is less likely to be flexible in its approach towards Islamabad although a strong realization exists that a successful Afghan-policy demands cooperation with Pakistan.
- (c) After a decade of war, the U.S. remains uncharitable to regional sensitivities. Drone strikes and dictated anti-terrorism strategies have, nevertheless, proven to be counter-productive and further deteriorated security in not only bordering areas of

Pakistan but across the country. This attitude of the U.S. is not likely to change and will have direct impact on cooperation with Pakistan.

- (d) Pressure on Pakistan is going to multiply in the coming months to take action against all militant elements within its territory, not only in the tribal belt but in cities as well, while the need for Pakistan's cooperation on Afghanistan is becoming exiguous. This shows the prospect of less reliance on Pakistan in the future that can be established from the fact that the U.S. has already started troop drawdown and handing over security to the Afghan National Army (ANA).⁴³
- (e) This also implies that till the time the ANA establishes its control and authority in the war-torn areas of Afghanistan, lawlessness will increase in the bordering provinces while the spill-over effects will further create trouble for Pakistan.⁴⁴
- (f) Operation NS has seriously dented Pakistan's image and credibility. Islamabad would have to take concrete measures to bridge the trust-deficit; this involves as a foremost measure, the need to devise its own coherent anti-terror strategy.

Operation NS & Pakistan-China relations

The impact on Sino-Pak relations is significant to study since China is a major defence supplier for Pakistan. The two countries are time-tested friends and military-to-military relations are a main pillar of their bilateral relations.

China was the only country that instead of raising fingers at Pakistan, showed support and instead criticised the Obama administration. "China holds that the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of any country should be respected," said Jiang Yu, a spokeswoman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry.⁴⁵ She said that the global community should do more to help Pakistan in its efforts to fight terrorism and "give more understanding and support" to the country. Official at two different briefings reaffirmed Chinese support to Pakistan, with Jiang Yu noting that, "We will continue to support Pakistan in instituting their own anti-terrorism strategies and carrying them out based on their domestic situation, and we appreciate Pakistan's active participation in the international anti-terrorism cooperation." She was quoted as saying that, "China will continue to staunchly support Pakistan formulating and implementing counter-terrorism strategies based on its own national conditions and stands ready to work with South Asian countries including Indian and Pakistan to jointly safeguard regional peace and stability."

Nevertheless, like any other neighbouring state, it is inevitable for China to be concerned about growing instability in Pakistan. Sino-U.S. relations are the most important bilateral relationship in contemporary international relations. Despite being tied deeply through economic interdependence, both states harbour suspicions against either's intentions. China is an emerging great power and holds domestic and regional clout. As military-to-military relations are the binding pillar of Sino-Pak friendship, Operation NS has created some concern among Chinese military circles as well. Although Chinese support is expected to continue unabated, Beijing is likely to adopt a more realistic approach based on its own interests and domestic priorities.

Conclusion

Operation NS is a watershed in Pakistan's war against terrorism. It will not only further increase violence across the country but rising extremism will seriously dent its society. The confirmation and recent surfacing of the notion that close collaboration between the Taliban and al-Qaeda network exists and indeed flourishes, is a worrying sign for Pakistan's security and integrity.

The United States cannot afford to abandon Pakistan but its role is definitely going to decrease. Pakistan will continue to be pressurised to take action against terrorist and extremist elements but refocus the anti-terrorism operations to within its own cities and towns, which are being repeatedly dubbed as recruiting grounds for Taliban and al-Qaeda. In the absence of a capable police force, there are the chances that Pakistan will have to compromise on its strategic ambitions as the military is the only institution with the capacity and capability to effectively fight terrorists. Concrete measures need to be taken to enhance the police force.

The Chinese importance, on the other hand, cannot be overlooked. China remains supportive to its traditional friend Pakistan but being an emerging superpower, it has its own set of priorities – domestic stability and peace in its neighbourhood are essential for its economic growth. The operation has caused concerns within the Chinese diplomatic, political and military circles since only a peaceful Pakistan is in the interest of China's own global ambitions. Pakistan will have to devise a strategy that will address the Chinese concerns and enable the sustainability of the support of a time-test friend.

Notes & References

- ¹ Following the September 11, 2001 attacks, the U.S. Congress passed the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Terrorists. The resolution authorizes the U.S. President to use "necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons" he determines were involved in the 9/11 attacks. Also, according to some, even the international law on armed conflict and the Charter of the United Nations a foreign government is allowed to perform a military operation on a host country's soil, if the host country is not capable of and willing to deal with the problem itself.
- ² To conduct this study a content analysis of three local leading newspapers, The News, Dawn and Tribune Express, was conducted from April 30th till June 30th. The inter-dependent variables were: *Osama, Pakistan, US, Afghanistan, Terrorism, Taliban, Congress, China*.
- ³ The people's resistance is known as Guerrilla Warfare. It was named after the Spanish *Guerrilleros* (bands of fighters), a force formed to fight the occupying French armies who had entered the Allied Kingdom of Spain in 1807 while on their way to annex Portugal and never left.
- ⁴ For further reading on Indian military history, please consult Martson, P. Daniel; Sundaram, S. Chandar, 2008, "A Military History of India and South Asia: From the East India Company to the Nuclear Era", IN, Indiana University Press; Kalyanaraman, S., "Conceptualization of Guerrilla Warfar", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 27, No. 2, Apr-Jun 2003, www.pidfweb.org/essay_conceptionsOfGuerrillaWarfare_Kalyanaraman.pdf
- ⁵ Ibid. Involvement of foreign citizens into any insurgent movement is the most important feature of the 21st century.
- ⁶ Punjabi Taliban also played an important role in the freedom struggle but the Taliban group remained associated to Pashtuns of Pakistan and Afghanistan.
- ⁷ Rashid, Ahmed, 2009, *Descent into Chaos: The US and the Disaster in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia*, New York: Penguin Group.
- ⁸ Such obstructions included Pakistan's cooperation in the US war against terrorism. Hence, the Pak army became the prime target of Taliban and militants.
- ⁹ By integration I imply that the group members remained committed to its sole leader, and intact as one group unlike Taliban commanders, who further set up their own splinter groups. Such groups swore allegiance to Mullah Omar but have had been facilitating Al-Qaeda in implementing its goals -- attacks on Pakistani security forces is one such example. There is no splintered Al-Qaeda group.
- ¹⁰ Shehzad, S. Saleem, 2011, *Inside Al-Qaeda and the Taliban: Beyond Bin Laden and 9/11*, London, Pluto Press
- ¹¹ "Taliban claim responsibility for Pakistani naval base attack", *The News*, 23 May, 2011, www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2011-05/23/content_12560256.htm.
- ¹² Ilyas Kashmiri was an ex-SSG Commando. He was killed in a US airstrike in June 2011. "Ilyas Kashmiri killed in drone strike", *The Express Tribune*, 4 June, 2011, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/182247/drone-strike-kills-five-in-south-waziristan-officials/>; *The Friday Times*, <http://www.thefridaytimes.com/10062011/page2.shtml>.
- ¹³ "Al-Qaeda had warned of Pakistan strike ", *Asia Times Online*, 27 May, 2011. http://atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/ME27Df06.html.
- ¹⁴ "Pakistani officials knew about Baitullah, Zawahiri meeting", *The Express Tribune*, 18 July, 2011. <http://tribune.com.pk/story/212025/pakistani-officials-knew-about-baitullah-zawahiri-meeting/>.

- ¹⁵ This reason can be established from the book “*Why I Choose Al-Qaeda*”, available at <http://www.archive.org/details/WhyIChooseALQaeda>. The English Language magazine Inspire published selected translations from the book in its 2011 Winter and Spring issues. Author’s name is being given as “Shaykh Abu Musa’ab al-Awlaqi”.
- ¹⁶ Shehzad, *Ibid*.
- ¹⁷ Naval Base attack is linked to failed negotiations between Al-Qaeda and naval authorities, who were interrogating detained lower cadre officials for hatching plans against armed forces leadership. Such clean-up operations were conducted within Pakistan Air Force (PAF) and Army as well in the past. "Navy base attack: Attack linked with bus bombings, not Osama", *The Tribune Express*, 24 May, 2011, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/174807/navy-base-attack-attack-linked-with-bus-bombings-not-osama/>; <http://www.ndtv.com/article/world/seven-al-qaeda-suspects-held-for-karachi-naval-base-attack-108747>; http://atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/ME27Df06.html; "Pakistan's military under al-Qaeda attack", *Asia Times Online*, 24 May, 2011, www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/ME24Df02.html.
- ¹⁸ After developing differences on suicide attacks, Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) split-up into two factions. "TTP splits as Kurram warlord defects", *The Nation*, 28 June, 2011, <http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Politics/28-Jun-2011/TTP-splits-as-Kurram-warlord-defects>; <http://tribune.com.pk/story/198054/split-in-the-ttp-ranks/>; <http://www.dawn.com/2011/06/27/tehreek-e-taliban-pakistan-splits.html>
- ¹⁹ Since then number of attacks on the security forces have intensified. Raman, B., “Bin Laden's Fatwa Against Musharraf & Pakistani Army”, Paper No. 284, *International Terrorism Monitor*, <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/papers24/paper2388.html>.
- ²⁰ "Brigadier Ali Khan arrested over links with militants: DG ISPR", *Samaa TV*, 21 June, 2011, <http://www.samaa.tv/newsdetail.aspx?ID=33281>; www.thenews.com.pk/TodaysPrintDetail.aspx?ID=53921&Cat=2&dt=6/22/2011.
- ²¹ “Osama’s death closes a chapter”, *Bassam Javed Sunday*, May 08, 2011, www.thenews.com.pk
- ²² Although, there is a lack of concrete evidence to prove the case but various terrorism analysts, leading journalists including Hamir Mir, Ismail Khan and others hold the same opinion. Nevertheless, the contrary notion is based on normative speculation.
- ²³ Lebovich, Andrew, “Al-Qaeda names Zawahiri new leader”, *The AfPak Channel*, 16 June 2011, http://afpak.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/06/16/daily_brief_al_qaeda_names_zawahiri_new_leader
- ²⁴ About 80 personnel were killed in the attack. "Pakistan bombings: Taliban admits Shabqadar attacks", *BBC News South Asia*, 13 May, 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-13385597>
- ²⁵ Juergensmeyer, Mark, 2004, “*Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*”, California, University of California Press.
- ²⁶ This comprises those belligerents who try to defend their faith against the enemies of their faith by responding to radical clerics, who endorse killing in the name of God. It is this kind of *right-wing terrorist group* that seek to maintain an extant political order or to return society to an idealized “golden age” of the past. *Ibid*.
- ²⁷ I am not mentioning its association with criminal groups as it will digress the main topic.
- ²⁸ “Zawahiri hiding in Fata: Panetta”, *The Dawn*, 10 July, 2011, <http://www.dawn.com/2011/07/10/zawahiri-hiding-in-fata-panetta.html>.

- ²⁹ More than five attacks have so far been carried out on the security forces by hundreds of Taliban militants, crossing into bordering tribal belt from Afghanistan. "Militants from Afghanistan attack Pakistani villages", Reuter, 6 July, 2011, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2011/07/06/uk-pakistan-raids-idUKTRE76522720110706>; <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2081394,00.html>; "Militants from Afghanistan attack Pakistani post", 4 July, 2011, <http://news.yahoo.com/militants-afghanistan-attack-pakistani-post-102828440.html>; "200 militants cross Afghan border to attack Pakistan checkpoint", *MSNBC News Service*, 1 June, 2011, http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/43234474/ns/world_news-south_and_central_asia/t/militants-cross-afghan-border-attack-pakistan-checkpoint/.
- ³⁰ "Understanding Strategic Change in Al-Qaeda's Central Leadership after Bin Laden", *Jamestown Foundation*, Volume IX, Issue 23, June 9, 2011, www.jamestownfoundation.org.
- ³¹ *Ibid*
- ³² Siddall, A., "The misapplication of defensive realism", *Association of Political Science Review*, apsa2000.anu.edu.au/confpapers/siddell.rtf.
- ³³ "Afghanistan and the new great game", *The Star*, 12 August 2009, www.thestar.com/comment/article/679670.
- ³⁴ The US is negotiating with puppet Afghan government for long-term stay of its troops in the country beyond the deadline of 2014. For more details see: "Secret US and Afghanistan talks could see troops stay for decades", *The Guardian*, 13 July, 2011, www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jun/13/us-afghanistan-secret-talks-on-security-partnership.
- ³⁵ "Afghan president confirms US demand for permanent bases", *World Socialist Website*, 11 February, 2011. <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2011/feb2011/afgh-f11.shtml>; "Secret US and Afghanistan talks could see troops stay for decades", *The Guardian*, 13 June, 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jun/13/us-afghanistan-secret-talks-on-security-partnership>; "US shifts efforts to establish joint military bases with Afghan army", *Iran Voice Justice*, 8 June, 2011. <http://english.irib.ir/voj/news/top-stories/item/79744-us-shifts-efforts-to-establish-joint-military-bases-with-afghan-army>; <http://inteldaily.com/2010/08/central-asia-u-s-military-buildup/>.
- ³⁶ "U.S. aid cut to Pakistan could hurt economy", *Reuters*, 11 July, 2011. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/07/11/us-pakistan-usa-idUSTRE76A13S20110711>.
- ³⁷ "Large number of CIA agents in Pakistan", *Press TV*, 20 April, 2011, www.presstv.ir/usdetail/175832.html.
- ³⁸ "US cut Pakistan's military aid over trainers: FO", *Dawn News*, 15 July, 2011. <http://www.dawn.com/2011/07/15/us-cut-pakistan%E2%80%99s-military-aid-over-trainers-fo.html>.
- ³⁹ Aggressor and security-seeking states words are used interchangeable to refer to US as an aggressive state for its unilateral self-driven security policies and Pakistan as security-seeking for its security dilemma.
- ⁴⁰ Jervis, Robert. 1999. 'Realism, Neoliberalism, and Cooperation: understanding the debate'. *International Security*, Summer, 24(1):42-63.
- ⁴¹ Mearsheimer, John. 1990. 'Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War'. *International Security*, Summer, 15(1): 5-56;
Schweller, Randall. 1996. 'Neorealism's Status Quo Bias: What Security Dilemma'. *Security Studies*, Spring, 5(3):90-121;

Zakaria, Fareed. 1992. 'Realism and Domestic Politics: a review essay'. *International Security*, Summer, 17(1): 177-198.

⁴² "We will kill Zawahiri just like Bin Laden: US", *The Express Tribune*, 17 June, 2011. <http://tribune.com.pk/story/190815/we-will-kill-zawahiri-just-like-bin-laden-us/>.

⁴³ The security of Bamiyan province was handed over to the local police on 17th July. "Afghanistan: NATO hands over Bamiyan province to local police", *BBC News South Asia*, 17 July, 2011, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-14177240>.

⁴⁴ As mentioned earlier, the discussion on association with criminal groups will lead to digression from the main topic.

⁴⁵ "China slams US bin Laden operation", *Press TV*, 5 May, 2011, <http://www.presstv.ir/detail/178415.html>