



CAUSES OF TERRORISM: A CASE STUDY OF KARACHI

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Abstract

Karachi is the financial and commercial hub of Pakistan. Karachi has the highest literacy rate in the nation (up to 90 per cent in downtown Karachi), as well as the biggest number of individuals employed in manufacturing, retail, and service industries. Both the city's cosmopolitanism and its economic success are hindered by violence. Thousands of lives have been lost and the city's economy has been devastated as a result of the violence in recent years. The Lashkar-e-Taiba (LT) and Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) have established themselves in these regions. Despite the extensive and varied nature of the violence in Karachi, this holds true. Karachi was not affected by the terrorist onslaught that struck Pakistan between 2002 and 2010, which claimed the lives of over 30,000 people. In the years 2011 and 2010, over 1,800 individuals lost their lives in Karachi. In 2011, Karachi was responsible for 9.6 per cent of all fatalities that were caused by violent crime in Pakistan. The political elite of Pakistan is aware of how important Karachi is to Pakistan's national security. In March 2012, Karachi's



security crisis overshadowed the Pakistani parliament's strategic assessment of security issues. U.S. authorities and the international community recognise Karachi's role in stabilising Pakistan. This study describes the sorts of violence in Karachi, their origins, and the ramifications for Pakistan's stability.

Keywords: Karachi, Pakistan, Terrorism, Poverty, Security.

Introduction

General peace and order in Karachi have improved greatly as a result of ongoing law enforcement operations. The operation was launched in 2013 in response to a rise in targeted killings, a catastrophic decline in the country's economy and reputation, and rising lawlessness and sectarian violence. The dilemma goes beyond national boundaries. Indeed, Karachi is a really global city. Additionally, it is the lone operable port city of Pakistan, which is recognised as the most significant pillar of the economy at the time. The situation in Karachi is of considerable worry owing to the presence of their own inhabitants, residing in Karachi for commercial purposes for the international community. Karachi's out-of-the-ordinary character has created a problem for Pakistanis who wish to visit the nation. People from all around Pakistan make Karachi their home and their source of income. (Fair, 2012) It is famous as mini-Pakistan and disruptions are deemed not localized but of national significance in this metropolis. The latter aspect of this worry has made it all the more urgent to look into what's going on in Karachi and provide solutions to keep the peace.

Because of the rapid spread of terrorist strikes, the country's financial markets and transportation systems have been disrupted. Because of the growing threat, the central government has had to devote a disproportionate amount of resources to the military, making it difficult to keep up with spending on other areas of the economy and society. In the current economic climate, terrorism poses a significant threat to Pakistan's economy and business community. The scholarly literature and the media are replete with descriptions of the monetary and human toll exacted by terrorist attacks in the metropolis of Karachi. (Saleem, Rahman & Rehman, 2018) Terrorism in the city might be motivated by a number of different factors, each of which has its own timeline- and situation-specific explanation, and hence some factors are more pressing than others. As shown by research on CSF perceptions, it's important to zero in on the traits that are most likely to contribute to success and eliminate the rest. Understanding the root causes of terrorism and ranking them by importance is a crucial part of this research. Policymakers need to take into account a number of crucial causes, but they may be constrained in their ability to do so by



the scarcity of resources necessary to effectively handle the complex phenomena of terrorism.

Therefore, the purpose of this research is to investigate the root causes of terrorism in Pakistan's largest metropolis, Karachi. Specific issues that were identified and supported by the literature were the primary focus of the investigation. Karachi, Pakistan has a number of risk factors for terrorism, although many of these may be mitigated by increasing the city's revenue, spending, health, welfare, development, and public expenditure. Inequality, ethnic fractionalization, domestic strife, corruption, foreign interference, illiteracy, legal uncertainty, poverty, and unemployment were also highlighted in the current study as factors. Karachi is the heart and soul of Pakistan since it is the country's largest and busiest metropolis and has a port. Additionally, it provides a wide range of jobs to the local population and makes significant financial contributions to the government. Since at least the previous decade, the country's security situation has worsened dramatically, negatively impacting the economy and resulting in significant loss of life and property. (Syed, Saeed & Martin, 2015) An operation was initiated in Karachi with the goal of regaining the city's former status as the most peaceful and vibrant in the country. Therefore, this study will be very useful for policymakers who are interested in investigating the present state of security, pinpointing the origins of worries, and proposing solutions to ensure that the situation remains peaceful.

Literature Review

After three decades of conflict, Karachi's condition is very complex and tough to handle. Since the present activities began, significant progress has been made in bettering Karachi's circumstances. As opposed to earlier years, when threats of boycotts and shutdowns were commonplace, the city is now operating normally, but there are still occasional occurrences of target assassinations. With the help of law enforcement, the government has made a resolute promise to continue the battle against terrorism until the threat is eliminated. Massive stability and permanent success are now anticipated by the nation. (Saleem, Rahman & Rehman, 2018)

Rehman et al. (2018) performed research to determine the impact of terrorism in Pakistan on stock markets. It was determined that three out of eleven dominating attacks had a negative effect on stock returns. This research helps to quantify the impact of terrorist acts on the country's economy. Because stock markets in all economies are responsive to developments in both the domestic and international technological landscape, it has been found to be illuminating.



Aslam and Kang (2015) performed research suggesting that terrorist incidents have a detrimental impact on the Pakistani stock market. Depending on the kind and location of assaults, their impact might vary greatly. The stock market's unfavourable reaction to assaults is proportional to their severity. In sum, the research suggests that the financial markets might be used as a predictor of future terrorist acts because of the varying effects that different terrorist techniques have on them. The financial markets pay close attention to news of terrorist acts. The current body of research indicates that terrorism has a detrimental effect on the global economy.

Shahzad et al. (2016) did research that looked at how terrorism may be connected to GDP growth and FDI. This research is important because it measures the drop in foreign direct investment that has been attributed to terrorism. The results of the study showed that the threat of terrorism has a negative impact on FDI. The administration in Pakistan must take efforts to control and deal with terrorism in the state because of the detrimental impact it has on foreign direct investment in the post-September 11 periods. The government has also begun a large military operation against domestic terrorism, and more measures are needed to forestall a foreign rebellion.

According to Khalid's (2017) research, the government of Pakistan is adopting a strategy of "counter-terrorism" as a matter of national urgency. The study has put an emphasis on the need for strategies in dealing with the problems that are now facing the country. It has been stated that the politicisation of the police force has made it a target for extremist organisations. Police play an increasingly important role in state affairs because some extreme groups see these practices as contrary to religious law and regulation. Citizens and law enforcement alike would benefit from the widespread dissemination of the most effective strategies for countering radicalisation. To combat the threat of terrorism in Pakistan, the country needs a police force that is both responsible and efficient.

Definition of Terrorism

Terrorism, to put it quickly, is more of a mentality than terrorism, which makes it hard to define. Terrorism and violence are inextricably linked, thus understanding their origins might help shed light on the terrorism at hand. The word "violence" comes from the Latin word "violare," which means "to transgress" or "to go against" something. To use violence to force one's own interpretations of religious teachings, sociocultural norms, or political and economic ideals on society is also a kind of terrorism. Terrorism, in a nutshell, is the use of violent tactics to intimidate and/or threaten members of the general public or certain social groups. Finding a single, universally accepted definition of terrorism is a formidable challenge in the academic community. There is a lot of work to be done, but sociologists, criminologists, and political scientists are doing their best to arrive at the least acceptable



definition. (Saleem, Rahman & Rehman, 2018) Instead of offering a new definition of terrorism, I'd like to broaden the perspective of social scientists on the topic.

Terrorism, very simply, is the instilling of terror by violent means. "Terrorism is a systematic system of intimidation, especially for political goals," as terrorism often reads, is a commonplace way of thinking about terrorist acts. Terrorist organisations, nation-states, and social scientists all define terrorism differently under different sets of conditions. The debate over whether or not certain freedom movements should be labelled as liberation struggles or terrorist activities is heated. One person's definition of terrorism is another's definition of a group's freedom struggle. (Murphy, 2012) Because of this occurrence, there is no generally accepted definition of terrorism. The meaning and significance of terrorism are seen differently by different people, each with its own agendas and priorities. In order to have a deeper comprehension of the problem, several definitions and perspectives on terrorism are discussed here. "Terrorism is the premeditated use or threat of violence to teach fear, designed to force or frighten governments or society," Charles Townshend (2002) writes in his book "Terrorism a very brief Introduction." To be heard is to resort to terrorism (Delillo, 1992). It is defined as "the unlawful use of force by people who oppose established social, political, or economic structures" in the Dictionary of the Social Sciences.

Terrorism, in a nutshell, is an act of violence committed by a rebel organisation or person in order to get their cause recognised by the government and society at large. It is the use of physical force to enforce the will of violent ideologies and groups. Terrorism may be defined as the strategic use of violence to instil fear among a sect or group inside a society. Fear caused by terrorism undermines the will to live, the most basic human motivation. When marginalised communities or schools of thought are denied the political and social space they need to flourish, they may resort to violence to get their voices heard. (Syed, Saeed & Martin, 2015) It's the final stage of forcing one's will on a community, whether by rulers or rebel groups.

Background

The city of Karachi serves as Pakistan's economic hub. In addition to having the biggest concentration of manufacturing, retail, and service sector jobs, Moreover, Karachi boasts the highest literacy rate in Pakistan (up to 90 percent in the city centre). Recent outbreaks of violence have dampened the city's international spirit and slowed its economic development. Recent years of bloodshed have cost the city thousands of lives and devastated its economy. Domestic and international policy discussions about Pakistan's national security challenges have focused on Karachi, despite the fact that militant groups



like the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LT) and the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) have long had safe havens in KP province, southern Punjab, and FATA. Between 2002 and 2010, terrorist attacks killed more than 30,000 people across Pakistan, but luckily they avoided Karachi. Approximately 1,800 people were murdered in Karachi between 2011 and 2010. Nearly 10% of all violent deaths in Pakistan occurred in Karachi that year. (Fair, 2012) The political class of Pakistan acknowledges Karachi's significance to the country's safety and security.

Rehman Malik believed that destabilising Karachi will destabilise Pakistan. His logic is economic. Karachi is the economic engine of Pakistan, responsible for a quarter of the country's gross domestic product, fifty-four per cent of federal government tax collections, seventy per cent of national income tax receipts, and thirty per cent of industrial output. In 2007, Karachi's per-capita output was higher than the rest of the country's. Karachi's daily tax revenue of Rs. 2 billion (\$21 million) has a significant impact on the economy of Pakistan as a whole. Recent citywide outbreaks of violence have shut down markets and industries, costing businesses \$31.5 million per day in lost revenue and the industrial sector \$73.6 million per year. Financial capital protection has to be prioritised by policymakers in Pakistan because of the importance of economic stability to the country's overall safety. The city is a hotbed for militancy and terrorism. Militancy has increased in Karachi due to ethno-political tensions and demographic constraints. Unconfirmed sources that the Afghan Taliban leadership is in Karachi. The city is home to more than 3,000 madrassahs and is a TTP sanctuary, organisational hub, fundraising and recruitment ground. In 2011, TTP terrorists assaulted the Pakistan Naval Station Mehran naval facility in Karachi, murdering 13 personnel and damaging two P-3C Orion maritime surveillance aircraft. Karachi is a terrorism hotbed along with Pakistan's northern tribal zone. The terrorism danger in the city was first acknowledged by Sindh Home Minister Manzoor Husain Wasan in November 2011. After factoring in both ethnic and sectarian violence as well as terrorist attacks, Mercer ranked Karachi as the 216th most unsafe city in the world the same month. The TTP and other militant organisations established their presence in the city, where they are safe from American drone attacks and counterinsurgency measures. There has been much discussion over the city's role in worldwide terrorism. (Murphy, 2012)

After spending a few weeks in Karachi training as LT militants, in November 2008 they sailed out of the city's harbour and carried out synchronised assaults in Mumbai, India, killing more than 170 people. Faisal Shahzad, a Pakistani-American who planned to assault Times Square in 2010, joined TTP in Karachi and received terrorist training. Karachi is vital to Pakistan's stability and democracy, regardless of its foreign policies. The city's ethnically divided neighbourhoods serve as a battleground for the country's major political parties, each of which has a distinct base of support among the city's residents. When urban



violence becomes unmanageable, it poses a danger to the coalition government in power and is often used as a bargaining chip at the provincial and federal levels. Because of this, Karachi is a major chink in Pakistan's fragile democratic framework and one of the locations in the country most at risk of army involvement. Karachi's commercial, trading, and manufacturing sectors pleaded with the government to declare a state of emergency and take charge of the city's security during the city's ethnopolitical unrest that summer of 2011. (Fair, 2012) Since the paramilitary Rangers, rather than the impoverished police force, are in charge of security in Karachi, the operation might have gone off without a hitch even if the Pakistani army had decided against taking such a drastic move.

Major Causes of Terrorism and Violence in Karachi

Karachi's political, ethnic, sectarian, and militant variables each contribute to the city's cycle of violence in their own ways and with their own set of triggers. Yet, each of these causes is driven by and exacerbated by underlying structural concerns that also perpetuate violent cycles. Failure to recognise and address these underlying causes has stymied a variety of surface efforts to restore calm in Karachi. (Micheal, 2007) Inadequate urban planning, population pressures, bad police, and inefficient criminal prosecution due to a weak court system are only some of the key structural reasons for violence in the city that are highlighted in this research. The structural flaws are not specific to Karachi or even Pakistani cities, but they are nevertheless important to draw attention to. As was shown above, authorities trying to break cycles of urban violence almost never take into account the larger socioeconomic issues and land-use trends that are the actual causes of violence in Karachi. Karachi's bad security environment might be repeated in other quickly developing cities due to the presence of these social, economic, and legal difficulties. Pakistani policymakers can only expect to heed the warning signals of Karachi if they emphasise the relationship between structural difficulties and urban violence. Because of these underlying difficulties, cities like Karachi, which are plagued by design and policy flaws, are particularly susceptible to a wide range of forms of violence. Once the state stops caring about providing services, utilities, and security, political parties stop representing the people and start providing a vital type of protection under the pretext of ad hoc service delivery. (Saleem, Rahman & Rehman, 2018) Without engaging in coercive politics, urban inhabitants have little chance of gaining access to or benefiting from the city's infrastructure. It is clear that failure to enhance urban planning and administration in other regions of Pakistan would have far-reaching consequences for the safety of its citizens, as shown in the current situation in Karachi. Karachi is of particular importance to policymakers because of its large size, its huge network of seminaries, and chronic lack of governance and law enforcement. Worryingly, Karachi is a key recruiting ground for militants and other extremist organisations because of its trend toward marginalisation



along ethnic lines as well as in terms of jobs and opportunities. As was previously indicated, sectarian organisations and the TTP are increasingly appealing to Karachi's educated, middle-class inhabitants. (Murphy, 2012) Affiliation with organisations, whether they are the armed wings of political parties, militants, or sectarian groups, gives much-needed safety in a violent and competitive metropolis.

Territory

Karachi's political and ethnic violence may be traced back to a number of root reasons, but the competition over underdeveloped land resources is perhaps the most significant. Further, the city's seemingly infinite squatter colonies provide a safe haven for extremists seeking to elude civilian law enforcement. As a result, the lack of safety in Karachi can be directly traced back to problems with urban planning, unequal land usage, and misallocated resources. Since the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, when a large number of people fled to Karachi, In response to the state's arbitrary regularisation and forcible evictions, some groups have resorted to violence. For the most part, political parties have maintained contact with the all-pervasive land mafia since the 1980s, because unlawful developments provide the easiest way to buy the votes of slum residents by promising them safe homes, amenities, and infrastructure like roads. Given that Pakistan is presently the most rapidly urbanising country in South Asia, it is crucial that the violent turf battles that arise as a result of inadequate urban planning be understood and addressed. (Newberg, 2016)

Exploding Population

Karachi's population has increased by a factor of over 25 since Partition and now stands at 18 million. Karachi's population increased by 432% between 1941 and 1961, a rate "unparalleled by any other metropolis in the globe at any time in human history." In fact, the city is currently increasing at a pace of 5.4% each year, making it one of the world's fastest expanding urban areas. An estimated 1,000,000 individuals from rural Pakistan move to Karachi every year, causing the city's unplanned slums to expand by 100,000 plots per year. Over 8,000 acres of land designated for amenity plots and parks were encroached upon by low-income homes and slums between 1986 and 2007. (Ishaque, Mahesar & Khan, 2018)

Lack of Urban Planning

Poor planning that began in the 1950s has caused ghettoization and urban sprawl in Karachi. Worst of all, in 1958, the Greater Karachi Resettlement Plan proposed developing



two satellite towns twenty-five kilometres to the north and east of the city in order to relocate the city's migrant and working-class population away from the city core. Karachi became a low-density sprawl as the city's core population left for the suburbs. A squatter settlement is a type of informal community that has emerged in the city and has grown to define the urban character of the city's neighbourhoods. (Micheal, 2007)

Lack of Local Government Oversight

Karachi has a lot of slums and people living on land they don't own. This is made worse by the fact that more than twenty federal and provincial government agencies, port authorities, city authorities, private-sector developers and military cantonment boards are in charge of the city's development. These entities operate autonomously without direction from a unified metropolitan authority, presiding over overlapping jurisdictions and authorities and vying for control of financially lucrative planning projects. When there are so many proprietors, complications arise. Corruption, bribery of officials to alter land records, and the pitting of government agencies against one another are all tools used by private developers and land mafias working for political parties to acquire property for commercial development. (Saeed, Syed & Martin, 2014)

The deficit in Law Enforcement Agencies

A lack of effective law enforcement contributes to the rising tide of sectarian, terrorist, and ethno-political violence in Karachi. The majority of issues are caused by chronic understaffing. The city's 32,524 police officers are responsible for protecting 18 million residents. A total of 12,000 police officers are now working on special security operations, with 8,000 of those assigned to protecting government officials and other notable figures. Twenty thousand police officers are not enough to keep the peace in the city. Trust in the police force has declined as a result of staffing shortages. Due to underreporting of crimes, such as the new anti-extortion squad has revealed, a clear picture of the state of security in Karachi cannot be painted. It's no secret that the police department has a political agenda. The Sindh police IG claims that over 40% of Karachi's police force was hired for political reasons. Appointees to political positions seldom take action against criminal organisations including land mafias, extortionists, target killers, and criminals who work for their patron parties. By rescinding Police Order 2002, Sindh introduced politics into Karachi's police force. All provincial police officers are subject to appointment and transfer by the PPO. Due to its removal, the Sindh IG is now limited to influencing just DSPs. (Khalid, 2017) Appointments at the provincial level require formal permission from the province. The provincial parties have undermined Karachi's police force by appointing officers who



protect the illegal activities of the political parties from which they were elected. After a security crackdown against target murderers between July and September 2011, it became clear that the police had become politicised when just 130 charge sheets were filed to the courts despite the fact that 291 people had been detained and accused under the Anti-Terrorism Act.

Police fear repercussions if they crack down on criminals and armed party activists during ethno-political conflicts. Since 1992, 92 Operation Clean-Up police personnel have been abducted or assassinated. The project attempted to rid Karachi of MQM militants. The inability of the police force to ensure its own safety renders it irrelevant to the task of keeping the city safe. Since the 1990s, the people of Karachi have relied on the paramilitary Rangers organisation to prevent and respond to political violence, and to restore order after killings of high-profile figures. In times of heightened violence, the government grants the Rangers expanded police authority, allowing them to conduct warrantless searches and arrests, seal off areas, seize potential tools of crime (such as firearms and explosives), and defend themselves against assaults. In August of 2011, the Pakistani government sent as many as 4,000 Rangers into Karachi in an effort to catch target killers, carry out surgical strikes in no-go zones, and break the city's two-year cycle of ethno-political bloodshed. While the Rangers are effective in restoring order in Karachi, they are not a long-term solution to the city's security problems. Violence in Karachi stems from a wide variety of causes that are all interrelated, therefore law enforcement must be hyper-local. This type of law enforcement might be provided by a police force that is adequately staffed, trained, equipped, and appointed in a transparent manner. (Khalid, 2017)

Socioeconomic Inequalities

Karachi's rich and poor have a large wealth difference. Social class differences have increased petty crime and armed robbery. Class divides map onto ethnic groupings, fueling ethnic enmity. Urdu-speaking mohajirs and Punjabis are wealthy, whereas Pashtuns and Baloch are destitute. Some Pashtuns in Karachi's commercial transport industry have benefitted from transferring NATO goods to Afghanistan since 2001. Their sudden riches explains the ANP's rise. Pashtun settlements remain undeveloped, and socioeconomic discrepancies bolster the idea that ethnic minorities are ghettoised in Karachi. (Micheal, 2007)

Joblessness



Karachi has 17.56 per cent unemployment in 2019, compared to 14.4 per cent nationally. Low-skilled rural migrants increase urban unemployment in Pakistan. Seventy-five per cent of Karachi's population works in the unofficial economy, and up to three million people survive on daily wages. Seventy per cent of workers in the primary industrial region of the Sindh Industrial Trading Estate (SITE) do the same. In Karachi, just about 40% of adults are actively looking for job. More than half of the city's residents are poor because of high unemployment and low wages. When markets in Karachi are shut down because of fighting, daily wage earners suffer. The rate of unemployment varies by ethnic group. In an effort to reduce tensions in the workplace, several companies are favouring applicants from the same racial or cultural background. (Mirza, Parhyar & Tirmizi, 2013) Considering that most businesses in the area speak either Urdu or Punjabi, many Pashtuns have been forced out of the workforce due to discriminatory unemployment practises.

Metropolitan Demographics

Karachi is Pakistan's most developed, rich, and literate city despite its multifarious violence and the pervasiveness of the structural challenges outlined above. Human development in Karachi was higher than the national average of 0.539 in 2005, at 0.7885, with a positive annual rate of progress of 2.7%, according to the Social Policy and Development Center. The city's literacy rate in 1998 was 67.42%, according to the census, which is much higher than the national average of 49.90%. New research suggests that in Karachi's financial area, as much as 90% of the population can read and write. The following demographic trends are driving ethno-political violence and are expected to intensify the aforementioned structural concerns, which endanger the aforementioned indicators. Without new policies to address these shifts, the city faces a more dangerous future. (Newberg, 2016)

Fragile Legal System

The shortcomings of the criminal justice system exacerbate the problems caused by ineffective law enforcement. Over 200 Rangers troops were detained in August and September 2011 during surgical operations, yet not a single one has been successfully convicted as of yet. Some of the most infamous perpetrators of the current violence in Karachi had previously been released from prison by antiterrorism tribunals operating at the local level (ATCs). Ajmal Pahari was acquitted of more than a hundred murder charges and extortion rackets on behalf of a political party in June 2011 by a Karachi court due to a lack of evidence. When no eyewitnesses to a murder Pahari was accused of committing showed up to testify, the prosecution's case collapsed. Pahari was also accused of murdering four Americans in 1997, but he was exonerated by an ATC. The failure to



successfully prosecute gang members and target killers, which is necessary to stabilise Karachi in the long run, is highlighted by the acquittals of Pahari, some of which are mentioned below. (Saeed, Syed & Martin, 2014)

Faulty Investigation

Additionally, errors, omissions, and delays that occur throughout the process of registering crimes and completing police investigations impede the ATCs' ability to deliver prosecutions. Suspected terrorists, criminals and target killers frequently escape justice due to incomplete first information reports (FIR), delays in assembling a police lineup, witnesses who failed to identify the accused, unreliable, inconsistent, or tampered-with evidence, improperly recorded confessions and witness statements, and tampered with medical or forensic evidence. In addition, confessions obtained through illegal interrogation methods or even torture are not admissible in court, despite the fact that this is how the vast majority of accused persons admit to their crimes. (Irshad, 2011)

Militancy

As a direct consequence of the uptick in ethno-political violence that occurred between 2010 and 2011, Karachi's law and order situation deteriorated to the point that terrorist organisations were able to strengthen their foothold there and begin carrying out assaults. There have been rumours, but they have not been proven, that the leadership of the Afghan Taliban has moved to the city. The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which is an umbrella organisation combining terrorist factions in Pakistan's northwestern tribal areas, has intensified its fundraising and recruiting efforts in the city in addition to launching many high-profile assaults. In addition to this, Karachi has seen a rise in the activity of terrorist organisations with a sectarian objective in recent years. Militancy comes in many different forms, and these forms frequently interact with one another. This might be the most destabilising factor in Karachi's near-term future. (Mirza, Parhyar & Tirmizi, 2013)

Criminal Activities

The breakdown of law and order in Karachi contributes to the city's ongoing ethno-political violence. Some of the assailants in the targeted assassinations were not affiliated with any one political group, but rather belonged to one of the city's two hundred criminal gangs, many of which have claimed ties to prominent political organisations. Because of the many criminal activities in which gangs engage, city residents may never feel truly safe. In 2011, there were 1,490 automobile thefts, over 1,683 armed robberies, 12,500 mobile phone thefts and 113 kidnappings for ransom reported in Karachi. Officers routinely confess that these estimations are drastically low since most victims choose not to report crimes and



there is considerable mistrust of the government. (Ishaque, Mahesar & Khan, 2018) Criminality in Karachi is rampant, but crimes with political overtones pose the greatest threat to the city's peace and quiet. Lots of gangs have land mafias that deal with the division and selling of stolen property. These mafias seize public lands, commercial properties and unpermitted squatter settlements via the use of fraud, intimidation, bribery and fire before reselling them for a profit. Political parties and the land mafia are inseparably linked. Due to Karachi's poor urban planning, political parties must rely on land mafias to supply real estate, utility lines, roads, and other infrastructure to their followers in slum neighbourhoods. In contrast, land speculators use their political connections to regularise squatter settlements, turn amenity plots (intended for community centres and parks into residential or commercial property), and obtain permits to develop properties, which they frequently purchase for a small percentage of their market value after resorting to threats or violent behaviour. (Mirza, Parhyar & Tirmizi, 2013)

Target Killings

Karachi had a substantial increase in ethno-political violence in the year between 2010 and 2011. More than a thousand individuals were killed in what are known as "target murders" in 2010, which are characterised as "tit-for-tat assassinations directed at members of opposing political parties and their associated ethnic groupings." This number increased to 1,891 in 2011, and then to over 740 in the first five months of 2012. (Ishaque, Mahesar & Khan, 2018) A total of 324 persons were killed in July 2011 and another 229 in August 2011. Criminal gangs and the armed wings of major political parties were mostly responsible for this carnage. There is solid evidence linking major political parties to terrorists who specifically attack civilians. The Intelligence Bureau (IB), the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), and the Military Intelligence (MI) all contributed to a study compiled by the Sindh Home Department in September 2011 that uncovered connections between criminals and political parties. Twenty-six alleged target murderers from 2010 Karachi riots were interviewed for the study. They all admitted to having ties to outlawed terrorist groups including as the MQM, ANP, and MQM-Haqiqi (a splinter branch of the MQM). In spite of the report's lack of trust with the public and media due to its failure to identify any target murderers linked with the ruling PPP party, the Supreme Court accepted it, and the Inspector General of Sindh Police appointed a task team to arrest the persons identified in it.

Analysis

As a result, the activities and initiatives conducted in 2011 to restore law and order in Karachi are obviously neither systematic or sustainable, as seen by the persistence of



violent crime in the city. Only after political pressure and unprecedented involvement from the highest levels of the judiciary and army did the ethnopolitical violence in Karachi cease in 2011. The departure of a polarising political figure has also helped the situation. Political unanimity is the key to stabilising Karachi since it is the one thing that can avoid new cycles of violence. The tragedy of Karachi is that the same political actors who should be stabilising and governing the city are themselves significant destabilising elements. Mainstream political parties see Karachi like a feudal landholding, viewing control over the city's land and municipal resources as an indicator of political strength. Karachi will not be secure unless these factions agree to a power-sharing agreement that fairly reflects the city's changing demographics and socioeconomic conditions. Without an honest census, settling the question of political representation in Karachi is difficult. As it relates to this issue, the city is stuck in a never-ending loop. Each political faction will do anything it can to prevent, obstruct, or manipulate the census so that the results are more favourable to their cause. As was previously indicated, the release of reliable census data would be good for and bad for all the main parties. The problem of fair political representation, however, cannot be raised without first conducting a complete and accurate census. Another difficulty is that there is no large mohajir community in the provinces to help swell the numbers. Some estimates suggest that in less than 30 years, Pashtuns in Karachi would outnumber Urdu-speaking mohajirs. Tensions between Karachi's municipal authority and Sindh's provincial government are likely to rise as a result of the Eighteenth Amendment's devolution of political power to the provinces. In light of Karachi's disproportionate size and revenue output, the province has to swiftly create an equitable structure for sharing provincial resources. (Mirza, Parhyar & Tirmizi, 2013) One further thing standing in the way of political discussions is the fact that the main political parties don't have a permanent mechanism or platform where disputing parties may talk for long periods of time without being interrupted. The National Assembly has established special standing committees to discuss matters of law and order during periods of increased violence.

Conclusion

The only way to combat ongoing criminal behaviour and ethnopolitical violence like extortion in Karachi is via political discourse that results in a culture of representative politics. Political negotiations and sectarian or militant urban violence are not as closely tied, and to combat these forms of violence, Pakistan's national security strategy, madrasah reform, and other statewide policy initiatives would need to be reviewed. Good administration, political will, and an effective, unconstrained police force are needed to manage sectarian and militant violence. Reconciliation and power-sharing are required. As political groups in Karachi compete for voters by exchanging resources like land and



money ahead of the 2023 general elections, tensions are expected to rise. As a result of a successful demonstration in December 2011, Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf (PTI) party of Imran Khan entered the political mix in Karachi, which might spark instability. Analysts speculate that MQM pressure on PTI might result in a splintering of the Pashtun vote in Karachi. Conflict is likely to increase if there is a new political actor and the ANP is marginalised. The continuing political unrest might help the TTP, sectarian, and other extremist organisations expand in Karachi. In the near term, terrorists escaping drone attacks, military operations, and other counterterrorism attempts in northern Pakistan will increase the city's militant presence. As political parties and militant organisations seek funding, increased ethnopolitical and militant activities in Karachi will lead to a rise in extortion, land grabs, robberies and kidnappings for ransom. Karachi's security would certainly worsen. Karachi's violence will affect national politics and security. A post-2023 coalition government of Karachi-focused parties may not survive escalating ethnopolitical tensions and territorial warfare. The likelihood of terrorist attacks in other parts of Pakistan will increase as a result of fundraising and collaboration amongst militant organisations in Karachi. Terrorist recruitment and ideology dissemination will be aided by the city's widespread demographic and socioeconomic pressures. The economy of the city suffers as a result of the prevalence of violence stemming from ethnic and political strife, religious extremism, militant groups, and organised crime. Pakistani politicians who care about national stability should address the violence in Karachi and highlight systemic approaches to addressing the problem.



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