



Volume and Issues Obtainable at Centeriir.org
Pakistan Journal of Criminal Justice
ISSN: 2958-9363 ISSN (E): 2958-9371
Volume 2, No.1, 2022
Journal Homepage: <https://journals.centeriir.org/index.php/pjcl>

Consequences of Merging of FATA in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: A Critical Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on securitization in the tribal areas that are traced back to the British arrival in the region. Both the British and Pakistan treated the tribal belt with imperial and national security considerations. The British perceived it as the centre of gravity against Czarist Russia for India's survival and security during the nineteenth-century Great Game and afterwards. Pakistan after independence continued the region with the same colonial pattern against Afghanistan, India, Russia and Iran. Both the colonial and post-colonial power retained the tribal belt as a barren periphery, security zone and geo-strategic centre of gravity, for the sole reason of protecting and safeguarding the interest of the core region, in the name of imperial and national security. The main focus of this research is on the post-merger security paradigm of the tribal areas. FATA's merger as the democratic project based on mainstreaming is changing the imperial legacy of the region. The mainstreaming is shrinking space for the state to use the region for securing and serving the interest of the core region under the pretext of national security. Moreover, it also restricted space for militants, extremists, anti-state actors and influential elites.

Article History: Received: August 11, 2022: Accepted: November 28, 2022

Keywords: FATA Merger, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, FRC

1 Introduction

Formerly known as FATA, this sparsely populated strip of land runs the length of the Pakistan–Afghanistan border. It is flanked on all sides by the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. After its consolidation with KP, the tribal districts and subdistricts evolved from its original seven Ex-Political Agencies and six Frontier Regions (FRs). The area of the province is 27,220 square kilometres or 3.4% of Pakistan as a whole. Formerly known as FATA, the region is home to five million people as per the 2017 census conducted by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. In 1849, the British displaced the Sikhs and advanced into the lowlands of the border region, where autonomous Pakhtun tribes lived. The former FATA was of considerable strategic importance to the British Empire because of its location at a crossroads of major nations' interests and as a gateway to Central Asia, Afghanistan, and the Indian subcontinent.

The Pakhtun belt was established by the British using the "Threefold Frontier Policy" as a guide. British India had direct control over the Pakhtun-populated areas of the first zone. British officials had an indirect hand in the second zone, which included the unresolved tribal territories between the modern-day settled districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Afghanistan. Afghanistan, which is also referred to as the "outside edge" zone, is the third location on the map. These perimeters were designated by British officials as buffer zones. Concerns were raised in Britain

that the Czarist Russian Empire, which had already conquered much of Central Asia, might use Afghanistan as a springboard to invade India, a treasured colony of the British Empire. Czarist Russia, on the other hand, viewed the British Empire as a potential danger to its hegemony in Central Asia. This included the khanates of Kokand and Bukhara. For the first time, the British understood how crucial it was to dominate the autonomous tribal belt in order to protect India from the imperialistic threats of Czarist Russia.

Formerly known as FATA, the region currently shares a Durand Line—measuring 2,400 kilometres—with Afghanistan. After the British partitioned British India in 1947, the tribal territories became a part of Pakistan. When tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan grew, one of the main causes was the contested Pak-Afghan border (Rizvi, 1971, p. 143). Upon the British withdrawal from the Indian subcontinent, a new demarcation of the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan was necessary because Afghanistan claimed it had been forced to sign the Durand Line pact. According to Pakistan, the British left the Durand Line in place as an international border (Imrana, 2015, p. 3), and according to the principle of international law, a treaty cannot be changed or annulled after it has been formed.

Pakistan has kept the tribal territories' "independent status" and continued imperial regulation over FCR after it gained independence. Throughout the territory, Governor General served as the top authority (Ahmad M. , 2013, p. 13). In the 1980s, when the former Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, the policy's extension yielded dividends. Actually, at that period, the former FATA was used by Afghan Mujahedeen as a geostrategic launching pad in their fight against Russia in Afghanistan. Formerly peaceful FATA is now a conflict zone thanks to Pakistan's perpetuation of the imperial doctrine of securitization (Khan, 2017). In reality, it was in Pakistan's national security interest to keep the area formerly known as FATA as a buffer zone, but this allowed locals to solve their problems. Concerns in the tribal areas that did not directly threaten Pakistan's central interest were not a priority for the central government (Nawaz, 2009, p.39). For this reason, the former FATA became a strategic shield for the United States in pursuit of a strategic purpose during the Soviet-Afghan conflict, providing sanctuary to a wide variety of militant groups from throughout the area and beyond (Ahmed, 2000, p. 130). The United States and the Saudi Arabian Kingdom provided Pakistan with substantial military aid during its war in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union.

While the Operations were successful in displacing the Taliban and establishing calm over much of what was formerly known as FATA, there was still apprehension that the terrorists would return after the Pakistan Army withdrew (Ali, 2018, p, 7). All sectors of Pakistan agreed that incorporating the former FATA territory within Pakistan's legislative framework and administrative authority was the best long-term solution to the region's challenges. Nonetheless, opinions diverged on the best approach to and level of depth for integration. Hussain claims that the authorities' deliberate refusal is at the heart of every issue involving the implementation of reforms in the former FATA. The state is struggling to replace its security-focused regional paradigm with a growth-oriented one (Hussain, 2017). For the first time in decades, the tribal territories have been incorporated into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as a result of the Twenty-Fifth Constitutional Amendment Bill. Formerly known as FATA and PATA, these areas are now fully under the control of the state, putting an end to the colonial era in the area (Raza, 2018). As a result of recent constitutional and legal changes, the region is formally undergoing the mainstreaming process. The effects of the FATA merger on border security between Pakistan and Afghanistan are the primary focus of this work.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

Because of its strategic location, the former FATA was exploited as a defensive model by the imperialist British and later by Pakistan. As the region was excluded from mainstreaming due to its unique position, the harsh law of FCR gave rise to militancy and insurrection while protecting the privilege of a few. To safeguard British India from Czarist Russia, the British enacted policy in the former FATA. Pakistan is a state that has mostly adhered to British imperial policies and upheld the region's unique status that was instituted to protect British India's vital interests. The post-merger paradigm is a reaction against the colonial and post-colonial policy that had been the norm before the unification of the region. Since no extensive study of the security situation in pre-merger FATA has been undertaken, the researcher has taken this initiative. With the region's geo-strategic importance in mind, the paper evaluates Pakistan's securitization policy. In the instance of the former FATA, the present study creates a new academic frontier for future scholars. Policymakers can use the study's suggested methods to correct previous blunders and plan for future threats. One of the main causes of the rise of militant infrastructure and regional

fragmentation is the practice of securitization, which was instituted in the name of national security to protect the interests of the core region. This dissertation is unique in that it provides the first comprehensive account of Pakistan's borderland security paradigm after the merger of two separate states.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

Security complexities in the Pak-Afghan region cannot be rationally concluded from the application of a single theory. For this reason, we applied many theoretical frameworks to the issue at hand. Complex Realism, an amalgamation of realism, Marxist structural theory, and constructivism, provides the theoretical foundation for this study. Power, conflict, and the formation of alliances and counter-alliances are the realist's focal points when considering the factors that contribute to the diversity of international relations. Furthermore, it explains how the boundary dispute between Pakistan and Afghanistan may be traced back to the colonial era's arbitrary border-drawing practices. Marxist structuralists are used to shed light on why the former FATA was so dependent on the states of Afghanistan and British India (and later Pakistan) for so long. Constructivism has been applied to the study of inter-state and trans-regional identities of the people of former FATA, a phenomenon that is posing a threat to the mainstreaming system of Pakistan, which is built on the concept of a nation-state.

2 Indicators of Securitization in Former FATA

Within the theoretical framework of Marxist Structuralism, this section examines the colonial and post-colonial governance and constitutional structure of the former FATA. A security schism emerged in the tribal areas as a result of the governance and constitutional crisis that had its roots in a variety of causes. Colonial and postcolonial techniques for governance in tribal areas can be adequately explained by Marxist Structuralism, which distinguished centre-periphery bargaining along client-pattern imperial lines. It also clarifies why the region is still considered to be on the perimeter, in contrast to the more economically developed core. Because the centre had access to the resources of the periphery, it was able to create innovative methods of manufacturing, which benefited everyone but the once-proud Federally Administered Tribal Areas. Until its 2018 merger with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, FATA had been unbroken with a special status as an "Excluded region" since the British arrival. The region's economic well-being and security continued to rely on the central region. The region has been economically exploited and neglected since the reigning regimes have kept it on the periphery.

2.1 General Introduction to Governance

When people think of governance, they picture the process by which communities and societies are governed according to established norms and regulations (Ali, 2015, p.23). It's a system via which the government makes decisions that benefit the general populace (Moore, 1993, p. 56). An excellent example of governance, as defined by Pierre (2000), is the long-term coordination and consonance of several players with varying goals and interests. Institutions, civil society, interest groups, private businesses, and international organizations are all examples of possible social and political players (Pierre, 2000, p. 9). The term "governance" refers to a wide-ranging approach that strengthens public administration and the government's capacity to carry out core responsibilities. It's a paradigm of development that pulls in the public and private sectors as well as the government to make it more plausible. Trust in the state and its institutions can be hard to maintain if proper governance mechanisms are lacking. There is virtually little that can be done to establish peace and order in war-torn countries because of the lack of effective government. Restoring a well-organized governance approach is crucial for societal, economic, and political integration and rehabilitation (Rondinelli, 2007, p. 13).

2.2 Tribal Regions under the Imperial Form of Government

For defence purposes, the tribal region's location made it a geostrategic zone of importance to British India. Therefore, maintaining strong control over the area was crucial to ensuring British India's safety and longevity. The region was split up administratively for what seemed to have been the reasons of making the government more efficient and strengthening British India's defences against both internal and external threats (Haroon, 2004, p. 1). The tribal regions were maintained by the British as being outside of provincial control. It remained a federal subject under FCR administration with the Political Agent answering directly to the Governor General. The Indian government was represented in the area by a Political Agent, who was essentially a "half-governor" (Khan, 2008, p. 120). It was expected of him to serve as the tribal lands' chief judge, chief of police, and executive head in the absence of the Governor General. Due to his absolute dominance, the local tribes often referred to him as "king"

(Akins, 2017, p.9). Those in authority within local tribes, called "Maliks," were rewarded monetarily to keep the bonds of loyalty strong (Khan T. M., 2008, p. 120). As a tactic of oppression and manipulation, Britain used its influence over the colonies' governing systems to play games. It spread a variety of administrative structures over the subcontinent (Malik, 2013, p. 109).

Caro (1976) claims that after conquering Pakhtun territory from the Sikhs, the British Empire instituted a dual system of government. They implemented a form of government based on democratic principles in the cities but abandoned the tribal areas to the same pure tribalism that has ruled them for decades (Caroe, 1976, p. 346). Therefore, the tribal zone was kept as an undeveloped margin subject to repressive rules and regulations. Although they had provided some internal autonomy, it was largely symbolic in light of the severe penalties imposed by the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR). The more developed, populated areas, on the other hand, were linked to the colonial centre and were therefore subject to the same rules and regulations as the rest of the state. The British system of administration in the colonies' outlying regions was predicated on two things: Political Agents and the inhumane Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Besides civil servants, the empire also deployed tribal forces like Khassadars, levies, and tribal Aman Lakhkur to protect its holdings there (Bangash, 2012, pp. 269- 338). FCR's approach to tribal governance was completely different from that used elsewhere in British India. The safety of British India was a primary consideration while making policy (khan, 2017).

2.2.1 FCR-A Despotic Law Caused Instability in the Tribal Regions

Historically, the Pakhtun-majority province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) was a part of the Punjab province. It was officially recognised as a province separate from Punjab in 1901 by Viceroy Lord Curzon of British India. The Chief Commissioner was in charge of its operation (Wazir A. K., 2012). The administration of tribal regions in the NWFP was enacted under a revised version of the FCR in 1901. The exploitative imperial model of government ran against the values and beliefs of tribal communities and their respect for basic human rights (Khan T. M., 2008, p. 121). To bring it into line with the rest of British India's provinces, the "Government of India Act of 1935" was implemented in 1937. As a result, it was recognized as a province with complete autonomy, although the surrounding tribal belt retained FCR (Hayat, 2000, p. 182). The original FCR, known then as the Punjab Frontier Crimes Regulation, was drafted and enacted in 1872 in response to conflicts stemming from internal fights among tribes over topics like honour, property, women, and chieftain. The legislation suggested a traditional means to end the blood feud in the area. The Jirga (a council of elders) would settle civil and criminal cases instead of regular courts. When the British colonials arrived in the tribal lands, they ushered in a set of rules and regulations that ran counter to and were therefore invalid for tribal communities. Caroe (1976) provides a thorough explanation of why the provision didn't work. In addition, he claimed that FCR's emphasis on giving more authority to the offender rather than compensating the victim was at odds with the tribal patterns of life (Caroe, 1976, p. 354). Although the establishment of the inhuman FCR was ostensibly motivated by a desire to improve administrative efficiency in tribal areas, in reality, its implementation had no purpose other than to protect the British colonial intent in the area. It allowed the federal government to nominate a representative to each regional Political Agency. It granted the Political Agencies complete control over taxation, government, the courts, the magistracy, the executive branch, and the legislative process (Bangash, 2012, p. 262).

2.3 Creation of Pakistand and the Fate of tribal areas

Pakistan's use of the tribal lands it inherited following its 1947 independence. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Pakistan's first Governor General, reassured the tribal leaders that their autonomy would be respected. That's why the government didn't interfere with local tribal matters, ensuring that the tribes could continue to observe and follow their unique traditions. As a result of Jinnah's reassurance, the tribes pledged their full support to the State of Pakistan. So that there would be no room for misunderstanding in the future, the state of Pakistan signed various agreements with tribal territories. Minor adjustments were made while introducing the region, nevertheless. The Governor General assumed the role and responsibilities of the British Viceroy, and with the help of his appointed Political Agents, he governed and administered the area. The Governor General of Pakistan instituted a strict watch on the tribal area (Khan, 2016, p.19).

2.3.1 FATA's Imperial Legacy

As a result, Pakistan has kept FCR in the region and maintained its imperial form of government. While Jinnah represented a more nuanced approach to regional politics, his death led Pakistan to abandon that course and instead

adopt a more black-and-white, imperial approach to the regional government. State officials in charge of tribal affairs had a monopolization and exploitation stance (Bangash, 2012, pp. 260-261). The state made no effort to bring the area under its standard administrative, legal, and constitutional protections. After gaining independence from the British, Pakistan continued its pure tribalism, which centred on Political Agents and FCR. Issues arose between the governed and the governing because those involved with the region's administration saw themselves as heirs to an elite imperial lineage (White, 2008, p. 223). The British colonial elite was ingrained with ideas of social stratification by the imperial British. After Pakistan's independence, the country's elites began viewing themselves as civilized and the tribes as barbaric. They consolidated power in the established order while maintaining the tribes' subjugation to an ineffective and antiquated imperial form of government (Durrani, 2007). In this way of thinking, the state of Pakistan has ignored tribal autonomy for the better part of seven decades, contributing to ongoing security concerns and giving anti-state actors operating under regional influences.

2.3.2 FATA's Constitutional Status after British Raj

One can also note that the constitutional classification of the former FATA as "special areas" had significant implications for the organization of its government and administration. The Federally Administered Tribal Areas are governed by the inhumane FCR and are designated as "Excluded Areas" in Article 104, Section (10) and Clause (3) of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (1956). The former FATA's representation in national and constitutional organizations was tasked to the President of Pakistan, who regulated laws and provisions for the region. As a result, the region received five general seats in the U.S. Congress (Naseer, 2015, p. 23). Although it was Presidential in form, Pakistan's second constitution, adopted in 1962, did nothing to improve the region's woeful imperial administrative and governance structure. Article 223 of the Constitution merely changed the region's name to "Tribal Areas," but otherwise left the system in place as it had been under colonial rule. The excluded status of tribal territories was maintained and the President was given authority to control provisions for them under the Constitution of 1962, as was the case under the Constitution of 1956. In tribal regions, neither federal nor provincial regulations would be applicable. The former FATA was entirely under the President's control. As the President's representative, the Governor of the Northwest Frontier Province (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, or KP) regularly dealt with issues pertaining to the tribal territory. The only good thing that happened in the tribal territories was the implementation of the Basic Democracy system in February 1960. This allowed for each tribal territory to have a single representative in the federal and provincial legislatures through an electoral college (Khan, 2016, p. 15).

2.3.3 Continuation of FCR in FATA

Keeping the inhumane FCR provision in place instead of the mainstream system was a major contributor to security issues in FATA. Inaction on the part of policymakers allowed for regional and international actors to meddle. Once a British colony, the area suffered the same fate for the next seven decades after it was split off (Taj, 2011, p. 12). Wazir (2007) claims that the tribesmen's Constitutional rights were violated since the State extended the local proxies and the black cruel imperial-era governance framework of regulations. When it came to protecting people's basic rights and responsibilities, the region's higher and lower courts lacked the authority to act (Wazir M. M., 2007, p. 196).

2.3.4 FATA faced with Economic Exploitation

It has been stated that the future of the Tribal Areas would be decided on the economic front, rather than the political or ethnic ones (Saeed, 2003, p. 135). Economic disparity is severe on the periphery. New methods of manufacturing were developed by the centre with the help of its peripheral regions; these innovations benefited the centre but left the periphery in the dust (Gultung, 1980, p. 184). As a peripheral region wholly reliant on Islamabad for its survival, FATA has fallen behind in terms of living standards compared to the capital. The federally administered tribal areas (FATA) have traditionally served the state's national, economic, and security interests by remaining reliant on the federal government.

2.3.5 FATA as a Defence Paradigm

Khan and Saeed said that the tribes had been wronged greatly by the Pakistani Federation, which had frequently utilized the tribal lands as a geo-strategic base camp against the hostile regional powers. Being geographically adjacent to Afghanistan, it has long served as a focal point for superpowers and rebel movements (Khan F. S., 2016, p. 72). Fayyaz claims that the state of Pakistan has utilized proxies in the name of national interest and security and that this region has been a significant land route for exporting and importing proxies ever since Pakistan was

founded. As in the Soviet-Afghan conflict of 1979, the area provided a haven for militants and insurgents (Fayyaz, 2010, p.191).

2.4 FATA's Merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Formerly Federally Administered Tribal Territories (FATA) and Provincially Administrated Tribal Areas (PATA) are now subject to the same constitutional and legal jurisdiction as the rest of the country's populated areas. Therefore, Pakistan has accomplished a major goal on the road to becoming a sovereign state in accordance with its constitution (Dawn, 2018). However, the 31st Amendment on its own wouldn't do anything to fix matters in the tribal territories. This is the first (and arguably most important) step toward better conditions in what was formerly FATA and PATA. There is still a long way to go before these regions can catch up to the rest of the country in terms of development and stability. In addition, a substantial investment of capital is needed to put the regional reform strategy into action (Raza, 2018).

3 FATA Post-Merger Security Policy

This section discusses the effects of KP's merger with FATA on the safety of the combined tribal areas. It goes on to examine Pakistan's security paradigm post-merger using interviews with professionals who are familiar with the tribal regions. Those who subscribe to the Constructivist view argue that everything we see around us is the result of human interaction. As a new social construction, a merger is altering the established order in the former FATA. It's an agreement between several efforts and reforms that could shift the paradigm of tribal security.

3.1 FATA after Pakistan's Independence

Similar to when it was under British authority, FATA was not included in independent Pakistan. The region was astonishingly quiet for 30 years. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and Pakistan's following policies caused the Taliban to gain power in the region's traditionally peaceful tribal population. Formerly off-limits FATA became a haven for Taliban and Mujahedeen groups due to this exclusion. As they battled the Soviet Union, they received aid from Pakistan, the United States, and Saudi Arabia. Surprisingly, following 9/11, Pakistan's tribal society embraced extremism and terrorism as a new kind of social building. To put it another way, the freedom warriors of the 1980s evolved into 9/11-era terrorists and radicals. More than 70,000 Pakistanis have been killed since Pakistan joined the US battle against terrorism. Besides the heavy toll of lives lost, the country also suffered substantial economic losses, to the tune of US \$126 billion. Militia and terror groups in the tribal areas were eradicated, but millions of civilians were temporarily displaced as a result of the military operations. The tribal people were put through a variety of man-made disasters due to the insurgency and subsequent military actions. Since 2008, almost 5.3 million people have been temporarily displaced and settled in various urban territories due to anti-terrorism efforts, as reported by South Asia Terrorism Portal (Lifang, 2018).

After military operations had eliminated the insurgents, the government's priority moved to rebuilding the territory and rehabilitating the Temporarily Displaced People (TDPs) in FATA. The government in the area has initiated a programme to improve the economy, society, and governance. The FATA Development Authority reports that those whose homes were destroyed or severely damaged during military operations received compensation of Rs. 4 lacks, while those whose homes were damaged received compensation of Rs. 160,000. In addition, each family received a transportation grant of 10,000 rupees and a return cash award of 25,000 rupees. The federal government launched a variety of initiatives in indigenous regions. Investments in the nation's youth in the form of billions of rupees have been made in the areas of education, healthcare, infrastructure, and transportation (Khan, 2018). The stability brought about by the military operations paved the way for integration, which ultimately resulted in FATA's full assimilation into mainstream society.

3.1.1 FATA Reforms Committee 2015

The FATA Reforms Committee, headed by Sartaj Aziz, met with FATA Parliamentarians on December 10 to discuss the region's future (Khan Z. A., 2017, pp. 15-16). The FATA legislators ratified a seven-point Agenda. They proposed three possibilities, including merging FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, granting it province status, or establishing an Executive Legislative Council in the style of Gilgit Baltistan. After that, the FATA Reforms Committee was given the agenda. The Committee took baby steps, consulting with the indigenous people along the way (Wazir A. S., 2017). It made stops at each of the Agencies. About 200-300 Maliks, political figures, tribal

youth, social activists, businesspeople, and journalists attended the one meeting held in each Agency and each FR. They started in Mohmand Agency on January 1st, then went to North Waziristan on February 4th, then to Kurram on March 28th, then to Orakzai on March 28th, then to Khyber on April 4th, then to South Waziristan on April 25th, then to Bajaur Agency on December 31st, and finally to the Frontier Regions on May 2nd. The Committee's recommendation for FATA's future was turned in in August 2016. The study included suggestions for action as well as a specific plan for carrying them out across the region.

The Reforms Committee looked at the data and found that the vast majority of tribal people desired FATA to unite with KP. There was a discussion of cultural and economic ties between the tribal areas and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It was also thought that alternatives to merging FATA with KP could bring about economic collapse and give the wealthy a stranglehold over the impoverished tribal masses. Merging FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was presented as the Committee's preferred solution (Pakistan, 2016). It also proposed a 10-year development package for FATA and a 5-year transition plan to bring the region into the mainstream. Over the following decade, the Committee instructed the Minister of Finance to allocate three per cent of the federally divisible pool of the National Finance Commission to the region. It was suggested by the Committee that all TDPs be relocated back to their homes by the end of 2016. Prioritized repairs to their destroyed homes, marketplaces, and other structures were finally finished by year's end. SAFRON, military foundations, the National Logistic Cell, and the FATA Secretariat are among the federal agencies that should be responsible for housing and rebuilding after the displacement of displaced persons. It also proposed bringing state institutions like the Supreme Court and High Court to the area to protect the rights of the indigenous people living there (Aziz, 2017)

3.1.2 Twenty-Fifth Constitutional Amendment Bill

The bill to integrate FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was adopted by the Senate on May 25, 2018, making it the twenty-fifth constitutional amendment to pass the National Assembly and the Senate in consecutive years. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly also passed the merger bill on May 27, the penultimate day of the assembly and a requirement under the Constitution. Most crucially, the Twenty-Fifth Constitutional Amendment was signed into law by the President of Pakistan on May 31, 2018, officially merging FATA with KP province. As a result, the oppressive FATA region, which had been administered by the FCR for many years, was combined with the more liberal KP (Hayat, 2018, p. 50). As a result of the FATA merger Bill, seven articles of the Pakistani constitution related to the tribal territories were revised. Article 51, clause 1, was also revised in light of the 25th Constitutional Amendment Bill. This clause dealt with the total number of seats in the National Assembly. A total of 342 seats were cut to 326 in the National Assembly due to the revised proposal (Tribune, 2018). The seat allocation table between the Federation and the federating entities has also been updated thanks to the merger bill. Changing estimates for the National Assembly's size have been published in a revised clause-3, which now lists 326 seats. For the 2018 general election, a new clause (3A) was inserted into clause-3 to provide FATA representatives with the same legal standing as other candidates. The FATA representatives must remain in the National Assembly until its dissolution. When the National Assembly is dissolved, Article (3A) expires automatically (Tribune, 2018).

4 Conclusion

Following the events of September 11, 2001, Pakistan adopted a policy of neutrality towards its neighbours and regional governments. It avoids taking a side in regional conflicts. If Pakistan adopts a policy of neutrality, amicable and mutually beneficial ties would develop with its neighbours and regional governments. This strategy will leave no room in the border region for foreign ideology. Pakistan's reluctance to play the proxy card in Afghanistan, Kashmir, and the Middle East, such as in Yemen, demonstrates that it has halted its strategy of interfering and involvement in the affairs of other states. Extreme poverty and destabilisation have emerged from the country's extensive history of terrorism and extremism. The reality showed to the state that its interference in the affairs of other nations had no benefits, but had devastating consequences in the shape of terrorism and extremism. From the 1980s until September 11, 2001, Pakistan maintained an aggressive posture along its shared western border with Afghanistan. This aggressive campaign along the western border transformed the "former FATA" into the most hazardous location on earth. However, following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Pakistan altered its posture and remained permanently defensive along its western border. It only needs assurance from Afghanistan. Pakistan began fencing its border with Afghanistan after the military operations in the tribal areas to prevent assaults and incursions from Afghanistan. Pakistan's defensive stance along all of its borders reflects its future neutrality

plan. The world has openly condemned Pakistan for having ties to extremists and offering safe havens to these groups since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The nuclear weapons of Pakistan also became a matter of discussion. It was feared worldwide that it may fall under terrorist control. Pakistan was beset with several obstacles that placed its existence on the verge of extinction. The US operation in Abbottabad to assassinate Osama bin Laden was the last nail in the coffin. It breached Pakistan's sovereignty and harmed the morale of Pakistan's military. The nation was being monitored by opposing foreign intelligence services. It was practically hard for law enforcement authorities to observe competitor agencies' actions. The nation updated its security policies in response to the crisis. Realization dawned that the only way out of this impasse is to abandon the securitization strategy and embrace regional economic cooperation and integration. According to the main and secondary literature reviewed for this study, the post-merger state strategy is founded on national integration and regional economic development. The concerns, such as Pakhtunistan, the Durand Line, and others, that led to the militarization of tribal territories were resolved. The post-merger developments will aid in implementing the state's strategy of economization along the Pak-Afghan border and in other state regions. The findings of the study offer the solution to the issue of why the state turned to national integration and regional economization. Due to the current national, regional, and global conditions, the state is prepared to use the integration cum economization strategy rather than securitization

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