



TERROR TRACKER

Newsletter by Counter Terrorism Centre



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR
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PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT CAVES IN TO DEMAND OF RADICALS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY TO DISCUSS EXPULSION OF FRENCH AMBASSADOR



Tehreek-e-Labbaik members protesting for the expulsion of French Ambassador to Pakistan – (TLP media cell)

The government of Pakistan led by Prime Minister Imran Khan appeared to have capitulated to the pressure of the radical Barelvi group Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) on 21 April 2021 — which it had itself designated as a terrorist organization and banned a week earlier — when it agreed to pass a resolution in the country’s National Assembly to expel the French Ambassador.

The government’s about-face on the issue came on the heels of violent protests which the TLP had unleashed across the country over its demand for the expulsion of the French ambassador from the country. The violent protests led to the reported killing of six police officers and abduction of 11 police personnel. The TLP has called for the expulsion of the French ambassador in protest against French President Emmanuel Macron’s support for publications like *Charlie Hebdo* to publish caricatures of the Prophet.

The TLP also made three additional demands, namely removal of the ban on the party under the Anti-Terrorism Act and release of its party chief Saad Rizvi along with other party workers arrested during the protests. In a surprising twist, Imran Khan turned sympathetic to the TLP’s demands by mid-April and claimed his government had similar goals to that of the radical group — namely of putting an end to blasphemy around the world — even though their methods are different. Meanwhile, Deobandi terrorist group Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan gave support to its arch sectarian rival in the Barelvi TLP during the protests. The aligning of these previously feuding radical forces points to a dangerous new wave of radicalism sweeping the country. — [Arab News](#), [The Dawn](#), [The Print](#)

CHINA SLAMS SUICIDE BLAST IN QUETTA: FIVE KILLED



Cars set ablaze by the blast

The Tehreek-e- Taliban Pakistan (TTP) claimed responsibility for conducting a suicide blast at a luxury hotel, which hosted the Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, even though the diplomat was not present in the hotel at that time of the explosion. Five people are reported to have lost their lives, while 11 were injured in the attack.

In a strongly worded statement, Beijing condemned the blast, even as the TTP said that the blast targeted Pakistan security officials only.

According to the police, the suicide bomber had triggered the blast late in the night on 21 April, in the car park of the Serena hotel in Quetta, minutes before the return of the Chinese ambassador to the hotel. Although the TTP took responsibility for the attack, Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmad pinned the blame on a ‘foreign hand’. — [The Hindu](#), [Global Times](#)

ISLAMIST TERROR MAY LEAD TO CIVIL WAR: FRENCH GENERALS



NEW FRENCH BILL SEEKS ALGORITHMIC SURVEILLANCE

Responding to several attacks over the past several months, French government introduced a new anti-terrorism bill on 28 April that would approve intense algorithmic surveillance of phone and internet communications and tighten restrictions on convicted terrorists released from prison.

On 23 April, a female police employee was killed in a knife attack by a Tunisian migrant at a police station south-west of Paris.

The accused is said to have shouted "Allahu Akbar" (God is greatest) while carrying out the attack.

French President Emmanuel Macron paid tribute to the 49-year-old victim and said that the killing was an attack on the nation and that France would never give in to "Islamist terrorism". — [BBC](#), [Reuters](#)



Over a thousand service personnel in France, including 25 retired military generals, have signed a letter which warns President Emmanuel Macron about his government's 'lax policies' that it says is pushing the country towards a "civil war" in the wake of growing violence of Islamist activists.

The letter, which drew an angry rebuke from the French government, surfaced on 21 April 2021 – the 60th anniversary of a failed coup attempt against the government of World War II hero Charles de Gaulle.

"The hour is grave, France is in peril," the letter reads as it criticises "fanatic partisans" and "certain anti-racism" groups for dividing communities. The letter speaks of an attempt to start a "racial war".

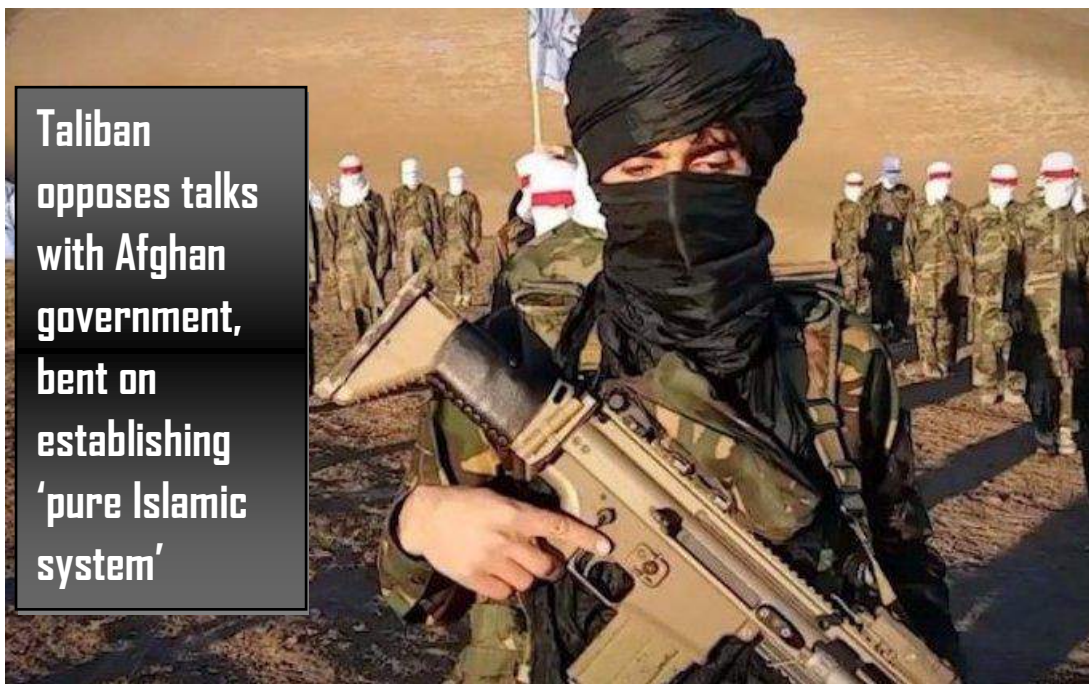
The far-right leader Marine Le Pen supported the letter by saying, "I invite you to join us in taking part in the coming battle, which is the battle of France".

Meanwhile, an opinion poll suggested that French people support the letter in large numbers. Reported by *Valeurs Actuelles* magazine, the survey found 58% of French citizens supported the letter's "call to honour", while 73% agreed with its assessment that the country is "disintegrating".

Since 2015, France has lost 260 people to terrorist attacks. In addition to the major terrorist attacks, Islamists are also said to have made ghettos where illegal migrants form the majority and police reportedly fears to tread. As many as 86% of the respondents said that the nation's laws do not apply in some cities. — [RT](#), [The Indian Express](#)

WILL AFGHANISTAN TURN INTO BROOD OF TERRORISTS AGAIN

U.S. BEGINS WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS AMID CONCERNS FOR FUTURE



Taliban
opposes talks
with Afghan
government,
bent on
establishing
'pure Islamic
system'

ISLAMIST FORCES – REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE

Unlike the Trump administration that had made US withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan conditional to Taliban denying shelter to Al-Qaeda or other foreign jihadist groups and also to forging a power-sharing agreement with the Afghanistan government, the announcement by President Joe Biden that the US will withdraw all its troops from Afghanistan by September 11, 2021 with no strings attached has raised eyebrows among several security experts.

The announcement is all the more surprising as it comes after a US Treasury Department report earlier this year, which states that al-Qaeda is gaining strength in Afghanistan as it is “continuing to operate with the Taliban under the group’s protection.” The January 4, 2021 report stated: “Al-Qaeda capitalizes on its relationship with the Taliban through its network of mentors and advisers who are embedded with the Taliban, providing advice, guidance, and financial support.” It added: “Senior Haqqani network figures have discussed forming a new joint unit of armed fighters in cooperation with and funded by al-Qaeda”.

Notwithstanding the report, the United States has begun its final withdrawal from Afghanistan, as it pulls out 2,500 of its troops and 7,000 NATO soldiers from the country by the 20th anniversary of the September 11 attacks.

Meanwhile, the Taliban made it clear in its statement of 22 April 2021 that it was not open to talks with the Afghanistan government and said that “Islamic Emirate will under no circumstance ever relent on complete independence and establishment of a pure Islamic system”. — [TOLO News](#), [The Indian Express](#)

TIME TO END
THE ‘FOREVER
WAR’: BIDEN



US President Biden making the
announcement on 14 April 2021

The US will withdraw all remaining troops from Afghanistan by the 20th anniversary of the September 11 attacks, President Biden announced on 14 April, 2021. These words, spoken from the Treaty Room of the White House, turned the page on a war that has cost the US trillions of dollars and the lives of 2,300 of its troops.

“We went to Afghanistan because of a horrific attack that happened 20 years ago. That cannot explain why we should remain there in 2021,” Biden said. “We achieved those objectives. Bin Laden is dead and al-Qaeda is degraded in Afghanistan, and it's time to end this forever war,” he added. A US official made it clear to reporters on 13th of April that the withdrawal would not be conditions-based, as the President held such an approach “a recipe for staying in Afghanistan forever.” — [NPR](#), [AP](#)

22 Security Forces Personnel, Several Maoists Killed in Chhattisgarh Encounter

A total of 22 security forces personnel were killed, while 32 were injured and one jawan was missing in a four-hour long encounter with Maoists on the afternoon of 3rd of April 2021, near Jonaguda village in Sukma district of Chhattisgarh state. Among the security forces personnel killed, several were from the CoBRA (Commando Battalions for Resolute Action) unit, while others were part of Bastariya battalion of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and the District Reserve Guard (DRG).

According to officials, at least 400 Maoists were involved in the attack, many of whom used light machine guns and rocket launchers. Maoist militants also suffered many casualties and it is estimated that at least 15 of them were killed in the encounter. The security forces were ambushed along a two-kilometre stretch of forest area. – [India Today](#), [Times of India](#), [Hindustan Times](#)

US ‘Rewards for Justice’ slammed by UN

The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has endorsed the views of UN’s Special Rapporteur Alena Douhan in her criticism of the US’ so-called ‘Rewards for Justice’ Programme that offers money for information on alleged terrorists living outside the country, as a violation of human rights. According to the official, “many of the people targeted by the ‘Rewards for Justice’ programme have had their due process rights denied”. The official urged the US government to align its anti-terrorism activities with international law. - [UN News](#)

5 Terrorists Killed in J&K on April 11

Five terrorists were killed on a single day (11 April 2021), in two separate operations in Jammu and Kashmir. Three suspected terrorists, including a teenager who had gone missing and presumably joined the terrorist group, were killed by security forces in an operation at Hadipora village in Shopian district. In another operation in Anantnag on the same day, two more terrorists were killed. – [Times of India](#), [NDTV](#)

Christchurch mosque shooter’s legal action

Sentenced to life imprisonment for 51 murders and one charge of terrorism, the 29-year-old perpetrator of Christchurch mosque shooting in 15 March 2019, Brenton Terrant is planning to launch a legal challenge against the government of New Zealand for the poor condition of his jail and for being labelled a ‘terrorist’ under the Terrorism Suppression Act. Authorities say his legal action will not affect his jail term. - [WION](#)

India, Bangladesh end 10-Day Anti-Terror Drill

On 12 April 2021, Indian Army Chief Gen. M. M. Naravane attended the closing ceremony of a 10-day multi-lateral UN mandated counter-terrorism exercise held in Bangladesh. The Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina was the chief guest of the ceremony. Both India and Bangladesh strengthened their counter-terrorism cooperation through this multi-lateral military drill named ‘Shantir Ogrosena’ (Front Runner of Peace), which also included forces from Bhutan and Sri Lanka. – [PTI](#), [Eurasian Times](#)

Boko Haram seizes northern regions in Nigeria

According to Nigerian officials, terrorist group Boko Haram has hoisted its flag and taken control of large swathes of territory in northern Nigeria.

State Governor of the Niger province Abubakar Bello has reportedly stated that the terrorists attacked Kaure, a remote community in the northern state and has hoisted its flags there. He warned that terrorist presence in his state has the potential to endanger the security of the nation's capital Abuja, about 140kms away. – [Anadolu Agency](#)

Sri Lanka bans 11 jihadist groups

On 15 April 2021, Sri Lanka banned 11 Islamic terror groups including ISIS. A gazette signed by Sri Lanka President Gotabaya Rajapaksa under the 'Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act, No. 48 of 1979 regulations, notified this decision. Some of the other groups are: The United Thawheed (Thowheedh) Jamma'ath, Ceylon Thawheed (Thowheedh) Jamma'ath among others. – [India Today](#)