

Briefing paper by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)

**Can Shi'a and Sunni overcome the sectarian divide?
Displacement and negotiations in Kurram, 2007-2011**

May 2011

Annex I: Text of Muree Agreement

First, members of the grand jirga appointed on the 8th of October 2008 shall repatriate Shi'a and Sunni IDPs according to the law and tradition. Methodology of the repatriation shall be determined by the grand Kurram jirga on 2 November 2008.

Second, in accordance with the Ramazan (cease fire) Agreement of September 2008: the provision of food, medicines and other essential commodities to the affected area and the exchange of bodies and captured fighters shall take place 22 October 2008 under the auspices of the political administration of Kurram. A committee comprised of the following [17 Sunni and 17 Shi'a] members shall together work out the details to ensure the said provisions and exchange.

Third, [Shi'a and Sunni] parties shall return the occupied land and villages to their rightful residents under auspices of the jirga members. Both parties shall ensure security in the villages of return. Methodology and guarantees shall be worked out by the jirga members by 2 November 2008.

Fourth, any party violating the agreement shall pay Rs 200 million rupees as punishment.

Fifth, the parties shall fully cooperate with the government to deal with anyone who may try to spoil the peace in Kurram. Equally, the political administration and other concerned government institutions will be considered to be part of the conspiracy to destroy peace in Kurram, if [political administration and other concerned government institutions] fail to prevent the destruction of peace in Kurram.

Annex II: Tribal land disputes in Kurram agency

- *Tor Ghar*: Tor Ghar (Black Mountain) is disputed between Turi tribesmen of Pekar and Mangal tribesmen of Teri. The issue is currently dormant because the Political Administration in Kurram pays Rs. 15,000/month to the people of Pekar.

- *Gurgutan Mountain, Kutri*: During the 1980s, mujahedeen stored arms and ammunition in the caves of a Kurram mountain called Gurguthan Ghar near Kutri. Following the jihadis departure, Sunni Mangal of Kutri occupied the caves and mountains. In response, Turi Alizai of Pewar claimed their ownership. The issue is under adjudication with the state authorities.
- *Syed Mehmood Forest*: There have been several small-scale tribal clashes over the ownership of this forest. Currently the forest is controlled by Turis of Pewar.
- *Mitta Khan Hill*: This hill is disputed between Toi Haji Khel (Parachamkani) and people of Bughaki and Badama (Shai) near Khumassa village. In 1981 an armed clash took place between the parties. The issue is currently dormant as the Political Administration pays Rs.15,000/month to the Budakhel of Badama and Bughaki.
- *Shamilat* (adjacent to Sunni village Boshera in Upper Kurram): In 2005 the Hamza Khel and Mastu Khel partitioned Shamilat in Parachinar plateau from Malana up to Mali killi (North South) and Shinai to Ahmedzai (east-west). Village Bushera lies between Mali Killi and Ahmedzai on the edge of the Mali Killi Kharlachi road. The Turis (Hamza Khel and Mastu Khel) do not recognize the right of Bushehra (Sunnia) Bangash in the Shamilat which is within the Sarsim of Bushera.
- *Sateen Shamilat*: The Kurram political administration established a camp for Afghan refugees in the Shamilat of Sateen during their stay in the Agency. A number of (Sunni) Parachamkani tribesmen also built mud and wood houses inside the camp as well as in an adjacent area called “Murghai China”. They also purchased some land in Balish Khel from the Turi Ghundi Khel and built houses on it. Parachamkani and Massozai disputed the ownership of the land where the refugees had lived when the refugees left. An armed clash took place between the Parachamkani and Massozai which continued for five months and caused dozens of deaths on both sides. In the meanwhile the Turi Ghundi Khel of Balish Khel brought a claim of ownership of Shamilat and demanded the evacuation of both Massozai and Parachamkani from the Shamilat as well as demolition of the mud building raised by the Parachamkani in Murghai China. The dispute is under adjudication in court.
- *Shorko Kass*: During the British administration of Kurram Agency, valuable land in the Maidan area near Lakka Tigga, Kurram Militia post was given to the Turi Mali Khel on the condition that they construct houses within a year. The Mali Khel, however, failed to occupy the land and build houses within the stipulated period. In the 1980s, the houses built by the Mali Khel continued to be occupied by Afghan refugees. But as soon as the refugees evacuated the area, the Mali Khel re-occupied it. Then an armed clash took place between the Bangash and the Mali Khel in which about 12 Bangash and three Mali Khel were killed. To resolve the situation, the Political Agent referred the case to a six member jirga: three Sunni and three Shia elders. He also imposed a fine of Rs. 300,000 each on both the parties. The Jirga split three-three to three as to whether the land belonged to the Shi’a or the Sunni. The case was being adjudicated in court when, in 2007, the Turi and Mali Khel raided and occupied the disputed area. Those groups still hold the area and have built bunkers there.

- *Parachinar Eidgah*: In 1981 when the Sunni decided to build a market in an open area adjacent to Eidgah (Sunni graveyard) near Parachinar the Shia claimed to have equal right to the land. The two sides agreed to let the matter be negotiated by ulama (clerics) from each group. A decision is still pending. After a 2007 sectarian clash which led to an eviction of the Sunnis from Parachinar, the Shi'a community cut all the trees in the graveyard in Eidgah and have started burying their dead there.
- *Mauza Alizai*: In Mauza Alizai, 3/5th of the arable land is being occupied by Watizai (a sub-tribe of Zaiumusht) but the Shia who actually own the land do not allow the Watizai to build houses on the land arguing that they are tenants and can only use the land for production. The Shia land owners, by contrast, are free to use their land for residential and commercial purposes. The dispute is a constant source of tension in the agency and requires an urgent solution.
- "*Sehra*" (Parachinar plateau - about 70,000 acres): An unmeasured Shamilar [FERTILE AREA] was recently partitioned among various sections of the Turi Tribe. Some of the area is reported to have been left vacant to be given to Sunni Bangash of Bushera which lies in the "*Sarseem*" (portion of the plateau belonging to the Sunni Bangash of Bushara town). However, the Turi tribe does not allow any construction on this land by the Sunni Bangash in their Shamilat. This is another source of tension in the area.
- *Gavi to Speen Thai* (on the right bank of the Kurram River): A compromise was reached in the year 1957 between the Turi tribe and Sunni Bangash of Lower Kurram under the supervision of the Political Agent whereby the Turi tribe collectively accepted the rights of ownership of Sunni Bangash in a Shamilat extending from Gavi to Speen Thai on the right bank of the Kurram River. As a result of the compromise, the two tribes also agreed to remove / demolish all un authorized cultivations / construction made by either party in order to restore the land's previous status as pasture, grazing land and forest. The compromise was implemented in letter and spirit. But in 2008, amid sectarian clashes, the Turi resumed cultivation and reconstruction in the same disputed Shamilat.
- *Shamilat in Maidan-Shoorki, Shna Darga*: PA Syed Sarfaraz Ali Shah, with the consensus decision of both Shia and Sunni elders (Turi –Bangash tribes) ordered in 1965 that the Shamilat in Maidan-Shoorki, Shna Darga could be used only for pasturing. Nonetheless, the next Political Agent (Mr. Fakhruz Zaman) allowed the Mali Khel of the Turi tribe to construct a new *abadi* in 1967. The Sunni Bangash accept the legal titles of every other Turi tribe (i.e. Hamza Khel, Mastu Khel, Duperzai, Alizai or Ghundi Khel) provided it is owner of Khiwat in the respective revenue estate of the common shamilat in Lower Kurram. But the Sunni Bangash are opposed to granting such titles to Turi of Upper Kurram.
- *Ownership rights for residents of Central Kurram*: An order was admitted (BY ENTITY) to the last settlement report of Kurram Agency whereby no resident of Central Kurram can purchase land in the valley i.e. Upper and Lower tehsils. This deprives all the residents of Central Tehsil of the right to purchase land and houses within Kurram Agency. In contrast, no such restrictions are imposed on the Shia community which is free to purchase property in anywhere in Sunni areas.

Annex III: Text of Kurram agreement

We, the members of the grand jirga appeal to the President of Pakistan, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, the Chief of the Pakistan army, the Governor of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, the Corps Commander Peshawar, the Interior minister of Pakistan and the Inspector General Frontier Corps to extend full help and support for the repatriation of the displaced families from Kurram [back to their place of origin] and implementation of the Murree agreement.

For more than three years, ongoing armed clashes have led to many deaths and much destructions and pushed Kurram into misery. Hence, the President of Pakistan and the Prime Minister of Pakistan are requested to approve a special development package for Kurram.

The grand jirga extends its heartfelt thanks to the Interior Minister, the Governor of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, the Corps Commander Peshawar, the Political Agent Kurram and FATA members of the Pakistani parliament for the successful dialogue leading to this peace deal.

We [members of the grand jirga] request all people of Kurram to show restraint and patience and cooperate with the government of Pakistan and the grand jirga for implementation of Murree agreement.

Political administration in Kurram and all the concerned law enforcement agencies must fulfil their due role for peace in Kurram. New security check points must be built wherever needed so that the writ of the government effectively can be enforced.

Annex IV: Review of Kurram violence 1980 – 2011

1980-2006: Refugees, Afghan Mujahedeen and competing tribes clash (reported by media then and remembered by elder now)

Shi'a Bangash displaced by mujahedeen and local tribes in Sadda area, Lower Kurram. In 1981, tension emerged in Sadda town over a wealthy Shi'a trader's proposal to build an Imambara, or Shi'a shrine. While the local Sunnis seem to have accepted the proposal, an influential Akhunzada family from Central Kurram raised a lashkar and threatened to demolish the Imambara if the Sadda Shi'a did not abandon their plans. But the Shi'a refused to abandon their plans and sectarian clashes followed. Several people were left dead on both sides.¹

A similar conflict erupted again in 1983. According to tribal leaders, local Sunni men were incensed by rumours that the sons of the man behind the Imambara had distributed pornographic images; some even said they were of local girls. The subsequent attack was thus directed at that family. But the fighting soon escalated into severe sectarian clashes which also involved Afghan mujahedeen and refugees encamped in nearby Sateen and Tindo areas.² The fight which lasted for two days was

described by Shi'a Bangash leaders as a massacre of wealthy members of their group motivated by greed.³

As a result, an estimated 55 to 128 families were displaced to Parachinar. The families have since bought properties in Parachinar and continue to live there.⁴ A tribal jirga commended their return but continued threats prevented them from going back home.⁵

In July 1986, when Shi'a kidnapped a man who failed to pay his personal debt and Turi (Shi'a) kidnapped the Office Superintendent of the Political Agent's office, Sunni tribesmen from Lower Kurram hit back by raiding and looting Shi'a villages near Sadda.⁶ The residents fled to Upper Kurram.

Turi battle over land with Mangal tribesmen supported by Afghan insurgents in Upper Kurram; clashes during religious celebrations

During July and August 1987, 90 people died when Turi lashkars fought against Afghan mujahedeen supported by Mangal tribesmen and the Pakistani army in various areas of Upper Kurram. The clashes were caused by the mujahedeen's reaction to the Turi's blocking of their access to mountain passes to Afghanistan. The Turi also believed that the rival (Sunni) Mangal in Upper Kurram were becoming too strong because of their good relations with the army.⁷

According to media outlets, soldiers and Afghan mujahedeen attacked residential areas, destroyed 11 villages and set fire to hundreds of houses.⁸ Judging by the number of houses that were destroyed it is likely that thousands had to flee, at least temporarily.⁹

In June 1993 a Turi lashkar tried to re-open a closed water canal and capture a disputed forest in the Shaluzan Mountains, sparking heavy fighting with Mangal men.¹⁰

Turi and Mangal tribesmen clashed again in (Shi'a majority) Parachinar in July 1996 in the context of *Milad-un-Nabi* celebrations. At the time, the press claimed that the row had its origins in family feuds around the marriage of a local tribesman to an Afghan girl.¹¹ According to Sunni elders, the Turi attacked the processions with hand grenades, and two men were killed. A three-day-long fighting spree in Parachinar expanding to other villages in Upper Kurram prompted the army to intervene.¹² As a result, seven Mangal villages in Teri Mangal area has since been occupied by Turi families,¹³ and Mangal residents fled Parachinar after their houses and shops were destroyed by army shelling or burnt by militants.

In December 2001, after Turi and Mangal had fought over control over disputed Pekar forests in Upper Kurram, a 2,500-men Turi lashkar attacked Mangal villages in the northern frontier suspected of hosting Taliban fighters. The lashkar destroyed 161 houses of alleged collaborators of the Taliban in Dradar, Sra Kanda and Saladeen towns. A Levy and FC force was sent to the locality but eyewitnesses said they failed to intervene. Thousands of Mangal fled during the fighting, seeking protection with relatives in other areas of Kurram and in KPK.¹⁴

2007-2011: TALIBAN INCURSION PROMPTS SECTARIAN WAR

TTP incursion and sectarian provocations erupt in clashes in mixed areas in Lower and Upper Kurram prompting mass displacements

In late 2006 Taliban (later TTP) and other militant forces entered Lower Kurram after anti-Shi'a Sipah-i-Sahaba, barricaded in a mosque in Parachinar, had battled tribal militias. Amid speculation that the newly arrived forces planned to take over Shi'a areas and establish bases there, sectarian clashes erupted during the *Rabi ul-Awal* procession in Parachinar.¹⁵

An exchange of fire from rooftops and the main mosque intensified. A Sunni neighbourhood was heavily attacked. Many houses were torched or hit by rockets. A number of Sunnis fled to Sadda, Lower Kurram, while others sought refuge in safer Parachinar neighbourhoods, where they stayed until November 2007.

Elders brokered a ceasefire. But it was only effective in Parachinar and Sadda towns, and the violence spread to nearby villages.¹⁶ In Lower Kurram, joint tribal and TTP forces, allegedly using weaponry from the Army's Wah Ordinance Factory, attacked Shi'a villages with rockets and heavy armament. All the women and children of Jalamay and Chardiwar immediately escaped to Alizai. The men barricaded themselves in trenches for a few days. But they eventually also had to flee to Alizai. Nearly all of those who were displaced returned to their looted homes and villages after some weeks.

Fearing Taliban infiltration in Upper Kurram, Turi expel Sunni minority from Parachinar

After months of tension and rumours of TTP infiltration in Upper Kurram, another round of violence commenced in Parachinar on November 9, 2007.¹⁷ Turi militias from Zeeran (near Parachinar) attacked a Sunni neighbourhood during Friday prayers. The Sunni families – consisting largely of women, children and the elderly – who remained in town were staying together. The remaining houses were empty. The Sunni families believed that looting the empty houses was the immediate object of the attack.¹⁸ Some, however, alleged that they were avenging the murder of a Zeeran police inspector who had been killed in Hangu, allegedly by Sunni from Parachinar.

The Turi fighters were mostly from outside Parachinar and they targetted primarily Sunnis who had come from other areas, some of them as seasonal labourers. Of the 62 Sunni deaths more than half (35) were from Punjab, Baluchistan and Afghanistan. But the neighbourhoods of local Sunni residents also were destroyed. A number of people were trapped in their basements during the fighting, without food and in fear of being hit by shells or consumed by spreading fires.¹⁹ Others were helped by Shi'a neighbours who sheltered them until the situation calmed. A number of the men were given women's clothes and escorted to safety in the Kurram Militia base.

On November 16, 2007, some 580 Sunni families from Parachinar left in a convoy to Sadda.²⁰

TTP and Sunni tribesmen attack and displace Turi and Shi'a Bangash in Lower Kurram

Meanwhile the violence had spread to Sadda and other towns in Lower Kurram where TTP -- exploiting the sectarian animosity ablaze after the April 2007 clashes -- had sent some 400 Wazir and Mehsud militants from South Waziristan in October 2007.²¹ The TTP militants fought Shi'a Bangash and Turi in towns near Sadda and Bagzai.²² Rival factions used rockets and mortars, hitting populated areas. The exchange of hand grenades and shells near the Imam Bara and the main Sunni mosque repeatedly hit the areas in Sadda where the IDPs had taken refuge forcing them to flee again, this time to KPK.

A peace jirga brokered a cease-fire which took hold in the main towns; the army -- using helicopter gunships and troops on the ground -- controlled Parachinar and Sadda.

However, violence continued in rural areas. Sunni extremists from many regions of Pakistan took part in the offensive. Local residents were terrified by the size and aggressiveness of the attacking TTP force, which beheaded and tortured their captives. In only two days, 180 people were killed in two neighboring towns.²³ After cleansing smaller Shi'a towns,²⁴ the TTP/tribal force aimed to conquer Alizai, the Shi'a bastion in Lower Kurram. All the children and women fled to the abandoned Sunni quarters of Parachinar and to an Imambara in Alizai area where the community provided food, clothes and other necessities. The men took up positions in trenches in Alizai while Turi reinforcements arrived from Upper Kurram.

Meanwhile, the Turi attacked Sunni villages in the Shalozan Tangi area in Upper Kurram. The Sunni women and children fled to safety while the men sought to defend their villages, only to die in the trenches or flee. UNHCR registered 6,000 Sunni refugees, mostly women and children, who had crossed the border into Paktia province in Afghanistan in early January 2008.²⁵

This time most people remained in displacement; first in Alizai and Parachinar, later in Peshawar and Hangu. Meanwhile houses and properties that had been abandoned were looted and then burnt; food stores and local pharmacies were emptied. Orchards and fields also were destroyed to prevent people from returning.

TTP and radical sectarian groups spoil tribal peace deal

Both Shi'a and Sunni tribal leaders in Kurram decided to try and end the violence and called for a peace jirga. The jirga summoned more than 100 elders from rival groups. The elders signed an agreement in Parachinar on January 14, 2008 in front of the Political Agent.²⁶ But fighters from outside the area wanted to continue exploiting the tribal conflict as a means of strengthening their own hand, and worked to spoil the agreement.

Hakimullah Mehsud, then commander of the TTP in Orakzai, Khyber, and Kurram, sent hundreds more fighters from the Waziristans to Kurram in early 2008. The Khyber-based Afridi anti-Shi'a groups, Lashkar-e-Islam and Ansar-ul Islam, also sent fighters to target the Shi'a. In March 2008, militants sabotaged the communication

system in Lower Kurram. In April, an attack on an army-escorted Shi'a convoy instantly triggered Turi - Mangal fights in Upper Kurram which endured for months.²⁷

Turi offensive in Lower Kurram weakens TTP and displaces 52 Sunni (Bangash) villages

The Shi'a elders in Upper and Lower Kurram perceived that the army's inaction was to their disadvantage. They also believed that the local agreements between Kurram tribes were unsustainable while outside spoilers were present in their territory. A jirga thus decided to launch an inter-tribal laskhar to attack the strongholds of sectarian groups. Relatives came back from Islamabad, Peshawar and Parachinar to fight together with local men. Those who opposed these measures were forced to remain silent or displaced.

The laskhar fought minor Sunni Bangash villages before moving towards Bagzi, the TTP base and its primary target.²⁸ The battle over Bagzi lasted for 22 days before the TTP militants and local Sunni Bangash fighters were defeated and the local men fled. Simultaneous clashes took place in disputed areas all over Upper and Lower Kurram; more than 600 people died in the fighting.²⁹

The Turi-led Shi'a offensive occupied disputed territory west of the Kurram River in Shoorki, Shna Darga and Munda in Lower Kurram and forcibly displaced the mainly Sunni Bangash population in 52 villages -- an estimated 2,000 families -- northwest of Alizai and Bagzi.³⁰ Properties were looted or torched during the fighting. Many of the villages had both Shi'a and Sunni hamlets, and the Shi'a population in some of the towns was also displaced.³¹

Stalemate leads to Murree peace agreement, but the agreement is not implemented
After a unilateral cease-fire declared by the Turi on September 2, 2008 failed, a peace jirga supervised by the PA was convened in Sadda and Islamabad. Six Sunni tribes -- Bangash, Mangal, Para Chamkani, Zaidashat, Ali Sherzai and Maqbal -- announced a ceasefire shortly afterwards.³² The Murree Agreement, brokered by the Government and signed by all the tribes, was signed on October 16, 2008. But the Agreement, discussed later in this paper, was not implemented. Displacements, a major concern in the agreement, continued.^{33 34}

TTP, Haqqani and sectarian groups lose local support; security forces' offensive displaces 50,000 from Central Kurram

The sectarian intensity of the fighting diminished during 2009. TTP and the Haqqani Network established themselves with headquarters in Shasho and Pirqyum areas near Sadda but failed to fulfill their ambitions of securing corridors through Upper Kurram.³⁵ Sunni sectarian groups came under pressure as they started to be seen as a threat by some local Sunni leaders. But the sectarian groups' tactics installed fear and few dared to oppose them.³⁶

Military operations in Central Kurram against TTP commander Fazal *Saeed* and other militants' bases culminated between October 2009 and January 2010. U.S drones and Pakistani helicopter gunships bombed militant positions. The Kurram Militia, a unit assigned to the paramilitary Frontier Corps, launched a series of operations targeted

at militant training centers and the northern routes used by militants in their journeys to Afghanistan.³⁷

By the second week of December immediate evacuations were ordered in Nalai, Sultani, Tarali and the Jani Koat areas in Central Kurram.³⁸ Up to 50,000 people fled, many of them towards Sadda town. Thirty-five thousand individuals were registered and received humanitarian assistance in March 2010 by Medicins Sans Frontiers (MsF), the only humanitarian agency operating inside Kurram. Although the IDPs did not foresee a quick end to their difficult situation, they soon returned to their home areas or went into secondary displacement in Hangu, KPK.³⁹ Sporadic military operations took place during 2010, but only some 1,000 people remained in Sadda by April 2011.

Restrictions on the movement of goods and people

According to the FCR, roads in FATA are state property and the security on the road is the state's responsibility.

The blocking of roads is often used as a defensive strategy in order to avoid infiltration by enemies. But it has also been used to isolate enemy tribes and impose such hardship upon them that they are forced to either give in to demands or displace from their regions altogether.

Lower Kurram

After sectarian violence broke out in April 2007, a blockade was imposed on Shi'a travelling on the main road from Thal, KPK to Parachinar, Upper Kurram. The blockade aimed to weaken the Turi and Shi'a Bangash and to force the Turi into accepting the right of Mangal tribesmen and Afghan insurgents to freely move through Upper Kurram into Afghanistan.

The unsafe area for Shi'a is mainly, but not exclusively, from Tal to Saparay -- less than 10 of a total of 70 km -- but the government is unable or unwilling to secure it.⁴⁰ The route through Dara Adam Khail has also been controlled by TTP militants who have set up roadblocks. At these roadblocks, people with Shi'a names or with marks on their back (from self-flagellation inflicted during the Shi'a Zangir Zani tradition) are investigated and kidnapped. Sometimes they are killed.

The blockade has led to a hike in the cost of living and limits on medical services. Produce enters by army convoys or is transported by Sunni drivers, who generally travel safely. But bribes paid at check points and the monopoly of those who are able to make the journey have contributed to the skyrocketing of prices on essential commodities like flour, lentils, rice and petrol by 400%.⁴¹ Prices instantly fall when the roadblocks are temporarily lifted. But the hardship caused by the interference in road travel has been significant: Among many others, 500 Shi'a Bangash families decide to leave Lower Kurram for Afghanistan in June 2009 as a result.⁴²

Meanwhile, exports from Upper Kurram, which once included tomatos, potatoes, rice, peanuts, soybeans and apples, have ground to halt as has mining activity and other productive investment. The hospital in Parachinar often lacks critical drugs. Shi'a

doctors claim that 143 children died of preventable diseases between April 2007 and December 2010 because of the blockade.⁴³

Monthly convoys escorted by the security forces -- the fare was Rs. 1,500 in March 2011 compared to Rs. 180 in 2007 -- are rarely attacked. But when they are, as was the case in July 2010, January and March 2011, the convoys are normally halted for one to two months. This leads to an even greater shortage of supplies.

Nonetheless it is still possible for individuals to travel. For Rs. 8,000, a generous monthly salary, people bribe government official to hide in their vehicles which move freely on these roads, or walk the dangerous Khyber mountain roads and routes through Afghanistan.⁴⁴

In response to their partial confinement, the Turis started to build alternative routes. After the battle in August 2008 which consolidated Turi control of the Alizai area, a 20-km path which connects Parachinar to Alizai was expanded. The Shurko route, as it is called, detours around the Sunni-dominated town of Sadda, which is located on the main road linking Parachinar with Alizai and the rest of Pakistan.

Upper Kurram

In Upper Kurram, the Turis blocked access to Teri Mangal and the Shelawsan Tango border area from 1982 to 1997. They did so again beginning in 2007. The route from Shelfzan Tangi via Parachinar to Sadda which would normally take 30-40 minutes by car has been closed. The measure was put in place to control the inflow of Sunni militants from Afghanistan but has remained in place in order to control the Mangal, Maqbal and Zadran (Sunni) tribesmen living in that area. The Turi claim that it is retaliation for restrictions imposed on wood-cutting in the area. From a Turi militant perspective, the relocation of Haqqani to Mata Sangar and Bashura Sunni areas renewed the need to besiege the area.⁴⁵

The high cost of living is the main concern of the population. There is no market place in the area and the townspeople buy supplies from Afghanistan at expensive rates. While the area has two health clinics, there is no doctor. In case of serious illness, the inhabitants use a mountain route through Ahmedi Shama village to reach Sadda which takes some 16 hours – a delay that has proved fatal for critically-wounded or ill patients during times of armed conflict. .

Humanitarian convoys have on occasion been allowed to pass through Parachinar to supply households. But they risk being attacked by Turi militants. In October 2010 the security forces blocked the five main routes from Upper Kurram to Afghanistan: Terimangal, Spina Shaga, Khairlachi, Burki and Shahidano Dand. The blockade only affected Turi tribesmen which by late April 2011 are impeded from crossing the border. Analysts and tribal leaders believe it was enforced to pressure the Shi'a Turi to broker a truce with the Sunni tribes and with Afghan insurgents.

Other Sunni towns in Upper Kurram have been living 'under siege' since the clashes in 2007.⁴⁶

Turi clash with Mangal hosting militants in Shelowsan Tangi, Upper Kurram

In August 2010, Mangal tribes from the Shelewzan Tangi area were granted access to the road, which passes through Parachinar, during the month of Ramadan. But one convoy was attacked by Turi militiamen who alleged that the convoy was bringing supplies to Afghan militants and was involved in a conspiracy to take over Khewas, the only Shi'a (Bangash) village in a mainly Mangal and Zadran Sunni belt.⁴⁷ As a result of the incident, the Mangal blocked the water route to the Shi'a Bangash Khewas settlement.⁴⁸

Turi hit back by attacking Mangal towns with a big lashkar. People from Shelewzan Tangi and surrounding villages (Lala Mela, Ismail Mela; Kabli; Khairat Din; Shafoo) received reinforcements from militants. The attackers, possibly supported by the Frontier Corps, used heavy weaponry. The locals responded from their bunkers and also launched missiles from mountain positions. On the 11th of August, the third day of fighting, the elders of the warring parties formed a peace committee that negotiated a one-hour ceasefire. Some men in each family were left behind to protect their homes and participate in the fight. But the women and children were sent to safety. The Pakistani security forces also intervened, and claimed that more than 70 "militants" were killed in the strikes. But analysts and Turi elders agree that the army intervened on behalf of Haqqanis and Hekmatyar fighters and that helicopters bombed Shi'a positions from the air.⁴⁹

Four villages - Aqal Shah Killay, Sarang Killay, Qabli and Khewas Killay - were torched amid the exchange of heavy fire, and some 700 houses destroyed. Finally, after four weeks of intense fighting and some 150 deaths, the PA summoned a jirga which put an end to the fighting. But nearly all of the villagers, estimated at up to 4,000 people, had already been displaced.

The largest group of displaced people reached Nangarhar in Afghanistan where the local people looked after them for four or five days. Then they continued to Kohat via Peshawar. Other displaced people passed through Paktia, Afghanistan before returning to Sadda. A third group fled to the Sunni (disputed) Turi Mangal area in northwestern Upper Kurram. Meanwhile, the Shi'a Bangash from the Khewas village fled to a secure area of Shelafzan where they hid for one month before they were escorted by security forces to Parachinar.

¹ Sunni leaders later alleged that Shi'a Syed families of Sadda that previously had hosted religious celebrations opposed the building of the Imambara because they would lose an important source of income. According to this version, they requested the Akhonzada tribesmen in Orakzai to halt the construction of the Imambara.

² According to the Sunni version, the sons of Haji Hussain Ghulam alias Dadoo (the man behind the building of the Imambara the previous year, lent a pornographic magazine to a boy hailing from the adjacent Pir Qayum village. When the boy failed to return the magazine, he was beaten. In retaliation, he mobilised his relatives who moved to attack the businesses of 'Dadoo'. When his sons realised what was happening, they opened fire on the attackers but incidentally hit Sunni pedestrians, including Afghan refugees, walking on the sidestreet. This in turn, transformed the incident into sectarian clashes.

³ Local Sunni leaders claim that the Shi'a were killed by refugees and/or mujahedeen. Some leaders also emphasise that the incident happened amid Shi'a protests against the influx of refugees. Kurram Militia and Thall Scout, requisitioned from Parachinar and Thall garrison, were present but failed to intervene.

⁴ "Open Letter by IDPs: Humanitarian Crisis":
http://issuu.com/voiceofsadda/docs/open_letter_by_idps_humanitarian_crisis,

⁵ According to most accounts, the IDPs received rents for their abandoned properties until November 2007 when their houses were burnt.

- ⁶ The affected area included Balish Khel, Gharbina and Ibrahimzai villages.
- ⁷ BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, August 6, 1987, On the Situation in Pakistan's Kurram Agency; BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, August 20, 1987, Tribal jergas support Turi tribe; The Telegraph, July 28, 1987, Thirty killed, 60 wounded in battle between moslem sects
- ⁸ Ibid
- ⁹ Sunni *malik* narrate that the murder of Afghan refugees triggered a devastating retaliation against the Shi'a devotees taking part in the Muharram procession in Sadda, Lower Kurram, two weeks later.
- ¹⁰ Xinhua General News Service, JUNE 5, 1993, Four killed in tribal fighting in Pakistan; Xinhua General News Service, June 11, 1993, 20 killed in tribal clash in Pakistan
- ¹¹ Japan Economic Newswire, August 1, 1996, Tribal clash over girl leaves 5 dead in Pakistan (recent reports, however, stress that the clashes took place along sectarian lines)
- ¹² The Sunni merchants kept their shops closed for two days to honour the dead, but the Turi believed they were preparing to retaliate and thus launched a preemptive attack on Sunni worshippers the following Friday.
- ¹³ The villages are: Teki Kale (Zeran); Jelum Zo; Puladai; Me Ke; Lewan Khel; Chapri Malana; Ghulami Chapri
- ¹⁴ Business Recorder, March 11, 2001, Seven killed in Parachinar sectarian clash; The Pakistan Newswire, December 22, 2001, Mengal tribes sought action against the culprits of Nov 22 incident
- ¹⁵ Agitated by Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan's (SSP) boss Eid Nazar Mangal – who were injured and then airlifted to Sadda by the army in the subsequent fighting -- youth chanted anti-Shi'a slogans. This was video taped by the owner of a music shop and widely distributed. (The Sunnis, for their part, claimed the Shi'a had thrown stones at their procession and that the Shi'a just wanted a pretext to launch an attack.)
- ¹⁶ E.g. Peuwar, Karmaan, Para Chamkani, Teri Mangal, Blisht Khel, Bagazai, and Ali Zai.
- ¹⁷ The speculations were nurtured by rumour spread by local bakers who said that the main mosque was buying thousands of breads on a daily basis. It was evident, they thought, that thousands of Taliban hiding inside. Sunni elders persuaded the political administration to search the mosque to disprove the claim, but the rumours continued to circulate.
- ¹⁸ Despite their declared unpreparedness, Sunni women in Parachinar had received military training after the clashes in April 2007. They were armed and responded with fire from their bunkers in Sunni neighbourhoods Akber Khan Serai and Mirajan Colony. There was also exchange of fire from mosques and the Imambara.
- ¹⁹ Some 140-150 people, mostly women, had been gathered in a two-storey building in Kacheri Colony. When their neighborhood was torched one man was sent out the backdoor with all the women and children. They did not find shelter with the local administration and were forced to run by foot through the streets. For the women, who were not adequately dressed, the shame seemed to be greater than their fear of dying.
- ²⁰ A last group was evacuated from Parachinar by the Kurram Militia in helicopter.
- ²¹ The militant force was sent by Baitullah Mehsud under the command of Qari Hussain,
- ²² The affected towns included Balish Khel, Sangina, Ali Zai
- ²³ Eurasia Review, (SAIR) 27 March 2011, Kurram: False Accords (Tushar Ranjan Mohanty), <http://www.eurasiareview.com/pakistan-false-accords-in-kurram-analysis-28032011/>
- ²⁴ i.e. Chardiwar, Jalamay
- ²⁵ *Daily Times*, 2 January 2008, Families migrate from Kurram Agency to Afghanistan,
- ²⁶ *Dawn*, 15 January 2008, Warring factions sign truce in Kurram ; Pakistan Security Research Unit (PSRU) Brief Number 40, Sectarian Violence in Pakistan's Kurram Agency Suba Chandran 22nd September 2008, http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/documents/PSRU_KurramAgency_SectarianViolence.pdf
- ²⁷ The fights took place in several areas around Balish Khel, Sadda, Karma, Para Chamkani and Parachinar . Fighting between Mangal and Turi continued in Shalozan, Pekar and Tari Mangal areas.
- ²⁸ At that stage, the local Shi'a lashkar received support from Upper Kurram and the Sunni hamlets were vacated. They fled in a hurry crossing streams and using forrest paths in order to avoid Inzeeray, a nearby Shi'a village. When the people from Bin Yamen saw that the local Shi'a received reinforcements they also send a message to adjoining Sunni villages Baghan to abandon their homes which they did. Some of the men from the displaced villages joined the Sunnis in
- ²⁹ Fighting was reported from Pekar, Tangi, Karman, Para Chamkani, Maqbal and Nastikot areas of Upper Kurram and Sadda, Balishkhel, Sangina, Inzari, Bagzai and Alizai in Lower Kurram
- ³⁰ Including Maru Khel, Chutta Manduri, Bagzai, Munda, Bilyamin, Muzaffarkot, Makhezai Gharbi/Sharqi
- ³¹ Including the Shi'a populations of Makhayzia, Bin Yameen, Muda Chardiwar, Aarawali, Sedan and Kalya
- ³² *Dawn*, 1 September 2008, 'Kurram clashes leave 95 dead, 200 injured', <http://archives.dawn.com/2008/09/01/top1.htm>; *Dawn*, 2 September 2008, 'Six Kurram tribes announce ceasefire', <http://archives.dawn.com/2008/09/02/top2.htm>
- ³³ In December 2008 local Sunnis and Shi'as near Chardeewar clashed and both groups were got displaced when outside lashkars interfered.
- ³⁴ In June 2009 12-day long clashes have left about 89 people dead and 175 injured in Upper and Lower Kurram, in Balishkhel, Khar Kali, Sangina, Mangak, Kochi Parachamkani and Kirman (see *Dawn*, 28 June 2009, 'Kurram clashes leave 33 dead', <http://archives.dawn.com/archives/38623>)

³⁵ The Haqqani network has freely used the Pir Qayyum, Sateen and Shasho camp Lower Kurram but really needed open access to its bases in Tari Mangal (west), Mata Sangar (south), Makhrani, Wacha Darra (north) and Spina Shaga in Upper Kurram to launch attacks into Afghanistan.

³⁶ A local Sunni lashkar in Zawa town in Central Kurram was besieged for weeks by TTP's Mullah Toofan. The townspeople, on the verge of starvation, fled leaving behind livestock and personal belongings (see 'Life in Kurram and Orakzai Agencies of FATA', May 2010, <http://www.geotauaisay.com/2010/05/life-in-kurram-and-orakzai-agencies-of-fata/>)

³⁷ The Long War Journal, 16 December 2009, Pakistani military continues offensives in Kurram, Arakzai, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2009/12/pakistani_military_c_2.php; The Long War Journal, 27, November 2009, Fighting intensifies in northwestern Taliban strongholds, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2009/11/fighting_intensifies_3.php; New America Foundation, April 2010, p. 9, The Battle for Pakistan - Militancy and Conflict in Kurram, http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/documents/NAF_TheBattleforPakistan_MilitancyandConflictinKurram.pdf

³⁸ Pakistanviews, 13 December 2009, Residents asked to leave central Kurram Agency, <http://www.pakistanviews.com/war-on-terror/residents-asked-to-leave-central-kurram-agency.html>; Dawn, November 22, 2009, Gunship helicopters target Lower Kurram, <http://archives.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/03-gunship-helicopters-target-kurram-agency-ss-09>

³⁹ MsF, 16 February 2010, Pakistan: MSF Distributing Aid to People Displaced by Fighting in Kurram Agency, <http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/news/article.cfm?id=4266&cat=field-news>

⁴⁰ The areas where most attacks have taken place between 2007 and 2011 are: Ochat, Bagan, Charkhail, Mandoori, Paraw Kalay and Sapari Check post.

⁴¹ Each lorry that enters has to pay Rs. 3,000 at a Levi Check point

⁴² The nation, 6 June 2009, Bangash tribe decides to move to Afghanistan <http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Politics/06-Jun-2009/Bangash-tribe-decides-to-move-to-Afghanistan>

⁴³ A Christian minority of 400 families living in three hamlets (Kaloonis) near Parachinar City have been heavily affected by the blockade. They are employed by the Town Committee to clean public buildings. But since the Town Committee's income are taxes imposed on goods entering Parachinar, its revenues have decreased abruptly since 2007. This has consequently affected the employees working for them.

⁴⁴ A larger plane was flying the same route until recently and made it both cheaper and easier to get a ticket, which today costs some Rs10,000. A 28-seater helicopter which flew from Peshawar to Parachinar with essential drug supplies for the Parachinar hospital and pay to government employees used to give a lift to students. The frequency of the route decreased from weekly to monthly in 2009 and was brought to a complete halt mid 2010.

⁴⁵ This is claimed by some Turi leaders. It has also been reported in this well-researched paper by Jeffrey Dressler: Combating Terrorism Center, March 2011, p.12 Vol 4 Issue 3, Haqqani Network Influence in Kurram and its Implications for Afghanistan, <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/sentinel/CTCSentinel-Vol4Iss3.pdf>

⁴⁶ including in Pekar Tangi, Landiwan, Sangbast, Major Kali and Boshera

⁴⁷ According to the Shi'a Bangash and Turi, Afghan insurgents had taken positions in Mata Sangar and Bashura, of the Sunni Moqbil tribe, and they sought to evict the people of Khewas and establish a base there.

⁴⁸ According to news outlets, the same had happened in May 2010. In May 2010, fierce fighting erupted between Mangal and Turi in Pekar, Shalozan and Tangi at the Afghanistan border in Upper Kurram killing some 20 tribesmen. Turi had blocked the road from Parachinar to Shalozan Tangi. The Mangal, in turn, retaliated by deviating water supplies to a Shi'a village. Posing as police officers, Mangal militants also kidnapped 60 Turi, including women and children, from the road between Thal and Parachinar (see interviews and Dawn, May 15, 2010 Dawn: Militants kidnap 60 in Kurram tribal region; Dawn, 17 May 2010, 10 hostages escape captivity: Militants free 40 kidnapped passenger, <http://archives.dawn.com/archives/44698>; Dawn, 20 May 2010, Four killed in Kurram tribal clash, <http://archives.dawn.com/archives/133579>); The Express Tribune, 18 March 2010, [Forty six militants arrested in Kurram Agency: Officials, http://tribune.com.pk/story/100318/forty-six-militants-arrested-in-kurram-agency-officials/](http://tribune.com.pk/story/100318/forty-six-militants-arrested-in-kurram-agency-officials/))

⁴⁹ Longwarjournal, October 22, 2010, Siraj Haqqani sheltering in Kurram, near area of US helicopter strikes, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2010/10/siraj_haqqani_shelte.php