Twitter Thread by Abdul Basit

Abdul Basit
@basitresearcher

1. TTP is not a monolith and does not reside in one area in Afghanistan. Its connections with sections of the Afghan establishment and TTA are old and diverse. Dealing with TTP is part of the ongoing peace process and a key Pakistani demand.

> Veteran Pakistani journalist @IKPeshawar reveals in a latest TV talk show hosted by @rifatorakzai that TTP was part of the agenda of the recent visit of Pakistani Prime Minister @ImranKhanPTI to Kabul. 1/3 https://t.co/lFwI53KmLU
>
> — Ab. Sayed (@abdsayedd) January 9, 2021

2. Recent developments reveal these diverse & apparently contradictory connections of TTP. The mysterious killings of six mid-level TTP commanders b/n May & July in Afg was arguably the quid pro duo that Pak would have demanded in return for brokering the US-TB deal.

3. After these developments, among others, TTP reunified realizing that it'll be weakened if it didn't unify. While some sections of Afg establishment may ve links with Halqa Mehsud, after the 2014 APS attack it took action against the Swat Taliban.
https://t.co/8lX8OLnRLf

4. Following the APS massacre, Afghan forces bombarded position of Fazlullah and his associates on Pakistan's insistence. In 2018, the Afghan ministry of defense officially announced Fazlullah's killing in a drone attack.

https://t.co/yV13rMKhab

4. Going by @EUEofficial35's interview with @SaleemKhanSafi, Afghan establishment engaged factions of Jamaat-ul-Ahrar or the Mohmand Taliban. In the same interview, the allegations of Indian support were also leveled, including financial assistance and medical treatment.

5. Another key TTP leader Faqir Muhamamd, previously belonged to Tehreek-e-Nifaze Shariate Muhammadi, was also captured & killed by NDS in Afg in 2013. So, a hard stance against former TNSM-turned-TTP factions & a soft corner for Mehsud TTP seems visible.
https://t.co/nnbXdorroK

6. Against the backdrop of the Afghan peace process, TTP commanders' killings , the reunification of its various factions, its mention in the UN report & claiming its leaders could join ISKP after the US exit from Afg & ensuing renunciation from TTP need to be put in perspective.

7. Not just that, TTP also ideologically denounced ISKP, not to be confused with the latter in the post-US Afghanistan. Pak is pushing both TTA & Kabul vis-a-vis TTP. So, the contradictory trends not only reveal the diverse nature of TTP but the complex landscape it navigates.

8. This contradictory trend is not different from TTA's links with Pak's establishment. Some factions, like the Haqqani Network, are closer than others. Still, there are some factions such as the Qayum Zakir group which was not on good terms with the Paki deep state.

9. Of course, both Kabul & TTA would deny these links. From the strategy point of view, why Kabul wouldn't support a group intent on harming Pak. While sheltering TTP by TTA is part of its policy to maintain some leverage of Pak's establishment & avoid its blackmails.

10. TTA also shelters TTP for ideological cpmpulsions--the latter has pledged allegiance to the former, & ethnic reasons. TTP hosted TTA after 9/11. In a way, TTA is returning that favour now. However, this relationship is more complex courtesy Al-Qaeda & ISKP's presence.