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DURING my recent visit to Pakistan, I found evidence of Taleban presence in Karachi. Stories have already surfaced of truck drivers being warned of terrible consequences if they carry supplies for NATO forces fighting in north Waziristan.

I heard of at least two incidences where women were injected with contaminated blood in busy market places, because they went out of their houses without abaya and wearing the traditional Pakistani dress called 'Shalwar Qameez.'

I also saw anti- and pro-Taleban graffiti on the walls in many parts of the city. This is an alarming situation and points to the increasing influence of Taleban in urban Pakistan.

I talked with a few taxi drivers belonging to north Waziristan. Surprisingly, they had nothing but praise for Taleban.

One taxi driver told me that the divorce case of his sister was pending judgment in the local courts for long. So they went to a Taleban Jirga in Patel Para near Lasbella area of Karachi, and divorce was finalized within three days.

He told me that Patel Para is the headquarters of Taleban in Pakistan. He also told that many Taleban elements were living in Banaras Colony near north Nazimabad located near Orangi town area. I realized that these jirgas are operating as parallel courts. The government has no control on these private courts.

An Urdu-speaking resident of north Nazimabad area told me that Taleban were building illegal houses on hill areas in blocks P, Q, R, S and T of north Nazimabad Karachi. Passengers in bus numbers W-21 and W-22 between Qalanderia Chowk and Abdullah College route often complain of harassment by Taleban.

The walls of the flats, houses and parks situated at Asma Gardens in Scheme 33, Gulshan view Apartments and Noman Arcade and its vicinity are replete with pro-Taleban graffiti like "Karachi me rehna hai to Taleban ban ke rehna" (if you want to survive in Karachi, be like Taleban), "Karachi men rehna hai to jihadi ban ke rehna" (be a jihadi, if you want to live in Karachi), "Karachi men rehna hai to Baitullah Mehsud kehna hai" (say long live Baitullah Mehsud, if you want to live in Karachi) etc.

But some anti-Taleban graffiti were seen at Lasbella Bridge in Liaquatabad Town. 'Taleban Murdabad' (Down with the Taleban) and 'Shiiat ka qatl-e-aam na Manzoor' (The killing of Shias is rejected) and in English 'Back Shias, full power, Super power' are the phrases that appeared.

The third largest political party in Pakistan, as well as the ruling party in Sindh Province, Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), has already warned of a conspiracy to 'Talebanize' people in Karachi and has demanded the government to take action against extremist elements throughout the city. It informed that the truckloads of Taleban were being shifted from tribal areas into the city. They were involved in looting, forcible occupation of land and defacing of public property in the city.

MQM organized its workers' meetings to spread awareness about the alarming issue of 'Talebanization of the city.'" Sources said that MQM workers have been asked to keep their eyes open.

For avoiding the situation like the ones in the North West Frontier Province and the tribal

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areas where girls' schools are burnt, the chief of the MQM, Altaf Hussain, asked the people of Sindh to give shelter to people from the tribal areas but encroachment on the land of Sindh would not be tolerated at any cost. MQM fears that all the posh and business areas would be targeted if Taleban increases hold in the city.

Recently, a day after a suicide bomber killed 19 Pakistanis, including 15 policemen, in Islamabad, a string of bombings rocked the southern port city of Karachi. One civilian was killed and more than 50 wounded after a series of seven bombs were detonated in the course of 90 minutes. This deplorable act proved that Taleban are trying to overrun Karachi and foment sectarian violence in the city.

It was truly an outcome of the efforts of "Talebnaization" of Karachi which can further create polarization, religious hatred and discrimination.

Karachi is the center of gravity for the whole region. It has been the scene of intense sectarian clashes over the past several decades. Chaos in Karachi will not only affect the development of this metropolitan city, but also the overall economic condition of the nation.

The enemies of the country want to shatter economic activities, impose their agenda by creating linguistic riots and destabilize the country. Terrorists knew that by disturbing the economy of the city, they can create anarchy and terror in Karachi as well as the whole country.