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## Taliban: a 'Frankenstein' created in US-USSR tussle

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None has got the confidence to say something with a bit of certainty about the 'mysterious movement' known as Talibanisation. But there are different stories which are linked to its wellspring. The cover story has always been that they (Taliban) are the product of the US, and saw the light of day when America and former USSR locked their horns in 1979 to grab the title of the 'super power' in the rugged and cold mountains of Afghanistan. From the very beginning, Washington and its allies took Russia for a kind of fanatic and zealous realm. They knew that only a group of zealots, imbedded with a sort of religious fervour, would be able to blow Russians away on the face of earth. Therefore, the US engineered a group, called 'Mujahideen', who were not only trained as the best fighters, but also provided with the fatal weapons of the time. The Mujahideen played like death-defying puppets in the hands of America for quite a long time. They were happy being busy in lapping up dollars, besides enjoying American gas guzzlers and visits to the Europe and US. General Zia ul Haq, the then president of Pakistan, also deemed it an opportunity to keep clinging to his rule. He not only prolonged his tenure but sowed the seeds of mistrust between the military and civil society, achingly hindering the social development process in the country. The mistake committed by the CIA and its co-agencies was that they did not take a calculated risk, while giving that much leverage to the then Mujahideen. Religious parties in Pakistan, particularly Jamaat-e-Islami and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, were

hired by America to drum the spirit of Jihad into the fresh careerists as fighters to teach a lesson to the arch enemy of the United States. The Islamic militants from other parts of the world thronged Pakistan and Afghanistan to inflict a crushing blow on the Red Army. Pakistan's ISI and American CIA carried off very well to bleed the USSR and turned the world unipolar for their own ulterior motives. After the liquidation of Russia in 1989, the Mujahideen were chucked away in the corners of Pakistan like some disposable bottles in the bin. It was an uphill task for Pakistan to keep the Mujahideen as lodgers; rather they were lodged at various madrassahs of NWFP and thus acquiring the name of 'Taliban'. The game never ended here, unluckily. The Taliban were 'misapplied' again by the government of Pakistan to establish a 'junta' of its own choice in Afghanistan. Sad enough, the United States responded very flatly to the situation, building up by the time and never took a single step for the economic uplift of the under-dogged fighters. The Mujahideen ended up on the scrape heap after short careers of Western mercenaries. Again, there was some sort of voodoo with the US because everything just went wrong to fetter the 'hydra' of terrorism. The US and its allies never tried to resolve the disputes, which were the fundamental causes of terrorism in the world; rather in the wake of 9/11 they started running amuck after Osama bin Laden. Since then, the US has been blatantly disregarding the fact that the collateral damages, in the name of hunting Osama, could only be counterproductive. To fight this menace in the world, it is incumbent on the international community to have a holistic approach towards the issue, which is to eradicate poverty, besides instilling the feeling of fresh hope into people of the Third World countries. I think it will be the height of folly and a tragic waste if America gallops any more into the politics of Hobson's choice, that is 'either you are with us or with them'. For I emphatically believe that this would never help to affectively tackle the problem. Washington must realise that terrorism is a phenomenon which does not occur in a vacuum. While combating the rebel elements, the US must know that injustice and poverty, in any society, provide a real fecund ground for the terrorism to grow. Due to a fragile democratic system, Pakistan has been an easy prey to extremism. A glaring example is that the term development remained an alien word to the politics of Pakistan. The subservient judiciary and docile parliament were the key factors, welcoming various social evils in the country, including militancy. We had better discard 'a radial political system' and the politics must percolate down through the 'have-nots' of the

society for the development of true democratic norms. By targeting and storming the hideouts of terrorists, we will make the militants hotfoot, but would never wipe off terrorism from the world. As a matter of fact, the killing of innocent people, in any part of the world, would definitely evoke the embedded human psyche known as 'revenge is sweet'. What is necessary is to furnish a society where justice rules and prosperity thrives. Terrorism and justice cannot live together as dark and light cannot appear at a time.