

News

Pakistan: Ghani calls for reconciling with 'willing' militants

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PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Owais Ahmed Ghani pleaded on Tuesday "reconciliation" with militants willing to come into the mainstream.

"Although we have accomplished significant success as far as counterinsurgency measures in FATA are concerned, however a lot still remains to be done in terms of initiating reconciliation with those who can be brought into the mainstream," Ghani said while addressing the opening session of the two-day "Strategic Workshop on Rehabilitation and De-radicalisation of Militants and Extremists".

He stated that the problems in FATA were multifarious, hence a multidimensional approach was needed to tackle them, however, he added that sectarian and ethnic issues were as dangerous as militancy.

Ghani expressed optimism that with the help of the jirga system, things are "about to change for the better".

Organised by the FATA Secretariat under the auspices of the FATA Capacity-Building Project, the workshop was attended by senior government officials, the political administration, foreign dignitaries, analysts, civil society representatives, besides Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Inspector General of Police Malik Naveed, US Consul General Candace Putnam and FATA Administration and Coordination Secretary Abid Majeed.

Urgent rehabilitation: "The principal aim of this one-of-a-kind policy dialogue is to find practical ways and means of reforming the ideology of radicalised extremists to rehabilitate them so they can be reintegrated into mainstream society without returning to their extremist cause," former Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief secretary Khalid Aziz said. He added, "There is an urgent need for a policy that prescribes a process to transform individuals who are currently detained so that they can be released with relative assurance that they will not continue to be a threat to security and stability of national interests."

The first day of the two-day seminar had been designed to give exposure to a group of leaders and policy-makers from FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to case studies of relevant subjects from experts who successfully carried out such rehabilitation, reintegration and de-radicalisation programmes in other conflict-hit countries.

Guest speakers from Singapore, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Sri Lanka had been invited by the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, Singapore to participate in the seminar in collaboration with the FATA Capacity-Building Project.