

## **TERRORISM IN PAKISTAN WITH A FOCUS ON KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA AND BACHA KHAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT PESHAWAR**

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### **Abstract**

*Terrorism is a brutal phenomenon; it shakes the very foundations of human society in all ages. Terrorism exists since long and put many losses to the people, property and their peaceful coexistence all around the world. Background and definition of terrorism has been discussed. Pakistan's aviation industry has been badly affected by the scourge of terrorism. Moreover, it has its everlasting effects on the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and on the only international airport of this province i.e. Bacha Khan International Airport, Peshawar (BKIAP). Due to terrorism, many aspects of BKIAP have been affected and ultimately created problems for the passengers and their families. This paper aims at analysing the different terrorist's incidents that affected badly the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Bacha Khan International Airport Peshawar (BKIAP).*

### **Key words**

Terrorism; Aviation; Attacks; Bacha Khan Airport; Peshawar

### **Introduction and Background of Terrorism**

The word terror is derivative of the Latin word *terrere*, which means, to terrify. The Webster's English Dictionary defines terrorism as "violence committed by groups in order to intimidate population or government into granting their demand". Considering terrorism in the context of the word its existence would go as far back as recorded history itself. Both major religions of the world Islam and Christianity have used terror during their crusades against each other (Wolf and Frankel 2007, 259-260). In the 100 A.D a tribe in Israel called the zealot used the tactics of hit and run in different public places against the roman occupation. Moreover, in Spain the Inquisition (1469-1600) used the method of systematized torture, against the Heretics and the

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whole medieval era was based on terrorizing the countryside (Furstenberg 2007, 82). The World War I started due to a Serb terrorist in the year 1914. The rise to power of Hitler's in 1932 involved plans for genocide. Some nations like Cyprus, Algeria, Ireland, Israel and Tunisia, become republics due to revolutionary terrorism, and more than a few people would argue that the United States was founded on terrorism. If one compares it to the contemporary terrorism then it would be quite evident that the ancient time terrorism was more religious in character and lasted longer (Taylor 1988, 38). Analyst refers the Palestinian religious groups organized attempt against their rivals in 66-73 A.D as of terrorist attacks of ancient times. The era of modern terrorism that lasted from 1871 to 1960. In this era, the leftist as well as the right-wing was operative, but in the period before world war first the leftist-wing was more active and after the world war first most of the operations were conducted by the right-wing. The leftist was socialist, liking equality and government intervention was more there (Taillon 2002). Furthermore, Terrorism is not a regional phenomenon but it is an international issue and exists throughout the world (Laquer 1977, 7).

History of terrorism is full with different incidents and the historians are of different opinion regarding the history/beginning of terrorism. However, some events can trace us to the era of its time of beginning, Terrorism is a global phenomenon; it has its roots across the World. Terrorism exists in the history of mankind for thousands of years (Deutcher 2009).

### **Definition of terrorism**

Terrorism creates a sense of fear in an organized manner in population and Terrorism “needs and is aimed at audience” (Russet 1981, 507). The word terrorism defies an exact definition, difference of opinion exists on the word terrorism, and there are about hundred definitions of the word terrorism (Deutcher 2009).

“Terrorism is the use or threat of extraordinary political violence to induce fear, anxiety or alarm in a target audience wider than the immediate symbolic victims. Terrorism is violence for political effect as opposed to military impact” (Walker 2010, 1395). In another definition M. Crenshaw, defined terrorism, “Terrorism is characterized as a series of individual acts of extraordinary and intolerable violence, a constant pattern of symbolic or representative selection and is deliberately intended to create a psychological effect on specific groups of people” (Taylor 2002, 10).

**Terrorism and Aviation Industry in Pakistan**

In a speech to National Assembly of Pakistan, Ali Mohammad Khan, MNA from Pakistan Tehrik-i-Insaaf categorically said, "Pakistan lost more than seventy thousand precious lives which include Pakistan army personnel, paramilitaries, civilians and school kids etc. in the war against terror from 2001 to 2015. Such a huge loss is accompanied by more than 100 billion of dollars spent on the war against terror, and still some countries are demanding Pakistan to do more and more. Pakistan did and is doing more than any country is doing for the eliminating of terrorism from the country and the world. On 9/11 few thousands of people were killed for which we are equally sorry, but no Pakistani was involved in that killing in which the aeroplanes were used as a bomb against the infrastructure in United States of America. No places in Pakistan were safe from those terrorist attacks; even it was a mosque, market, school and forces and airports etc. Pakistan was damaged, economically, socially, psychologically, politically and in tourism aspects but still USA is threatening Pakistan with to do more, but now it is United States to do more because they are supporting the terrorist in the world" (Ali Mohammad 2017).

Terrorists' activity on ground and against aviation industry has affected our country in many aspects, political, economic, and social or tourism but it has affected these directly and indirectly. Tourism is one of the main sources of income for developing countries. In many developing countries, the tourists' industry has been badly affected by terrorist actions either political or ethnic groups but have left disastrous effect on the revenue collecting industry (Wynne-Hughes 2012, 615-20). Before the 9/11 and Talibanization, tourists in this region were coming to Pakistan for exploring the beauty of this country but with the increase of terrorism in this part of the world the flow of tourists have been reduced or become vanished. It is because tourists try to go to some place for relaxation and thwarting their anxiety but going to such a place where they do not feel their life even safe, so they avoid going and visiting to such places. Nobody can stake their life just for the sake of tourism. So, only the foreigners have become limited to the professional or other obligatory visits to Pakistan (Hoffman and Reinares 2014).

"War on terrorism has merely prompted terror and militancy in Pakistan. It has affected new areas and has expanded multi-fold in its scope and breadth. It has caused indoctrinating those who were on the side-lines. The collateral damage, in this war, has affected thousands of innocent families, pushing them in to the lap of insurgency, without any fault of theirs. It has sort of bartered away Pakistan's sovereignty and has been a source of huge humiliation to its 160 million people" (Haq

and Hussain 2008, 82-83). The war against terrorism has affected Pakistan in all spheres either it is socio-economic, politically, tourism, FDI, Agriculture and in all security related fields. Karachi has the Pakistan largest airport named as Jinnah International Airport Karachi (JIAP) and is the main source of income. It is located in the largest city of Pakistan, the sea ports are also located in the same city which doubled its importance for the people and country in contributing to socio-economic, political and tourists' point of view.

Due to bad law and order situation in the city and surrounding in the beginning of the twenty first Century and onwards many of the refutable airlines abandoned their services to the main commercial hub of Pakistan. The detail of some of those airlines are produced here that when those airlines quitted their services to our country and this quitting had many side effects on the economy, tourism and social structure of our country.

In the year 1998-99 many of the foreign airlines either suspended or reduced their flights to Jinnah International Airport due to the deteriorating security situation in the city of Karachi and the country as a whole. The atomic explosion and economic embargo was another reason for the most of Europeans and other foreign countries to suspend their operation to the heart of Pakistan. The airlines which suspended or reduced their frequency in the same period are Royal Jordan Airline, Kuwait Airline, Yemen Airways, Gulf Airline, Egypt Airline; Garuda Airline (Indonesia), Philippine Airline, Thai Air, Indian Airline, Air France, Royal Dutch KLM, Lufthansa Air (Germany) and Aeroflot (Russia). The year 1998-99 was very bad as for as the aviation industry of Pakistan's are concerned because most of the refutable and high valued aircrafts quit business with this part of the world which has suffered the socio-economic status of Pakistan and a drawback for the aviation sector as well (M. Jamil, Personal Communication, September 10, 2017).

It was only the Karachi airport in Pakistan to which airline from most of the countries were arriving and the other airports like Islamabad and Lahore were not of the same calibre as that of Karachi. Like Karachi BKIA Peshawar has also been suffered either due to the direct attack of the terrorists on it or due the terrorists' activity in the city of Peshawar but it is a fact that the Peshawar airport has suffered in all the aspects from these terrorists' activities. Moreover, BKIA Peshawar is the only international airport of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from where the people of this province can be benefited.

## **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province of Pakistan**

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is generously blessed with beautiful natural places like landscapes, mighty rivers, forests and mountains. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the smallest province of Pakistan having an area of 74521 square km but it has many tourists' spots as compared to the other provinces of Pakistan. This province is full of natural beauty and has many attractive places for which foreign tourists' wishes to have a visit to those places. The green valleys, snow covered mountainous ranges, beautiful waterfalls, natural lakes and cultural heritage further adds to the beauty of this province.

The attack on the army public school in Peshawar, in which hundreds of students and teachers were killed, was an attack renowned and condemned all over the world by all nations. The attack on Bacha Khan University in Charsadda and other school attacks were quite horrible. In these terrorists' attacks, not only the precious lives were taken away but the educational, economic, social system and infrastructure were destroyed. Not only female education but their mobility was also restrained by the terrorists in the affected areas of KP. The women were not able to approach freely to the public places and the whole burden in these areas fell on the shoulders of men. In such a way, the social life of women was also disturbed due to terrorism. Terrorists in area of conflict were of the opinion of Islamic way of life for women and these terrorists were of the opinion to impose this radicalisation throughout the country. However, due to the political involvement and military action the situation has become a bit improved. Although, still much is needed to improve the situation, but the previous situation is to be kept in mind, it has been improved considerably (D. Zafar, Personal Communication, January 10, 2017). No area or place in KP remained safe from the attacks or insurgencies; either it is the main provincial capital, Peshawar, smaller districts or towns.

However, the most affected areas are KP, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA). FATA (Ex), is under the control of federal government and PATA is under the control of provincial government. Moreover, PATA is developed as compared to the FATA, the population are educated and rule of law and courts jurisdiction prevails. Both FATA and PATA are connected with KP in terms of geography and in term of culture and traditions. The turbulent valley of Swat and Malakand division are included in the PATA. After the 9/11 the terrorists slowly and gradually made their feet strong in FATA and PATA for enforcing Shariah —a government/life system based on the Islamic ways, they

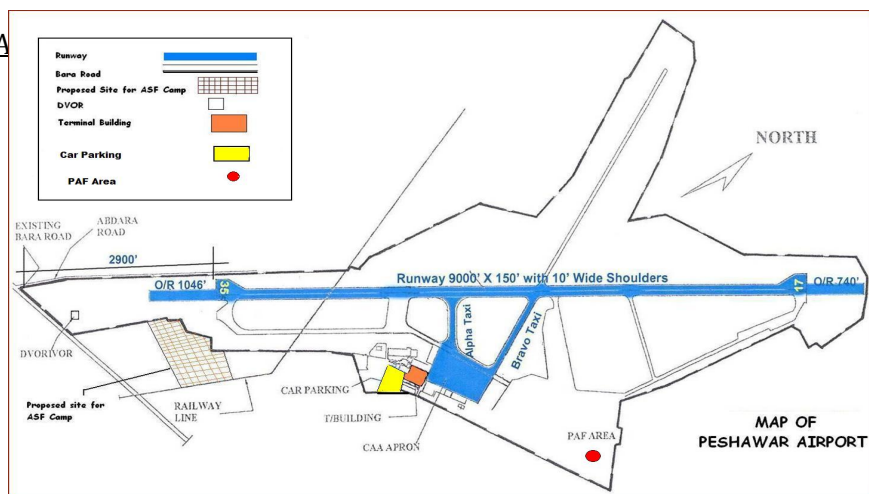
came across from the borders and attracted the local targeted people from the population of KP. Furthermore, from these areas the terrorists were operating in all areas of the province and inflicted heavy losses to this province. The peace of the people of this province was snatched and unrest prevails all over it (Khan 2012, 136-138).

Most of the people, who can bear the cost of replacement, moved to the different parts of the country especially Islamabad. It was in October 2007, when the situation flared up, the government decided to start an operation in Malakand, Swat, Shangla, Dir etc. known as Operation Rah-e-Haq. Thousands of residents from the FATA and PATA fled to the settled districts of KP and thus created a situation of fear and unrest in the whole province of KP. The Internally Displaced Persons (IDP's) were whole heartedly accommodated by the settled places people either in their homes or the camps made by the government of the province (Y. Jan, Personal Communication, January 17, 2013).

### **Bacha Khan International Airport Peshawar**

It is an International Airport situated in the city of Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It is situated at about 8 km from the Centre of Peshawar city (Quadri & Quadri 2014). It is one of the busiest airports in Pakistan and stands at number 4<sup>th</sup> as far as annual flights are concerned. A railway line passing across the main premises of the airport makes it one of the unique airports of the country. It is the only Airport in Pakistan through which a railway tract is passing. Furthermore, it is also important to note that a canal passes beneath its runway. These two qualities make it a unique airport of the country. Bacha Khan International Airport is situated 180 km to the west of Islamabad City (the capital of Pakistan), which makes it at a distance of about two hours' drive from the capital to the Airport through M-1 motorway.

The BKIA Peshawar is a historical airport across Pakistan. As it is the provincial capital of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the BKIA offers global networks for most of the north-western region of the country and the adjacent areas of Afghanistan. The airport was renamed after a Pashtun nationalist political leader Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan (known as Bacha Khan among the residents of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province). It was renamed on 27 January 2012 (Mahmood 2014).



**Layout of BKIAP**

The above map of BKIA Peshawar shows the length/width of the runway and the adjacent building of the airport. A small car park of the airport which was the capacity of about three hundred vehicles has been demolished due to the construction and upgradation of the airport. Parking has been shifted to the army ground opposite to the airport main entry gate.

#### COMPARISION OF EXPENSION PLANE

S#	COMPONENT	EXISTING CAPACITY	NES PAK PLANNED CAPACITY
1	VIP/ CIP PASSENGER	68	100
2	INT'L DEPARTURE BRIEFING AREA (COUNTERS)	09	20
3	DOMESTIC DEPARTURE BRIEFING AREA (COUNTERS)	04	10
4	INT'L ARRIVAL LOUNGE (Square feet)	13,035	24,300
5	DOMESTIC ARRIVAL LOUNGE (Square feet)	7,600	12,600
6	INT'L DEPARTURE BRIEFING AREA (Square feet)	8,550	14,400
7	DOMESTIC DEPARTURE BRIEFING AREA (Square feet)	6,223	13,500
8	CONCOURSE HALL (Square feet)	16,580	32,000
9	CAR PARK (CARS NOs)	350	900
S#	LAND UTILIZATION	EXISTING(ACRES)	NEW PROPOSED AREA
1	CAR PARKING AREA	02.03	11.10
2	TERMINAL BUILDING AREA	01.53	04.65

3	UTILITY BLOCK AREA	00.11	01.59
4	VAULT ROOM AREA	00.37	00.14
5	APRON & TAXIWAY AREA	16.56	38.66
6	CARGO TERMINAL & CAR PARKING AREA	01.29	06.09
7	MASJID AREA	00.07	00.83
8	P.S.O INSTALLATION AREA	01.08	01.87
9	ASF CAMP AREA	02.45	03.29
10	TGS/ GROUND HANDLING EQUIPMENT AREA NO.1	04.63	04.65
11	TGS/GROUNG HANDLING EQUIPMENT AREA NO.2	-	05.11
12	CAA OFFICE, CAA OFFICER & STAFF MESS AREA	-	06.32
13	PROPOSED FLIGHT KITCHEN/ CATERING AREA	-	00.52
14	ROAD & GREEN PATCH AREA ETC	44.86	36.17
	<b>TOTAL AREA</b>	<b>74.98 ACRES</b>	<b>122.99 ACRES</b>

### CAA BKIAP Data

It was basically the original plan for the upgradation of the BKIA Peshawar but later on, few changes were also observed. Two additional tunnels were added to connect aircraft directly with the building of the airport. The cost of its upgradation has also been increased from its original amount. The parking mentioned in the plan has also not being materialized and temporarily acquired land from Pakistan army for parking use.

### FLIGHT INFORMATION

<b>INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS PER WEEK</b>	160 (about)
<b>DOMESTIC FLIGHTS PER WEEK</b>	25 (about)
<b>AIRLINES OPERATING (9 NOS.)</b>	AIR BLUE, AIR ARABIA, EMIRATES, ETIHAD, GULF AIR, PIA, QATAR AIRWAYS, SHAHEEN AIR, SAUDI ARABIAN AIRLINES and SERENE AIR.
<b>CHARTERED FLIGHTS (06NOS.) (PARACHINAR)</b>	SCHON AIR, STAR AIR, HYBRID, ASSL, AIR EAGLE AND PESHAWAR FLYING CLUB



Source: CAA BKIAP Data

The above table shows the weekly international and domestic flights schedule with showing the different airlines operating from BKIA Peshawar. Etihad airway has suspended its flights permanently from this airport after the aerial fire on the PIA flight in 2014 and the domestic sector flights have also been abandoned except the Serene Air and PIA. The chartered flights were operating from this airport to Parachinar due to the closure of roads leading to Parachinar in the Sunni-Shia conflicts but after the opening of roads those flights and airlines have also been abandoned and now only small trainee plane are operating under the sponsorship of Peshawar flying club for the training purpose. Although this airport is not much large in structure, as compared to other airports of the country but a large number of passengers and visitors are frequently visiting this airport due to their travelling requirements. As most of the population of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is poor and illiterate, so they are doing jobs in the Middle Eastern countries. Almost all the flights are destined to Middle East and recently there is no direct flight to any of the European country from this airport. A few years back there was a direct flight to London from BKIA Peshawar by the national flag carrier but due to less number of passengers it was too abandoned. This airport is witnessing a large number of passengers, visitors and flights on daily basis. Although night operation is suspended at this airport however the flight operation deficiency is fulfilled in day time and it affords the whole burden on day time only.

### **Different type of Incidents at BKIA Peshawar:**

Sabotage incidents at BKIA Peshawar are also more in number as compared to the other airports of the country. Either it is terrorists or other unfortunate accidents, BKIA Peshawar suffered all the times. It is a hub or gateway for the Middle Eastern and central Asian countries. Most of the Middle Eastern passengers are travelling from this airport. But the locality of this airport made it quite vulnerable for terrorists and this airport is situated on a small piece of land as compared to the other international airports of the country.

On December 26, 2006, one person was killed and two were injured when a powerful time bomb blasted beside the main Khyber road outside Peshawar Airport. The bomb was planted in a car, parked on Khyber Road. The Bomb disposal squad officials announced that the bomb was about two kilograms. It totally smashed the car it was

planted in, in addition to breaking the boundary wall of Risalla Lane of the Pakistan Army ground opposite to the main in gate parking of the Peshawar airport. The explosion took place at 7:10 am. It also damaged six other vehicles. The explosion did not disturb the schedule of flights except the effect that the airport's entry and exit points were closed for some time. The CCPO Peshawar, Malik Saad told *Daily Times* that the Suzuki car exploited in the bomb blast was stolen some 10 days before from the capital city, Islamabad (Daily Time, 27 December 2006).

On 28 April, 2007, a bomb blast inside the Peshawar International Airport on Saturday rocked the sensitive cantonment of the city, triggering a wave of fear among hundreds of passengers in the compound. The device was attached with a timer and planted in crates of soft drinks inside the canteen. This was another attempt to disrupt the smooth functioning of the airport but fortunately, it again could not report any casualty except a little economic damage to the canteen. Although, it created panic in the visitors and passengers however, in long run it did not suffer the aviation industry at BKIA Peshawar as might have been desired by the terrorists (M. Khan, Personal communication, 22, December 2014).

On 15-12-2012 at about 2031 hours, during landing of PIA transit flight PK-755 (LHR-PEW-RUH) sound of explosion was heard from western side of the airport near University town. Meanwhile sound of 3 x more explosions were also heard at 2032, 2035 & 2037 hours respectively and a Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device (VBIED) struck with the perimeter wall at western side of the airport opposite to 9<sup>th</sup> Army Aviation unit near runway, due to which approximately 60 feet of perimeter wall was blown up at Abdara Road adjacent to University town in which 2 x militants were killed. 3 x militants were shot dead during intrusion by PAF and army combaters. Dozens of the stray bullets fell at the apron during the occurrence (F. Rabbi, Personal communication, December 20, 2012).

On 24-06-2014 at about 2257 hours, on the arrival of PIA flight PK-756 from Riyadh it revealed that the aircraft (Registration No. AP-BGN) was hit in funnel area near Pishtakhara prior to landing. Resultantly, 01 x lady passengers namely Maknoon and 02 x Cabin Crew (Flight Stewards) namely Ijaz Khan and Wajid got injuries. The injured lady passenger and Cabin Crew were shifted to CMH Peshawar in CAA Ambulance and later it revealed that the lady passenger expired in the hospital. 191+5 passengers were on board the aircraft. After arrival of the flight, the CSO, Deputy Director (Ops), Base Commander

PAF Base Peshawar, Commander 102 Brigade, Airport Manager CAA and Station Manager PIAC BKIA Peshawar reached at the Apron. Combined search of the aircraft by ASF and PIA security staff was carried out and it revealed that 08 x bullets were hit to the aircraft. PIAC authorities lodged an FIR of the incident in Police Station Badhbeer Peshawar. A search operation was launched by the concerned law enforcement agencies after the incident in the airport's funnel area, during which 200 suspected persons were arrested. After this incident the UAE-based carrier's the Emirates and the Etihad suspended their flight operations on a temporary basis to Peshawar, and resumed their flight operation at BKIA Peshawar in August of the same year, after a short period of time (K. Atlas, Personal communication 25 June, 2014).

The above were few of the devastated incidents that have been happened against BKIA Peshawar. It has not only affected the routine business of the Peshawar airport but also have bad consequences for the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

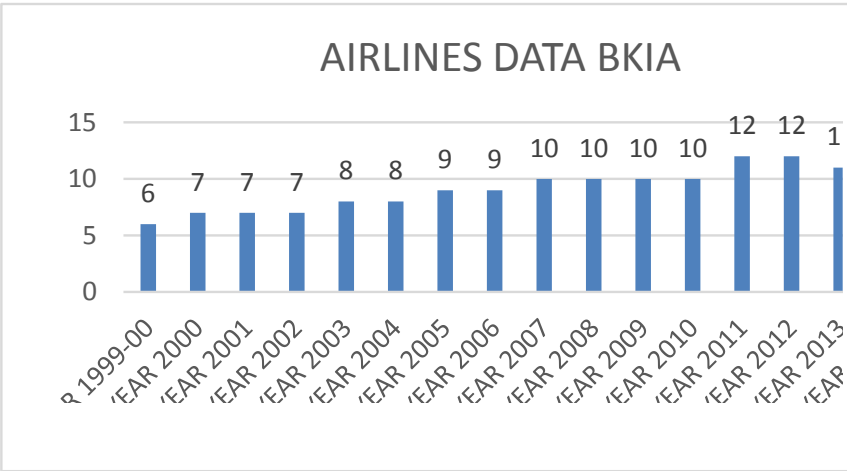
### **Analysis of terrorism Impact on the Bacha Khan Airport of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

KP province has the only international airport for the people of this province, so all these above-mentioned activities have adversely affected the business and the security of the airport. The direct effect of the entire situation has been observed over BKIA Peshawar. The flow of visitors and passengers affected due to all the above-mentioned damages faced by the province and the city of Peshawar. The political leaders and elites of the society in KP avoid using this airport for travelling. The security structure has been converted from normal to high and red alert. Moreover, due to all these negative developments in the province the tourism has been almost disappeared and the economy of the province has been damaged badly (Quadri and Quadri 2014, 75).

As we know that the province of KP has only international airport that is the Bacha Khan International Airport Peshawar supported by many operative and non-operative domestic airports, mostly in the scenic locations of the northern areas of Pakistan. These, northern airports were operative in the 1970s and onwards attracting the national and international tourism, which had a very positive effect on the socio-economic conditions of that area, the province of KP and the whole country. Like in Swat, Chitral and Parachinar, the tourism industry was in full bloom and hence the aviation industry flourished (As discussed before). However, with the passage of time and with increase in the

fanatics in those beautiful rural areas the tourism industry was devastated. Instead of upgrading the respective airports for global cargo and transportations, they were closed down even for the mass transport except Chitral airport which has a few weekly domestic flights. The northern areas have fresh fruit and dry fruit production in huge quantity like peach, apple, orange and nuts etc. Besides the eatables, these areas have local industries of other goods like garments, antiques, handicrafts and so on. The aviation industry could have proved to be the fastest means of transport to national and international markets which can further add to the economy and social structure of the province but in case of the lack of this very fast mean of transport i.e. aviation industry services and hence the opportunity of economic prosperity was missed (Azam 2016).

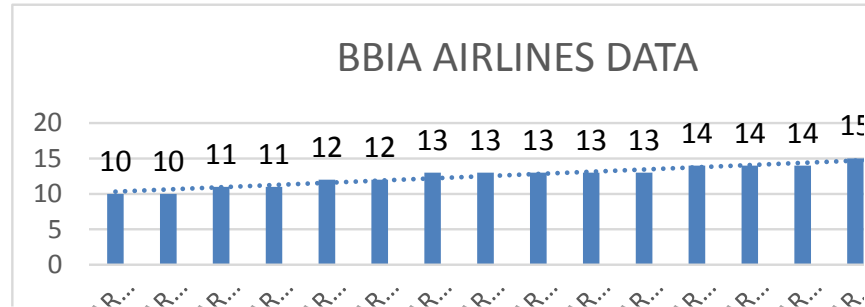
**GRAPH SHOW THE AIRLINE DATA OF BKIA  
PESHAWAR ANNUALY**



Source: (CAA BKIAP data)

The above graph shows the number of airlines operate yearly from Bacha Khan International Airport Peshawar. With the passage of time, advancement in technology and increase in population the number of airlines need to be increased smoothly but in case of BKIA it is not so. Due to terrorist incidents the number of flights does not increase smoothly.

BBIA Islamabad



Benazir Bhutto International Airport Islamabad the number of flights increases every year.

Graphs are shown here for the purpose to indicate the difference between Islamabad international airport and BKIA Peshawar. In peaceful Islamabad airport, one can clearly understand the flow of improving in flights and passengers with the passage of time but in case of Peshawar airport the graph is not in a smooth up direction and goes up and down. In case of Islamabad airport, the graph smoothly goes up and up but in case of BKIA Peshawar it does not happen with the same smooth up. Although the flights most of the time at BKIA Peshawar remained during the year period but at the time when terrorists action flares up some airlines immediately, stop their service to Peshawar and again resumes it as soon as the atmosphere get relax. However, such like situation creates a bad image for this airport and the routine business as well as the travelling of the passengers disturbs.

Conclusion

It is concluded that terrorism is not a new term. It exists since long in different societies in different forms. Terrorism has also shattered the fastest and important sector for travelling in the world i.e aviation industry. Due to which many foreign airlines suspended their flights to Pakistan. The suspensions of these flights to Pakistani airports have negative impacts on the economy and culture of our country. The most effected province from the scourge of terrorism in Pakistan is the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Peshawar, the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is badly affected by terrorist attacks. Due to bad law and order situation in the province and the city of Peshawar, the Bacha Khan International

Airport has been directly affected. During the tense situation the flow of passengers, cargoes and airlines have been affected the BKIA Peshawar. Moreover, it is the only international airport in the province of KP, so in case of the suspension of flights the passengers have to get their flights from other airports of the country.

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