TTP: Organisational and Operational Developments in Q3 2026

During the third quarter of 2026, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) pursued organisational consolidation, geographical expansion and technological adaptation while substantially intensifying its propaganda and recruitment activities. Developments documented in PICSS Weekly Insight reports indicate that the group sought to strengthen its central command under Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud, absorb smaller militant factions, expand its presence beyond its traditional strongholds in the former tribal districts, and project itself as an increasingly organised and technologically capable militant force. At the same time, the emergence of competing militant formations, particularly Ittehad-ul-Mujahideen Pakistan (IMP) and the renewed independent activities of Jamaat-ul-Ahrar (JuA), presented challenges to TTP's organisational influence and recruitment.

Organisational consolidation and expansion remained important priorities throughout the quarter. On 8 July, TTP announced that two militant factions, led by Hafiz Saifullah Baloch from Chagai district in Balochistan and Mufti Abbas alias Ansari from Buner district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, had pledged allegiance to Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud. This process continued in September. On 16 September, TTP announced the incorporation of several factions from Mohmand, Bajaur and the Quetta-Harnai area. The announcement identified Mufti Muawiya, Maulvi Khalid, Qari Yasin, Shaukat and Maulvi Waliullah among the local leaders pledging allegiance. The joining factions reportedly originated from Anbar/Ambar, Khwaizai Baizai and Safi in Mohmand, Riyasat in Bajaur, and Quetta-Harnai. These developments reflected TTP's continuing strategy of absorbing smaller armed groups under a centralised leadership structure while extending its networks into settled districts of KP and different parts of Balochistan.

The quarter also witnessed important developments within the group's leadership and command structure. On 4 August, Umar Media released a 23-minute video featuring TTP chief Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud, marking his first major visual appearance in 2026 and his first confirmed video appearance since October 2025. The production presented him travelling through mountainous areas, meeting armed fighters and interacting with individuals portrayed as local residents, including mine workers in the Para Chamkani area of Kurram. Although the filming locations could not be independently verified, the video appeared intended to demonstrate the leader's accessibility, operational involvement and continued authority over the organisation. The following day, TTP confirmed the death of its Orakzai wali, Amir al-Bahr Muawiya, also known as Ahmadur Rahman, reportedly killed in a security operation in Hangu. The group announced Muhammad as his successor and Abubakr as deputy, demonstrating its efforts to maintain organisational continuity following leadership losses.

Geographical expansion and operational adaptation were evident in TTP's claims and propaganda productions. While North and South Waziristan remained its principal operational centres, the group increasingly publicised activities in Peshawar, Dera Ismail Khan, Tank, Hangu, Kurram, Bajaur, Lower Dir and other settled districts. Its releases also highlighted attacks or claimed operational presence in Balochistan, including Ziarat, Pishin and Panjgur. The Panjgur claim was particularly significant because it suggested an attempt to extend the group's operational footprint beyond Balochistan's predominantly Pashtun belt into Baloch-majority areas. In September, Umar Media circulated a video

featuring former media chief Chaudhry Muneeb-ur-Rehman Jatt, accompanied by armed men, to project an operational presence in southern Punjab. Towards the end of the quarter, a separate video featuring armed militants and a Sindhi-language message sought to establish the perception of TTP influence in Sindh and encourage local support. The filming locations and actual extent of operational networks associated with these productions could not be independently established.

Chaudhry Munib Ahmad Jutt (also referred to as Muneeb-ur-Rehman Jutt or Commander Muneeb), a Punjabi figure previously associated with al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent and long-time head of Umar Media, was no longer identified as head of the media wing by September. Reporting indicated he had been replaced, with Engineer Abdullah cited in some accounts as his successor. In a video released around 22 September 2026, Jutt addressed residents of southern Punjab, claiming ongoing TTP activity in the province, criticising Pakistan’s political and military establishment, and appealing for support. The shift from senior media responsibilities to public operational messaging from Punjab indicates a reassignment toward field or regional command roles. This change coincides with the group’s continued emphasis on expanding recruitment narratives beyond its traditional Pashtun base.

The group’s monthly operational reports claimed 315 attacks in July, 406 in August and 334 in September, representing a combined 1,055 claimed attacks during the quarter. These figures are TTP’s own claims and should not be confused with independently documented militant attacks in the PICSS Militancy Database. The reports portrayed an extensive campaign involving guerrilla attacks, armed clashes, sniper and laser-sighted attacks, ambushes, IEDs, targeted killings, quadcopter attacks and suicide operations. In July, TTP claimed 304 security personnel killed, 477 injured and 68 captured. Its August report claimed 294 killed, 352 injured and 31 captured, while its September infographic claimed 213 killed, 382 injured and 45 captured. These casualty figures remain independently unverified.

TTP’s media productions increasingly highlighted the use of drones and other surveillance or attack technologies. Footage of the late-July assault on the Khazina Banda police and CTD checkpost in Hangu showed the use of automatic weapons and drones, while other videos displayed quadcopters, night-time operations and attacks on military vehicles. In an interview published in July, TTP spokesperson Muhammad Khurasani claimed that the group was seeking long-range missile capabilities and expanding its use of quadcopters and thermal imaging devices. However, the group’s aspiration to acquire missile technology did not establish that it possessed an operational missile capability. Its August operational report claimed limited missile activity, but the PICSS assessment noted the absence of independently documented missile attacks.

Suicide operations also featured prominently in TTP’s operational messaging. The group publicised the July attack on the Manji Khel police post in Tank and subsequently released the 19th episode of its Shaheen Jawan series featuring Daud, whom it identified as a suicide attacker involved in the operation. The video included an interview with an elderly man identified as the attacker’s father, using familial endorsement and religious arguments to glorify his actions. Towards the end of September, the group released footage relating to the 26 September suicide attack against the Aman Mela joint police and customs checkpost in Darazinda, Dera Ismail Khan, identifying the attacker as Abu Dujana, a member of its special istishhadi force. The production depicted the use of an explosives-laden tractor-trolley. These productions reflected the continued importance of suicide attacks in TTP’s operational repertoire and the group’s efforts to portray the attackers as ideological role models.

Media consolidation and ideological mobilisation constituted another major feature of the quarter. On 5 July, TTP appointed Engineer Abdullah as its new media chief, replacing Muneeb-ur-Rehman Jatt, and announced changes across its website, video-production and social-media divisions. Under Jatt, Umar Media had expanded its multilingual output, improved production quality and increasingly incorporated emerging technologies, including AI-assisted content generation. The leadership transition indicated continued institutionalisation of TTP's information operations.

Throughout the quarter, Umar Media sustained an extensive and diversified propaganda campaign through recurring video series, interviews, documentaries, podcasts and publications. These included Rasm-e-Mohabat, Operation Khyber, Dawat-e-Jihad, Tyar Hain Hum, Shaheen Jawan, Eiqaz and Rabt-e-Millat. The productions combined footage of claimed attacks, military training, religious interpretation, organisational messaging and profiles of slain militants. The July special edition of Majallah Taliban, titled Hum Kaun Hain? (Who Are We?), provided a more comprehensive presentation of TTP's ideological position, rejecting Pakistan's constitutional and parliamentary system in favour of governance based on the group's interpretation of Sharia. It also employed historical grievances concerning military operations in the tribal districts to justify the group's armed campaign.

In August, the 17th episode of Rabt-e-Millat featured Mufti Nadeem Khan Darweesh, who argued that Pakistan had failed to fulfil the religious objectives associated with its creation and presented Taliban rule in Afghanistan as a model of Islamic governance. The production explicitly sought to mobilise religious scholars against Pakistan's political system or, at minimum, discourage opposition to TTP's armed campaign. Other releases glorified wounded and slain militants, portrayed battlefield losses as religious sacrifices and encouraged clandestine medical assistance to injured fighters. The group also released documentaries commemorating former commanders, including Umar Rahman alias Ustad Dawood Fateh, a former TTP leader in Malakand Division. Collectively, these productions sought to reinforce internal discipline, sustain recruitment and provide ideological justification for continued violence.

TTP also attempted to exploit public grievances and influence local communities. Senior Rahbari Shura member Peer Ain-ul-Zaman issued messaging concerning Balochistan and the adjoining Pashtun belt, seeking to utilise grievances over security operations while discrediting government-backed peace committees. In July, a TTP commander operating in Tank warned police, tribal elders and local residents against cooperation with such committees and criticised government institutions. In August, a commander identified as Aryana Paindakhel reportedly threatened residents of certain houses in Domel, Bannu, with consequences if they failed to vacate their properties by 25 August, although the authenticity and circumstances of the warning remained unclear. These statements illustrated the group's efforts to exercise coercive influence over communities and discourage local resistance to militant activities.

The organisation also attempted to associate itself with mainstream religious and public concerns. It issued condolence statements following the deaths of religious figures, including Maulana Aziz-ur-Rahman Jalandhari and Maulana Ehsan-ul-Haq, despite no established organisational relationship with them. Following a hospital fire at PIMS in Islamabad in August, TTP spokesperson Muhammad Khurasani expressed condolences over the deaths of newborn babies while blaming alleged government negligence. Such interventions appeared designed to portray TTP as responsive to public suffering and religious sentiment, despite its continued campaign of violence against state

personnel and other targets. Its Independence Day propaganda similarly attempted to exploit domestic political discontent, including footage of demonstrations supporting imprisoned PTI leader Imran Khan, to strengthen its anti-state narrative. TTP claimed to have conducted 74 attacks on 14 August alone, a figure assessed in the weekly report as highly exaggerated.

However, organisational competition and internal militant rivalries complicated TTP's efforts to consolidate its position. The independent re-emergence of JuA and the growing visibility of IMP presented alternative centres of militant authority, potentially competing for recruits, local influence and resources. In August, a TTP leadership message delivered by Mufti Ghufran, a member of the Rahbari Shura and head of its media commission, emphasised obedience to commanders, organisational unity and the avoidance of internal disagreements. The messaging appeared particularly relevant in the context of competition from these rival formations. On 13–14 September, fighting reportedly occurred between TTP or a TTP-affiliated faction identified as the Rahmatullah Group and the Hafiz Gul Bahadur group in Kariz Kot, Lower South Waziristan. The confrontation reportedly resulted in casualties on both sides, including the death of a senior HGB figure, Sohail Mughal Khel. Reports linked the dispute to revenues associated with the chilgoza trade and extortion involving development projects. The clash highlighted the importance of territorial influence and access to financial resources in shaping relationships among militant groups, even where they shared broadly similar ideological positions.

The quarter also produced unconfirmed reports of tensions between TTP and the Afghan Taliban authorities. In late August, social-media accounts claimed that Mufti Noor Wali Mehsud had relocated permanently to Pakistan following disagreements with the Afghan Taliban leadership. Other reports alleged that senior TTP figures had been detained, placed under restrictions or moved away from Afghan border areas amid growing Pakistani pressure. These accounts were not officially confirmed by either TTP or the Afghan Taliban and therefore did not establish a definitive change in their relationship. Nevertheless, they reflected the growing pressure surrounding Afghanistan-based militant networks and the potential implications of Pakistan–Afghanistan tensions for TTP's leadership and operational arrangements.

Overall, developments during July–September 2026 suggest that TTP remained focused on expanding its organisational networks, improving its operational capabilities and strengthening its ideological and information campaigns. The group's growing use of sophisticated visual propaganda, attempts to establish influence in new geographical areas, and continued incorporation of smaller factions indicated an ambition to operate as a nationwide militant organisation rather than remain confined to the former tribal districts. However, its efforts were constrained by security operations, leadership losses, competition from other militant formations and possible pressures on its Afghanistan-based networks. The combination of organisational expansion, technological adaptation, coercive local influence and sustained ideological mobilisation indicates that TTP continued to represent a significant and evolving threat to Pakistan's internal security during the third quarter of 2026.

Source: PICSS Weekly Insight reports covering 3 July–1 October 2026, particularly the sections on militant-group developments, propaganda and outreach. The report dated 25 September–1 October includes one day beyond Q3; only its September developments have been incorporated.