

# Sharia Used As Truce Carrot

*The Pakistani government is reportedly permitting the barbaric practice of Sharia Law in Taliban-controlled areas of the nation's northern tribal areas as part of a ceasefire deal announced on Monday.*

✖ **Feb. 16, 2009** – On Monday Pakistan suspended military offensives and imposed Sharia law in parts of the nation's North West Frontier Province, a gesture intended to calm a major insurgency there led by the Taliban terrorist group, reported the Associated Press (AP).

Sharia is a code of law derived from the Koran revered for its quick and easy justice. Sharia Law can involve chopping off a hand for stealing, public stoning for adultery, or generally harsh societal restrictions on women.

The peace agreement applies to the Malakand region, an extremely unstable area encompassing the northern Swat Valley, also known as the most likely hideout of al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden.

Muslim extremists have gained sway in the area ever since they began kidnapping and beheading people, burning girls' schools and attacking security forces last summer, the AP reported.

A senior U.S. defense department official told the AP it was hard to view the latest ceasefire as anything other than "a negative development."

Analysts said it was doubtful the deal would stop violence, while one critic wondered why authorities caved to the demands of a militant terror group.

"This is simply a great surrender, a surrender to a handful of forces who work through rough justice and brute force," Athar Minallah, a lawyer and civil rights activist, told the AP.

“Who will be accountable for those hundreds of people who have been massacred in Swat [Valley]? And they go and recognize these forces as a political force. This is pathetic.”

Dozens of suspected American missile attacks on al-Qaida and Taliban targets in these tribal areas close to the Afghan border have been ongoing for months, the AP reported. The Obama administration has indicated it will continue such attacks, which have reportedly killed several top al-Qaida leaders.