THURSDAY 19 FEBRUARY: PEACE NOT WAR

My father prepared breakfast today because my mum is not feeling well. She complained to my father, asking why did he tell her about the journalist's [death](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7889120.stm)? I told my brothers that we will not talk of war but peace from now on. We received the information from our school headmistress that examinations will be held in the first week of March. I have stepped up my studies.

WEDNESDAY 18 FEBRUARY: HOPE SMASHED

I went to the market today. It was crowded. People are happy about the deal. I saw a traffic [jam](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7889120.stm) after a long time. In the evening my father broke the news of the death of a Swat journalist (Musa Khankhel). Mom's is not feeling well. Our hopes of peace have been smashed.

TUESDAY 17 FEBRUARY: HUSTLE AND BUSTLE

Today I started preparing for the examinations because after the peace deal there is a hope that girls' schools could reopen. My teacher did not turn up today because she went to attend an engagement.

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| Swat people escape a Taleban attackThe people of Swat have become tired of the violence |

When I entered my room I saw my two brothers [playing](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7889120.stm). One had a toy helicopter while the other had a pistol made of [paper](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7889120.stm). One would yell "fire" and the other would say "take position". One of my brothers told my father he wanted to make an atomic bomb.

Maulana Sufi Mohammad is in Swat today. The media are here too. The city is witnessing a lot of rush. The city's hustle and bustle has returned. May God help make this agreement successful. I am optimistic.

MONDAY 16 FEBRUARY: REOPENING?

Today I was very happy because the government and the militants were to sign a peace deal. Today the helicopters were flying very low too. One of my cousins remarked that with the gradual return of peace the choppers were coming down too.

In the afternoon people started distributing sweets. One of my friends called me to greet me. She said she hopes she could go out of her home now because she was imprisoned in her room for the last several months. We were also happy hoping the girls' schools might open now.

[SUNDAY](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7889120.stm) 15 FEBRUARY: DON'T BE SCARED

Some guests from our village and Peshawar came today. When we were having lunch, firing started outside. I had never heard such firing. We got scared, thought that the Taleban had arrived. I ran towards my father who consoled me by telling me 'Don't be scared - this is firing for peace'.

He told me that he read in the newspaper that the government and the militants are to sign a peace deal tomorrow and he firing is in jubilation. Later, during the night when the Taleban announced the peace deal on their FM station, another spell of more stronger firing started. People believe more in what the militants say rather then the government.

When we heard the announcement, first my mother and then father started crying. My two younger brothers had tears in their eyes too.

FRIDAY 13 FEBRUARY: FAZLULLAH CRYING

Today the weather is good. It rained a lot and when it rains my valley looks more beautiful. As I got up in the morning, my mother told me about the murder of a rickshaw driver and a night watchman. Life is getting worse with the passage of each day.

Hundreds of people are arriving daily in Mingora from surrounding areas while residents of this city are moving to other areas. The rich have moved out of Swat while the poor have no place but to stay here.

We asked our cousin on the telephone to take us around the city in this splendid weather. He picked us up but when he came to the bazaar we found out that the markets were closed and the road wore a deserted look. We wanted to head towards the Qambar area but somebody told us a big procession has been brought out there.

That night Maulana Fazlullah (a pro-Taleban cleric) came on his radio and kept crying for a long time. He was demanding an end to the military operation. He asked people not to migrate but instead return to their homes.

THURSDAY 12 FEBRUARY: HEAVY SHELLING

There was heavy shelling last night. Both my brothers were sleeping but I could not. I went to lie down with my father but then went to my mother, but could not sleep.

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| Pakistani women activists in Lahore protest over girls' school closures in SwatThe closure of girls' schools in Swat have angered many Pakistanis |

That was why I also woke up late in the morning. In the afternoon I had tuition, then my teacher for religious education came. In the evening I continued playing with my brothers amid fighting and arguments. Also played games on computer for a while.

Before the Taleban imposed restrictions on the cable network, I used to watch the Star Plus TV channel and my favourite drama was 'Raja Kee Aye Gee Barat' (My dream boy will come to marry me).

Today is Thursday and I am scared because people say that most suicide attacks take place either on Friday mornings or on Friday evenings. They also say that the reason behind this is is because the suicide attacker thinks that Friday has a special importance in Islam and carrying out such attacks on this day will please God more.

WEDNESDAY 11 FEBRUARY: EXPLOSION WARNINGS

I was scared the whole day and also bored. We do not have a TV set now. There was a burglary in our house while we were away in Mingora for 20 days.

Earlier such incidents did not happen, but they have become rampant since the security situation in Mingora deteriorated so rapidly. Thank God there was no cash or gold in the house. My bracelet and anklet were also missing but I later found them. Maybe the burglar thought of them as gold ornaments but later found out they were artificial.

Maulana Fazlullah in a speech last night on his FM channel said that a recent attack on a police station in Mingora (the largest town in the Swat valley) was akin to a pressure cooker blast. He said that the next attack would resemble a cauldron exploding and after that a blast the size of a tanker exploding would take place.

At night my father updated us on the situation of Swat. These days we frequently use words like 'army', 'Taleban', 'rocket', 'artillery shelling', 'Maulana Fazlullah', 'Muslim Khan' (a militant leader), 'police', 'helicopter', 'dead' and 'injured'.

MONDAY 9 FEBRUARY: PRECARIOUS

Boys' schools in Swat have reopened and the Taleban have lifted restrictions on girls' primary education - therefore they are also attending schools. In our school there is co-education until primary level.

My younger brother told us that out of 49 students only six attended his school including a girl. In my school, only a total of 70 pupils attended out of 700 students who are enrolled.

Today the maid came. She normally comes once a week to wash our clothes.

She comes from Attock district but she has been living in this area for years now. She told us that the situation in Swat has become "very precarious" and that her husband has told her to go back to Attock.

People do not leave their homeland on their own free will - only poverty or a lover usually makes you leave so rapidly.

SUNDAY 8 FEBRUARY: SCHOOL MEMORIES

I am sad watching my uniform, school bag and geometry box.

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| Map showing Swat valley |

I felt hurt on opening my wardrobe and seeing my uniform, school bag and geometry box. Boys' schools are opening tomorrow. But the Taleban have banned girls' education.

The memories of my school flashed before me, especially the arguments among the girls.

My brother's school is also reopening and he has not done his homework. He is worried and does not want to go to school. My mother mentioned a curfew tomorrow and my brother asked her if it was really going to be imposed. When my mother replied in the affirmative he started dancing with joy.

SATURDAY 7 FEBRUARY: EERIE SILENCE

My brother and myself left for Mingora in the afternoon. My mother had already gone there. I was happy and scared at the same time at the thought of going back after 20 days. Before entering Mingora, there was an eerie silence in Qambar.

There was no one else besides people with long hair and beards. From their appearance they looked like Taleban. I saw some houses damaged due to shelling.

The streets of Mingora were thin. We went to supermarket to buy a gift for our mother but it was closed, whereas earlier it used to remain open till late. Many other shops were also closed. We had not informed our mother about our plans to go back to Mingora because we wanted to surprise her. As we entered the house she was quite surprised. 