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## Terrorism and Counter- Terrorism Strategies: A Case Study of Pakistan with Special Reference to National Action Plan

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Sanaullah \*

Brekhna Gul †

Mubasher Hassan ‡

**Abstract** *Since 9/11 and the American decision to send ground forces to Afghanistan to chase and target Al-Qaeda leadership, Pakistan has seen incidents of terrorism of unprecedented magnitude. Thousands have lost their lives; while millions have been displaced, damaging the social fabric as well as hurting the economy of the country badly. In response, the government of Pakistan has deployed both soft and hard methods to do away with terrorism. In the wake of the APS incident, the government came up with a plan known as National Action Plan (NAP) to deal with terrorism comprehensively. Though on paper, the plan seems to be a well-composed document, it is subject to certain weaknesses and shortcomings. This paper will address what NAP is and what it has done to effectively curb the menace of terrorism in Pakistan. Data has been collected from secondary sources. What it argues at the end is that though the plan has done much to address the issue of terrorism, still much has to be done to effectively address what is known as terrorism.*

**Key Words:** Terrorism, National Action Plan, Military Courts, Terrorists, FATA

### Introduction

According to the UN office report, *“Those acts that are aimed to spread fear in general masses in order to gain some political goals in any condition indefensible are related to terrorism. The actor can do his acts in any shape like in religious, political, racial, ideological, or ethnic terms”*.

In Pakistan, terrorism sparked when the USSR entered Afghanistan in 1979 and as a result, millions of refugees migrated to Pakistan, including many terrorists. The turning point for Pakistan was 9/11 attack on the twin towers. Al-Qaida, stationed in Afghanistan, accepted the responsibility for the attack. America launched an attack on Afghanistan to eradicate all the terrorist groups operating

there. America asked Musharraf for help and was provided in the shape of routes and Airbases (Saeed, 2018). Musharraf Government had legitimized this support by stating that India is ready to do that job if he would not provide support. The consequences of this intervention were very bad. The militant and jihadis group which Pakistan had supported against USSR and those groups operating in Pakistan started a war against Pakistan himself (Hussain, 2019).

It was Nek Muhammad who first established a group called "Pakistani Taliban" and started a jihad against Pakistan. Later this group was converted into "Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan" (TTP) under the leadership of

\* Demonstrator, Department of Political Science, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, KP, Pakistan.

Email: [Sana-ullah@awkum.edu.pk](mailto:Sana-ullah@awkum.edu.pk)

† Lecturer in Political Science, University College for Women, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, KP, Pakistan.

‡ Independent Researcher.

Baitullah Mehsud, which was highly invasive to Pakistan. TTP had targeted Pakistan to take revenge for the Lal Masjid attack and the casualties made by Pakistan in FATA areas. To control these militant groups, Pakistan had adopted both non-military (Soft Approach) and military (Hard Approach). Soft approaches include legislative performance and peaceful engagements with insurgents. In these peaceful engagements, Pakistan has signed many peace agreements with militants. Through legislation, Pakistan has passed different anti-terrorism laws under different governments since 9/11. The hard approaches taken against insurgents are different military operations in FATA and also in settled areas, especially in major cities, to arrest the high profile leaders of Al-Qaida and TTP ([Ahmad, 2014](#)).

A Special security report of Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) says that more than 900 persons were killed and wounded more than 1500 in 657 fanatic attacks which included 41 of sectarian nature. More than 1500 attacks, including suicide bombing, target killing, and assassination, occurred, which in the result gave us 3450 dead while 5350 wounded, according to PIPS' 2007 report. The statement given shows that Pakistan met 60 suicide blasts generally security forces were fired at in 2007, which killed at least 770 and 1,574 were injured. PIPS shows that after Lal Masjid Operation, the suicide attacks increased. Nearly 2150 deadly attacks took place in 2008, which resulted in approximately 2270 losses of life and 4560 damages. The number given by Pakistan's Human Rights Commission states that 67 deadly attacks resulted in the loss of 970 lives and wounded more than 2300. The report given by secret agencies revealed that from 2002 the figure of suicide attacks promoted 140 till in December 2008.

The worst year was 2009, in which more than 7300 persons were wounded while lost lives were 3020, targeted by sectarians and insurgents in 2580 happenings, a report shared by Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies in 2009. These fatalities numbers developed 48% as related to 2008. On the other hand, the rate of suicide assaults, on the other hand, increased by 1/3 to nearly 90 bombings which resulted in the death of 1300 and wounded 3600. In 2012,

173 radical incidents took place, which caused 507 died and 577 injured. Five hundred sixty persons were murdered and nearly 990 wounded in 131 terrorist events. ([Hussain, 2019](#)).

### **Pakistan's Counterterrorism Strategies**

Though the war started in Afghanistan against the Taliban by the United States and its allies destroyed their regime. After the dislocation of the Taliban government in Kabul, the threat entered Pakistan by the influx of Jihadists into its tribal areas adjacent to Afghanistan. At first, South Waziristan was their main center, but later on, it diffused to the remaining of FATA. It was in 2003 that under the leadership of Nek Muhammad, a militant group raised and named themselves as "Pakistani Taliban". After some time they made association with other jihadist groups like Al-Qaida and also with sectarian organizations and started jihad not only against western armies but also against the security forces of Pakistan and its people living in tribal as well as in big cities ([Ahmad, 2014](#)). So, to fight the evil of this terrorism, Pakistan needed more perfect counterterrorism policies. Defining the concept of counterterrorism is also a complex phenomenon because Paul Wilkinson states that no universal counterterrorism strategy existed due to the unique feature of every conflict. Thus, counterterrorism policies can be defined as "the actions that a state performs as a reply to the performance of terrorism". Counterterrorism, defined by the Oxford dictionary, is "the activities done by military and political personals to battle against, stop and discourage terrorism."

In Pakistan, both non-military (Soft Approach) and military (Hard Approach) options are taken to engage with terrorism. Soft approaches include legislative performance and peaceful engagement with insurgents. Peaceful engagement means that Pakistan has signed many peace agreements with militants. Through legislation, Pakistan has passed different anti-terrorism laws under different governments since 9/11. The hard approaches taken against insurgents are different military operations in FATA and also in settled areas, especially in major cities to arrest the high profile leaders of Al-Qaida and TTP ([Ahmad, 2014](#)).

### **Hard Approach (Military Options)**

The government of Pakistan has established several defensive and proactive procedures to dismantle and compel the terrorist factions to surrender. Two operations were launched against insurgents by Islamabad, one against tribal militants in Baluchistan in 1974 and the other against Karachi separatists in 1992. An abrupt increase occurred in these hard approaches after the attack on the twin towers in September 2001. So, the following military operations have been done against Terrorist after 9/11:

#### **The operation to Endure Freedom (2001-2002)**

In defeating terrorists, it was a successful operation to some extent. Many Al-Qaida leaders and their supporters were prisoned in this operation. Though, both US and Pakistan armies became unsuccessful in capturing the chief leaders of Al-Qaeda.

#### **Operation Al-Mizan (2002-2006)**

Under the pressure of Washington, Pakistan did operation against foreign militants in FATA. Several small military operations were included in it, like the Kalosha-II operation in Waziristan. About 70,000 to 80,000 forces were stationed for this operation in FATA.

#### **Operation Zalzala (2008)**

Baitullah Mehsud had captured the Sararogha fort and killed many security forces in South Waziristan. Three main operations were conducted by Islamabad against Baitullah after the failure of the Saratoga Peace agreement. These operations also included Operation Zalzala (earthquake), in which major areas of South Waziristan were cleared, and key strategies of the Taliban were destroyed.

#### **Operation Rah-e-Haq (2007-2009)**

This operation was led by the request of the provisional government, and its major aim was to "Shoot on Sight" and to hold curfews throughout the Swat against insurgents' groups. There were three phases in this operation and finally ended with Malakand accord.

#### **Operation Sherdil (2008-2009)**

This operation is also known as the "battle of Bajour," whose main aim was to destroy all militant groups. This battle was fought after the partial success of security forces in Southern areas of FATA. Nearly 1000 terrorists and 63 security forces lost their lives in this battle.

#### **Operation Rah-e-Raast (2009)**

This operation was carried out in Mingora Swat and was aimed to clean the area from the insurgents by killing and detaining them. All the financial and ammunition sources were destroyed in this operation. Their hidden residencies were exploited, and the control over Mingora was recovered.

#### **Operation Rah-e- Nijaat (2009)**

This operation was primarily conducted against TTP in South Waziristan. Rah-e-Nijaat (Path of Salvation) was based on "Search and Clearance," in which all the control and command system of TTP was dislocated. The main objective of this battle was to eradicate the strategic hold of TTP from both North and South Waziristan, in which the army got success to some extent.

#### **Operation Brekhna (Thunder) (2009)**

Mohmand Agency was the center of this operation in which TTP was targeted by the military forces of Pakistan. This operation continued till operation Zarb-e-Azab.

#### **Operation Zarb-e-Azab (2014-2017)**

This operation was done in North Waziristan Agency, in which the Taliban were targeted without any discrimination between them (good or bad). This was a successful operation and is still going on in certain areas. The number of terrorist incidents in Pakistan reduced after this operation ([Mubashra, Sana, Marium, 2018](#)).

### **Soft Approaches (Non-Military Options)**

Pakistan has made several amendments in the already existing frameworks of countering terrorism like the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1997 and has also formulated new legislation to make this regime more rigorous. After the operation

of Swat and South Waziristan in 2009, the government of Pakistan had further harshened the anti-terrorism laws because of the severe attacks on the armed forces by the Taliban ([Ahmad, 2014](#)). Following are the soft approaches adopted by Pakistan through its Parliament by passing anti-terrorism acts and making peace accords by army and politicians with Taliban factions.

### **Peace Accords (2005-2009)**

By signing a peace agreement called the *Shakai agreement (2004)* and *Sararogha Agreement (2005)* by Islamabad with Nek Muhammad and Baitullah, respectively, the power of Malakand and South Waziristan militants was weakened. Later on, *Miranshah Peace Acord (2006)* with the insurgents of North Waziristan, *Mohid-e-Sararah Agreement* with Abdullah Mehsud, and *Swat Agreement* with Fazlullah were signed by the Pakistan government. But unfortunately, all these agreements were proven useless.

### **National Internal Security Policy (NISP 2014-2018)**

The first proper policy made by the Pakistan Government against terrorism after 67 years of its independence was National Internal Security Policy (NISP). There were three main objectives of this policy, to do conciliation with all the stakeholders, to defend Pakistan from internal threats, and dismantle the funding system of all terrorist groups. Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD), the combination of law enforcement agencies and security agencies, is the mean through which NISP is to be implemented.

### **National Action Plan**

After 9/11, the international society has greatly altered, and it has greatly weakened the economic and political institutions. Every state has been affected directly or indirectly because of the unstoppable wave of terrorism. This war cost millions of innocent people to lose their lives in the name of xenophobic, religious, or sectarian violence. The world has faced the inhuman practices of violence. Every nation pledged to battle and defeat this evil. Pakistan is also the one state who is fighting a battle against this evil and has become highly

targeted by it. Among major disasters, one disaster was done on December 16, 2014, when TTP invaded the Army Public School (APS) in Peshawar, capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This attack was considered one of the ugliest terrorist attacks ever happened in Pakistan killed more than 150 people, including 133 schoolchildren, ranging between eight and eighteen years of age. Since then, Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister of Pakistan, spoke openly and recognized Pakistan's publicly addressed and recognized Pakistan's long-lasting loophole on the matter and sworn to end to the discrimination between "good and bad Taliban". A clear demarcation was made between the nation and the insurgents. Twenty-point National Action Plan (NAP) had been outlined by PM where he guaranteed to eradicate the concept of terrorism to defeat all kinds of sectarianism and extremism. A lethal attack that happened a week later had motivated all military officers and political parties to make a highly aimed NAP to eradicate and curb terrorism and extremism ([Ali, 2017](#)). To defeat and root out terrorist outfits was the main policy initiative of NAP. To overcome the internal threats, the plan has compelled central and provincial authorities to work together for the dismantling of terrorist networks and their resources and guaranteeing the nation a peaceful environment ([Ramay, 2016](#)).

### **Implementation Mechanism of NAP**

To supervise the implementation of NAP, several bodies have been created. The central committee, which is headed by Prime Minister and nine cabinet ministers, provide the guidelines while the fifteen sub-committees were formed to keep a check on NAP. In these fifteen committees, eleven are chaired by the interior minister. At the provincial level, Apex committees are formed under the supervision of Chief Ministers, provincial bureaucrats, military officers, and representatives from military and civil intelligence agencies. Apex committees send messages to the interior minister regarding the cases to be tried in military courts. One analyst has argued that giving the military a greater responsibility has sidelined the true representatives of people, which has highly damaged the democratic

institutions (Report, 2015). Following are the apex committees of each province:

### **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA Apex Committee**

On January 4, 2015, the opening assembly of the KP Apex Committee took place, which involved the army chief, the DG ISI, the corps commander of Peshawar, the governor of KP, and CM Pervez Khattak. Improvement of Zarb-e-Azab, operation in Khyber Agency and the situation of displaced persons, were focused on in this discussion. On local media, all the reports of nine meetings of the Apex Committee between January 2015 and February 2016 were presented. FATA reforms were also discussed in the meeting, which was later merged in KP on 31 May 2018 by the 25<sup>th</sup> amendment in the constitution. After an attack on Bacha Khan University in January 2016, the attention shifted toward the security of educational institutions. The military was very interested in setting up a better administration to handle the desires of the public. The military did operations throughout FATA regions of KP to eradicate militants. The military operations, under Apex Committee, were largely at the "clear and held" stages. "Build and transfer" was the main direction of military policies. Building activities like that of roads and markets were started in North and South Waziristan under the sponsorship of the military through this plan ([Nawaz, 2016](#)). High funding was provided by the United States and Saudi Arabia to this developmental plan. Then, the key aim of the army was a four-phased action to bring back the temporarily displaced persons (TDPs); to quickly build mosques, schools, roads, electricity, water, and livestock, and to bring back teachers.

### **Punjab Apex Committee**

It was at the corps headquarters in Lahore cantonment that the first assembly was held of Punjab Apex Committee which comprised DG ISI, Chief Minister, Army officials and the corps commanders from across Punjab. Internal security situation was focused on in this discussion. The chief minister gave emphasis on the joint security work of military and civil institutions. The CM was given the job of leading this setup with the support of the army

(Nawaz, Counting Militancy and Terrorism in Pakistan, The Civil-Military Nexus, October 2016). In later meetings, keep watching madrasas sectors, banned organizations and their funding system, and the suppression of insurgents and their supporters were this committee's main objectives. But unfortunately, the general masses were not given a chance to approach these policies.

### **Sindh Apex Committee**

An Apex Committee of Sindh consists of the Director-General of rangers, chief secretary, the provincial ministers for information and parliamentary affairs, the corps commander, IG of police, sector commander of ISI, joint director general of Intelligence Bureau of Sindh and Divisional Commissioners, which are headed by Chief Minister. On January 8, 2015, it held its first meeting where the emphasis was given to control sectarian and religious terrorism. To curb the hate speeches and literature, ban the use of loudspeakers and keep a check on madrasas, social media they are using and their publishers were the main target areas of this committee ([Nawaz, 2016](#)). For quick treatment, Sindh Apex Committee was sending cases and matters to the military courts. It also banned the illegal immigration of Afghan refugees to the major cities of Sindh and regularly scrutinized their activities.

### **Baluchistan Apex Committee**

It was January 9, 2015, that the first meeting Baluchistan committee was held under the supervision of Chief Minister Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch. Other members who attended this meeting were the chief secretary, home minister, IG of police, inspector general of Frontier Corps and home secretary. This committee also used military courts for quick solutions of issues. This was also aimed to restrain hate speeches, literature, and terrorist factors. Several meetings were held by it to consider all these issues and problems ([Nawaz, 2016](#)).

### **Twenty (20) Points of NAP**

Following are the twenty points on which different authorities of the Pakistan government agreed upon and started action on:

1. Application of death sentence to those who were found guilty in cases of terrorism.
2. Formation of Military Courts for two years to quickly solve the issues of terrorism.
3. Insurgent groups would not be tolerated to work in a society.
4. The strengthening of NACTA.
5. It was curbing of all those newspapers, journals, and literature that were the sources of spreading sectarianism, prejudice, and terrorism.
6. They are dismantling the financial sources of terrorist groups.
7. Not allowing banned organizations to re-emerge.
8. Formation of special anti-terrorism force.
9. Religious maltreatment will not be allowed.
10. All madrasas sectors will be regulated and registered.
11. Terrorists and their organizations will not be promoted through electronic media.
12. Reforms in FATA and the rehabilitation of IDPs.
13. Destroying of terrorist networks.
14. 'Watching media' would not to be misused for terrorism.
15. Militancy in Punjab will not be allowed at any cost.
16. Karachi will be made a peaceful city in the ongoing operation.
17. Giving Baluchistan government full power to reconcile with all the insurgents.
18. Sectarian terrorists are to be dealt dealt firmly.
19. Construction of a wide-ranging strategy to deal with the matter of Afghan migrants, starting with the registration of entire immigrants.
20. The criminal justice system is to be renewed and reformed.

### **Implementation of Death Sentence of those who Find Guilty in Cases of Terrorism**

After the operation of Swat (2009) and in other FATA areas, Army prisoned many suspected militants. The army had asked the government to authorize them to deal with these prisoners in their own courts. Finally, they were

authorized to bring all suspects, including civilians, under a special court called "Military Courts" by 21st amendment in the constitution. The government also lifted the moratorium on the death penalty of all condemned prisoners. Through these courts, in 2015, 345 people were executed while this number raised to 419 in 2016 (Elahi, 2017). Though, a large number of questions were raised on the reliability of Pakistan's judiciary by stating that a large number of executions were not related to terrorism and recommended the suggestions to make it more transparent.

### **Special Trial Courts Under the Supervision of Army**

By 21st Amendment, the formation of military courts was another noteworthy feature of NAP. These courts were given two years duration to deal quickly with terrorism related cases. Throughout the above-mentioned time period, 274 persons were convicted in which 161 people had confessed their criminalities and 43 were found guilty of terrorism were dealt in military courts, which is an admirable indication (Khalidd, 2018). Five men belonging to Al-Qaida and supporting terrorism were sentenced and convicted. In Punjab province, the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) of Gujranwala said that it had detained a number of persons possessing terrorist finance, dangerous arms, and radical literature of terrorist organizations. Every person was sent to jail for 16 years duration, and their properties were also confiscated (Tanzeem, 2020).

After the expiry of Military Courts in January 2017, its tenure has been re-extended, this time, by implanting some conditions such as of allowing the accused to engage a lawyer. Arrests are being made throughout the country for the misuse of loudspeakers, against hate speech, and illegal Afghan imams and refugees. Though, these Military courts met with criticism for their locked and private procedure. Also, the government has also failed to expand the performance of civilian courts within an assumed time period.

### **Censor on Militant Outfits and Armed Bands**

To censor militant groups curb their capital and connection was another mission of NAP. Sixty

groups were banned by Pakistan before the formation of NAP. After the announcement of NAP, four more groups were added to the category of banned groups which included Jamaat-ul-ahrar and the famous ISIS organization. Ghulam-e-Sahaba and Maymar Trust, renamed after the ban of Al-Rasheed Trust, were also declared illegal in Pakistan (Khalidd, 2018). Without taking strict action to counter the unrestricted movement of these radicals within and outside the state, banning Militant outfits will not be fruitful.

The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) of Punjab Police in July 2019 detained Hafiz Saeed, leader of censored militant organization Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and its associated political arm Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) for allegedly financing terrorism. Police arrested Saeed and several associates as he was on his way to court in Gujranwala to apply for bail in a separate case, Additional Inspector General CTD Punjab Rai Tahir said in a statement. Police filed terror financing cases against Saeed, his brother Hafiz Masood and other LeT leaders, including Abdul Rehman Makki, Amir Humza, Muhammad Yahya Aziz, and Malik Zafar Iqbal. The FIR accused five ostensible charitable organizations, the Dawat wal Irshad trust, Maaz bin Jabal Trust, Al-Anfal Trust, Al-Madina Foundation trust and Alhamd Trust of terror financing. (Khan A. N., 2019).

Under the umbrella of NAP, thousands have been prisoned for the guilty of terrorism. According to NACTA, from 24 December 2014 to 25 March 2015, 32,345 persons were detained. On 28 May, NACTA's national coordinator said to Parliament that 49,000 suspects had been under arrest after December 2014, but only 129 are affiliated with TTP (Report, July 2015). According to the Anti-Terrorism Act, individuals who were suspected were required to make sure their attendant at the police station. They were also prohibited from bearing arms, taking banking loans, and from traveling inside and outside the country.

In January 2015, according to the progress report of NAP, the Ministry of Interior had declared seventy-two organizations affiliated with terrorism and were banned and continued working to find out the organizations still operating under changed names. Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar told the ministry to

reread the state list of censored groups in line with the United Nations list. This was ostensibly done, and the revised list, which comprised sixty censored groups under the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) and twelve by the United Nations, was positioned on the NATCA website just before United States Secretary of State John Kerry's January 2015 visit to Islamabad (Report, July 2015).

As the NACTA had claimed, 1,808 terrorists had been murdered and 5,611 injured. As compared to 2014, killing cases were reduced to 28.5 percent. The terrorist invasions were reduced to 1,009 in 2015 in contrast to 1,823 in 2014, a decrease of 25%. Added 7,923 people in the fourth schedule. Names of 188 uncompromising militants were added in the Exit Control List. 2,081 uncompromising radicals were not allowed to any movement. 1,026 cases registered, while 230 terror suspects have been detained. According to an official report, in the first three months of 2015, 39 sentenced offenders were executed; fourteen in Punjab, five in Sindh and one in KP, while other zones did not take any action during this period in this regard. Besides, 5,487 search operations were led in Punjab, 322 in Sindh, 1,223 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 12 in Baluchistan, and 275 in Capital (Elahi, May 2017). Punjab had been trying to meet these expectations of military leadership as it killed a number of sectarian terrorists in encounters. The feared Malik Ishaq, chief of LeJ, was murdered along with his sons and collaborators in an encounter by the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) in July 2015. Similarly, in January 2017 Rizwan Ali Asif, Alias Asif Chhoto, who had succeeded Malik Ishaq as the chief of banned LeJ was killed along with three other militants in an encounter by CTD in Muzaffargarh.

### **Registration and Regulation of Madrasas**

The decision of the government to register all religious institutions and to keep a check on their funding system through bank accounts was considered very controversial. This decision was called the western agenda to degrade seminaries by some religious scholars and argued that the religious institutions do not encourage hate or supply weapons to their schoolchildren. The religious parties have decided not to back government policies if the

seminaries were targeted under NAP. About 35000 madrasas are existing in Pakistan, in which 374 are there in the capital. All of them were working without any restriction. Though, the government has stepped forward to register all these sectors under the umbrella of NAP.

"Some 90 percent of madrasas have no connection to terrorism," Interior Minister Nisar stated. If true, this would still translate into several hundred thousand possible jihadi peoples. No exact date has been produced about the figures, their financial sources and the background of teachers and students of these religious institutions. NAP has recommended to establish such a sector that would list the registered and unregistered seminaries and their financial sources. Intelligence agencies were given the task to do all these functions effectively.

The numbers provided by military and civilian intelligence agencies are between 18000 and 33000. It shows that there is no fixed number of these religious institutions. Among these, the sensitive madrasas are about 11,000, which belong to the Deobandi group. According to the Islamabad police report, near the Capital, twenty madrasas are said to belong to TTP, in which two sectors are giving proper arms training to their students. There existed 145 highly sensitive madrasas in which the majority are there in the district of Tank (KP) located adjacent to the South Waziristan. The survey provided by Sindh home minister states that their province has 12,500 seminaries with total students between 120,000 to 150,000. 2,100 of these sectors were considered dangerous for national sovereignty. Karachi by itself bear 800 jihadi madrasas, which have well contributed to sectarian violence. To counter these criminal groups, politician-backed armed organizations and TTP sources, Rangers contributed their big and good efforts. Sindh's government has paid excellent contributions in curbing of these evils. They have sealed their offices mainly in Badan and Sukkur districts. In Hyderabad, some seventy-two connections of the insurgents were dismantled (Report, 2015).

There was a strong reaction from the religious scholars. The general secretary of the Deobandi Wafaq al-Madaris al-Arabia, Pakistan's largest federation, has sworn to shield madrasa freedom, its dominion, and the

Islamic teaching system at any cost and stated that it is against religion to interfere in these madrasas in the name of anti-terrorism. For this the CM of Punjab, Shahbaz Sharif, replied that his government has no intention to act against the religious institutions. A number of terrorists and insurgents had been detained who were planning for invasions, where belonging to jihadist madrasas. The police are visiting these sectors to interview their teachers and administrators who were suspected to be involved in motivating students for jihad. Many madrasas are taking signs from the parents that the madrasas will not be responsible for losing their offspring. Some of these institutions are added to the police sensitive list, and the police regularly investigate and record the lectures given to students and the people who are entering or existing these religious institutions (Report, July 2015). A senior police investigator in Lahore said:

*There are seminaries in the large cities that we know are hazardous, but if you just go into one casually, you perhaps won't find anything you can use in court, because the terrorists and the arms aren't there all the time. You need intelligence-based police work to connect the Terrorist to the seminaries; you need knowledge of when the militants will show up to store their weapons or hide there.*

Seminaries in smaller townships and rural areas are severely equipped and are more conservative in nature, so police are highly sensitives in dealing with them and need high political and other agencies' support to control them. When Information Minister Pervaiz Rasheed, in May 2015, described madrasas sectors as conservative and radical in nature, clerics from the city's Jamia Binoria madrasa issued a *fatwa* and declared him as kafir.

## Rehabilitation of IDPs

The majority of population of Waziristan and other FATA regions were dispersed and moved to Sindh and Punjab and areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa after the operation of Rah-e-Nijaat and Zab-e-Azab. Due to the unclarity of certain areas in border regions like Shawal and Rajgal and many other areas in North Waziristan and the presence of terror materials, the fate of IDPs is undefined. Secondly, due to the destruction of their homes

and properties lack of good health facilities and food large number of IDPs refused to go back. Thus, to rehabilitate them, the government had focused these problems under the umbrella of NAP\_(Khalidd, 2018). A committee was established under the special assistant to Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs who was considering all the problems confronted by these displaced people and was submitting the report to the federal government.

### Registration and Repatriation of Afghan Refugees

Another issue on which light was put in NAP was to return and register Afghan immigrants. Approximately 1.3 million immigrants are registered, while millions remain without any registration. There was to put check and balance on the movement of unregistered Afghan migrants so as not to cause any danger to Pakistan. Special focus was given on their movement through the Pak-Afghan border, which was used by these refugees for drug trafficking. Different check posts and forts were built up to tighten the security and control the illegal border crossing. A *National Policy on Management and Repatriation of Afghan Refugees* was formulated by Pakistan authorities in order to repatriate and register Afghan migrants\_(Khalidd, 2018). The federal cabinet approved the introduction of visa system for all Afghan migrants. Recently, the Capital Development Authority (CDA) in Islamabad forced more than 50000 Afghan refugees to leave the area where they were settled from the decade. These eviction of Afghan refugees from the capital was one of the policies under the umbrella of NAP\_(Zahid, 2016).

### NACTA, the Anti-terrorism Institution will be Strengthened

NACTA is the key institution supervising NAP, though, it has not been able to make itself an active organization and remained mostly unproductive, according to several security specialists and senior police officers. To strengthen NACTA, the government has to establish a counterterrorism force and set a specific goal to improve the overall security situation. Political will is needed to make this agency stronger. The government claims about

NACTA to be operational and functional but it has failed to arrange a single meeting of it since the enactment of NAP. The funds provided to it was always late and it is failed to set up Joint Intelligence Directorate (JID). There is a lack of vision, capacity, and human resources, and more importantly, its control over its relevant departments such as CTD (Counter-Terrorism Department), intelligence communities, and other institutions that effects performance. The military intervention should be avoided from the jurisprudence set for them (Dogar, 2017).

Recently, in October 2020, Interior Minister Ijaz Shah had called a meeting on the national level to stress the need for taking more steps to strengthen NACTA in its operational capacity. The institution was to give its proper budget and to keep a transparent record of its finance and expenditure. The federal minister directed NACTA for well keeping of its records, transparent process and assured it that the audit will be done on time. Emphasis was given on the operationalization of all available vehicles for the official utilities. A committee was formed to review the changes in the numbers of sanctioned posts \_(Nasiruddin, 2020)

### Check and Balance on Electronic and Print Media and Action against Religious Parties Sponsoring Sectarianism

Curbing of hate materials was the main objective of NAP. All Provincial home departments were directed by the federal ministry of interior to curb the circulation of hate materials by the banned organizations. The police department was given the task of implementing this policy. As the official figure states that under the *Sound System ordinance 2015* 3,906 persons were detained by the police for spreading sectarian violence in the society. The Act states:

*"It shall be illegal for anyone to use, or help in using, permit or allow the use of a sound system which makes any loud, needless or unusual noise or any noise which irritates, disturbs, hurts, or endangers the ease, calm, health, peace, or safety of persons in or outside the neighborhood".*

According to the clause of 9, 11, 13, 14 and 18, NAP has taken serious actions against the

electronic and print media, which became the source of intolerance, hatred, and extremism. Print and social media are the main sources of many religious parties. Big progress has been made in eradicating these elements from society. 15,259 clerics and religious teachers were prisoned by security agencies for spreading hate and sectarianism in a community. A great number of detentions was carried out in joint operations against such elements across the country in the past few years. This resulted in mitigating the sectarian and religious conflicts. The year 2018 faced only 16 such happenings as compared to 91 in 2014 (Khalidd, 2018). About 1,500 books and hate materials were seized and 71 shops were sealed, according to the ministry of information. At least, 1,961 suspects were prisoned, and 1,893 cases filed against clerics. The role played by Cybercrime cell under FIA to monitor social media accounts and websites is also very praiseworthy.

### **Zero Acceptance for Militancy in Punjab and Dealing Inflexibly with Sectarian Terrorists**

To battle against the insurgents operating in Punjab was another big initiative by the government of Punjab under NAP. The inauguration of terrorist organization formation first took place in Punjab in order to combat India in Kashmir, the Soviet Union in Afghanistan and Shia community, supported by Iran, within Pakistan's borders (Jaffrelot c. , 2016). It was Al-Qaida who trained Punjab militant groups during the Taliban Government in Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001.

In the encounter of 28 July in Muzaffarabad, by killing the *Emir* of the sectarian terrorist group Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), as well as his deputy, and 14 other members, the provincial government has broken the back bone of terrorism (Zahid, 2016). Encountering the terrorist materials by Punjab police has eradicated the roots of sectarian terrorism from its territory.

### **Taking the On-going Operation in Karachi to its Logical Conclusion**

In matter of Karachi operation, the central government in collaboration with the military has challenged the opposition parties. The

Mutahida Quami Movement (MQM), which was the root cause of violence against its opposition like Pashtuns, Baluch and to some extent Jumaat-e-Islami, was the main target in operation. Their offices and headquarters were sealed, and the arms they were using against opponents and Rangers were confiscated. The sources from which MQM fighters were receiving arms were dismantled. Many MQM fighters were slayed in cross firing with Rangers and police while some were arrested. The same action was also taken against the Pashtun, Baluch, and other Sectarian insurgents. The sources and supporters of TTP was also terminated (Jaffrelot c. , 2016).

### **Choking Terrorist Financing**

The FIA and Financial Monetary Unit of the Ministry of Finance has played vital role in investigating and tracking of money laundering and other sources of terrorist financing. Under the pressure from IMF and other international agencies, The *Anti-Money Laundering Act* (AMLA) of 2010 was amended in 2014. The central government also desired to boost its counter-financing of terrorism (CFT), and place AMLA and CFT in line with the necessities set by the international organization, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). Although the government has made some freedom in this regard, its CFT and AML policies are still in their opening phases of growth (Zahid, 2016).

To control terrorist organizations funding, 777 cases were made against Hawala Hundi and 1060 sponsors were arrested. 1320.705 million rupees are recovered from this Hawala Hundi. 336 cases were reported against anti-money laundry and 483 people were arrested.

### **Conclusion**

The history of terrorism in Pakistan reveals that it has been raised and strengthened its roots due to poor policies and their implementation to regulate it. The policies need to be made and implemented by the true representatives of the people. Local-level politicians and bureaucrats need to be involved in the formulation of terrorism curbing policies, and their implementation must be done through police department which know very well every root of this evil. In every community, people choose

the path of radicalization and extremism when there will be no employment opportunities for them. The lower literacy rate also triggers the rise of terrorism ratio in society. So, the responsible government must provide its citizen with proper employment opportunities and quality education system to challenge the rising evil of terrorism. The existing agencies which were created for the deterring of terrorism like NACTA need to be strengthened by filling all vacuums remained in it. No

tolerance should be given to the non-state actors for the interests they are serving in Afghanistan or Kashmir. The laws made for the controlling of money laundering must not be compromised if the backbone of the terrorists is to be broken. The intelligence agencies need to assist the police department by providing them every needed information regarding terrorism. The police must be helped in protecting every witness, lawyer and judge fighting the cases against terrorists.

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