

PART 4: COUNTER-TERRORISM

NAP POINT 3: Militant outfits and armed gangs will not be allowed to operate in the country.

NAP POINT 4: NACTA, the anti-terrorism institution will be strengthened.

NAP POINT 8: Establishing and deploying a dedicated counter-terrorism force.

NAP POINT 15: No room will be left for the extremism in any part of the country.

NAP POINT 11: Ban on glorification of terrorists and terrorist organisations through print and social media.

NAP POINT 6: All funding sources of terrorists and terrorist outfits will be frozen.

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Part 4: Counter-Terrorism

4.1 Introduction

The fourth theme comprises of several points in the National Action Plan, specifically #4, #8, and #15. This theme deals with the issue of counter-terrorism efforts in Pakistan.

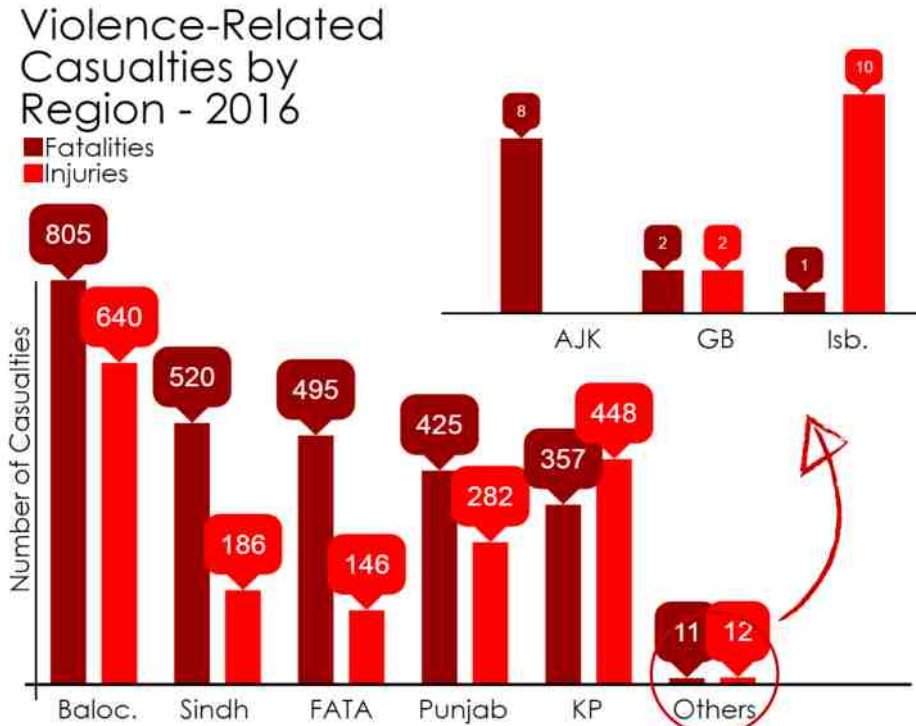
There is also significant overlap with the third theme pertaining to banned outfits and the NAP points that constitute that theme. Specifically points #3, #6, #11, and #14 all overlap. The overlapping points have been addressed by the previous chapter, specifically terror financing, cyber-crime, mobile SIMs, and print and electronic media, and will not be addressed here.

While Pakistan ranked 4th among the countries most affected by terrorism according to the Global Terrorism Index in 2015, the security situation in Pakistan seems to have improved in 2016. According to the Center for Research and Security Studies' Annual Security Report 2016, there has been a 66% decline in violence related fatalities since 2014.¹ In comparison to 6,572 casualties (4,647 dead and 1,927 injured) reported in 2015, the figures declined to 4,327 (2,613 dead 1,714 injured) in 2016.

Province/Region	2015		2016	
	Fatality	Injury	Fatality	Injury
Balochistan	719	274	805	640
Sindh	1221	320	520	186
Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)	1924	576	495	146
Punjab	328	319	425	282
PunjabKhyber Puktunkhwa (KP)	441	415	357	448
Gilgit Baltistan (GB)	4	19	8	0
Islamabad	10	2	2	2
Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK)	0	0	1	10
Total	4647	1925	2613	1714
Percentage of last year casualties:			56.2%	89.0%

¹ Nafees, M., Gul, I., & Salahuddin, Z. (2017, March 26). CRSS Annual Security Report - 2015. Retrieved March 22, 2016, from <<http://crss.pk/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/CRSS-Annual-Security-Report-2016-Final.pdf>>.

Graph 4.1 Violence-Related Deaths in Pakistan by Region - 2016



Annual Security Report, 2016 - The Center for Research and Security Studies, 2017

Regionally, there were some exceptions to this trend. The Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and the city district of Karachi have seen the most improvement, while the fatalities in Baluchistan have seen a rise. Fatalities from violence in Balochistan increased from 719 in 2015 to 798 in 2016, an upsurge of nearly 10%. Punjab lost 424 persons to violence during in 2016 which is the highest number of fatalities in the province in the last four years. Both provinces were major targets of suicide attacks thus increasing the casualty count. Baluchistan suffered seven suicide attacks, leaving 220 persons dead, including 61 police trainers, 52 lawyers, and 62 pilgrims at a Sufi Shrine while Punjab had one suicide attack in Gulshan Iqbal Park, Lahore that left 74 persons dead of whom 29 were children.¹

The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) remained at the forefront as a prominent actor. Lashkar-e-Jhangvi was reborn as LeJ Al-Alami and was responsible for the attack on a shrine in Khuzdar, Balochistan killing at least 52 and injuring 102.² LeJ Al-Alami is believed to have widened its scope, developing linkages with global terrorist outfits, including the Islamic State (IS). In Balochistan, the TTP, Jamaat Ahrar and LeJ Al-Alami have posed a far serious threat than the Baloch insurgents

¹ Staff Reporter. (2016, November 13). At least 52 killed, 102 injured in blast at Khuzdar shrine. Dawn. Retrieved January 05, 2017 from <<http://www.dawn.com/news/1295928>>.

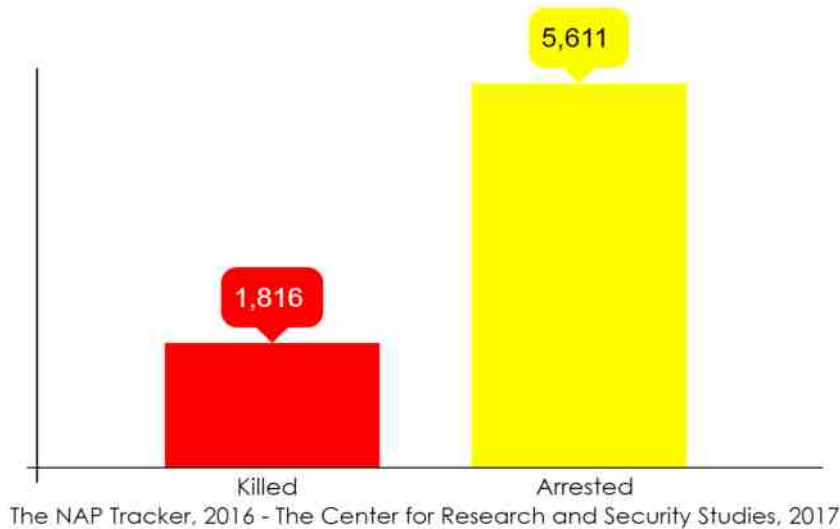
themselves, as according to PIPS' annual security report, 2016.³

According to the National Security Advisor (NSA) Lt. Gen. (retd.) Naseer Khan Janjua, since the enactment of NAP in the last two years, 1,816 terrorists have been killed across Pakistan while 5,611 have been arrested. This includes terrorists belonging to proscribed organizations such as Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, as well as Chotu Gang, and those killed in Zarb-e-Azb.⁴

The decline in violence reflects the success of the security operations conducted by both the military and civilian forces.

Reporting on terrorism in the Senate on January 19, 2017, the Minister for Interior Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan informed that a decline has been observed in the number of terror-related incidents and casualties across Pakistan since 2013.⁵ In total, there have been 4,613 fatalities in 5,321 incidents of terrorism with 12,188 injured across Pakistan over the last four years. There were 1,571 incidents of terrorism in 2013 which killed 1,794 and injured 5,352. The number of terror-related incidents increased in 2014 to 1,816 but there were comparatively fewer fatalities; 1,172, and those injured; 3,185. In 2015, there were 1,139 incidents of terrorism which killed 838 people and injured 1,706. In 2016, the number of terror-related incidents drastically declined to 785 with 804 deaths and 1,914 people injured.⁶

Graph 4.2 Terrorists Killed and Arrested since NAP Implementation



³ Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies. (2017). Pakistan Security Report (Special Report). Islamabad: Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies. Retrived, January 05, 2017 from <<http://pakpips.com/downloads/325.pdf>>.

⁴ CRSS held exclusive interviews with the NSA in December 2016, January 2017 and February 2017. The NSA leads the National Security Decision, and is responsible for the security of Pakistan. The implementation of the NAP is one of his tasks.

⁵ Riazul Haq. (2017, January 20). Some foreign spy agencies financing terrorism, says Nisar. The Express Tribune. Retrieved January 22, 2017 from <<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1301153/funding-trail-foreign-spy-agencies-financing-terrorism-says-nisar/>>.

⁶ Ibid.

4.2 National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA)

4.2.1 Overview of NACTA

The National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) was formed in 2009, aimed at helping curb terrorism in the country. It was meant to be the premier intelligence agency for deployment of special weapons law enforcement forces conducting operations that fell outside the ambit, scope or jurisdiction of conventional law enforcement. The NACTA was designed to assess difficult situations, to confront armed conflicts, to go up against militant suspects and to conduct armed counter-terrorism operations. It is required to formulate a counter-terrorism plan to achieve short, medium and long term objectives and formulate action plans for their execution.

It is headquartered in Islamabad. The previous Coordinator of NACTA was Hamid Ali Khan who resigned in August 2015 and the Ministry of Interior appointed Lt. Cdr. (retd.) Ihsan Ghani as the new National Coordinator NACTA.⁷

Initially nothing more than an idea on paper, NACTA's power was greatly enhanced in March 2013 under the NACTA 2013 Act,⁸ but the agency remains largely defunct.

4.2.2 Functions of NACTA

The functions of this Federal organ, as available on its own website, are as follows:

- a) To receive and collate data or information or intelligence, and disseminate and coordinate between all relevant stakeholders to formulate threat assessments with periodical reviews to be presented to the Federal Government for making adequate and timely efforts to counter terrorism and extremism;
- b) To coordinate and prepare comprehensive National counter terrorism and counter extremism strategies, and review them on periodical basis;
- c) To develop action plans against terrorism and extremism and report to the Federal Government about implementation of these plans on periodical basis;
- d) To carry out research on topics relevant to terrorism and extremism and to prepare and circulate documents;
- e) To carry out liaison with International entities for facilitating cooperation in areas relating to terrorism and extremism;
- f) To review relevant laws and suggest amendments to the Federal Government; and
- g) To appoint committees of experts from Government and NGOs for deliberations in areas related to the mandate and function of the Authority.

⁷ Ghiskori, Z. (2015, August 20). Ihsan Ghani best pick for handling affairs of NACTA - The Express Tribune. Retrieved February 05, 2016, from <<http://tribune.com.pk/story/942034/improving-nap-ihsan-ghani-best-pick-for-handling-affairs-of-nacta/>>.

⁸ Act No. XIX of 2013: An Act to Establish A National Counter Terrorism Authority in Pakistan. (2013, March 26). Retrieved February 15, 2016, from <http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/docu-ments/1364795170_139.pdf>.

⁹ NACTA Website - Main Page. (n.d.). Retrieved March 02, 2016, from <<http://nacta.gov.pk/>>.

4.2.3 Progress on NACTA

The revamping of the latent NACTA was initiated by the Prime Minister on December 28, 2014. In order to achieve the intended results, the PM stressed on sound coordination between the Provincial and Federal governments and the law enforcement agencies. However, progress on this was largely glacial and did not bear much fruit. The bulk of the direct counter-terrorism operations in the country have been carried out by the military, with assorted raids by police forces in various provinces.

Dissatisfaction with NACTA was not without reason. Thirteen months into the implementation of NAP, the government remained largely indifferent to NACTA and despite repeated requests to the premier, and a mandate that requires quarterly coordination meetings, not a single sit-down had occurred. NACTA, despite having the most powerful board of directors, had not met even once since the implementation of NAP.

Even the Interior Minister's report in January 2016 to the National Assembly, when answering questions of progress on NACTA, stated the following: "Budget released, Joint Investigation Directorate being established, strengthening in progress, issues being looked into".¹⁰ It is unfortunate that vague language such as "issues being looked into" and "strengthening in progress" was the best the government came up with, nearly thirteen months into the implementation of the NAP. It is illustrative of the lack of seriousness with regard to the re-activation of NACTA.

The only other reference to NACTA in the report presented mentioned that NACTA worked with the Ittehad-e-Tanzeemat-e-Madaris Pakistan (ITMP) to create a Uniform Registration and Data Form for the registration of seminaries, and shared it with the relevant stakeholders for input.¹⁰ In a separate question, the Interior Minister continued to insist that NACTA "being the prime agency in the counterterrorism realm is coordinating and monitoring all the endeavors exercised by various concerned agencies and administrative units of the country. Through meeting of field experts, professionals and representatives, NACTA is contemplating unified policies and extending recommendations to effectively respond to the various shades of the terrorism spectrum."¹⁰ This statement was also highly suspect, given that at the time, NACTA had no budget or structure to speak of.¹¹

In January 2017, in an exclusive interview with CRSS, the National Coordinator of NACTA, Ihsan Ghani, stated that contrary to common perceptions, the National Counter-Terrorism Authority in the last 3 years had grown and performed its functions as per Section 4 of the NACTA Act, 2013.

According to him, the inception of the National Internal Security Policy (NISP) and the National Action Plan (NAP) gave strength to the Authority to coordinate and review implementation of these policies at a Federal level. He said that it should be reiterated that despite the passage of the 18th amendment, the subject of terrorism remained within the Federal domain and therefore, as a federal review and coordination body regarding terrorism and extremism, NACTA has worked effectively in diminishing and eradicating these phenomenon from our society.

¹⁰ Questions and Oral Answers, 28th session of the National Assembly. (2016, January 15). Retrieved March 15, 2016, from <http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/questions/1452850149_459.pdf>.

¹¹ CRSS conducted exclusive interviews with the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) Chief Ihsan Ghani in February 2017.

On May 10, 2016, NACTA's Coordinator informed a Senate Standing Committee on Interior, chaired by Senator Rehman Malik, that NACTA was in close coordination with Intelligence Agencies (IAs) to establish a Joint Intelligence Directorate (JID) to counter terrorism and related activities. The meeting also discussed the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) (Amendment) Bill 2016 which proposed that the National Authority would be governed by a Board of Governors with the Prime Minister acting as its Chairman and the rest of the members comprising of federal and provincial ministers and chiefs of law enforcement and intelligence agencies.¹²

The bill also stressed the need for a mechanism to ensure the meeting of the Executive Committee at regular intervals. The amendments introduced included amendment of section 6 Act XIX of 2013 of National Counter Terrorism Authority Act 2013 and amendment of section 8 Act XIX of 2013 of National Counter Terrorism Authority Act 2013. Through clause (2) the word each quarter of existing in section 6 (4) shall be omitted and through clause (3) following sub section (7) shall be added in the section 8 as The Executive Committee may meet as and when required but it shall meet at least once in each quarter of a year.¹³

In the interview with CRSS, Ihsan Ghani stated that the Joint Intelligence Directorate (JID) is the most sensitive and integral component of the National Counter Terrorism Authority and is part of the process to strengthen NACTA for its full functionalization.¹¹ He also revealed that the brigadier for heading the JID has been nominated. JID, as envisaged under the National Action Plan, has been established where officers have begun joining from 30 agencies that were identified. Recruitment of the core group of 53 personnel is also under process. According to the National Coordinator, the JID has come a long way in a short span of about one year.¹¹

An overview of the human resource position of NACTA over the past four years is as under:

Grade	June, 2013	December, 2016
17 through 22	14	31
1 through 16	58	73
Total	72	104

The National Coordinator stated that the recruitment process for the remaining posts; BS 01-04 positions, and the selection of a testing agency for recruitment from BS 05 onwards, is under process.

According to the NSA,⁴ the Government has provided Rs. 218.8 million to NACTA for its refurbishment since 2013.¹⁴ A report provided to CRSS by the National Coordinator outlined the budgetary position of NACTA in a comparative form for the last four years which is as under. It clarified the expansion of NACTA's Human Resource as well as the role of NACTA over the last four years. The report stated that

¹² Questions and Oral Answers, 28th session of the National Assembly. (2016, January 15). Retrieved March 15, 2016, from <http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/questions/1452850149_459.pdf>.

¹³ CRSS conducted exclusive interviews with the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) Chief Ihsan Ghani in February 2017.

¹⁴ CRSS interview with Interior Joint Secretary Khushdil Khan on January 04, 2017.

the enhancement in the budget was an indication that the Government of Pakistan had become serious in strengthening and ensuring the full functionalization of NACTA.¹⁵

Year	Original Budget	Original Budget	Total budget
2013-14	95.000	-	95.000
2014-15	92.040	-	92.040
2015-16	100.337	1110.652	1210.989
2016-17	109.424	1450.000	1559.424

Note: All units are in millions of rupees.

NACTA's own premises are still to be established; something which is essential for any organization to operate independently and effectively. In May 2014, NACTA was shifted to 'S' Block from a rented building in the F-8 Sector of Islamabad. In November 2015, it was partially shifted to the National Police Bureau (NBP) building in G-6. Due to inadequacy of space in the NBP building, NACTA acquired one floor at the National Technology Council (NTC) building in July 2016 on a rent basis to house some of its wings. Presently, the Capital Hotel Building has been hired for finally housing NACTA, including the Joint Intelligence Directorate. The refurbishment and addition of floors is expected to be initiated soon. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has also further allocated the Hostel Building of Pakistan Manpower Institute Islamabad to NACTA for housing its additional staff and wings. The work on the renovation is expected to begin soon.¹⁶

To attract the best human resources to NACTA, the Minister for Interior and the Prime Minister's Office granted employees risk allowance equal to basic pay, effective from 3rd August, 2015.

To further restructure NACTA, Employees Service Rules were prepared and posted, with the approval of the Establishment Division. Medical rules for NACTA employees were also made and announced, with approval from the Capital Administration & Development Division on June 09, 2016

In addition, financial rules were prepared and vetted by the Controller General Accounts and Auditor General of Pakistan and added to the agenda of the next Board of Governor's meeting. According to the National Coordinator, these services, medical and financial rules are essential for Authority to work systematically.¹⁷

4.2.4 Progress by NACTA

In the Quetta Commission Inquiry report issued by the Supreme Court on December 15 2016, Justice Qazi Faez Isa was recorded as saying that NACTA had categorically failed as the NACTA Act was not being implemented. He further added that NACTA was not fulfilling its statutory mandate; its law was not being implemented by the members of its Board of Governors, which had never met, while its Executive Committee had met only once in three and a half years. The oversight of NACTA, which

¹⁵ CRSS Exclusive Interview with National Coordinator Ihsan Ghani on January 18, 2017.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

normally vests in the Board and the Executive Committee, had been assigned to the National Security Adviser, the office of which is a non-statutory body, headed by a retired government servant, Lt. Gen. Naseer Khan Janjua since October 23, 2015.¹⁸

While there has been considerable criticism levelled against NACTA for its lack of progress, there are, according to Ihsan Ghani, seven functions of NACTA which are quite broad in nature and cover a range of areas from intelligence gathering, dissemination and coalition to policy making and so on.

It is the National Action Plan, however, with its twenty points that has given NACTA a certain direction and twenty areas to act on.¹⁹ Among NACTA's core responsibilities is its mandate to review national plans and coordinate their implementation under the law. The subject of reviewing the National Action Plan has remained in the direct domain of NACTA. According to Ihsan Ghani, NAP has strengthened the Authority by establishing provincial and federal linkages and enabling all federal and provincial entities to evolve coherent responses to terrorism and extremism.²⁰

Refuting the Quetta inquiry commission's claim that NACTA had been performing poorly, the Minister of Interior Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan stated that the authority has shared as many as 7,774 intelligence excerpts with the security agencies, provinces, Rangers and FC and 20,000 intelligence-based operations had been conducted as result of it.²¹

The National Coordinator Ihsan Ghani informed CRSS that NACTA has introduced new initiatives within both provincial and federal bodies and has been monitoring the implementation of NAP. Below is a list of the Provincial Apex Committee Meetings held to review NAP by NACTA followed by a list of meetings held the federal level.²²

At the federal level, a task force has been constituted under the National Security Advisor to ensure the implementation of NAP in coordination with the relevant stakeholders. The Prime Minister constituted sixteen sub-committees of the PM's Implementation Committee for the National Action Plan. The National Action Plan has served to administratively and financially strengthen NACTA. It allowed the Authority to develop vertical and horizontal linkages at both the federal and provincial levels for proposing and reviewing implementation of policies as given under Section 4 of the NACTA Act, 2013. Ihsan Ghani was of the view that all federal and provincial agencies must be given due credit for their cumulative efforts in achieving peace and for having brought down incidences of terrorism so that they were at par with the level in 2005.

¹⁸ Supreme Court of Pakistan. (2016). Quetta Inquiry Commission Report. Islamabad: Supreme Court of Pakistan. Retrieved January 12, 2017 from <http://www.supremecourt.gov.pk/web/user_files/File/QuettaInquiryCommissionReport.pdf>.

¹⁹ CRSS Exclusive Interview with National Coordinator Ihsan Ghani on January 18, 2017.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Staff Reporter. (2016, December 18). Nisar chooses to challenge commission report. The Nation. Retrieved on January 13, 2017 from <<http://nation.com.pk/national/18-Dec-2016/nisar-chooses-to-challenge-commission-report>>.

²² CRSS Exclusive Interview with National Coordinator Ihsan Ghani on January 18, 2017.

Table 4.4: Meetings at the Provincial Level						
Punjab	Sindh	KP	Balochistan	GB	AJK	Total
7	10	5	9	6	5	42
Meetings at the Federal Level						Meetings
Meetings Chaired by Prime Minister						3
Meetings Chaired by Minister for Interior						5
Meetings Chaired by Minister of State for Interior						1
Meetings Chaired by Secretary MoI						1
Meetings Chaired by NC NACTA						22
Total Meetings Held						31

Besides creating a taskforce under the NSA which would review the implementation of NAP, NACTA has also taken other counter-terrorism initiatives and measures. NACTA developed registration/data forms for seminaries in consultation with Ittehad-e-Tanzim-ul-Madaris (ITMP) Pakistan after taking input from all federal and provincial stakeholders to design them accordingly. NACTA has also been an active part of the consultations under the Minister for State on Interior with all five Boards of Wafaq-ul-Madaris to reform the curriculum taught in Madaris.²³

4.2.5 Formulating a Consolidated Fourth Schedule List at the National Level

The third point of the National Action Plan states that militant outfits and armed gangs will not be allowed to operate in the country. While the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1997 adequately provides for action against proscribed organizations and persons on the Fourth Schedule, it has been under the vision of NACTA that strong measures have been adopted by all the provinces, AK and GB in a coordinated manner.²⁴ In late September 2016, NACTA directed the governments of all four provinces, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Gilgit Baltistan (GB) and Islamabad to establish a consolidated online database of all the individuals listed under the Fourth Schedule²⁵ of the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) 1997.²⁶

While each province had maintained its own list in the past, they did not coordinate or share such information with each other and there had not been a consolidated list at the national level.

NACTA's Coordinator, Ihsan Ghani, directed his department to establish an online system within fifteen days similar to the database already being used by the Punjab Government to track all persons

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Schedule IV of ATA 1997 is a section of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1997 which subjects the suspects of terrorism to close observation and regular attendance before the local police. It is a monitoring mechanism for people who are not directly involved in terrorism activities, but whose affiliation with banned outfits or their previous criminal record makes them suspicious. Implementation of the fourth schedule, however, has been lamentable at best. They are kept under surveillance by the police to remove the possibility of their involvement in any terrorism activity in future. As part of the process, the people are required to provide fresh pictures to the local police station every month and inform the law-enforcers before leaving the jurisdiction of their police stations. They are regularly check and monitored by police and intelligence officials.

²⁶ Kalbe Ali. (2016, October 1). Nacta moves to streamline list of Fourth Schedulers. Dawn. Retrieved January 13, 2017 from <<http://www.dawn.com/news/1287247>>.

listed in the Fourth Schedule. Although a consolidated list had yet to be finalized, the lists provided to NACTA by the provinces, AJK, GB and Islamabad counted up to 8,307 people named under the Fourth Schedule of the 1997 Anti-Terrorism Act.²⁷ According to a senior ministry official, the lists provided to NACTA had some serious flaws as at least 20-25% of the names were incorrect, 20% were supposedly dead while around 5% had either left the country or were unable to move around due to old age or illness.²⁸

These lists were first revisited and revised by the provincial governments and the finalized lists were shared by NACTA with the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Finance, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), NADRA, Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), Intelligence Bureau (IB), Directorate of Passport & Immigration, Provincial Counter-Terrorism Departments (CTDs) and Arms License issuing authorities. NACTA also pursued several cases of review and appeals of persons listed under the IV Schedule at various forums such as the courts, the Federal Ombudsman, and other relevant departments. As a result, eight fourth schedulers were delisted while the appeals of six were rejected by competent authorities.²⁹ There are strict conditions for placing someone on the Fourth Schedule of the ATA and such individuals are described as “proscribed persons under the law”.

4.2.6 Choking Terrorist Financing

Point 6 of the National Action Plan states that the funding sources of terrorists and terrorist outfits will be frozen and/or choked. With respect to countering terrorism financing and in coordination with the provinces under NACTA, the Fourth Schedule lists were shared with the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) for freezing the bank accounts of all proscribed individuals. Of the 8,307 persons on the fourth Schedule, the data of 6,577 individuals was shared with the State Bank of Pakistan as they had CNIC and fourth schedule notification. The total number of accounts frozen were 5,023 while the amount frozen has been over Rs300 million.¹¹

The National Action Plan's sub-committee on Choking Financing for Terrorists and Terrorist Organizations held a meeting in January 2016 under the Chairmanship of the National Coordinator to recommend the constituting of a taskforce which would “frame a comprehensive model law for orderly operations” of Non-Governmental Organizations, Non-Profit Organizations and charities, both local and foreign, and which “will be strictly enforced.” During the formulation of a strategy for such a taskforce, the active input of all related federal and provincial ministries, departments and organs was taken along with the other stakeholders that were in attendance. The meeting discussed the finalization of nominations for the taskforce.³⁰ And this work is under process as per the terms of reference (ToRs) with both the federal and provincial stakeholders.¹¹

In order to clamp down on terrorist finances, Counter-Terrorist Financing Units (CTFUs) have been created in all Provincial Counter-Terrorism Departments (CTDs). These units are meant to be given

²⁷ Kalbe Ali. (2016, October 1). Nacta moves to streamline list of Fourth Schedulers. Dawn. Retrieved January 13, 2017 from <<http://www.dawn.com/news/1287247>>.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ CRSS Exclusive Interview with National Coordinator Ihsan Ghani on January 18, 2017.

³⁰ NACTA. (2016, January 26). NACTA Events: Meeting on Constituting Taskforce to Frame a Comprehensive Model Law for Orderly Operations of NGO's / NPO's/Charities. National Counter Terrorism Authority. Retrieved January 14, 2017 from <<http://www.nacta.gov.pk/Events.htm>>.

the requisite training through the FIA, SBP and the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR). According to Ihsan Ghani, NACTA can also be approached, if required, by the concerned law enforcement agencies (LEAs) where further specialized training is required and this will be coordinated with the Financial Monitoring Unit (FMU) and the concerned agencies. CTFUs would be responsible for investigating the financial dealings of all those suspected and accused of terrorism and would be responsible for establishing reverse leads.

Thus far, 1) CTFUs have been established in all CTDs to trace reverse leads into terrorist financing, 2) the process of formulating Branchless Banking Regulations has been initiated, 3) obligatory money declaration and a regulatory mechanism for bulk cash transactions is being established in collaboration with stakeholders, 4) work on charity regulation, such as those of NGOs and NPOs, has been initiated. A taskforce has been established for this and core groups have been formulated at both the Federal and Provincial levels so that the policy is tabled soon. 5) NACTA is also in the process of establishing a National Terrorist Financial Investigation Directorate (NTFID) that will deal exclusively with terrorist financing, money laundering (TF/ML) and transnational crimes.³¹

According to the Interior Joint Secretary Khushdil Khan, there have been 498 reported cases of Hawala, also known as Hundi (an informal value transfer system based on the performance and honour of a huge network of money brokers operating outside of, or parallel to, traditional banking), across Pakistan. In these trust-based transaction cases, 692 individuals have been arrested while Rs 804.849 million have been recovered. In addition, there have been 230 reported cases of anti-money laundering where 341 persons have been arrested. Furthermore, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has looked into 115 Suspicious Transaction Reports (STR), of which 32 cases have been registered and 75 are under inquiry.⁴

According to NSA Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Naseer Khan Janjua, the practice of Hawala and Hundi by terrorists reveals the loopholes in the transaction systems provided by the state. It is the state's responsibility to provide proper mechanisms for money transactions so that practices like Hawala and Hundi are not relied upon. Efforts made in this regard by all provinces are evident in the number of arrests of suspects and the money that has been recovered. According to the NSA, the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1947, and Anti-Money Laundering Act, 2010 have also undergone amendments as part of the measures undertaken to choke the financing of terrorism. The State Bank of Pakistan has eased the requirements concerned as regards education and medical-related remittances. Training has become compulsory for law enforcement agencies while the Financial Monitoring Unit (FMU) and Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) have been tasked with many duties in this regard.

The NSA stated that 98.3 million unregistered SIM's have been blocked by the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA). However, this number has been around since the first year of the implementation of the NAP.

4.2.7 Counter-Terrorism Helpline

³¹ Ibid.

A Counter-Terrorism Helpline (1717) was established on the January 9, 2015 and a campaign to create public awareness was launched in August 2016. The gap of 17 months between these two dates is indicative of the lethargic pace at which the bureaucratic machinery operates. In August 2016, the capacity of the operatives and implementers working in the helpline was also enhanced.¹¹

In 2016, the scope of reporting was enhanced to include reports against hate speech since it was felt that the issue directly affected public sentiment and, should therefore, be devolved to the public sphere. A hate speech helpline was therefore also started with the objective of taking the matter pertaining to hate speech to the public sphere. A summary of actions taken so far is as under:

Category	Calls
Spam Calls (pre-campaign)	131728
Spam Calls (post-campaign)	56980
Actionable Calls	2688
Numbers Blocked	6758
Action Completed	2671
Total Calls	191386

Furthermore, NACTA's coordinator Ihsan Ghani made an appeal to the people of Pakistan to not get involved in such practices and stated that "irrelevant calls are not only a waste of precious resources of the government but it may end up in an irreparable loss of lives which may include members of their own family or friends." NACTA officials even decided to name the offenders in public as an attempt to shame them and prevent further prank calls.³²

4.2.8 Identifying and Addressing Drivers of Radicalization

NACTA also initiated a dynamic profile based record of individuals accused or convicted of acts of terrorism and extremism in collaboration with Provincial CTDs on a unanimously agreed preform. This is meant to enable NACTA to assess the economic, social, environmental, psychological, ideological or revenge-based reasons behind acts of terrorism. It is meant to provide an authentic profiling with an aim to make incisive policy interventions in relation to the exact problem.

4.2.9 Ban on Glorification of Terrorism and Terrorist Organizations through Print and Electronic Media

Point 11 of the National Action Plan deals with the strict implementation of the ban on the glorification of terrorism and terrorist organizations through print and electronic media. In this regard, according to the Interior Joint Secretary Khushdil Khan, any violation is instantly reported to the concerned quarter for taking action and there has been visible improvement.⁴

Section 6 (a) of the Punjab Maintenance of Public Order (Amendment) Bill 2015 criminalizes expressions of support, sympathy, and glorification of terrorism, making the offence punishable with

³² Ibid.

imprisonment for up to three years and a fine. According to the Interior Joint Secretary, while it is already in the law, it was not being implemented properly.

Furthermore, as point 14 deals with “concrete measures against promotion of terrorism through internet and social media”, there have been many changes in the existing laws as well as legislations passed. For example, in August 2016, the Government passed the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) 2016 which makes collection of funds for terrorist organizations through any information technology system or electronic devices an offence.³³ In Balochistan, according to the Interior Joint Secretary, there have been 55 meetings with the media and 86 awareness campaigns to sensitize them.⁴

According to the National Security Advisor, NACTA, the National Security Council (NSC) and the Ministry of Interior is formulating a policy in consultation with the Ministers of Information and Religious affairs, DG FIA, Chairman PTA and intelligence agencies to prevent the glorification of terrorism and terrorist organizations through all types of media. It is expected that a policy guideline would be provided to the Provinces, the Ministers of Information, Chairman PEMRA, DG FIA, Chairman PTA and the intelligence agencies for monitoring and implementation. The Minister of Information, Chairman PEMRA and NSA are soon to have a meeting with channel owners to define and clarify the national policy in black and white for strict implementation. He stated that Chairman PEMRA in consultation with the Ministry of Information may suggest necessary legislation and hence the Federal and Provincial secretary information will regularly conduct meetings with owners of media houses, both print and electronic, to encourage them to play their due role. Provinces will also establish Media Monitoring Committees to have regular interaction with journalists and the management of print and electronic media.⁴

4.2.10 Formulation of a National Counter Extremism Policy (NCEP)

On June 20 2016, the second round of meeting with stakeholders was held in Islamabad where the Ministry for Interior discussed the formulation of a “National Counter Extremism Policy”. The meeting was attended by the political leadership of major political parties, senators, members of the National Assembly, think tanks, civil society, human rights activists, and NGOs. The discussions focused on themes of building community resilience, internet and cyber space radicalization, cultural revival, religious education and the rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners and convicts. The responses and the input from the participants highlighted an agreement on the need to focus on soft measures which are an essential part of ensuring peace in the country.³⁴

The convener of the Committee, Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed, emphasized that the NCEP will be formulated under the legal framework and the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The Committee agreed that the policy themes will include the concept of national security, building community resilience, education reforms, cultural revival, media engagement, an enabling

³³ Pakistan: Punjab Province Criminalizes the Glorification of Terrorism. (2015, January 23). Library of Congress. Retrieved January 20, 2017 from <<http://loc.gov/law/foreign-news/article/pakistan-punjab-province-criminalizes-the-glorification-of-terrorism/>>.

³⁴ NACTA. (2016, January 26). NACTA Events: NACTA Initiates Consultative Process to Formulate National Counter Extremism Policy. National Counter Terrorism Authority. Retrieved January 14, 2017 from <<http://www.nacta.gov.pk/Events.htm>>.

environment, rehabilitation and reintegration and a robust implementation strategy to ensure that the work bears the desired results. The Committee also decided that it will hold weekly meetings for timely completion of all its tasks.³⁵

Towards this end, NACTA has planned a National level consensus building exercise for evolving a consensus narrative to counter the prevalent narratives spreading intolerance, extremism and terrorism. With respect to this, a national level workshop was held on the 14th and 15th of January 2017 at Bahria University Islamabad. The 2-day workshop resulted in valuable contributions to the narrative.

4.2.11 Revamping the Criminal Justice System

Revamping the Criminal Justice System is an integral component of the National Action Plan and an arduous and intricate task that requires extensive deliberation, reforms and resources. NACTA held meetings with and also involved all Provincial Chief Secretaries and Inspectors General of Police (IGPs) to steer this process. Task forces have been established at both the federal and provincial levels with cross function representation. The four pillars of the Criminal Justice System have been included for deliberations viz. police, prisons, judiciary and prosecution. Mechanisms of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) have also been added to the discussion as a fifth dimension. The results of these deliberations are expected to be presented to the Minister of Interior by March 2017.¹¹

More information on this can be found in Part 9: Criminal Sector Reforms.

4.2.12 Translation of Anti-Terrorism Laws/Ordinances into the Urdu Language

NACTA also translated Anti-Terrorism Laws/Ordinances into the Urdu language with the help of the Law & Justice Division and circulated them to all the Provincial Police Departments in order to facilitate efforts to combat terrorism.¹¹

According to the Joint Secretary, the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (CrPC), is more than 30 years old and it is not available in police stations in the Urdu language. The drawback of this is that when First Information Reports (FIRs) are lodged for a crime, they are lodged under the wrong section. If for example there is a cleric that is using the loudspeaker for hate material, an offence that is now punishable, and is arrested, his FIR would be dismissed the next day and he would be granted bail because in all likelihood the investigation would reveal that the section he has been charged under does not even apply to the offence that has been committed.⁴

In responding to this need, NACTA compiled a compendium of the special new federal laws such as the Anti-Terrorism Act 1997, the twenty points of the National Action Plan and so on, and translated them in Urdu. This translation was sent to all the Provinces and other territories of Pakistan.

The Joint Secretary added that the NSA also sent a letter to the Inspectors General (IGs) of all the Provinces directing them to print more copies of this compendium and sending it to all the police

³⁵ Ibid.

stations in their respective Provinces. A copy of this letter was also given to CRSS.

In addition to this, the Interior Joint Secretary stated that copies of this compendium were also sent to institutions that provide trainings to investigating officers so that they include it in their module and use it during training. He stated that it was the responsibility of the Station House Officers (SHOs), Senior Superintendents of Police (SSPs), and Deputy Superintendents of Police (DSPs) to hold trainings of the 12 or 13 police stations in their areas and acquaint them with these laws and sensitize them to using the relevant laws depending on the nature of the crime.³⁶

4.2.13 Engagement of Youth in Countering Violent Extremism

NACTA has also initiated a series of interactive sessions to engage the youth in Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) in all major universities including Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), Kinnaird College Lahore, University of Engineering and Technology, Nishtar Medical College, Ghulam Ishaq Khan University, Islamia College Peshawar, Peshawar University, IBA Karachi, Dow Medical College, NED University Karachi and Balochistan University. Interactive sessions were meant to commence from the 14th of November 2016 in Karachi and thereupon across the country.¹¹

4.2.14 Establishment of Research Wing

NACTA established a research wing and has undertaken various research projects. The Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS) was awarded a project to conduct a study titled “Measuring indigenous change in Madrassahs: issues, prospects and policy options”. The data for the project has been collected, and the institute is currently in the process of analysis. Another project analyzing Terror financing in Pakistan is also underway. Finally, a project titled “Madras Audit Reporting Standardization (MARS) program” is on-going in collaboration with CODE Pakistan, and is aimed at improving governmental financial oversight of Madaris.³⁷

The 2013 NACTA Act also requires the National Counter-Terrorism Authority to establish liaisons with international entities. Links with local and international think tanks, such as USIP, RUSI, NSGI and others, were established to discuss counter-terrorism (CT), Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), de-radicalization, conflict resolution and stabilization. The steps taken in this regard are as under:

1. Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) has been supporting NACTA to establish a “CVE Centre of Excellence” wherein research will be conducted through regular staff stationed at NACTA in collaboration with multi-disciplinary actors from across Pakistan. International entities, including RUSI, will regularly assist in developing relevant policies. In this regard, a formal written understanding will be signed with RUSI.
2. The UK National School of Government International (NSGI) has offered to train NACTA officers on policy formulation. The teams of NSGI will conduct quarterly visits to NACTA to hold discussion sessions with active participation of senior and mid-career officers to exchange ideas and share experiences upon policy formulation processes in UK and Pakistan. The first visit of NSGI is scheduled from 13th till 17th of March, 2017.
3. The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) has supported NACTA during the course of the

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

formulation of its National Counter Extremism Policy. USIP has also committed to support the Authority in the upcoming center of excellence on CVE. It will share international best practices and research methodologies applied in government establishments for conducting research of such magnitude and typology.

4. The European Union (EU) introduced the STRIVE Program in selected areas of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for strengthening counter-violent extremism. A consultation has also been under way to identify the possible requirements of the governments that could benefit from the component Support to Provincial Governments STRIVE Strategies.
5. The European Union (EU) is also extending financial assistance to support Pakistan's Action to Counter Terrorism (PACT). NACTA activated the dormant project and conducted a series of meetings with intelligence agencies, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), the Economic Affairs Division (EAD), KP Government, EU and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for finalizing the operation mechanisms of the project.

4.2.15 MoUs with other Countries

NACTA has also vetted and finalized a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Japan through the Ministry of Interior in order to curb the menace of terrorism internationally and to strengthen intelligence ties for combating terrorism and terrorist activities. Currently, NACTA is in the process of vetting draft MoUs with the Government of Republic of Maldives and the Government of the Russian Federation.³⁸

4.2.16 NACTA Red Book

NACTA has also initiated a compilation of the NACTA Red Book of terrorists which is under process.³⁹

4.3 Armed Militias and Afghan Strategy

Lt. Gen. Naseer Khan Janjua stated that “fighting terrorism against armed militias is our main maneuver. While Pakistan has suffered some losses; it is a matter of our pride that the people of Pakistan have been able to fight against terrorism in these operations with a national unity. These are those operations in which the civil-military was united, such as the combating operation of Zarb-e-Azb.” He went on to state that the security situation in Pakistan has greatly improved since Zarb-e-Azb and in defining which armed militias these operations have been targeting, the NSA named Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Al Qaeda, Al Qaeda in Subcontinent, sub-nationalists, Daesh, and other foreign terrorist organizations. He stated “We've put the whole terrorist spectrum under our focus. We put everyone on the canvas. This has included terrorist organizations, sectarian organizations, and Jihadi organizations.”⁴

The NSA stated that the menace of terrorism, though fairly curtailed, still remains a main threat as the TTP has gone across the border to Afghanistan and found safe havens where they are being properly

^{38,39} Ibid.

directed. This has caused a lot of damage to Pakistan. Troops are committed on the western border while the entire security apparatus including the Army, Air Force, Navy, Police, rangers, FC, coast guards and intelligence agencies are committed around the clock. Fighting terrorism remains a major focus as regards the concerned relevant national, provincial leaderships, ministries and institutions.⁴

- Against the backdrop of rising insecurity in the region, the NSA devised certain guidelines which he presented before the Pakistani leadership. These were as follow:
- “Operation Zarb-e-Azb and counter-terrorism operations be continued to root out extremism, terrorism, militancy and insurgency from every nook and corner of the country.
- Rejuvenated whole of the nation approach be inspired and adopted to ensure the success of operations. Federal government's responsibilities, provincial governments' responsibilities, FATA, AJK, Gilgit Baltistan, armed forces, intelligence agencies, judiciary and media.
- Facilitate reconciliation at the earliest in Afghanistan, using all means and less kinetic operations. This is considered essential to normalize the regional situation.
- NDS and ISI need to work together to connectively make reconciliation a possibility and inject transparency to reduce trust deficit.
- To stay relevant, Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG) should also continue to exploit reconciliation possibilities and help bring peace in Afghanistan.
- order monitoring mechanism should be hardened to prevent infiltration, cross-border movement. FC wings to be sanctioned for the purpose being raised in planned time. Commitment for preventing use of own soil must be fulfilled to improve our image.
- Intelligence outreach be extended in Afghanistan to proactively detect, track, monitor and bust and foil any attempt of conducting an act of terrorism from across the border.
- Where possible, confidence building measures be initiated with Afghanistan to see that the relationship does not deteriorate any further. Also, continue to engage with the US to improve the trust level.
- We must continue to ask the US and Afghanistan to eliminate Mullah Fazullah and other prominent leadership of TTP in Afghanistan. Provinces should also enhance the capacity of their police CTD and intelligence agencies. Compatible equipment must be provided and police reforms be ensured.
- Provinces to establish effective inter-city check post provided with latest equipment to monitor the movement on main roads entering and exiting their provinces.
- Provinces to conduct security audit of all sensitive, vulnerable places and assets with a view to reinforce and improve existing security arrangements.
- NACTA to complete the establishment of Joint Intelligence Directorate forthwith. In addition, national and provincial, including AJK and Gilgit Baltistan, information and operation centers be established to share real time information.⁴⁰ Hence, every individual will belong to the state.
- With respect to hate speech, there should be capacity training of implementing training agencies and the establishment of an Ulema Board. Hate material banned in one province will be shared with other provinces.”

⁴⁰ This database would be connected with NADRA, hence assisting intelligence agencies by providing a data bank of criminals and their activities.

4.4 Obstacles

Insufficient financial resources and lack of government initiatives are causing delays in the activation of NACTA and execution of the NAP.

In 2014, the Islamabad High Court placed NACTA under the charge of the Prime Minister but the obscurity over the legal status has caused delay in the implementation of NAP.⁴¹ It remains under the control of the Interior Minister who is unable to provide it with sufficient resources and skilled staff. Lack of clarity over the legal status of NACTA remained a problem until November 2015.

The Secretary of the Ministry of Interior, Shahid Khan, declared in June 2015 that progress on NAP leaves a lot to be desired. In the same meeting, the then National Coordinator NACTA Hamid Khan said that the government had been unable to collect exact data on seminaries, that more needed to be done to clamp down on terror financiers, and that refugee registration was a major task. He was also quick to aggrandize the SIM registration initiative and the ongoing operation in Karachi.⁴²

This urgency to claim victory and responsibility has also backfired and hurt NACTA in the recent past. For example, a report was sent to the government by NACTA in April 2015 which claimed that the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) had confiscated 120 accounts belonging to banned outfits. The aggregate of money frozen in the end was Rs10.3 billion. However, upon further scrutiny, it was revealed that this amount was seized over the course of a decade and nearly no progress had been made since the enactment of the NAP.⁴³

To date, NACTA does not have a designated, refurbished space in which to operate as a cohesive unit.

4.5 CPEC Security

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project with the investment of \$46 billion is said to be a game changer that could stimulate the growth of both states and lead to the development of the entire region.

There are however, many security issues linked to the CPEC project. Earlier, under the support of the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), Uighur militants from the Xinjiang province in Western China targeted the inhabitants of China, whereas the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and other militant organizations in Pakistan have been targeting its citizens.

The military states that Pakistan's security forces have dismantled the ETIM with Operation Zarb-e-Azb and the Chinese President Xi Jinping acknowledged this initiative during a visit to Pakistan in April 2015. He praised the efforts of the Pakistani military and labeled it a solid step toward the peace and stability in the region. He promised to stand by Pakistan in all its activities against terrorism.

⁴¹ APP. (2014, July 09). IHC orders placement of NACTA under PM Secretariat - The Express Tri-bune. Retrieved February 27, 2016, from <<http://tribune.com.pk/story/733175/ihc-orders-place-ment-of-nacta-under-pm-secretariat/>>.

⁴² Khan, A. (2015, June 02). Fresh revelations: Anti-terror plan fails to achieve goals - The Express Tribune. Retrieved January 18, 2016, from <<http://tribune.com.pk/story/895997/fresh-revelations-anti-terror-plan-fails-to-achieve-goals/>>.

⁴³ Husain, K. (2015, April 10). Nacta's claim fails scrutiny. Retrieved February 21, 2016, from <<http://www.dawn.com/news/1174993>>.

Later in November 2015, Pakistan and China agreed on a four-layer security plan meant for the over three thousand kilometer long trade route connecting the Xinji-ang province to the Gwadar sea port. Since the civilian government has assigned the task of protecting the Chinese to the Pakistan Army and Navy, the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) assured the protection of the Chinese working in Pakistan. About 32,000 security personnel will provide security to 14,321 Chinese workers who have been working in 210 different projects across Pakistan. Over three thousand policemen, 740 Askari security guards, 4,100 private security guards, and 900 Rangers, would safeguard different projects related to CPEC.⁴⁴

In September 2016, it was reported that 14,503 security personnel had been deployed thus far to guard the 7,036 Chinese working on the CPEC project.⁴⁵ In December, 2016, it was also reported that the Navy was raising its own unit, dubbed Taskforce-88, for CPEC security.

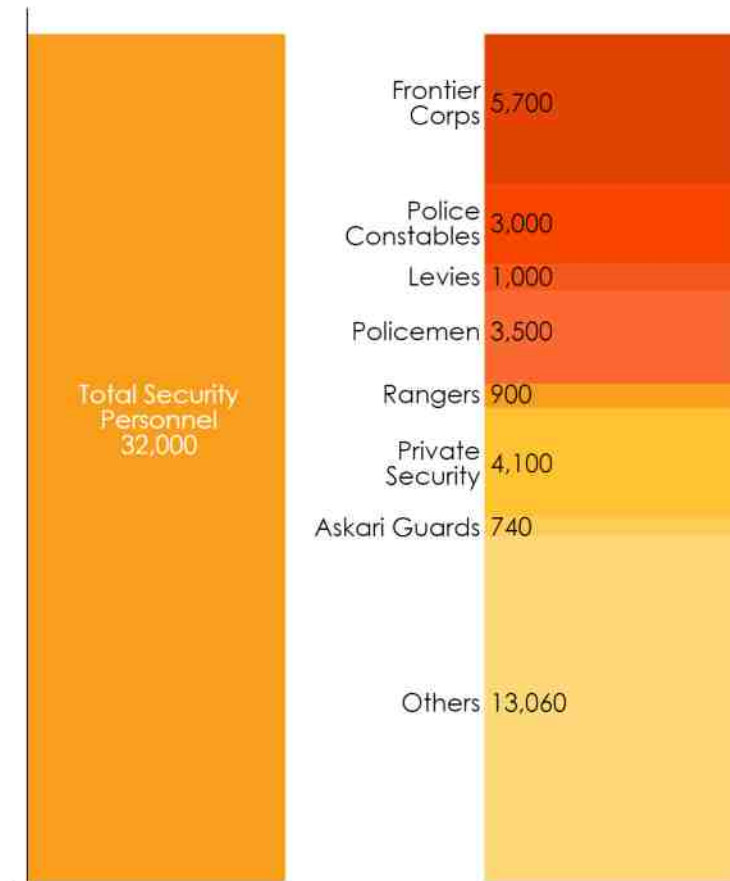
December, 2016, it was also reported that the Navy was raising its own unit, dubbed Taskforce-88, for CPEC security.⁴⁶

CPEC is also a major source of concern for Baloch nationalists who claim that it infringes upon their identity and rights. The ethnic Baloch have been ignored by the government over the last decade and the Baloch natives are now of the opinion that under the umbrella of economic development and prosperity, CPEC will turn them into a minority within their own land. There is a trust deficit, insecurity and disappointment within the Baloch community. They are scared of being marginalized by certain demographic changes that could be brought about under the CPEC project. Therefore, the Baloch community declared that they are not against the execution of the CPEC project only if the government endorses some legislation in favour of protecting the rights of the ethnic Baloch in the region. This sentiment is not universal, as some have taken up arms against the state instead.

⁴⁴ Ghiskori, Z. (2015, November 01). Economic corridor: Pakistan, China agree on four-layer security - The Express Tribune. Retrieved February 22, 2016, from <<http://tribune.com.pk/story/983033/economic-corridor-pakistan-china-agree-on-four-layer-security/>>.

⁴⁵ Correspondent. (2016, December 14). Task Force-88: Navy raises force for CPEC, Gwadar security - The Express Tribune. Retrieved February 22, 2017, from, <<http://www.chinatopix.com/articles/100551/20160912/pakistan-deploys-15000-security-personnel-to-guard-7000-chinese-working-on-china-pakistan-economic-corridor.htm>>.

⁴⁶ Chedda, M. (2016, September 12). Pakistan Deploys 15000 Security Personnel to Guard 7000 Chinese Working on China Pakistan Economic Corridor - China Topix. Retrieved February 22, 2017, from, <<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1262606/task-force-88-navy-raises-force-cpec-gwadar-security/>>.

Graph 4.3 CPEC Security Personnel Deployment Breakdown

The NAP Tracker, 2016 - The Center for Research and Security Studies, 2017

More than 500 Chinese security personnel were hired to build the capacity of the Special Forces and the local police for safeguarding sensitive routes. Paki-stan Marines and the border security forces were also tasked with securing the routes linked to CPEC projects. The CPEC Project Director, Major General (retd.) Zahir Shah, asserted that the people of China are immensely satisfied with the security measures adopted by both countries. However, recent conversations with the Chinese reveal significant concerns related to matters of security. The Ministry of Interior declared that Balochistan would be more secure after the establishment of a new security policy as 1,000 Levies personnel and six wings of the Frontier Corps comprising of 5,700 personnel, and 3,000 police constables would be employed for the security of sensitive routes. The military established a special security force of nine battalions with each special division to be commanded by a serving Major General.

4.6 Special Anti-Terrorism Force / Pakistan Special Services Group

In addition to the military-run Zarb-e-Azb operation, the Special Services Group (SSG) is involved in extensive counter-terrorism operations and asymmetrical warfare in Pakistan.

4.6.1 Historical Background

SSG is also known as the Black Storks, a name derived from their unique head-dress. They are specialist counter-terrorism operatives, trained in non-traditional and asymmetrical warfare.

4.6.2 Structural Organization

Pakistani Special Forces have 7 divisions:

- 1st Commando Yaldrum Battalion
- 2nd Commando Rahbar Battalion
- 3rd Commando Powindahs Battalion
- 4th Commando Yalghar Battalion
- 5th Commando Zilzaal Battalion
- 6th Commando Al Samsaam Battalion
- 7th Commando Babrum Battalion

Divisions are controlled by Lieutenant Colonels. Each division comprises of 700 men in four companies, with each company further divided into sub-divisions and then into 10-man teams. It includes two autonomous commando companies:

- Musa Company - Specializes in Amphibious Operations
- Zarrar Company - Specializes in Counterterrorism

Trained by Zarrar Company, the Rangers Anti-Terrorist Company has been active since early 2004. The Paramilitary Rangers are primarily tasked with the urban pacification operations in Karachi.

4.6.3 Law Enforcement Progress on Counterterrorism

In a statement released by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) in January 2017, DG ISPR Major General Asif Ghafoor stated that since its launch in June 2014, Operation Zarb-e-Azb had killed 3,500 terrorists and injured 2,108. In addition, 992 terror hideouts and 7,599 factories that made Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and ammo have been destroyed. 18,087 weapons of different caliber had been recovered during these operations while 253 tons of explosive material has also been destroyed.⁴⁷

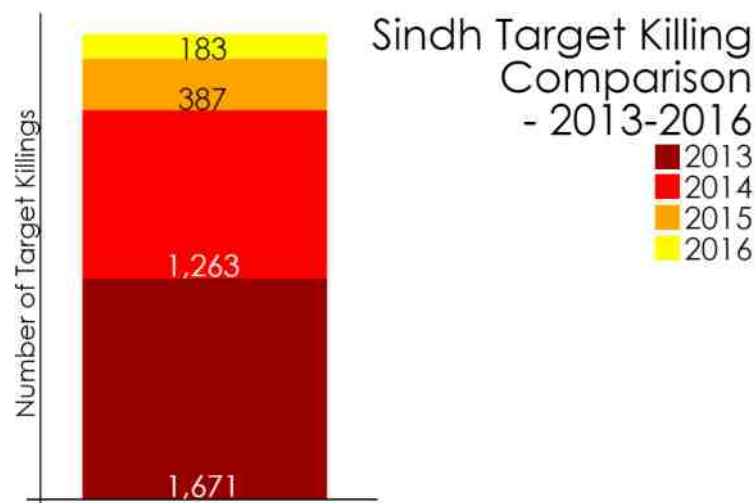
The law enforcement agencies (LEAs) have carried out a total of 25,620 intelligence-based and combing operations with 11,735 operations carried out in Punjab, 294 in Balochistan, 646 in Sindh,

⁴⁷ Staff Reporter. (2017, January 1). ISPR counts gains during 2016. The News. Retrieved January 27, 2017 from <<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/175960-ISPR-counts-gains-during-2016>>.

4,007 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa/FATA and 465 in Gilgit-Baltistan. The Pakistan Rangers conducted 1,992 operations in Karachi and arrested 2,847 criminals, 350 terrorists and 446 target killers. The number of security personnel that have been killed during these operations has been 583. According to DG ISPR, the cases of target killings have reduced by 91% and acts of terror by 72%.⁴⁸

Data collected by the CRSS Annual Security Report of 2016 confirms these trends. Target killing alone fell from 1,671 fatalities in 2013 to 183 in 2016. Meanwhile, terrorism incidents have also reduced drastically in the last two years.

Graph 4.4 Target Killing Statistics in District Karachi – 2013-2016



Annual Security Report, 2016 - The Center for Research and Security Studies, 2017

As per official figures quoted by the Spectator in its December 2016 report the army has killed about 3,500 Taliban fighters, destroyed 992 hideouts and cleared 3,600 square kilometers of territory since January 2015 to date. In these operations, nearly 500 soldiers have died. According to Director General of Sindh Rangers, Major General Bilal Akbar, the security situation in Karachi has also improved; where there were 2,789 killings in 2013, the first 11 months of 2016 only reported 592. Similarly, while there were 51 terrorist bomb blasts in 2013, there were only 2 in the first 11 months of 2016.⁴⁹

On August 16, 2016, the army launched an operation called the Khyber-III Operation to reinforce the deployment of troops along the Pak-Afghan border in order to effectively check the movement of terrorists by targeting their hideouts in the mountainous region of Khyber Agency. Previously, in

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Peter Osborne & Sabin Agha. (2016, December 31). Pakistan is winning its war on terror. The Spectator. Retrieved January 27, 2017 from <<http://www.spectator.co.uk/2016/12/pakistan-is-winning-its-war-on-terror/>>.

⁴⁹ Peter Osborne & Sabin Agha. (2016, December 31). Pakistan is winning its war on terror. The Spectator. Retrieved January 27, 2017 from <<http://www.spectator.co.uk/2016/12/pakistan-is-winning-its-war-on-terror/>>.

operations code-named Khyber-I & II most of the terrorist-infested regions of Khyber Agency, including the strategic Tirah Valley, had been cleansed. Operation Khyber-III has successfully decimated 9 terrorist dens where large dumps of arms and ammunition were found along with targeting terrorist hideouts in air raids and ground operations. According to the military, 14 terrorists were killed and 11 were wounded in the operation. However, the military did not reveal which groups the terrorists belonged to. The Mangal Bagh Afridi-led Lashkar-e-Islam extremist group and some factions of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan were known to have a strong presence in the region before the operations were launched.⁵⁰

According to the ISPR, the operation was aimed at reducing the cross-border movement of terrorists and was part of Pakistan's efforts to ensure effective border management to check the infiltration of terrorists who move between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The operation in Rajgal Valley was meant to squeeze the space available to fleeing terrorists in the border region. The military has successfully eliminated terrorists from the tribal areas, including North Waziristan Agency, where local and foreign terrorists once held control.⁵¹ As per the Director of the National Counter Terrorism Authority, Bakhtiar Mohamed, "the army has gone very deeply into every nook and corner of the tribal areas. There is no possibility of any revival of extremism."⁴⁸ In sharp contrast, NACTA has no such force at its disposal, and analysis reveals that even coordination with relevant authorities is scant at best.

4.7 Counter Terrorism Department

The eighth point in the National Action Plan deals with establishing and deploying a dedicated counter-terrorism force. According to NSA Lt. Gen. (ret'd) Naseer Khan Janjua, all the provinces have established their counter-terrorism forces according to their respective need. However, he stated that these forces should be utilized as per need and not for VIP duties. The number of required forces and the number currently present in each province, AJK, GB and Islamabad are as follows:

Department	Required	Present
Islamabad Capital Territory	1000	500
Punjab	1500	1182
Sindh	1000	782
Balochistan	1000	1000
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	2200	2200
Gilgit Baltistan	200	168
Azad Jammu & Kashmir	500	260

4.8 Conclusion

Overall there seems to be significant progress on the counterterrorism front. The kinetic operations conducted across the country seem to have gained a lot of ground. While other mechanisms, such as

⁵⁰ Staff Reporter. (2016, August 17). Seven security personnel injured in Khyber Agency blast. The Express Tribune. Retrieved January 28, 2017 from <<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1164470/seven-security-personnel-injured-khyber-agency-blast/>>.

⁵¹ Ibid.

choking finances and communications seem to have mixed results. Undoubtedly, the noose has been tightened around armed militias and terror outfits, and a prime example of this is multiple groups clamoring to take responsibility for whenever a terror attack strikes.

There are two problems here. First, as always, these kinetic measures are finite and they will eventually plateau out. The state really needs to reevaluate the root cause behind terrorism, and deploy mechanisms to address it. The softer side of anti-terrorism and anti-radicalization efforts has not seen much light of the day, and will be crucial moving forward. Second, state enablers need to be bolstered, empowered and emboldened to allow Pakistan to tackle this menace more effectively and efficiently.

Finally, while the progress thus far is commendable, without reforms in both civilian law enforcement and the criminal justice system, it is fleeting and impermanent at best.

4.9 Excerpt from Interview With NSA, Lt. Gen. (retd.) Naseer Khan Janjua⁵²

Zeeshan Salahuddin: One criticism hurled at the NAP is that the National Counterterrorism Authority (NACTA) remains an underfunded, underutilized resource. What do you plan to do about this?

Lt. Gen. (retd.) Naseer Khan Janjua: NACTA is a crucial part of the NAP. There is now immense political will to see it succeed and play the pivotal role we have envisioned for it. They have been spearheading many areas, the result of which will be known soon. We have also allocated over Rs. 200 million [\$1.9 million] to ensure they have a centralized, refurbished location to work from. NACTA is a top priority, and we will see it succeed soon.

⁵² Salahuddin, Z. (2017, Apr 07). Pakistan's National Security Adviser on Counterterrorism. Retrieved April 12, 2017, from <<http://thediplomat.com/2017/04/pakistans-national-security-adviser-on-counterterrorism/>>.