



Background Paper

Implementation and Monitoring of the National Action Plan



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PILDAT is an independent, non-partisan and not-for-profit indigenous research and training institution with the mission to strengthen democracy and democratic institutions in Pakistan.

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Preface

The PILDAT Background Paper on Progress of Implementation of the National Action Plan in Punjab has been commissioned so as to introduce a fact-based monitoring of the implementation of NAP.

PILDAT began monitoring of implementation of the NAP across the country with specific focus on provincial implementation.

The background paper, authored by **Mr. Naveed Elahi**, Honorary Director, Centre for Peace & Security Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore presents background and rationale behind making of the NAP while discussing how should progress on NAP be monitored by citizens.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of PILDAT.

Lahore
May 2017

Abstract

Albeit a number of times the civil and military leadership has agreed on reinvigorating the implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP), there have been widespread doubts and misgivings about its progress. Army, judiciary, media and even mainstream politicians have been expressing doubts about the efficacy and implementation of NAP.

There is a little but glaring flaw in understanding the nature and scope of NAP, which creates confusion, and due to which the results are not being achieved as desired. No doubt the NAP is an essential, useful step in the right direction which has made us turn our face towards the road we ought to tread to bridle terrorism and extremism. But NAP is not an anti terror strategy. It is like a plan of general area. To make it work, there is a need to be specific, to identify the streets, mark the bends, measure the distance and select the mode and time to reach the destination.

All aspects of NAP's 20 points are quite widespread and related to the phenomenon that is deeply ingrained in our society and system. It is a gigantic task to tackle them. There is neither any quick fix nor there is any magic wand to correct all in one go. A reasonable antidote is to prioritize the most glaring aspects of all points and focus maximum resources to handle them as per clearly laid out strategies. Implementation of NAP would remain lackadaisical and sporadic unless a strategy and institutionalized monitoring system is not in place. The Government ought to learn the lesson from the failures and successes of NAP experienced during the past two years.

It seems that more testing times are likely to be faced as is evident from the escalation in terrorist activities during the first five months of the year 2017. Besides, with general election approaching, the will and focus of the governments and political parties might peter out as they are naturally going to divert their attention and energies toward the election campaign. It is high time to take all possible steps to ensure effective implementation and monitoring of NAP so that the militants and miscreants do not take advantage of the transition period to defeat NAP and to harm the nation.

Background and Rationale Behind Making of the NAP

The NAP, a comprehensive roadmap devised to tackle the hydra of terrorism and extremism in Pakistan, was launched in 2015 in the aftermath of the grisly incident of Army Public School (APS) Peshawar. Though terrorism had been continuing unabated in Pakistan for the last one and a half decade, the APS massacre came as an ominous warning that the writ of the State, its internal security and international image were suffering. This sentence brought all the segments of the society and the State on one page to annihilate the terrible twin from our country.

After deep and prolonged deliberations, all stakeholders including the civil and military leadership agreed on the 20-point NAP. It was a remarkable step in the right direction as we came out of the state of denial, though belatedly, and adopted a clear direction to tread the path in unison to tackle terrorism with might and vigour. All quarters welcomed it and people looked at it with high hopes and expectations. The main aim of NAP was to control and eliminate the hydra of terrorism and extremism at a time when successful counter insurgency operations had started achieving successes in the tribal areas of Pakistan. The implementation on NAP seemed to have taken off well but soon widespread public dissatisfaction over its ineffective implementation started coming to light.

How Should Progress on NAP be Monitored?

As stated earlier NAP was launched sans strategy to implement and monitor it. The formation of sixteen committees was deemed enough for the implementation of NAP.

The role of the Ministry of Interior and NACTA in the monitoring and implementation process is vague, wavered and weak. Preferably the mechanism for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of NAP should have been clearly devised at the inception. In the absence of any such clear-cut institutionalized mechanism of monitoring, a farrago of attempts and statements has been witnessed during the past two years.

In August 2016, a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif took a strategic review of the regional and internal security situation and decided to set a 'high-level' task force, comprising representatives of all concerned departments and agencies, to monitor the execution of the National Action Plan (NAP).¹ Prime Minister said, "It is our collective responsibility to join hands for complete success of the plan." He also laid stress on strict implementation of the NAP in all provinces, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.

After the Quetta hospital bombing on August 8, 2016, yet another implementation committee was established headed by National Security Advisor, Lt. Gen.(Retd.) Nasser Khan Janjua. The Interior Minister, however, maintained that this committee was "merely an administrative body and both the interior ministry and NACTA will continue to have an oversight role in NAP's implementation".²

Additionally Nasser Janjua formed regional committees in all four provinces, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan for monitoring the implementation of NAP.³

In February 2017, the Minister of State for Interior Muhammad Balighur Rahman said that the Prime Minister himself monitored NAP to ensure significant progress on it, which has resulted in reduction of terrorist incidents in the country.⁴

Sporadic flurry of statements and haphazard formation of several tiers for implementation and oversight, in fact, diluted and defeated the purpose of the process.

However, there is a need to monitor the progress of implementation in provinces and at the centre in an institutionalized manner. Provinces being the actual implementers of most of the NAP points must give regular input through their Home Departments to NACTA. The same should be given to the NAP committees to collate and analyse and send the consolidated reports to the Prime Minister and the Chief Ministers, through NACTA, for their perusal. These reports can be discussed in Federal and Provincial apex committees for further review and action.

1. 'Govt to establish 'high-level' task force to monitor NAP's implementation,' Dawn, August 11,

2. 'Another Year of NAP' Rana. M. A. Dawn, 13 Feb 2017 can be accessed at: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1302942>

3. *ibid*

4. 'PM himself monitoring NAP: Senate told,' Radio Pakistan, February 13, 2017, can be accessed at: <http://www.radio.gov.pk/13-Feb-2017/senate-passes-the-federal-board-of-intermediate-and-secondary-education-amendment-bill>

Overview of the Status of Implementation of NAP in Pakistan

The matter of implementation of NAP has been controversial since its inception. The Government claimed effective implementation whereas the army, judiciary, media and civil society have been expressing dissatisfaction over it. The Corps Commanders' conference held in April 2015 and on November 10, 2015 expressed concerns about its lacklustre implementation with the army chief then calling for "re-energizing the National Action Plan in true letter and spirit and achieving discernible results. Also warned that effectiveness of armed forces' counter terrorism efforts could be weakened by derisory ancillary actions by civilian agencies."⁵

The Supreme Court of Pakistan had also expressed utter dissatisfaction on this apathy towards NAP.⁶ Though 2016 and the first four months of 2017 experienced deadly terrorist attacks in major urban centres like Karachi, Peshawar, Lahore, Quetta, etc., mainstream media observed that NAP was patchily implemented.⁷ It blamed that counter-extremism policy was perpetually in the back seat. Even PPPP Chairperson Bilawal Bhutto stressed on the need for implementation of NAP and accepted that Sindh alone could not effectively surmount the menace of terrorism without the coordination of the centre.⁸ It amounts to admittance of failure of implementation of NAP in Sindh.⁹

Conversely, the Government remained confident of the effective implementation of NAP. In February 2017, the Minister of State for Interior Muhammad Balighur Rahman said that the law and order and security situation had greatly improved and economy is on upward trajectory due to effective implementation of National Action Plan evolved by all the stakeholders unanimously.¹⁰

He gave an overview of implementation of NAP, according to which the Government has released 1.4 billion rupees against the demanded budget of 1.8 billion rupees by National Counter-Terrorism Authority (NACTA) and a number of recruitments

have been made while numerous others are underway to provide manpower to the authority; helpline 1717 has been established to receive people's complaints and to this effect about 250,000 calls were received which also covered complaints regarding hate speeches; a number of arrests have also been made and substantial hate material confiscated so far; counter-terrorism force has been established in Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Federal Capital, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir to check militancy in the country; hundred percent mapping of religious seminaries has been completed in Punjab, Sindh and Federal Capital while KP and Balochistan are also in the process of completing it; Karachi operation was also launched after taking all the political forces into confidence; and across the board action is being taken against terrorists which will continue till elimination of last terrorist.

5. DAWN 11 Nov 2015

6. Pakistan Observer, July 23, 2015

7. 'Sluggish response to militancy'. Dawn editorial, published on April 10, 2016 can be accessed at: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1325957/sluggish-response-to-militancy>

8. 'Bilawal reiterates the need to implement NAP' The Express Tribune, February 19, 2017, can be accessed at: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1332333/bilawal-reiterates-need-implement-nap/>

9. *ibid.*

10. 'PM himself monitoring NAP: Senate told' Aaj TV, posted on February 13, 2017 can be accessed at: <http://aaj.tv/2017/02/pm-himself-monitoring-national-action-plan-senate>

Table 1: Tabular Overview of Implementation of NAP

No.	NAP Item	2015	2016	Remarks
1.	Implementation of death sentence of those convicted in cases of terrorism	345 executions in the first 13 months.	The number rose to 419.	<p>Lifting of the moratorium on the death penalty was considered controversial.</p> <p>Second highest number of executions worldwide.</p> <p>Only 16 percent of the 419 executions done so far were linked to terrorism. Even among those convicted of “terrorism,” a news report states that 88 percent had “no link to a terrorist organization or anything that can reasonably be defined as terrorism.”¹¹</p>
2.	Special trial courts under the supervision of Army. The duration of these courts would be two years.	<p>9 military courts were established; 3 in Punjab, 2 in Sindh, 1 in Balochistan, and 3 in KPK. (Ahmed, 2016).</p> <p>They convicted 40 individuals.</p>	The number of convictions rose to 85.	<p>The 21st amendment, passed on January 6, 2015, amended the constitution allowing the establishment of military courts (MCs) for a period of two years. The tenure was extended for another two years.</p> <p>In the first full year, these Mcs were not sufficient given the scale of the problem of terrorism and persisting state of neglect and oblivion. For instance, Sindh, which accounts for about 17 percent of the country's population, had 3,360 pending cases¹² in anti-terrorism courts (ATCs), and some festering in limbo for up to eight years. MCs, while constitutional and legal, are a stopgap solution to a longstanding systemic</p>
3.	Militant outfits and armed gangs will not be allowed to operate in the country.	<p>As per National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) claims,</p> <p>1,808 terrorists had been killed and 5,611</p>	The statistics followed a similar pattern, with 24% decline in murder incidents in the first half.	One way of gauging the efficacy of this objective can be evaluated by looking at statistics of post-NAP crime rates and terrorist activities, which have shown a downward trend and can be correlated with NAP.

11. Report by Justice Project Pakistan covered by News Report, 'Most Executions in Pakistan Unrelated to Terrorism,' Newsweek Pakistan. The News Report can be accessed at: <http://newsweekpakistan.com/most-executions-in-pakistan-unrelated-to-terrorism/>
12. 'Overburdened Sindh ATCs unable to decide 3,300 cases in time,' Dawn, can be accessed at: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1196577>
13. Article by Zeeshan Salahuddin, published on December by 24, 2016, The Diplomat, can be accessed at: <http://thediplomat.com/2016/12/is-pakistans-national-action-plan-actually-working/>

		<p>wounded.</p> <p>Murder cases decreased by 28.5 per cent as compared to 2014.</p> <p>There were a total of 1,009 terrorist attacks in Pakistan in 2015 compared to 1,823 in 2014 – a 45 per cent decrease.¹⁴</p> <p>Added 7,923 people in the fourth schedule. Added names of 188 hardcore militants on the Exit Control List.</p> <p>Movement of 2,081 hardcore militants has also been restricted. 1,026 cases registered, while 230 terror suspects have been arrested.¹⁵</p>		
4.	NACTA, the anti-terrorism institution will be strengthened	Hardly any tangible activity or progress to strengthen it	<p>Progress on NACTA Joint Intelligence Directorate: Member JID appointed, core group recruitment underway</p> <p>Office space: PMI Building allotted by PM/Capital Hotel Building hired (5 years)</p> <p>Budget 2016-17: Rs1.56 billion NCCM merger: Merged into National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) operations wing</p>	Tangible results are yet to be seen. Why action was not taken to activate NACTA during more than two and a half years.

14. US State Department quoted in 'What has NAP achieved so far?' by Saad Ahmed Dogar, Express Tribune, published on January 03, 2017. The article can be accessed at: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1307640/nap-achieved-far/>

15. As per data released by Ministry of Information, Broadcasting & National Heritage, which can be accessed at: http://infopak.gov.pk/InnerPage.aspx?Page_ID=46

			Human resources: 31 BS 17-22 officers, 73 BS 1-16 officers, recruitment advertised. ¹⁶	
5.	Strict action against the literature, newspapers and magazines promoting hatred, extremism, sectarianism and intolerance.	<p>There were a total of 1,009 terrorist attacks in Pakistan in 2015 compared to 1,823 in 2014 – a 45 per cent decrease.</p> <p>Added 7,923 people in the fourth schedule. Added names of 188 hardcore militants on the Exit Control List.</p> <p>Movement of 2,081 hardcore militants has also been restricted. 1,026 cases registered, while 230 terror suspects have been arrested.</p>	<p>The following is the progress:</p> <p>1,335 cases registered for hate speech/material</p> <p>2,465 people arrested for hate speech/material</p> <p>70 shops sealed for hate speech/material</p> <p>16,267 cases registered for misuse of loudspeakers</p> <p>16,824 people arrested for misuse of loudspeakers</p> <p>5,141 pieces of equipment linked to misuse of loudspeakers confiscated.¹⁷</p>	
6.	Choking financing for terrorist and terrorist organizations.		<p>Hawala/hundi cases Registered: 681 Under investigation: 102 Acquittals: 33 Arrests: 931 Recovery: Rs885.38m Anti-money laundering cases Total: 283 Under investigation: 136 Under trial: 147 Conviction: 0 Acquittals: 0 Arrests: 414 Suspicious transaction reports Received from FMU:</p>	

16. The data shared in the Senate on March 10, 2017 by Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan during the Question-Answer session can be accessed at: http://www.senate.gov.pk/uploads/documents/questions/1489117899_531.pdf

17. *ibid.*

			<p>148 Converted into cases: 32 Closed: 14 Under enquiry: 102 Countering Terrorism Finance units are being established in the provincial Counter-Terrorism Departments, and the CTF has been made an integral part of investigations under the ATA by the CTDs.</p> <p>Draft bill of the Anti-Money Laundering Act prepared.¹⁸</p>	
7.	Ensuring against re-emergence of proscribed organizations.	Islamic State (ISIS) was added in the list of 63 banned organizations.	<p>Two additional organizations were added: Jamat Ul Ahrar (JuA) and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi Al Alim (LeJA).¹⁹</p> <p>8,309 people on fourth schedule</p> <p>2,052 restrictions on movement enforced.</p>	
8.	Establishing and deploying a dedicated counter-terrorism force.	<p>Counter Terrorism Force (CTF) and Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) were established.</p> <p>Performance was not satisfactory.</p>	These CT forces have been further trained, equipped and activated.	
9.	Taking effective steps against religious persecution.	Glaring cases of religious persecution continued to be a perplexing problem.	No change in the situation	Mishal Khan lynching case in Mardan speaks volumes of the progress in this regard.
10.	Registration and regulation of religious seminaries.	<p>Registered 90% of the madrassas.</p> <p>Failed to regulate the curriculum.</p>	<p>Pace remained the same.</p> <p>The official form for registering the 26,465 seminaries did not</p>	The progress on this front has been confusing and sluggish.

18. *ibid.*

19. List of proscribed organizations published by NACTA can be accessed at: [http://www.nacta.gov.pk/Downloads/BannedOrganization\(Eng\).pdf](http://www.nacta.gov.pk/Downloads/BannedOrganization(Eng).pdf)

		<p>No tangible action against seminaries involved in militancy.</p> <p>Geo-tagging of 13,782 madrasas, 62,678 mosques and 2,925 places of worship of minorities in Punjab.</p> <p>Of total 8,286 NGOs, geotagging of 4,200 has been done while 3,427 have been registered.</p>	<p>have the prime minister's approval as of September, 2016.²⁰</p> <p>Geo-mapping of seminaries along standard parameters by Provincial Governments:</p> <p>Punjab: 100pc Sindh: 100pc KP: 75pc Balochistan: 60pc Fata: 85pc</p> <p>Seminaries closed by Provincial Governments:</p> <p>Punjab: 2 Sindh: 2,311 KP: 13 Balochistan: 1²¹</p>	
11.	Ban on glorification of terrorists and terrorist organizations through print and electronic media.	<p>933 URLs and 10 websites of militant organisations blocked.²²</p> <p>The Punjab Maintenance of Public Order (Amendment) Ordinance, 2015 enacted.²³</p>	<p>Strict implementation of ban on electronic media on airing content regarding proscribed organisations and their activists is being enforced</p>	
12.	Administrative and development reforms in FATA with immediate focus on repatriation of IDPs.	<p>No final decision was taken in this regard due to stiff resistance from Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl.</p>	<p>Committee constituted under Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz has submitted a report to the Federal Government on the matter.</p> <p>Further action is underway. The repatriation of IDPs is ongoing and in its third phase.</p>	<p>Pace of reforms and repatriation of IDPs is disappointingly slow for host of unavoidable reasons.</p>

20. As per Quetta Inquiry Commission Report, which can be accessed at:

http://www.supremecourt.gov.pk/web/user_files/File/QuettaInquiryCommissionReport.pdf

21. The data shared in the Senate on March 10, 2017 by Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan during the Question-Answer session can be accessed at: http://www.senate.gov.pk/uploads/documents/questions/1489117899_531.pdf

22. *ibid.*

23. Details can be found in the News Report, 'Punjab bans glorification of terrorists,' Dawn, which can be accessed at: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1158400>

13.	Communication network of terrorists will be dismantled completely.	Pakistan Electronic Crimes Act 2016 passed. 937 URLs and 10 websites of proscribed organisations blocked.	98.3 million unregistered SIMs blocked. ²⁴	Progress remained erratic.
14.	Measures against abuse of internet and social media for terrorism.			
15.	Zero tolerance for militancy in Punjab.	Police conducted 33,772 combing operations during the last ten months and 5,549 cases have been registered while 24,436 suspected criminals have been arrested. The Counter Terrorism Department also arrested 40 extremist activists and 547 cases were registered for publication of hate material.	Lahore's Gulshan-e-Iqbal Park in March tainted the "zero tolerance" element of this point.	Two suicide attacks in Lahore in 2017 further undermined the spirit of zero tolerance in Punjab.
16.	Ongoing operation in Karachi will be taken to its logical end.	Pakistan Rangers deployed in Karachi have claimed to have arrested 400 criminals since June 2014, with up to 60 per cent decrease in terror incidents. 3,000 hard-core criminals have been arrested, while 246 terrorists, 38 kidnapers and ten extortionists killed so far in police encounters.	The Karachi operation against terrorists and their facilitators has seen reduction in the following: Terrorism: 90pc Target killing: 91pc Murder: 62pc Robberies: 48pc Additionally, 33,378 weapons have been recovered by law enforcement agencies during the operation. ²⁵	

24. The data shared in the Senate on March 10, 2017 by Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan during the Question-Answer session can be accessed at: http://www.senate.gov.pk/uploads/documents/questions/1489117899_531.pdf

25. *ibid.*

		<p>Additionally, 15,400 illegal weapons have been recovered.</p> <p>Rangers arrested over 58,000 criminals. Of them, 9,570 were absconders while 630 were proclaimed offenders.</p> <p>1,731 murderers, 713 terrorists, 517 extortionists and 118 kidnappers have been arrested.</p>		
17.	Balochistan Government to be fully empowered for political reconciliation with complete ownership by all stakeholders.	No tangible and fundamental progress.	Steps towards Baloch reconciliation, surrender, reconciliation and rehabilitation of 'ferraris' in progress.	Slow and dismal progress
18.	Dealing firmly with sectarian terrorists.	<p>Arrested 15,259 clerics, religious teachers, and prayer leaders for delivering hate speech and inciting violence, and registered 14,869 cases.</p> <p>6,000 cases were registered against shop owners for selling hate materials</p>		
19.	Formulation of a comprehensive policy to deal with the issue of Afghan refugees, beginning with registration of all refugees.		380,000 registered refugees left Pakistan.	
20.	Revamping and reforming the criminal justice system.	No progress.	Chief Justice of Lahore High Court Syed Mansoor Ali Shah has established various committees to bring reforms to Punjab's judicial system but other provinces have not taken any step toward restructuring the high courts and district courts.	

Overview of the Status of Implementation of NAP in Punjab and its Comparison with Other Provinces

Of all the provinces, only Punjab seems to have shown better progress in implementing NAP. The Chief Minister Punjab Shahbaz Sharif had said that it was a matter of life and death. The Prime Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Nawaz Sharif appreciated the Punjab Government for taking the lead in implementing NAP for elimination of terrorism and extremism.²⁶ He asked the other provinces to speed up implementation of the plan, which had the backing of the entire political spectrum of the country.

The Chief Minister Punjab in fact prioritized the NAP according to the needs and capacity of his province by declaring that the Provincial Government was determined to act against militancy and crack down on edicts declaring specific groups 'kafir,' hate speech, illegally-run seminaries and acting against Afghan refugees still based in the province.

Within a few days of the unleashing of the NAP, the Prime Minister's Office had projected that Punjab was leading the pack, with a higher number of arrests by law-enforcement agencies.²⁷ The data showed that Punjab had higher figures on NAP implementation than all other provinces and Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

According to an official report, in first three months of 2015, 39 convicted criminals were executed; 14 in Punjab, five in Sindh and one in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, while other areas did not take any action during this period in this regard. Besides, 5,487 search operations were conducted in Punjab, 322 in Sindh, 1,223 in KP, 12 in Balochistan and 275 in Islamabad.²⁸

During this period 958 suspects were arrested from Punjab, 244 from Sindh, 234 from KP, 188 from Balochistan and 235 from Islamabad by LEAs.

Furthermore 436 people were identified for hate speech in Punjab and 17 in KP. Of these, 329 were arrested in

Punjab and 10 were picked up from KP.

Over misuse of loudspeakers, 2,837 cases were registered and 1,471 people were arrested in this connection in Punjab; 14 cases were in Islamabad and hardly any such action was reported from other provinces.

In Punjab 41 shops were sealed for selling hate material and confiscated such material from 1,085 different places. Punjab also took lead in monitoring the presence of Afghan refugees in the province and 166,000 refugees were registered. The Prime Minister's Office noted that it hadn't received any information on this account from other provinces. Punjab was also the only province where legislation was being prepared to deal with the glorification of terrorists.

As far as combating hatred, sectarianism, and intolerance is concerned, according to a report²⁹ law enforcement agencies arrested 15,259 clerics, religious teachers, and prayer leaders for delivering hate speech and inciting violence, and registered 14,869 cases. About 6,000 cases were registered against shop owners for selling hate materials.

More than a year later Punjab still seemed to be ahead of other provinces in implementation of NAP. In November 2016, the Interior Minister, Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan had a meeting with the Chief Minister Punjab, Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif, to discuss the progress on implementation of NAP in Punjab. The Chief Minister informed the Interior Minister that NAP was being implemented across Punjab and asserted that NAP's implementation was far faster in Punjab as compared to other provinces. The Interior Minister agreed with him and expressed satisfaction over implementation of NAP in the province.³⁰

The varying degree of implementation in Punjab and other provinces can be understood in the light of the fact that every organization is "a subsystem of a wider social system which is the source of the 'meaning,' legitimation, or higher-level support which makes the implementation of the organization's goals possible".³¹ Therefore the overall environment, social system and

26. 'PM chairs meeting on implementation of NAP,' The News, published on 24 Feb 2015 can be accessed at: <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/11069-pm-chairs-meeting-on-implementation-of-nap>

27. 'Punjab ahead of other provinces in anti-terror steps,' Dawn, 24 January 2015 can be accessed at: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1159091/punjab-ahead-of-other-provinces-in-anti-terror-steps>

28. *ibid*

29. 'Is Pakistan's national action plan actually working?' The Diplomat, 24 December 2016, can be accessed at: <http://thediplomat.com/2016/12/is-pakistans-national-action-plan-actually-working/>

30. 'Nisar, Shehbaz Agrees To Implement Nap Across Punjab,' Khyber News, published on November 4, 2016, can be accessed at: <https://khybernews.tv/nisar-shehbaz-agrees-to-implement-nap-across-punjab/>

31. Parsons, Talcot. (1962). *Some Ingredients of a General Theory of Formal Organization*. Pp. 59-96 in *Structure and Process in Modern Societies*, by Talcott Parsons. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.

will of the leader, the chief executive and his top-management set the pace of performance of the organizations. Organizations mimic each other and perform in a similar manner due to environmental influences. In Punjab if the overall performance of organizations and institutions is better than other provinces, their performance pertaining to NAP is bound to be better than that of other provinces.

Nevertheless, the comparison of better performance of Punjab with other provinces was not given any weight by the military. The Corps Commanders' conference held at the GHQ in second week of January 2017 expressed dissatisfaction over the sluggish implementation of NAP,³³ and did not distinguish Punjab for any better performance in this regard. It is mainly because the army looks at the NAP propelled counter-terrorism campaign from the prism of its successful counter-insurgency efforts in FATA and wants the implementation of NAP to be equally aggressive and successful.

Punjab had been trying to meet these expectations of military leadership as it killed a number of sectarian terrorists in encounters. The dreaded Malik Ishaq, Chief of LeJ was killed alongwith his sons and accomplices in an encounter by the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) in July 2015.³³ Similarly in January 2017 Rizwan Ali Asif, alias Asif Chhoto, who had succeeded Malik Ishaq as the chief of proscribed LeJ was killed along with three other militants, in an encounter by CTD in Muzaffargarh.³⁴

Nevertheless, two horrendous terrorist attacks in Lahore in 2017; one in January at the Mall Road and the other in March at Bedian Road; in which senior police officers and army men including the civilians were killed and injured belied the claims of superior counter terrorism efforts by the Punjab. It can be said that though Punjab has been more enthusiastic and active in implementation of NAP than other provinces, a lot is left to be desired to ensure effective implementation of NAP that could show tangible and long-lasting results on all 20 points in Punjab.

Institutional Mechanisms for Monitoring the Implementation of NAP in Pakistan

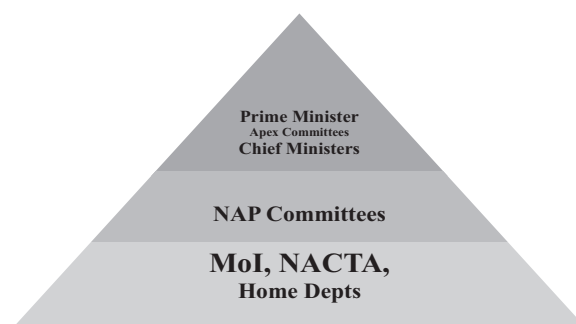
Effective implementation and monitoring of NAP is possible only if there is a comprehensive strategy to address all its points in a deliberate and planned manner. There is also a need to devise the benchmarks and yardsticks of successes.

The existing three-tier structure in the shape of NAP comprises Federal Apex Committee, National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA), and Provincial Apex Committees. This is the institutional mechanism to implement the plan headed by the Prime Minister. The Federal Apex Committee, which comprises nine cabinet members as well as forces and intelligence chiefs, is responsible for providing policy guidelines. At the provincial level, the main institutional mechanism is the Provincial Apex Committee, which is headed by the respective chief ministers and is comprised of provincial heads of police, administration, intelligence and security departments.³⁵

The monitoring should be done at the highest levels, i.e. the Chief Ministers and the Prime Minister Office. Provincial Home Departments should generate reports on monthly basis and provide to the Ministry of interior and NACTA for further action.

The Home Departments should procure these reports from the LEAs, intelligence agencies and civil society groups on specially designed proformas. NACTA should provide the same to the NAP committees to analyze and make the final reports. After processing, NAP committees should send the reports to NACTA for onward transmission to the Chief Ministers and the Prime Minister for their perusal. These reports should be discussed in the meetings of the Apex committees for further necessary action.

Figure 1: Monitoring Structure



32. Expediting NAP Implementation. Business Recorder. 15 March 2017. <http://fp.brecorder.com/2017/03/20170315154150/>

33. Lashkar-i-Jhangvi chief Malik Ishaq, two sons killed in Muzaffargarh 'encounter'. Dawn, 29 July 2015, can be accessed at: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1197098>

34. Daily Security Brief. Peace & Security. <http://www.cpss.com.pk/daily-security-brief-6/>

35. Ramay, S. A. (2016). National Action Plan: Implementation Gaps and Successes. Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI). Retrieved from <https://sdpi.org/publications/files/National-Action-Plan-Implementation-Gaps-and-Successes.pdf>

Performance and successes should not be quantified on basis of high or low numbers of actions alone. The quality and impact of actions should be taken into consideration too.

The analysis of the progress should have bearing on the concerned departments and the ministries. Shortcomings and shortfalls must be pointed out and solutions should be given to overcome the same.

All departments, especially the Ministry of Interior, Home Departments and NACTA, should ensure to display the performance on their websites. A dashboard should be established in the offices of the Chief Ministers and the Prime Minister to monitor the implementation of NAP on daily basis.

Major Obstacles Impeding Implementation of NAP in Punjab and Pakistan

Capacity Issues: The fact is that implementation of NAP is a gigantic task. Provincial Governments need strong will and capacity to implement the tall order. Provinces do not have the capacity and may be will in some areas to implement it all at once. The LEAs and intelligence agencies need huge resources to tackle issues like madrassa reforms, hate-speech, proscribed organizations, and sectarian organizations and their die-hard workers. The provinces are fearful that fall outs can be beyond their control and they lack capabilities to handle them.

Absence of CT Strategy: Another problem is varying approaches of provinces towards implementation of NAP. Punjab is faring well (though its performance is not entirely upto mark) but others are lagging behind in this context. Karachi is doing well in some aspects. The Law Enforcement and intelligence agencies are also not operating in a cohesive manner. Mostly their efforts are reactive and disjointed. These problems arise due to lack of national counter terrorism strategy, which can mention clear roles, tasks, and timelines.

Political Obstructions: Some political quarters, especially in Sindh, are plagued withan apprehension that Rangers and anti-terror laws can be used against them and their workers. Resultantly they are not ready to go all out for the implementation of NAP, rather they try to keep its pace slow and scattered.

Religio-political Parties: Religio-political parties resist implementation of anumber of points of NAP. The pressure of religio-political parties on the federal and provincial governments is one of the most

obtrusive obstacles in the effective implementation of NAP.

Excessive NAP Committees: Sixteen NAP committees are too much in number to be useful and effective. These committees comprise of almost the same members.

Skewed yardstick of success: We consider lull in terrorist attacks as success and lower our guards and consequently NAP starts falling apart.

Election fever will effect NAP: In coming days focus on NAP is most likely to peter out. The general elections are round the corner and political fever is already catching up. Gradually the federal and provincial governments will become too engrossed in the hectic preparations for the fight for their survival. NAP will be its most significant casualty. The terrorists must be closely watching the situation and would pounce into action.

Recommendations:

- i. There should be a properly articulated and officially announced National CT strategy that may attribute specific roles to the governments, departments, law enforcement agencies and intelligence agencies to operate in unison. It may also lay down objectives and give timelines to achieve the objectives.
- ii. Keeping in view the gigantic tasks of NAP and correspondingly feeble capabilities of provinces and the State it is imperative to prioritize and strategize various aspects of 20 points of NAP for implementation.
- iii. At the same time all out efforts must be taken to build capacity and capabilities of law enforcement agencies, intelligence agencies and judiciary so that they could address the challenges with confidence and in a professional manner.
- iv. Instead of 16 committees formed to monitor the progress of NAP, which are mostly headed and manned by common members, it is needed to lessen the number of committees to four or even two to make the process more effective and speedy. It will make them effective to get the reports from NACTA, MoI and Home Departments for proper monitoring and implementation.
- v. NACTA must be activated and empowered to bring about cooperation between the centre and the provinces for uniform implementation of NAP. Convening of meeting of its Board of Governors can revive its strength.
- vi. The efficacy of systematic and sustained monitoring system at the highest level should be made meaningful and visible through fair and firm action against the laggards and spoilers. Dead wood should be removed and heads should be made to roll on any glaring incident of terrorism.
- vii. A Counter Narrative Organization must be established to project our narrative and defuse the misleading narrative of terrorists and extremists in a sustained manner.
- viii. In order to save NAP from falling prey to the apathy likely to be caused by pre-election political wrangling, National Security Council should be empowered to oversee implementation of NAP from January 2018 till the new government comes into power after the general elections.

Conclusion

NAP is a promising plan, which could have fared better. Sans strategies, the LEAs, intelligence agencies and other departments fell short of attaining the desired momentum, thus failed to deliver. The mechanism to monitor the implementation by the NAP committees, apex committees and NACTA has remained dysfunctional. Lackadaisical implementation of NAP has earned criticism from all quarters including the army, judiciary, media and political leaders. Some respite however came from the Punjab, as it is believed to have performed better than other provinces. The credit goes to its Chief Minister who has been striving hard to improve the overall governance that is reflected in NAP related performance as well.

Despite improvement in the security situation across Pakistan dissatisfaction over the implementation of NAP by all quarters requires the government to ensure its effective implementation forthwith. It can be guaranteed through introduction of national counter terrorism strategy and by constant monitoring of NAP in an institutionalized manner.

A new spate of terrorism across Pakistan in the first five months of 2017 speaks volumes of the resilience and resurgence of the terrorists. It is feared that as the general elections are getting closer there would be an increase in the incidents of terrorism. Conversely, there is a likelihood that NAP might fall from the priority list and suffer from further neglect as the government and the political parties would gradually get engrossed in the election campaigns. The need of the hour is to implement this promising plan in letter and spirit. The nation has gone through a lot of agony during the last more than a decade therefore defeat is not an option.



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