

Pakistan's Approach toward National Security Strategy (2014-2020)

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ABSTRACT

Pakistan's National Security Strategy (NSS) from 2014 to 2018 are the subject of this study. The National Action Plan (NAP) or National Security Strategy was adopted in 2014 after the Army Public School Peshawar incident. The concerned policy formulated to investigate the basic causes of terrorism in Pakistan and also proposed counter terrorism policy for tackling these serious threats. The policymakers also anticipated a Comprehensive Response Plan (CRP) as a soft component of NSS to win the public's trust and confidence in countering extremism in the country. The National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) has assigned the concerned work regarding counter terrorism. The effectiveness of NAP and the role of NACTA in combating militancy, extremism, and terrorism, as well as turning around the volatile security environment, has been examined in this research paper.

Keywords: Terrorism, Extremism, National Action Plan, Comprehensive Response Plan. National Counter Terrorism Authority

Introduction

On February 26, 2014, Pakistan announced its first ever National Internal Security Policy (NISP-I), with the aim of combatting terrorism and militancy threats that has wreaked havoc. The first ever policy document produced by the federal government that looked at the causes of terrorism in depth and offered comprehensive guidelines for dealing with the dangers. The 94-pages NISP-I text addressed various complexities of terrorism and outlined a comprehensive roadmap to eradicate the threat from Pakistan.

To address the issue of extremism, the NISP used a two-pronged approach. The first approach is based on the realization that militancy cannot be defeated solely by the use of military force. As a response, policymakers envisioned a Comprehensive Response Plan (CRP), which was essentially the soft component of the NISP. Its central goal was to build the public's trust and confidence in countering extremism and terrorism. The government was concerned not just about stomping on the heads of terrorists, but also about the hardships and suffering that terrorist attacks and military operations may entail. In other words, it sought to take a more comprehensive tactic rather than a piecemeal one.

One of the concerns planned to be handled by CRP was the repair of several infrastructure facilities that had been demolished and destroyed as a result of terrorism. This included educational institutions such as schools, universities, and hospitals, as well as highways, communication networks, and energy supply lines. The losses were to be assessed by all relevant agencies. The National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) was formed to deeply monitor the whole process in the form of coordinating agency.

Additional goal of CRP was to rehabilitate all citizens of terror-affected areas, with a particular emphasis on the most disadvantaged members of society, such as women, children, and the elderly. The recovery process was to utilize funds provided by the government as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs). NACTA will be in charge of overseeing the recovery process and ensuring that all those participating in it were working together (NACTA Act, 2014). Reintegration was another critical aspect of NISP-I that was included in the soft portion. This included integrating Madrassahs into the educational system and ensuring that they were governed by the law. One of the most important goals was to create a unified national discourse to tackle the menace of terror and militant activities. While handling this issue help of religious scholars, the intelligentsia, the media, and educational institutions will be taken. The main goal of this part was to clear up misconceptions about militancy and expose the militants' ideological foundations.

CRP was also proposed as a means of overhauling the current legal system. This element was created to address flaws in the prevailing judicial system related to criminal, close gaps that militants often exploit. It is worth mentioning that the NACTA was in charge of putting all of the above suggestions into effect. Composite Deterrence Plan was the name given to the NISP's hard part (CDP). It included everything from reorganizing the NISA to enhance its capacity as reactive one rather than its proactive outlook. One of its features was to foster the desired and required harmonious and cooperative relationship among the country's secret agencies.

All kind of illicit activities that produces and nurturing rift and insecurity i.e., targeted killing, extortion, abduction for money were placed under NISP-1. Besides, safeguarding of sensitive institutions and installations, de-weaponization, stopping all types of medias i.e., social, electronic and print from the spreading of radical interpretations were all supposed to be secured under this portion of NISP-I. Furthermore, the Composite Deterrence Plan included tasks such as integrating the national data base and registration system to recognize people residing in various parts of the country, their belongings, and border control mechanisms to regulate the lawful movement of Afghan refugees and put a stop to any unauthorized movement of people, drugs, and firearms.

The CDP (Directorate of Internal Security formed under NACTA to synchronise the operations and activities of 33 military and civilian intelligence agencies. The Directorate of Internal Security (DIS) was established by the CDP to synchronise the duties and activities of 33 military and civilian intelligence and operational entities operating under NACTA. To isolate the militants, a proper scheme for disrupting their transnational network, aimed at cutting off their financial link, was to be launched. To that end, the international community's cooperation will be sought, as well as observance of anti-money laundering regimes. The concerned paper is qualitative nature and descriptive analysis of the secondary data has been followed to draw conclusion in this research.

Approaches towards NISP (2014-2020)

The National Internal Security Policy is one of the most important contributions of democratic government and the All-Party Conference. (NISP-2014). It has been well-designed, with major security agencies, civilians, and military leaders. The implementation of NISP in its true sense is the big task ahead. Its implementation will put the civilian government's seriousness to the test. The government is currently dealing issues such as law and order and governance issues, particularly in Baluchistan and tribal districts. The present government would have a difficult time implementing NISP under these circumstances. The state's will and authority will be put to the test in this regard. The civilian government's political will be put to the test in implementing NISP-2014 (Khosa, 2014). However, the Ministry of Interior (MOI), in this regard raises serious allegations. Various steps outlined in the NISP, such as madrassah registration, developing a policy against terrorism and creating a cooperative environment among the security agencies yet to be properly implemented in the state.

Arshi Saleem Hashmi and Muhammad Saqib (2017) reveal that counter financing terrorism is one of the most serious problems facing civilian government. There are two forms of funding available. First, financial support is provided to various madrassas and second, the financial support provided to extremist groups that work against the state's will. The former is primarily based on sectarian concerns. Saudi Arabia and its Sunni-allied states usually fund Sunni-run madrassas. Iran, on the other hand, is a major supporter of Shia sect madrassas. The government faces a significant challenge in taking steps to control such funds. The government attempted to register madrassas in Pakistan through the NISP-2014. It was also intended to investigate the financing of these madrassas. Religious political parties, on the other hand, were opposed to such government actions. Money laundering and terrorist financing should be addressed with particular urgency. Similarly, the latter support is primarily aimed at reinforcing extremist groups that are working against the state's interests. These groups are constantly working against the state's authority. The law and order situation was worsening as a result of their militant activities, particularly in Baluchistan. (Hashmi and Saqib, 2017).

According to Rana (2010), In Pakistan today, extremism is characterized in a variety of ways by different people. Some people describe it in terms of their political disagreements with others. Some define it in terms of theology, while others define it in terms of social differences. Extremism is difficult to eradicate in such a situation. The definition of extremism must be agreed upon. It would only be possible to eradicate this evil from Pakistani society. The main problem for NISP is the lack of a consensus-based definition of extremism and terrorism.

The militancy in Baluchistan is the most difficult test for NISP-2014. There are two types of issues in this province right now. The ethnic-based movements in Balochistan is the first issue. This type of movement has a long history, but it reached its apex during President General Parvez Musharraf's regime. The second issue is sectarian in nature marked by religious differences between Shia and Sunnis. According to Malik (2014), Deobandi Sunni sectarian groups claim responsibility for the majority of attacks against Hazara Shias. These organisations carry out their activities on a regular basis. It's difficult to give NISP credit for working successfully in the turbulent province of Baluchistan.

Another significant challenge to national security policy was discussed by Farooq (2014). He believes that political parties have not shown seriousness in developing security policy. It took six months, to

make this policy. This strategy was developed with the participation of all political parties. These political parties, on the other hand, showed little interest and made no substantial recommendations for this security policy. The Muttahida Qaumi Movement was the only exception in this respect. This lack of enthusiasm reveals that the security policy was not developed in collaboration with all political groups. The true reason for this rise in interest is because two provinces, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, are not ruled by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, the dominant party at the federal level (PML-N). The lack of interest displayed by both provincial administrations and other opposition parties in crafting national security policy indicates how difficult it is to put in place in these two key provinces.

One of the major issues for NIPS-2014, according to Hussain (2016), is "the working of banned militant and sectarian outfits operating under new banners." The government does not adequately monitor the banned organizations, allowing them to regroup under different names. Despite the fact that the NISP-2014 states that banned militant and sectarian organizations will not be allowed to operate under new names, the government has yet to take any serious steps to put this section of the NISP-2014 into effect.

The main goal of this body, according to Zaidi (2014), is to increase the level of coordination between all intelligence agencies. Controlling terrorist activities in the country is difficult without adequate and coordinated intelligence. Pakistan has more than enough intelligence agencies at the moment. The NISP correctly addresses this issue, emphasizing that the "main responsibilities are improving intelligence coordination." Similarly, reforms in madrassahs and deradicalization of the youth are required. It will assist the government in reducing extremism and terrorist threats. De-radicalized youth would positively contribute to the state's peace and prosperity. The NISP can function correctly and efficiently in such situations. Furthermore, the militant prisoner must be de-radicalized. They must go through a rehabilitation program.

According to Zaidi (2014), Pakistani society is "deeply divided by emotive discourses." There are a lot of people who have soft corner for extremists. These militants usually rely upon an extreme interpretation of religion. It is necessary to create a robust yet inclusive discourse on religious interpretation. Likewise, existing institutions are sufficient to combat the violent extremism. Lack of capacity is the most pressing issue that needs to be address. Instead of being replaced by new forces like the Rapid Response Force, organizations like the Frontier Constabulary (FC) and the Islamabad Capital Territory Police (ICT) must be given proper attention for capacity building. The creation of new forces results in force redundancy. Creation of new forces gave birth to two kinds of issues. The work of these forces is intertwined and the spheres of influence aren't well defined. Their functions and powers are overlap. Second, such actions on the part of the government place a financial burden. Instead of making the current forces more effective, funds have been allocated for the establishment of new forces.

After evaluating the positive aspects of NISP, Safi (2014) turns his attention to the security policy's flaws. "The National Internal Security Apparatus (NISA) approach needs to be changed from a reactive to a proactive approach with a positive attitude toward internal security issues," he believes. It is a common tragic attitude of all governments that they respond to terrorists' actions. The real need is to ensure proactive counter terrorism measures that will protect life, property, and liberty of the citizens

of the state. Government responses are only beneficial for short term and unable to address the public complaints and provision of security.

Another gap that was left at the time of NISP promulgation was that the government did not seek the opportunity in Senate of Pakistan. It was because the government lacked majority in Senate. Instead of all of these flaws, Hameed (2014) pointed out that the NISP's positive aspect was that it acknowledged for the first time that there was a lack of cooperation among Pakistan's security and intelligence agencies. Prior to the NISP-2014, this fact was often overlooked. NISP is the only approach that has properly addressed this problem. Any problem will be resolved, but the first step is to recognize the issue. Now that it has been established, the government need to take it seriously in order to enforce it.

NACTA is mostly responsible for the above problems and need to play its part as a think-tank in this regard. While several such proposals had been drawn up previously, none had received adequate attention, financial support, or working space. As a result, such proposals were never implemented. NACTA will recognize causes of terrorism. A research agenda dictated by others would be useless. Researchers would be unable to adequately recognize the causes that contribute to terrorist attacks if the government or state agencies dictate to them. NACTA has to see the flow of tasks assigned to it which is the main reason for its creation (Butt, 2011).

While certain militant groups, such as Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT) and Jaesh-e-Muhammad (JeM), do not pose a threat to Pakistani state institutions or citizens, their splinter branches have joined anti-state rebels over time. These organizations are thought to be backed by some elements of Pakistan's military establishment. Raza Rumi believes that the military's job is to protect society rather than to define it. As a consequence, successive military dictators have neglected the aims of state and nation building. Their understanding of state defence is founded on their perception of India as a constant threat. As a result of this viewpoint, some elements within the military establishment have been accused of supporting such groups. Similarly, intelligence agencies are hesitant to exchange information with other government agencies, such as NACTA (Rumi, 2015).

Military measures like these are risky for the state's future stability. These days, terrorists have links to even more dangerous organizations such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS. Farhan Zahid claims that Pakistan's future will be secure only if all militant organizations are eradicated from the country's soil. These organizations are not under the jurisdiction of state agencies or institutions, which can make them more harmful to our state's future and security.

Apart from that, the Balochistan crisis is a serious issue. These insurgencies are attracting a growing number of local people. The government must deal with this problem. "The state must properly resolve the grievances of the Baloch people. Ejaz Haider says" It's critical to recognize our misguided policies, which have exacerbated the issue. "Acknowledging our contribution to today's problems is a vital first step toward course correction".

Conclusion

National Internal Security Policy NIPS (2014 and 2018) were the systematic plans to combat the threat of violent extremism. It has nearly resolved all of the factors that have a significant impact on the country's internal stability.

National Internal Security Policy (NIPS) is a first of its kind it came from the civilian leadership, which had previously been thought to be the sole domain of the security establishment. To control this menace, the text calls for coordination among various operational and intelligence agencies, as well as the mobilization of all relevant entities and the mobilization of the entire society. This strategy correctly identified the issues and recommended a highly successful remedy. However, unless the strategy is followed to the letter and spirit, it is just a piece of paper.

This is where the otherwise carefully drafted internal security documents will go astray. NACTA was given the leading role in bringing this text to life, but it was unable to do so because it was not made an efficient and well-functioning entity. The new Directorate of Intelligence, which was supposed to bring the various intelligence and operational activities together and organize them, is in a similar situation. The explanation for this is that there is a trust gap between civil and military institutions on one side, and the federal and provincial governments on the other.

According to Ahmad's report, national security policy has failed to understand the low number of police officers (2014). "The total strength of Peshawar city police stands at 6000, though experts say that 11000 is sufficient for the population of 6.7 million," according to the study. The same issue exists in Karachi, which has 26,667 workers compared to a requirement of 100,000.

The authorities have ignored madrassah regulation and their role in instilling a mentality favourable to militants, as well as their role in providing financial help in the form of fund raising on their behalf. "The support that terrorist groups receive from the madrasah of the twin cities," according to an Azeem (2014) report. It is alleged that religious seminaries act as couriers for militant organizations. "Religious parties are still putting up barriers to integrating madrassas into mainstream education and oppose regularization."

The state institution's towards policy thinking has hampered the formulation of a consistent and clear policy against militants. It has also allowed anti-state militants to manoeuvre and hide among the chosen militants, who are typically thought to as good Taliban.

Though the NIPS was a civilian government initiative aimed at asserting civilian supremacy over issues traditionally considered to be the domain of the military, the policies that followed the tragedy at the Army Public School in Peshawar ended up bolstering the military establishment's grip on security matters. The government's decision to establish the military court instead of improving the legal system, particularly the criminal justice system, was a clear deviation from the recommendations of the National Internal Security Policy.

Ironically, NISP had correctly defined the redundancies in security and intelligence services while also recommending the establishment of additional institutions. The formation of the Rapid Response Force (RRF) at the federal level is an example, as the current Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) may be changed to execute all of the tasks assigned to RRF. This is a detrimental side effect of the defence apparatus, as well as an undue financial burden on the public purse.

Another element of the NISP draft that has been ignored is the fact that each province has a particular type of militancy that needs to be addressed separately. For example, in Sindh, law and order is a problem due to urban terrorism, which is fuelled by political patronage of criminal bands by political parties based on ethnicity. While religiously inspired terrorism plays a role in worsening the law and

order situation, the main contributor is the province's turf war among the political parties. Punjab has its own dynamics, which are mostly sectarian in nature. Baluchistan, on the other hand, is experiencing an insurgency that is very different from that of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa or FATA. It is not practical to provide a single NISP for the entire country in such a situation. The participation of provincial governments in the creation of the NISP was not sought. As a result, when implementing this strategy, a broad generalization was used.

Curriculum reform is one of the big issues that the government must handle properly. There is no consensus on how to design curriculum, especially at the school level, which should be inclusive. People should not be classified in the curriculum based on their religious beliefs or sectarian affiliations. In the country's textbooks, a general message of mutual humanity must shine. Unfortunately, previous governments' attempts have been thwarted by the current religious parties, especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Our children become extremists as a result of this categorization, particularly in their religious outlook. This issue was not adequately addressed by NISP. Terrorism is not solely the product of anti-American animosity and insecurity in India. It was not fully caused by the US invasion of Afghanistan, as some have claimed. Terrorism had been present on Pakistani soil even before 9/11. It was present as a result of President General Zia's Jihadist policies. However, after the US and NATO forces invaded Afghanistan, it developed at an unprecedented pace.

The NISP loophole could only be closed by adequately resolving the problems that are currently unaddressed in the security policy. Think tanks must update their security policies in light of input from various analysts and academics working on the terrorism issue. The province's input and political consensus are important in this regard. To incorporate NISP in its true sense, the federal government must also take it seriously. In this way, the NISP's desired results could be realized, and our land could be made even safer for its people.

The role of the media in this respect is also crucial. Terrorists must not be portrayed as heroes in the media. There is a need for a counter-narrative based on consensus in the fight against terrorism. The role of the media is also critical in this respect. In today's world, media is a powerful tool. Rather than disseminating sensational news, it must play a positive role in the fight against terrorism. Similarly, the government must implement effective security protocols and judge protection programs. Military tribunals are not a long-term solution for combating terrorism. The real need is for the government's judicial branch to be strengthened. It is also necessary to provide security and protection to witnesses who are testifying against terrorists.

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