

4.2 National Action Plan: a year in review

The National Action Plan (NAP) has completed its two years. The pace and success of implementation of NAP measures were far from satisfactory in 2016. Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif himself expressed dissatisfaction over the implementation of NAP many times during the year.

A major hurdle in the way of effective implementation of the NAP was the lack of a centralized mechanism. To deal with the issue, civil and military leadership appointed the National Security Adviser to the PM Lt. Gen. (retd.) Nasser Khan Janjua to monitor the progress on the NAP. On the other hand, security institutions made a few adjustments in their operational strategies but failed to completely transform their counterterrorism approach. In 2016, the terrorists' operational infrastructure and support networks, albeit weakened, remain intact.²⁰³

The formation of a new NAP monitoring committee under Lt. Gen. (retd.) Janjua reflected the fire-fighting approach of the government, as the national-level apex committee, and provincial-level apex committees comprising civil-military leadership, were already formed for similar purposes.²⁰⁴ The Interior Ministry and NACTA also have similar roles. Meanwhile, Chairman Senate Mian Raza Rabbani has suggested the formation of a

parliamentary oversight committee of NAP.²⁰⁵ But the government preferred to establish another monitoring committee.

It appears that the government invested much on monitoring the implementation of the NAP, rather to directly invest in the counterterrorism initiatives. Such approaches shift the burden on to the police and its counterterrorism departments, which are merely operational forces. To neutralize the pressure, police and other law enforcement agencies have tendencies to adopt extra-judicial measures.²⁰⁶ The police always need strategic insight of the government and support of other institutions to make their operations effective. This in itself not only exposes the capacity gaps of the implementing institutions, but also brings the structural dichotomies on the surface, resultantly causing confusions on some points of the NAP, especially pertaining to the status of banned organizations and madrasa reforms in the country. Few analysts point out that the NAP is too much military-centric, squeezing the space of the civilians.²⁰⁷

In view of the security landscape in 2016, a comprehensive review of the progress on the NAP in a year will help to identify the critical challenges, which are needed to be adjusted in the national counterterrorism plan.

The report will not only examine the progress on each NAP point in 2016 but

also identify the gaps in the state responses. In 2015, Pak Institute for Peace Studies had done a comprehensive exercise to review one-year progress on the NAP and invited leading experts to contribute their valuable insights and comments. The institute contacted several of these experts again to seek their views on the developments. A comparison of their views is also part of this report, which can help to measure the success level of the NAP.

4.2.1 Progress on NAP points

1. Execution of convicted terrorists:

The National Action Plan had conceived the execution of convicted terrorists as a deterrent factor, though there was no empirical evidence available to endorse the notion. The architects of the NAP put so-called deterrent element at the top, but two years of the practice prove the perception wrong. According to the last two year's data of compiled by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, only 29 were the terrorist convicted out of 426 executions.²⁰⁸ The experts see a security centric approach behind the point and argue lengthy imprisonment sentences have more impact.²⁰⁹

The government considers executions simple solution rather investing in high security prisons for terrorists and other dangerous criminal. Punjab province has built first high security prison in 2015²¹⁰,

but maintaining such prisons required trained staff and resources. The government has to reconsider its policy of deterrent and need to focus more on concrete measures for countering terrorism.

2. Speedy military courts:

Since January 2015, the military courts have convicted at least 157 people, of whom 153 people have been sentenced to death.²¹¹ According to a report by the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), military courts had until mid-2016 tried 105 civilian militants, among who 81 were found guilty with 77 awarded death sentences while four given life sentences.²¹² The report also said that the heirs of 17 people convicted by military courts had alleged that the convicts were denied a right to a fair trial in petitions to the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

The power of military courts will lapse on January 5, 2017. Initially, the government was giving an impression that it would not extend the 21st amendment of the constitution under which the military courts were established.²¹³ But towards the end of the year, media quoting interior ministry sources claimed that government has prepared the draft of a new law, integrating the Protection of Pakistan Act and Anti-Terrorism Act, while giving military courts permanent status.²¹⁴ The experts and watchdogs also do not see any advantage of the special powers to

security forces to detain individuals for prolonged periods. Instead, they suggest that parliament should deal with the issue as it did in the case of the Protection of Pakistan Act, 2014; when that law expired in July, parliament simply opted to do nothing.²¹⁵ The government and judiciary have to work on judicial reforms and to make sure speedy trials of terrorism cases, rather adopted an ad hoc approach.

3. Armed militias and banned militant groups:

NAP's points 3 and 7 deal with a similar kind of challenge. The point 3 shows commitment of the state that militant outfits and armed gangs will not be allowed to operate in the country and the point 7 reflects practical approach that the defunct outfits will not be allowed to operate under any other name. However, the ambiguity remains surrounded by these two points.

The federal government has added two more organizations in the list of proscribed militant groups in 2016. Lashkar-e-Jhangvi Al-Alami²¹⁶ and Jamaatul Ahrar²¹⁷, a splinter group of the TTP, are the new entries in the list for their involvement in terrorist activities across the country. The list of total number of banned groups now stands at 63, available on the website of National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA).

However, the banned groups dominated the debate on internal security in Pakistan in 2016 and, at time, caused rift among civil

and military leaderships. The reaction of the civil and military leaderships over the Cyril Almeida's story published in *Dawn*²¹⁸ on October 7, 2016 was the reflection of the seriousness of the issue. Security experts argue that the existing ambiguities on the status of certain banned militant groups are a major hurdle in the way of eradicating the terrorism and extremism from the society. Many banned groups usually take refuge behind anti-Indian rhetoric. State institutions have not even bothered to categorically disown these groups, which once again confuses the ordinary Pakistani citizen.²¹⁹ The point of an effective implementation of the ban on these organizations was included in the NAP because these organizations provide not only ideological legitimacy to terrorist groups but also a conducive environment for their operations. The banned organizations also have encroached on far-right territory and, if this process continues, they will erode the socio-cultural fabric of society.²²⁰

In this perspective, a clear and comprehensive approach is required to deal with the banned organizations in the country. First and immediate task for federal government would be to rationalize the list of banned organizations and divide it into different categories. The NACTA website only contains the names of the banned organizations and does not provide any reasons of banning them and record of their terrorist, criminal, anti-state activities. This is important not only for

legal and operational purposes but also for the public awareness. The list can be divided into at least 2 broad categories: the groups who have been and have not been functional over the last five years. There is also need to divide the groups into separate categories, based on who are involved in violence and terrorism inside the country and those who have such record out of the country. A clear distinction between ethnic, nationalist militant groups and religious groups is also required, because it confuses the debate on the issue and creates problem in the policy formulations. The current list puts three organizations, including Jamaatud Daawa (JuD) in schedule 2 (under observation), while brackets two organizations as enlisted under UNSCR. However, the UNSCR list²²¹ includes the names of nine Pakistani militant groups including JuD. If the state has any reasons behind this distinction, it should be mentioned. At the same time, no mechanism has been evolved to exclude the names of the groups, who have become non-functional or wanted to quit the path of militancy and extremism.

4. Strengthening and activation of NACTA:

Comparing with previous years, The National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) was more active in 2016. The authority got its official webpage,²²² which also includes a long awaiting official list of banned organizations and number of

registered religious seminaries in the country.²²³ A "Red Book" of terrorists was prepared containing complete information and profiles of the terrorists.²²⁴ Interior Minister told the upper house of the Parliament that the long awaiting Joint Intelligence directorate would start functioning soon.²²⁵ It was the core mandates of the NACTA to provide and share intelligence and information with relevant enforcement agencies. The authority has also formed the steering committee and core experts group to formulate the Counter Extremism policy.²²⁶

The measures taken by the NACTA could be considered as a modest beginning, but the pace of progress is not compatible with the scale of the terrorism and extremism challenges. Former National Coordinator of NACTA Khawaja Khalid Farooq thinks that the interior minister is keeping NACTA under his administrative control whereas the NACTA Act mentions it must be placed under the prime minister.²²⁷ Former head of the counterterrorism authority, Tariq Pervez, has also similar concerns and thinks that the NACTA cannot be called functional unless the legal requirement of holding the body's board of governors²²⁸ meeting is fulfilled²²⁹.

5. Countering hate speech and extremist material:

The police have shown progress on this front, but this is a huge challenge. Minister

of State for Interior Baleegh-ur-Rahman sharing the final progress report of the year on the implementation of NAP in Senate claimed that 1,365 cases had been registered across the country over hate speeches, 2,454 people had been arrested and 70 shops sealed after recovery of hate literature. Similarly, 1,526 cases about misuse of loudspeaker were registered.²³⁰

The police have succeeded in creating an environment at local level where individuals and Imams of the mosques have become careful in their sermons. However, the religious extremists are increasingly using the tactic of converting religious rage into mob anger where it becomes difficult for police to register cases.

6. Choking terror financing:

To curb terrorism financing the government has taken few major initiatives in 2016. First, the establishment of a national task force to curb terror financing and weaken militants' resources of finance and funding under NACTA.²³¹ The task force will comprise representatives of federal and provincial governments as well as from nongovernmental organizations, or NGOs.

State Bank of Pakistan has instructed all banks in the country to freeze accounts linked to 2,021 individuals listed on the Fourth Schedule of the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) 1997.²³² Most among 2,021

individuals were linked to sectarian groups and organizations.²³³

The State Bank of Pakistan has also issued new guidelines in form of a circular that aim to prevent the possible use of the banking sector for money laundering, terrorist financing and illegal transfer of funds. President of Pakistan Mamnoon Hussain has issued an ordinance empowering Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) to take adequate measures against fraud, money laundering and terror financing. According to the issued Companies Ordinance 2016, the SECP is empowered to investigate and also conduct a joint investigation.²³⁴

Because financing for terror activities is carried out through informal channels, regulatory measures by the State Bank could be only limitedly effective to check flow of terror financing. The measures are important, but the scope of freezing the bank accounts of individuals linked with banned militant groups should be across the board and transparent. It should not target specific militant groups. Moreover, accounts of individuals have been frozen, whereas no action has been taken against accounts of banned groups. A comprehensive action covering both traditional and non-traditional sources was required instead of just targeting the normal banking, which only few terrorists use and that too often with fake names. At the same time the list should be in harmony with the terrorist groups named

in UN Security Council Resolution 1267.

7. Banned groups

This point is closely linked to point 3, which is elaborated above.

8. Dedicated counterterrorism force:

After Punjab²³⁵ and Balochistan²³⁶, the federal capital Islamabad also has rapid response force.²³⁷ The rapid response unit will serve as a counterterrorism force.

The Sindh police is also demanding a professional and dedicated Counter Terrorism Force trained by tactical units of armed forces of Pakistan.²³⁸

9. Counter religious extremism and effective measures against religious persecution:

The government has not taken any concrete measures to stop religious persecutions in the country. It seems this point in NAP got very little attention of the government. The government links this issue with growing extremist tendencies in the country and this task has been given to NACTA to suggest a policy framework for this purpose. The counterterrorism authority has established a steering committee to work on formulating the National Counter Extremism Policy (NCEP), which, it is believed, will cover the following: national security, building community resilience, media engagement,

promotion of culture, education reforms, and [creation of an enabling environment for] rehabilitation and reintegration of militants. It is not clear whether the government will accept NACTA's forthcoming recommendations or not. Nor is it clear whether it has any intention of announcing a CVE policy. The recommendations could also become a casualty of the government's political considerations.²³⁹ However, the steering committee needed to underline two major issues: One, the discourse of hatred in the country has become increasingly sectarian. The government's approach in dealing with sectarian terrorists has been oriented around counter-terrorism, without addressing the causes promoting sectarian minds. Second, intolerance against religious minorities is still a major issue in the country. Though the government has included interfaith harmony portfolio in the ministry of religious affairs,²⁴⁰ but it has failed to play any role to stop the religious persecutions or to create conducive environment for socio-religious harmony in the country.

10. Registration and regulation of madrassas:

The National Action Plan (NAP) assigned priority to reform madrassas and the task was given to the federal interior ministry, even though after the 18th Amendment, education has become a provincial subject. Sindh was the only province, which took some measures for madrasa regulations

and introduced the Sindh Madressah Registration Bill, 2016. The bill encompasses all issues concerning the seminaries in Sindh that require to be taken care of by the National Action Plan.²⁴¹ Meanwhile the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government allocated funds of Rs300 million for the madrasa Darul Uloom Haqqania in Akora Khattak, which is known for its affiliation with the Taliban and other radical groups. The provincial government claimed the madrasa administration has promised to introduce reforms; experts disagree with the approach of funding madrassas like this in hope of some reform. No seminary has been given any grant by the federal government since 2002.²⁴² The federal government also claims certain developments on madrasa regulation front. The Interior Ministry and Ettehad Tanzeemat Madaaris Pakistan (ITMP), an umbrella organization of different madrasa educational boards, had reached on an understanding over the question of regulation of madrassas.²⁴³ NACTA and the ITMP have prepared a new form for madrasa registration.²⁴⁴ Copies of this form have been disseminated to provincial government and federal security agencies, to get their opinion and input. Furthermore, the government closed 254 unregistered and suspicious madrassas in the country as part of National Action Plan.²⁴⁵

These measures are not enough for regulating or mainstreaming the religious schools; instead these are making the issue more complex as madrasa educational boards are also not happy with the government policies and a slow pace of reforms.²⁴⁶ Dealing with the challenge of madrasa reforms is not so simple. The government is mainly focusing on registering the madrassas, but it is ignoring two critical aspects. First, certain madrassas and banned militant outfits provide human resources, ideological support and, more critically, hideouts for terrorists, which help them in carrying out attacks. This issue could be dealt only through clear security approach. The second pertains to the nature and quality of the education the madrassas provide. It is the duty of the provinces to take measures to bring them into mainstream.

The madrasa leadership has always remained skeptical about the state intention to regulate the religious schools. But the federal and provincial governments should try as a first step to bridge the mistrust and then introduce a policy of registration, which binds madrassas to provide compulsory formal education for certain hours a day. They should also ensure that while madrassas continue religious teaching according to the curriculum, they do not teach formally or informally, any controversial subjects to the students. Also, the provincial governments should introduce a

mechanism to check that madrassas are not offering any out-of-syllabus refresher courses against a particular religion, sect or community.

11. Ban on glorification of terrorism through print and electronic media:

After the NAP, spaces for pro-militant narratives have been significantly reduced, but extremist messages are still common. Justice Faez Isa inquiry commission²⁴⁷ report noticed that the media glorify terrorists, while reporting terrorist incidents. The commission called such media practices as “bad journalism”.

12. FATA reforms:

The FATA Reforms Committee²⁴⁸ proposed recommendations for reforms in FATA to prepare it for a five-year transition period for merger into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.²⁴⁹ Besides the proposed transitional measures to finally merge FATA in the KP province, some other key recommendations were as follows:

- Setting the end of 2016 as the target date for the return of temporarily displaced persons and the completion of reconstruction before the end of 2017
- The setting up of a high-level special committee comprising experts and officials under the KP governor to prepare before the end of 2016, a ten-year development plan for FATA

- Holding of party-based local bodies’ elections in FATA after the completion of rehabilitation phase and promulgation of the Fata Local Government
- Renaming of the Frontier Crimes Regulation as Fata Regulation Act, 2016, omitting all sections relating to collective responsibility, retaining the Jirga system for both civil and criminal matters, whereby the court will appoint a council of elders to adjudicate matters in accordance with the ‘riwaj’ and prevailing law in force
- The reorganization and revamping of Levies to perform police function, introduction of police uniform and basic training, sanction and induction of additional 10,000 men, improved border management between Pakistan and Afghanistan and abolition of rahdari and permit system to end corruption and cross border movement; and
- Introduction of proper land settlement property record in Fata on a priority basis for administration of civil laws and as a prerequisite for banking operation and investment.

However, experts underscore the need to take some preliminary steps, which they believe are required for an effective mainstreaming of FATA under the rolled out plan. First, the proposed implementation committee should have

more provincial representation, given that the reforms appear to center on the integration of FATA with KP. Second, the FATA secretariat and the governor's office need to be urgently strengthened with a view to enhance their administrative capacity to handle the to-be-assigned tasks. Third, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif himself needs to be more involved in the whole process.

13. Dismantling communication networks of terrorist organizations:

The terrorist organizations have sophisticated communication networks and they use both traditional and cyber communications means for operational purposes. The government uses traditional ways to disrupt their communication networks through complete shutdown of cellular networks at important religious and national occasions. A comprehensive legal and security regime to deal with this challenge is still needed.

Afghan cellular SIMs are another critical issue as terrorists and criminals use these SIMs for illegal and militant activities. Though Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has disabled international roaming for Afghan based operators in Pakistan, but the spillover of signals of Afghan SIMs in settlements nears the border is still a big challenge.²⁵⁰ Pakistan has to take up this issue with Afghanistan.

14. Measures against abuse of Internet and social media for terrorism:

In 2016, the parliament passed the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act 2016 (PECA), which aims at penalizing those who misuse online space including for terrorist activities. Salient features of the PECA are below:

- The main objective of the PECA is to prevent and penalize cybercrime which is defined as the unlawful access and/or interference with information systems in order to cause harm or incite hatred/violence.
- The Act also criminalizes cyber stalking, identity theft, child pornography, distribution of "malicious codes," spamming, etc.
- The federal government has to set up a separate investigating agency to look into such offences and to appoint presiding officers of the court to try cases under this Act.
- It creates international cooperation with foreign governments/agencies for mutual exchange of information and assistance, while retaining the right to refuse such requests if Pakistan's sovereignty or security is prejudiced in any way.
- The Act empowers Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) to remove "unlawful online content", which the authorities deem to be

against national security, public order and morality.

The Act was passed after several amendments made possible through intense advocacy with parliamentarians. Even though the original bill was altered to address those concerns, digital rights activists believe the Act passed has still some loopholes. For one, an activist with insight on digital space feared, "the vague language of the Act can be used to cover a vast amount of activity and speech that does not directly relate to terrorism."²⁵¹

15. Zero tolerance for militancy in Punjab:

Repeated arrests and killing by law enforcers of militants associated with Al-Qaeda, TTP and others in parts of Punjab in 2016 indicates either terrorists were already present in Punjab or have moved recently after operations in FATA. Those arrested also include ISIS supporters. To eliminate militants' sleeper cells in Punjab is a huge challenge mainly due to complex militant landscape of the province. Punjab also hosts militants focused on Kashmir who usually do not carry out attacks in Pakistan but are among major sources of recruitment for anti-Pakistan terrorist groups. Certain sectarian groups, especially the LeJ remnants have fled from Punjab and sought refuge in different parts of Balochistan, such as Quetta and Khuzdar, especially its sub-district Wadh.²⁵² Such

reports increase pressure on Punjab government to take stricter measures against the militant networks in the province or assign this task to paramilitary forces. The Punjab government is reluctant to engage paramilitary force Rangers in counterterrorism operations in the province. The provincial government reluctantly engaged the Rangers in an operation against criminals and terrorists in the Indus delta, generally known as *kacha* areas, in south Punjab and upper Sindh in April last year. In September, when the pressure once again mounted on Punjab, initially the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) denied presence of no-go area ruled by banned militant outfits in any part of the province, later the government had invited the Rangers in the province to conduct operations against banned organizations and terrorists.²⁵³

The issue will linger on, unless the Punjab government evolves an effective counterterrorism policy.

16. Taking the ongoing operation in Karachi to its logical conclusion:

Law-enforcement agencies in Karachi face multiple challenges to deal with, including ethno-political violence, sectarian killings, organized crime, land grabs and militancy associated with local and global jihadi network. Analysts argue that maintaining stability and peace in Karachi needs a long-term strategy, which can be achieved only through the consensus involving both

security and political leadership.²⁵⁴ At the same time federal, provincial governments and the security institutions have to start the transfer phase of the operation. It will require restructuring the policing system in the metropolis to deal with urban policing challenges. This process will take time, but it has to be started now and meanwhile, government and security institutions have to make efforts that the operation would not become politicized. The politicization will not only undermine the success of the operation but also provide opportunity to criminal and militant groups to regain political strength.

17. Balochistan reconciliation:

The political reconciliation in Balochistan was one of important point of the NAP, but Balochistan chief minister Nawab Sanaullah Zehri had so far shown lesser interest in reconciliation with insurgent leaders compared to his predecessor Malik Baloch. However he has said that government would accept only those disgruntled Baloch leaders who believed in the country and its Constitution.²⁵⁵

Nonetheless, the Baloch insurgency appears to be weakening in terms of leadership crisis although little has been done to address the grievances of the Baloch people mainly related to economic underdevelopment, the issue of missing persons and recovery of dead bodies, and so-called 'army's over-presence and influence'. One aspect of this weakening

insurgency, as believed by many scholars, is growing rifts among insurgent leaders, and foot soldiers' and field commanders' growing mistrust²⁵⁶ and grievances against self-exiled leaders²⁵⁷. Under the provincial government's amnesty scheme, launched last year, several hundred insurgents including commanders have surrendered so far.

However, new Army Chief General Qamar Bajwa recently showed an olive branch to Baloch separatists²⁵⁸, which kept the hope of achieving political reconciliation in the province alive.

18. Dealing firmly with sectarian terrorists:

NAP's point 18 was included in the plan to show the state commitment against sectarian violence in Pakistan. Apparently, this is part of counterterrorism campaigns of the provinces and the government has not chalked out any separate operational or political strategy to deal with the issue.

19. Policy to deal with the issue of Afghan refugees:

The NAP talks about formulation of a comprehensive policy to deal with the issue of Afghan refugees, beginning with registration of all refugees. The government however granted registered Afghan refugees in Pakistan an extension of another six-month extension.²⁵⁹ Meanwhile, the UN refugee agency has doubled its assistance package for families

who opted to return voluntarily to Afghanistan. More than 380,000 Afghan refugees²⁶⁰ have returned from Pakistan this year and over 1.5 million refugees will be enjoying this extension. However, the federal and provincial governments have yet to come up with some comprehensive solution. Only the police and other law enforcement agencies are trying to deal with the issue.

20. Revamping and reforming the criminal justice system:

On November 25, 2016 the Senate of Pakistan passed a bill to amend several laws for enhancing punishments for various offences. The purpose will be to strengthen the country's criminal justice system, as espoused in National Action Plan, to effectively curb terrorism and extremism. However, a sub-committee headed by Attorney General for Pakistan Ashtar Ausaf Ali was also tasked by the General retired Nasir Janjua, head of the Committee on Implementation of the NAP to review the progress of cases being tried in various courts under anti-terrorism laws.²⁶¹ The fate of this sub-committee is little known, but criminal justice system is

a chronic problem of the country. There are 3 million court cases pending in Pakistan.²⁶² Only in 2016, the IG Punjab received 10,253 complaints for the non-registration of FIRs; 1283 complaints for the registration of false cases; 861 for seeking bribe.²⁶³

Specifically in counterterrorism perspective, the police's ability to apprehend the proclaimed offenders is also a big issue²⁶⁴, and to cover this weakness the probabilities of extra judicial measures by the police increased.²⁶⁵

4.2.2 Mapping experts opinions on NAP

In 2015, Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) has collected the expert analysis on NAP twenty points and they have not only the evaluated the progress on the national plan but also identified the gaps, implementation and capacity issues in the state responses. In 2016, PIPS once again compiled the experts' observations the following table provides a comparison with their observations of the previous year. The mapping of experts' perceptions will help to understand the quality of the state's counterterrorism responses.

Table5: Experts' perceptions on National Action Plan

No	Point	2015	2016
1	Death plenty	There was no direct relation between the decline in terror attacks and resumption of death penalty.	The government lacks clarity over how to proceed with death penalties. The penalties are halted, followed by their resumption. Executions have been halted since August, the cause of which is uncertain. ²⁶⁶
2	Military courts	The details of the proceeding of the military courts are shrouded in secrecy, besides marking a dark spot on the country's nascent democracy.	The tenure of military courts will expire on 7 January 2017; the government has not publically clarified as to what do thenext steps entail. ²⁶⁷
3	Militant outfits & armed gangs	The government's subsequent action and statements suggest lack of clarity on dealing with certain groups.	The government has not been successful in curbing the activities of banned outfits, which still operates under fake names. Even their members contested elections. ²⁶⁸
4	NACTA	The organization's staff lack strategic guidance and its head remain powerless.	NACTA has still not been activated fully to perform its due role. ²⁶⁹ NACTA has practically been made a subsidiary of interior ministry.
5	Hate literature / speech	The country's existing laws are sufficient in cracking down on hate speech, provided law-enforcement agencies are trained and equipped to do that. Instead of having any national counter-hate strategy, the government has opted to regulate "public order" and check "systemic" dissemination of hate material.	It is all about the state's willingness to act against hate speech and material. In other words, a strict implementation of existing laws is needed in an inclusive way and without any political and strategic considerations. ²⁷⁰
6	Terror financing	There has been zero conviction in terror financing, a subject that stays untouched because of the government's lack of understanding of the web of militant economy. Even estimates about terror financing are unclear.	The government placed some restrictions on militants from generating funds through charities. ("chanda"), besides freezing accounts of banned outfits' members. ²⁷¹
7	Action against defunct militant groups	Banned groups, despite arrests of their leaders, still carry out public meetings and protest demonstrations	Already covered under point 3

No	Point	2015	2016
8	Establishing a dedicated counterterrorism force	All police departments in the four provinces have their own specialized forces, they lack coordination, and budget is yet to be released for the much-needed federal counter-terrorism force.	The "old-rotten system [of police] failed to contribute positively in the society, thus negatively effecting the implementation of NAP." ²⁷²
9	Counter extremism and protection of minorities	Action against sectarian militants will create positive atmosphere for religious minorities, but the presence of sectarian mindset, supported by discriminatory laws, still hangs above, creating fears of religious persecution.	The government is not implementing its own laws to curb hate speech and the persecution of religious minorities; Ahmedi and Shia communities are still being subjected to violence. ²⁷³
10	Registration & regulation of religious seminaries	The government has lately taken action against religious seminaries, such as by geo-tagging them and asking them to register afresh. The moves, however, largely faced resistance from some religious educational boards and clergy; lately, it was decided in meeting of the country's political and military leaders with representatives of madrasa educational boards to form a committee for preparing forms to register madrassas and to evolve a mechanism for register madrasa accounts	The government started geo-tagging of religious seminaries, thereby tightening government's grips on them. Even recently, the government has identified some religious seminaries with militancy links and has decided to take action against them. ²⁷⁴
11	Ban on glorification of terrorists & terrorist groups through print & electronic media	Only Punjab has issued a statute banning glorification of terrorists, on media. Yet, several militant outfits continue to publish and post material online.	Justice Qazi Isa reports also fault media for glorifying militants; on the other hand, media regulatory body has been asking media to follow the code, which debars them from glorifying militants.
12	FATA reforms and repatriation of IDPs	The government claims to have restored security in parts of FATA, nothing practical is done to introduce the long-demanded administrative reforms.	No impressive improvement in their situation. ²⁷⁵ The government-constituted committee unveiled a report on FATA reforms, suggesting options for mainstreaming FATA with rest of the country. The way ahead is about taking that report forward.
13	Dismantling communication networks of terrorists	The government claims to have dismantled terrorist networks, several of which operated from North Waziristan. Independent observers argue although terrorist	Telecommunication and Internet/cyberspace are among the main communication channels of the terrorists besides traditional means. Despite the government's

No	Point	2015	2016
		networks have been weakened and their capacity to operate hampered but they are not completely dismantled.	high claims, it has failed so far to dismantle militants' communications channels. That is visible from the continuing major or high intensity attacks in the country, which are reportedly coordinated and launched by more than one groups. ²⁷⁶
14	Countering terrorism in cyber spaces	The government's plan of introducing cyber-crime bill to monitor internet for terrorist activities, inflict several restrictions on the regular users, and violators, of the internet. Civil society fears that any such law could be misused in the name of terrorism, not least because there is no comprehensive personal data protection mechanism.	The PECA 2016 was passed giving "vast powers to the State to regulate speech and criminalize activity in cyber space." However, the vague language of the Act could be used to cover a lot of activity and speech that may not necessarily fall under terrorism or NAP, infringing upon civil liberties. ²⁷⁷
15	Counter extremism	That the Prime Minister vowed to end militancy from Punjab, to many, showed the government's admission of the presence of militants in Punjab. Questions are asked as to whether the government will ever take on all outfits.	Government does not have a clear vision for NAP. It looks as if they are using it to simply kill terrorists and not to achieve its actual aim, which is to reduce and curb the spread of radicalization. Chaudhry Nisar heads many of the various committees set up to oversee the implementation of NAP but it is unclear whether any of them are working properly and delivering any results. ²⁷⁸
16	Karachi operation	There are clear signs that the operation has effectively reduced terrorist attacks and criminal activities in the metropolis. Prime Minister Sharif has frequently deflected political opposition to the operation, saying that it will continue till its logical end	Sindh has its apex committee which convenes meetings over counter terrorism through the Rangers operation, but it seems that they do not want to have to follow NAP just because of political rivalry. ²⁷⁹ The non-cooperation between the center and provinces has been a cause for concern as no one is ready to take full responsibility to implement NAP; it points to the lack of drive and vision to implement NAP effectively. ²⁸⁰
17	Political reconciliation in Balochistan	The NAP calls for the empowering Balochistan government to pursue reconciliation policy with the	The outgoing Balochistan chief minister Malik Baloch had taken some serious steps to reach out to

No	Point	2015	2016
		disgruntled Baloch, heavy-handed measures of dealing in Balochistan continue to trickle in the media. To some Baloch nationalists, the approaches are poles apart.	the Baloch insurgent leaders in exile. However, after the incumbent chief minister Sanaullah Zehri held office, the efforts for political reconciliation almost stalled. No concrete efforts have been made thus. ²⁸¹
18	Countering sectarianism	The government's approach in dealing with sectarian terrorists has been oriented around counterterrorism, without addressing the causes promoting sectarian minds.	Over 100 militants associated with violent sectarian groups were arrested across Pakistan in 2016 including 2 key LeJ leaders Naeem Bukhari and Asif Chottu. Several others were also killed in search operations and raids as well as encounters with security and law enforcement officials. Despite these, banned sectarian groups continued to operate across Pakistan, as the government failed to constitute a policy to this end. ²⁸²
19	Policy on Afghan refugees	Despite calls for registering and/or evicting Afghan refugees, they hardly had any role in terrorist attacks inside Pakistan.	The country seems to have shown a lot of discontent towards the Afghan population in Pakistan over the last year. But one area where significant progress was made was with regards to the safe repatriation of Afghan refugees back to their homeland. ²⁸³
20	Reforming criminal justice system	Despite some on and off measures to expedite pending cases, the criminal justice system requires meaningful overhaul.	No "groundbreaking" work was done to this end. ²⁸⁴ Both the center and provinces "miserably failed" to reform the police system with regards to: increasing police budget; provide modern training and equipment; cleanse the police of corruption and inefficiency. ²⁸⁵