



Novel Solutions to the Dilemma of Katcha: Exploring the Uncharted Territory

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ABSTRACT:

Amidst the vast desert and remote areas of Pakistan, crime and dacoit gangs have been a persistent challenge for law enforcement agencies. In this white paper, we present innovative and pragmatic solutions to address this problem. Drawing from case studies and extensive research, we propose the establishment of a specialized police force equipped with modern technologies and tactics, community-based policing initiatives, and strategic collaborations with neighboring provinces. These solutions have not been explored before and have the potential to significantly reduce crime and ensure the safety of citizens in Pakistan's most vulnerable areas. Join us as we unveil a new era in crime prevention and security."

I. Introduction

Pakistan has been characterized as an insecure nation by the global community, primarily due to the precarious law and order situation and law enforcement agencies' inability to combat crime and terrorism effectively. On a larger scale, the Afghan war, War on Terrorism, ethnic unrest in Karachi and Layari, the feudal system in remote regions, and the obsolete security structure have transformed the country into a sanctuary for criminals and terrorists. Despite the primary impact of the aforementioned significant events waning, the residual impact continues to be felt. In the remote regions of Cholistan, Thar, and Thal deserts, criminals and dacoits have discovered safe havens, which they use to execute their nefarious activities.

Kacha: The Notorious Hotspot for Dacoits and Criminal Gangs

For many years, the region of Kacha that encompasses the city of Sadiqabad in Rahimyar Khan has been a notorious hotspot for dacoits. These malefactors primarily deceive individuals seeking to purchase affordable commodities, such as tractors¹, automobiles, firearms, and machinery, by luring them to meet near the Kacha area. Once they have arrived, the majority of these buyers are abducted and transported to the Kacha region, where a large ransom is demanded, accompanied by threats of violence and murder if it is not paid promptly. Despite the government's attempts to address the situation in this area, many factors have hindered their success, such as funding, the duration of operations, the severity of the problem, the challenging terrain, and the vastness of the area, which spans thousands of miles.

Kacha has been the primary base of operations for numerous gangs, such as the infamous Chotu gang and other brutal militias, who have not only abducted, murdered, and robbed countless civilians but have also launched attacks on and killed law enforcement personnel. The Punjab police, in collaboration with other law enforcement agencies and the army, intervened and curbed the threat posed by the Chotu gang when it spiraled out of control. Now, a new operation has commenced in Kacha to eradicate the smaller gangs, robbers, and dacoits in the area adjacent to the city of Sadiqabad. Although the local police have been deployed under the IGP of South-Punjab, and other law enforcement agencies have provided assistance, the operation's results, as reported by the police information desks, suggest that much of the area has been reclaimed. However, similar efforts have been made numerous times before, yielding limited success.

The question arises as to why operations of this nature consistently fail to produce positive outcomes. One reason may be that the government is unwilling to allocate vast resources and personnel to an operation aimed solely at neutralizing a group of robbers and dacoits. Operations are only initiated when criminals make headlines in national and international media. In these instances, the government's sole objective is to eliminate the criminals responsible for the heinous acts that have drawn attention to their actions.

The goal of these operations is to sweep the area and clear out any potential hideouts, similar to sweeping one's doorstep. However, given the vastness of the remote desert area that adjoins the outskirts of Bahawalpur, Rahimyar Khan, Rajanpur, and the border areas of Sindh-Punjab, which covers approximately 25,000 km² (8.5 million acres), it is akin to a Sisyphean task. Criminals are free to move in and out of the area, and government operations merely act as a temporary solution, resulting in a mini theater of catching a bunch of small gangs.

Furthermore, when the Punjab government attempted to tackle the Chotu gang in 2010, which was notorious for not only killing and kidnapping civilians but also the police, consecutive police operations proved futile. The dacoits possessed modern heavy weaponry, including anti-aircraft guns, whereas the police had outdated pistols and weapons. As a result, the gang captured 19 policemen, including a SHO. Eventually, the army was called in, and they neutralized the threat by capturing 40 dacoits and rescuing the captured policemen in an operation known as Zarb-e-Ahan.

Pakistan's Insecurity: The Challenge of Crime and Terrorism

The absence of arterial roads connecting remote villages and areas to the cities, coupled with the lack of police checkpoints in the area, further exacerbates the issue. Kacha is a vast area that spans parts of Sindh and Punjab. The lack of cooperation between provincial law enforcement forces is another problem that hinders progress in containing these dacoits. Due to the porous borders and limited resources, dacoits can easily move across provincial borders, making it challenging to address the issue effectively.

The aforementioned factors, being the primary antecedents of the operational fiascos, are responsible for the perpetuation of a vicious cycle whereupon the withdrawal of the paramilitary forces from the premises allows the malefactors to resume their stronghold in their elusive sanctuaries, thereby exacerbating the malignancy of criminality and instilling terror in the hearts of the populace once again.

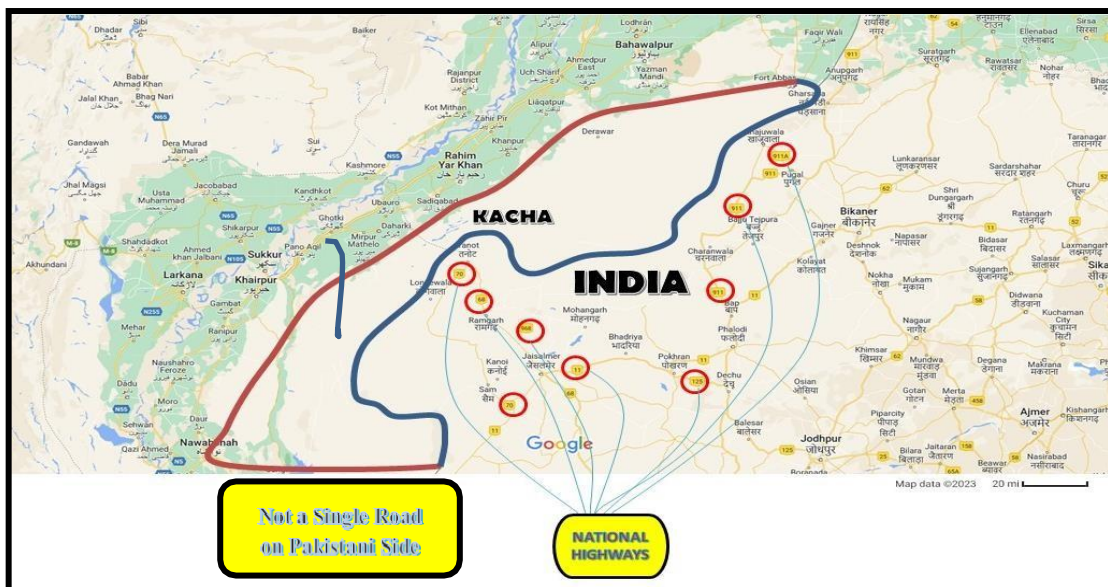
The ensuing text elucidates several practical and enduring solutions to alleviate the misery plaguing the area. The establishment of these solutions is a protracted process, requiring copious amounts of funds and political dedication. However, compared to the pernicious effects on the country's economy and populace every year by criminal activities, the requisite amount is but a drop in the ocean.

The question that begs answering is whether it is worth investing such a colossal amount in the project. The following data from various reports paints a harrowing picture of the impact of criminal activities on the economy and society of Pakistan:

- ⁱⁱ A report by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics estimates the cost of crimes in Pakistan to be around PKR 1.2 trillion (\$7.2 billion) in 2018. The report further suggests that crimes in Pakistan cost the economy between 0.6% and 1.5% of GDP annually.
- ⁱⁱⁱ According to a report by the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI), crimes in Karachi result in a loss of approximately Rs. 100 billion (\$600 million) per year in terms of productivity. This loss includes both direct and indirect costs such as time wasted due to traffic congestion caused by criminal incidents.
- ^{iv} A report by the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) highlights crimes as a major deterrent for tourists visiting Karachi, estimating a loss of around Rs. 8 billion (\$48 million) per year to the tourism industry.
- ^v The State Bank of Pakistan's report reveals that there were 2,402 bank robberies in Pakistan between 2010 and 2018, resulting in a loss of PKR 12.6 billion (\$76 million).
- ^{vi} A report by the All-Pakistan Textile Mills Association demonstrates that the textile industry loses around PKR 10 billion (\$60 million) every year due to criminal activities.
- ^{vii} The Pew Research Center's survey in 2019 indicates that only 23% of people in the United States held a favorable view of Pakistan, primarily due to security risks.
- ^{viii} Gallup Pakistan's survey in 2019 found that 70% of Pakistanis felt unsafe walking alone at night in their local area due to the fear of crime.
- ^{ix} A survey conducted by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute in 2020 reports that 59% of Pakistanis believe that law enforcement agencies are ineffective in controlling crimes.
- ^x The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics reports that there were 6,072 murder cases and 5,822 attempted murder cases in 2020 in Pakistan, resulting in a total of 6,293 deaths. Though not all of these deaths can be attributed to street crimes, a considerable proportion can.
- ^{xi} According to the Sustainable Development Policy Institute's report, a significant portion of police resources in Pakistan are directed towards combating street crimes, leaving fewer resources for other areas like terrorism and cybercrime.

If we consider the cost of crimes on Pakistan's economy by controlling crime in this area and eliminating the hideouts and weapon industries, the project's cost will be recuperated by the positive recovery of the economy within a couple of years. Furthermore, the region will prosper economically by offering new potential areas for economic growth besides the eradication of dacoits and criminals from the community.

Building Safer Communities: How Highway and Road Construction Can Help Prevent Crime in Remote Areas



In considering the quandary of rampant criminal activity in the region and seeking a solution that can both assuage the situation and maintain law and order in the remote areas of Kacha, it is imperative that we take a comprehensive approach.

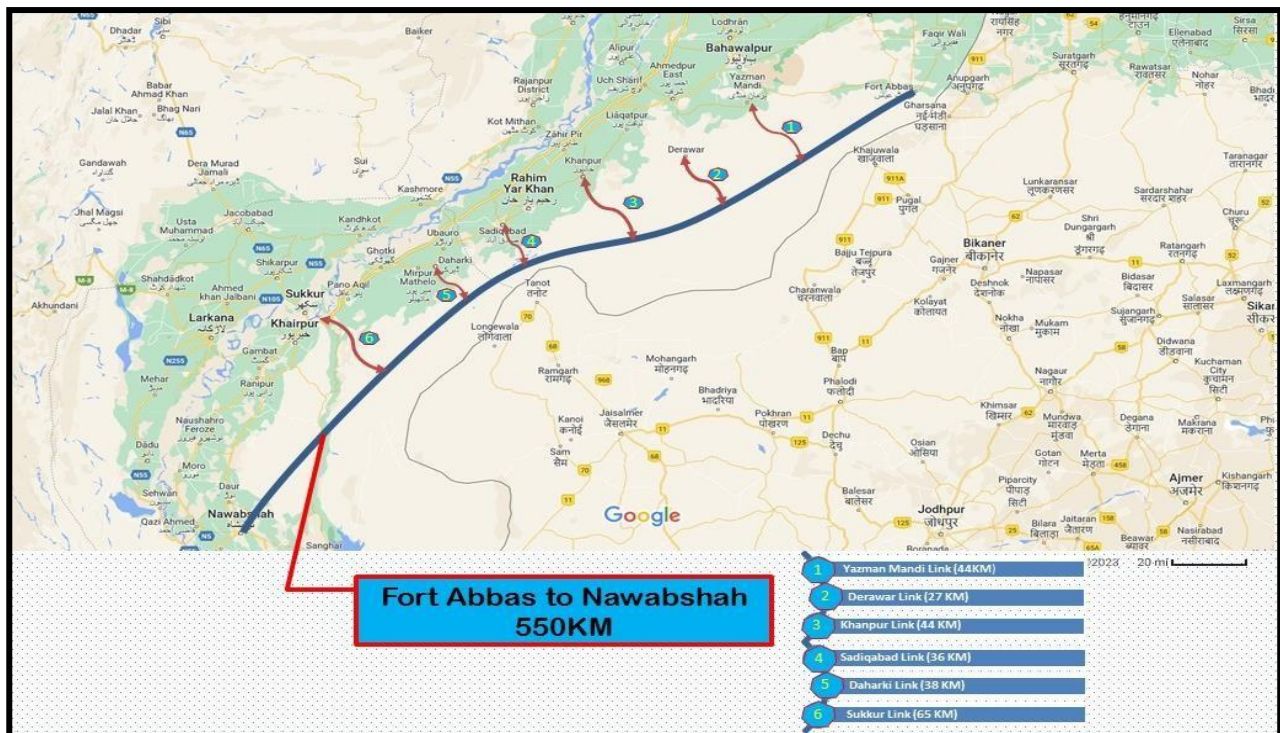
- To begin, we must examine the area that is parallel to and on the Indian side of the border. This is an arid region spanning 25,000 square kilometers, encompassing the area between Punjab's Fort Abbas and Sindh's Umer Kot, which poses a potential haven for criminals. Notably, this area lacks any major highways or arterial roads, rendering it difficult to traverse.
- The two aforementioned cities represent the furthest points in the area that are connected by arterial roads, leaving the remaining 850,000 acres of Kacha and its adjoining remote areas accessible only by muddy roads inundated with sand, which poses a significant barrier to entry. Unfortunately, this limitation inhibits the routine patrolling of these areas by law enforcement forces, as they lack vehicles that can track these terrains.
- India, on the other hand, has developed an intricate network of highways and roads to connect even the most remote villages in the desert area, a stark contrast to the lack of infrastructure in the corresponding region of Kacha. Indian National Highways 70, 68, 911, 911A, 11, and 968 are some examples of these critical arteries.
- Furthermore, due to the non-accessibility of the area, vital structures and facilities essential to daily life, such as electricity, drinking water, and healthcare, are not accessible. This glaring deficiency compounds the difficulty of the situation at hand.
- Presented below is a proposed Plan intended to furnish facile access to the remote regions. The Plan has been drafted by extensively working on online maps and exploring point-to-point distances and optimal routes, aiming to facilitate all the basic towns and cities that have been neglected due to their proximity to the Indian borders.
- Moreover, this plan is bound to serve as a harbinger of safety, by providing a secure route to the newly approved motorway M-5, which connects Multan to Sukkur, forming an integral part of the Peshawar to Karachi Motorway. At the starting point in Fort Abbas, lies the largest solar energy plant of Pakistan, the Allama Iqbal Solar Park. Notably, an identical facility can be established in proximity to the six links proposed in the plan.
- The foremost advantage of this access to the remotest areas is that the people living in these regions would have easy access to the nearest cities, enabling them to earn their livelihood and eradicate poverty, which is the root cause of crime. Furthermore, another advantage of the plan is that it would enable law enforcement agencies to efficiently manage these areas, with the aid of the border patrol.

Benefits of Solution

What measures can be taken to make this area accessible to law enforcement, as well as healthcare, water, and electricity facilities? Consider the following solutions:

- **Construction of an expressway:** To connect the remote areas of the desert, a two-lane or four-lane expressway could be constructed from Fort Abbas to Nawabshah in Sindh, which would traverse the most remote areas of the desert and intersect the Kacha area near Sadiqabad. This 550-kilometer expressway, mapped online through Google Maps, would provide a critical link to the most remote areas parallel to the Multan- Sukkur Motorway.
- **Connectivity:** This expressway would have six links that would connect the towns and cities of Yazman Mandi, Derawar, Khanpur, Sadiqabad, Daharki, and Sukkur.
- **Access to facilities:** The entire plan would equip law enforcement agencies to not only patrol these areas but also provide the government with healthcare and education facilities, electricity, and drinking water.
- **Eradication of criminal hideouts:** Once completed, the infrastructure would not only eradicate the hideouts of criminals but also create an opportunity to establish factories in this vast area without damaging the environment of populous areas.
- **Solar parks:** The area could be equipped with solar parks, similar to Allama Iqbal Solar Park, to provide not only electricity to the area but also add surplus electricity to national grids.
- **Job creation:** This plan would create at least thirty to forty thousand jobs in the national pipeline.
- **By implementing the above solutions, we can make this area accessible for law enforcement, healthcare, water, and electricity facilities.**

Implementation Demands



The inquiry that has emerged is how to finance the plan and ascertain its completion. Is it indeed wise to allocate such a substantial sum of funds to this plan in this remote region?

- Historical administrations have constructed roads with two or four lanes ranging from 110 to 200 million rupees per kilometer. In light of this, the expressway from Fort Abbas to Nawabshah would necessitate 120 billion rupees or nearly half a billion dollars.
- Furthermore, constructing the six connections from the primary road would entail an additional 25 billion rupees.
- As the Chinese banks are financing the Multan-Sukkur Motorway, with 90% of the costs being borne by these banks in exchange for the loan given to Pakistan, it is necessary to involve the World Bank or Asian Development Bank in the process and request that they provide funding for this project (As they have done in India's PMGSY case). In addition, platforms like BRICS and SAARC can assist by enlisting the support of influential powers.
- When the damage that crimes inflict on Pakistan's politico-socioeconomic fabric is evaluated, the cost of the road plan is considerably lower.
- Indian companies can be considered for contracts as they possess expertise in offering cost-effective road construction solutions through sustainable technology.
- In addition to this, every operation executed in the area to clear it of criminals comes at a cost. The most recent operation commenced with substantial funding of 2.7 billion rupees, and additional vast amounts will be necessary to proceed with the operation and eradicate the criminals from the region.
- Thus, when the costs of prior and future operations (as these operations do not provide long-lasting solutions) are calculated, they exceed the proposed plan's expense.

Success Story

The proposed Solution entails a case study wherein roads are being provided to remote villages, which is an imminent project by the Indian government under the name of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY). This endeavor was initiated in 2000 with the aim of providing good all-weather roads to the 1.7 xiiLakh inhabitants residing in the remotest villages that are devoid of any connection with main roads or facilities. The government provided roads to villages with 500 population in plains and 250 inhabitants in hilly areas. The project was jointly funded by the federal and state governments, with 60% being federally funded and xiii40% being funded by the states. According to reports, the average speed of construction was 98.5 KM per day, which increased to 130KM per day between 2014-2017. Additionally, green cover along the roadsides was developed to provide a green climate along the transportation routes. The primary objective of this program was to provide livelihood opportunities, markets, schools, and healthcare facilities to these remote areas, thereby boosting rural income.

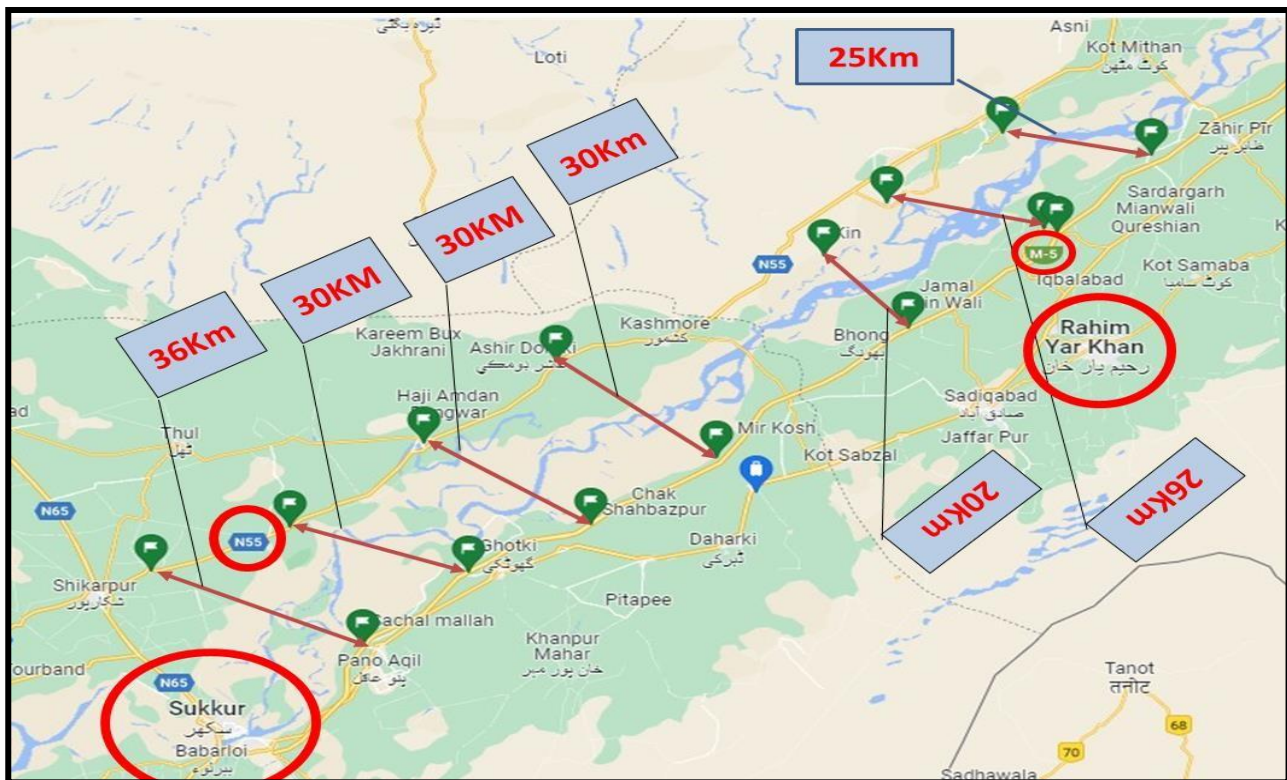
The World Bank invested a substantial amount of xiv\$2.1 billion in the project, with \$500 million xv being designated for the development of the green belt along the roads. • The Asian Development Bank contributed \$400 million xvto the project. To streamline the entire process, an Online Management, Monitoring, and Accounting System (OMMAS), a Geographic Information System (GIS), was introduced. This system manages and monitors all the phases of road development, from the proposal mode to road completion. The OMMAS also has a separate module to track the expenses incurred on each road. Based on the data entered by state and district officers, the OMMS generates detailed reports that are viewable in the citizens' section of the website (<http://omms.nic.in>).

A report by the World Bank suggests that after the completion of this project, the cultivation of land for agriculture increased in the region xvii. Furthermore, the poverty rate in these remote areas has reduced by 4.7% since the implementation of this project. The project's outcomes were detailed

in a research paper by Asher and Novasad (2020), which illustrates several changes observed after four years of completing the project. The population census of 2011 revealed a 12% increase in positive transportation availability. A 7.2% rise in manual labor was observed, and people left agriculture to explore novel employment sectors. Every village that the road touched saw a 4.2 xix increase in new jobs. These remote villages experienced a 10% xx boost in GDP.

The reports recommend focusing on providing employment opportunities to the inhabitants of these villages. The above-mentioned scenario and its outcomes exemplify how providing roads to remote regions can accelerate economic growth and enhance the provision of neglected facilities. Implementing the proposed solution will lead to similar results, not only benefiting security agencies with better reach to these areas, but also eradicating crime and reducing poverty and illiteracy.

Controversial Solution: The Militarization of Police to Tackle Crime in Remote Areas



What are the responsibilities of a country's military force?

It is mandatory for the military to ensure the safety of their nation from external threats and to safeguard their borders. However, the Pakistani army is required to not only focus on the external frontiers but also be actively involved in various internal matters, such as elections, enumeration, flood relief operations, and counterterrorism efforts.

The Pakistani army initiated Zarb-e-Azb, a campaign aimed at neutralizing the decade-long threat of terrorist attacks and killing of civilians. This operation proved to be successful, and the country enjoyed the benefits of it for many years. Nevertheless, the same terrorists organizations have re-established their foothold in these areas. Similarly, after the Pakistani army cleared the Kacha area in Zarb-e-Ahn by capturing the leader of the Chotu gang and other notorious individuals, the dacoits returned to their criminal activities once again.

In March 2023, the provincial police began an operation to remove the insurgents from the area; however, they encountered fierce resistance, and consequently, the army was called in to assist the local authorities. It is not a sustainable solution to call in the military to deal with the messier situations. Therefore, to solve this enigma, we must identify the causes of the terrorists and criminals' return to their strongholds and devise practical measures to contain them.

How do the insurgents manage to return to their strongholds with ease?

The seabed located at the borders of Sindh and Punjab is a notorious hub for criminal activity. This area provides cover for criminals due to the unpredictable water flow. During monsoon season, this area floods, further aiding the criminal juntas in evading law enforcement. By constructing a well-planned network of roads, the issue of criminal hideouts and underdeveloped infrastructure can be mitigated. Connecting these areas to the Multan-Sukkur Motorway (M-5) via interchanges would not only provide convenient access to remote regions of the seabed but also facilitate the provision of essential services such as education, healthcare, and security. Moreover, the facilitation of evacuation protocols and provision of relief aid in flood-prone regions can be accomplished efficiently. Reports indicate that these localities are considerably affected by catastrophic floods, rendering the populace incapable of migration due to the unavailability of suitable pathways or governmental assistance. (Sindh Rural Support Organization (SRSO), 2015).

SRSO. (2015). Situation Report 2. Retrieved from https://srso.org.pk/reports/flid_2015/Situation%20Report%20_%202023_1july15.pdf

- The majority of terrorist and dacoit groups possess modern military-grade weaponry such as rifles, guns, rocket launchers, and anti-aircraft guns. The well-equipped criminals cannot be restrained by the local police, who are armed with outdated weaponry.
- The local police not only lack the necessary equipment but also do not possess transportation vehicles that can navigate the sandy desert terrain. Additionally, their unfamiliarity with the area and training gaps prevent them from effectively containing the criminals.
- The police have limited access to armed vehicles that can provide them with safe passage to the strongholds without incurring heavy casualties.
- Furthermore, essential accessories such as batteries, flashlights, sleeping bags, sandbags, shields, and body armor are unattainable for these local authorities.

In the 1980s, the United States was heavily affected by a flood of drugs within the country. Drug dealers and criminals had better equipment and training, and local police were unable to address the growing criminal activities and booming drug markets. Although military intervention was an option, the government under President Reagan chose to equip local law enforcement forces with better weaponry. They initiated a program called "1033,"^{xix} whose purpose was to militarize local law enforcement by providing them with extra military weaponry and accessories. This program not only accelerated operations against the criminals but also ensured the safety of the officers involved.

A similar program could be implemented in Pakistan to provide law enforcement agencies with modern weapons and supplies, alleviating the issue of a lack of resources.

Implementation and Benefits of Solution

In order to combat criminal activities in Pakistan without detracting from border security measures, the following actions can be taken:

Equip Local Police:

- The current strength of local police is almost 300,000 personnel, but they are severely under-equipped with outdated weaponry and accessories.
- It is essential that all personnel are armed with military-grade weapons and accessories.
- To achieve this, the Pakistan Army can provide extra or unused military weapons and supplies for the local police to use.

Accountability and Resource Allocation:

- The transfer of resources would be overseen by an accountability board, which would ensure that law enforcement agencies utilize or disburse the acquired resources within a year.
- Failure to comply would result in the return of these resources to the military.

Cost and Training Assistance:

- Local law enforcement departments cannot bear the expenses of acquiring these advanced weapons and equipment, so the weaponry should be provided for free or at very low cost.
- The Pakistan Army can also assist in providing training facilities to the local law enforcement forces, similar to what they have done for the elite forces or rangers.

Weaponry and Accessories:

- The provided weaponry should include rifles, guns, pistols, bulletproof jackets, flashlights, sleeping bags, trucks, body gears and vehicles that can help in field operations.

Implementation:

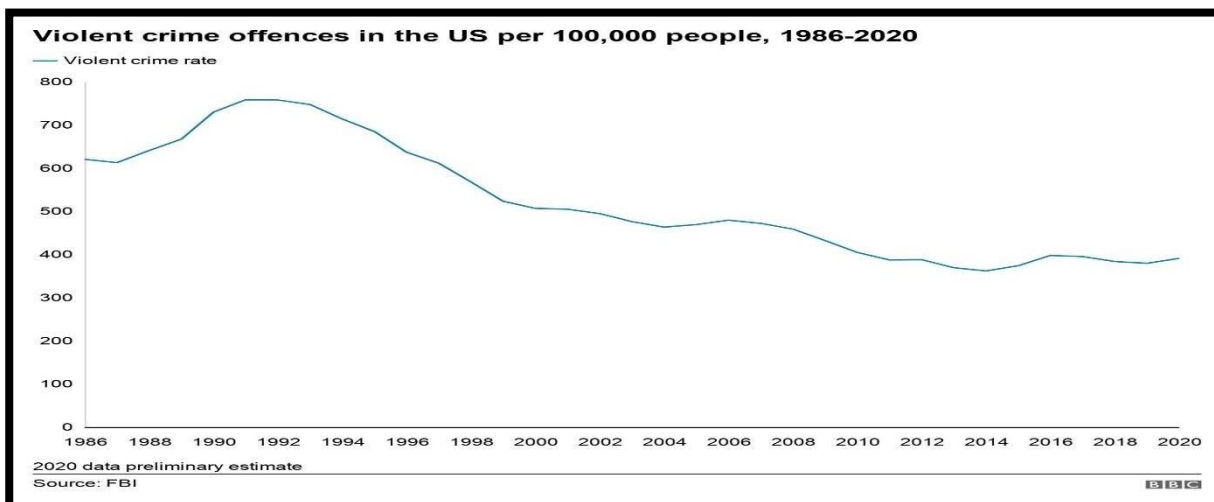
- The project can be initiated through yearly plans, starting with identifying the hotspots of criminal activity, then providing the respective law enforcement authority with weaponry as required.

Care and Return:

- The receiving department will be responsible for the care of the accessories, as the weaponry and accessories should be returned to the army.
- This will lessen the physical and economic burden on the army by caring for the extra weaponry.

Results and Benefits:

- The initiative would empower local law enforcement forces to eradicate criminal activities on their own without diverting the army's attention from border security measures.
- It would also increase trust in local authorities and lessen the burden on smaller districts that cannot afford to equip themselves with the latest weapons and equipment.



- Comprehensive training programs overseen by the military would enhance the capabilities of the security forces and ease the burden on police training academies.
- Armored vehicles equipped with heavy artillery would also help law enforcement forces eliminate "no-go" zones such as "Katcha," where a significant portion of crimes and abductions occur.
- Reports suggest that the use of militarized weaponry and supplies increases the morale and confidence of law enforcement forces, who now feel more secure and comfortable using advanced weapons.

Case Study

In the wake of World War II, the Surplus Property Act of 1944 was enacted to address the disposal of surplus government property. As a result, several short-lived agencies were formed to deal with these disposals. In the 1990s, under the administration of George W. H. Bush,^{xxiii} the 1033 program was initiated to transfer surplus weaponry and military equipment to local law enforcement agencies. The fundamental objective was to wage a war on drugs, as well as to equip the forces for drug enforcement and counter-terrorism purposes. The Law Enforcement Support Office was established as a division of the United States Department of Defense in 1995, with the responsibility of overseeing all transfers of military surplus equipment to local forces. According to a report, from 1997 to 2020, military equipment worth ^{xxiii}\$5.1 billion has been transferred to civilian law enforcement forces. Furthermore, reports suggest that local forces have requested basic military facilities such as flashlights, sandbags, sleeping bags, and medical kits. A mechanism has been established whereby the requesting department must first demonstrate the intended usage of specific military equipment that they require. Moreover, the receiving department must either use the equipment within a year or dispose of it. Under this entire program, civilian authorities were provided with a range of accessories, from air conditioners to clothing, computers, bulletproof vests, assault rifles, and grenade launchers. Many departments also requested armored vehicles, which have proven to be essential for the protection of security personnel during violent riots. It is worth noting that the United States government is not the only entity to have militarized its police force, as many other countries have followed suit, as evidenced by the following examples:

- The Brazilian government established the Federal Highway Police tactical team after the riots and robberies that occurred during the 2013 World Cup.
- ^{xxiv}France adopted a similar approach following the Charlie Hebdo shootings.
- ^{xxv}Germany established a counter-terrorism force, known as BFE+, to combat terrorism.
- ^{xxvi}Indonesia employed the Mobile Brigade Corps, which is responsible for launching counter-terrorism operations and participating in raids.
- The SWAT team in the United States is known for carrying out military-style raids.

Reports on the outcomes of 1033 Program

1033 Program by Scott Altemus

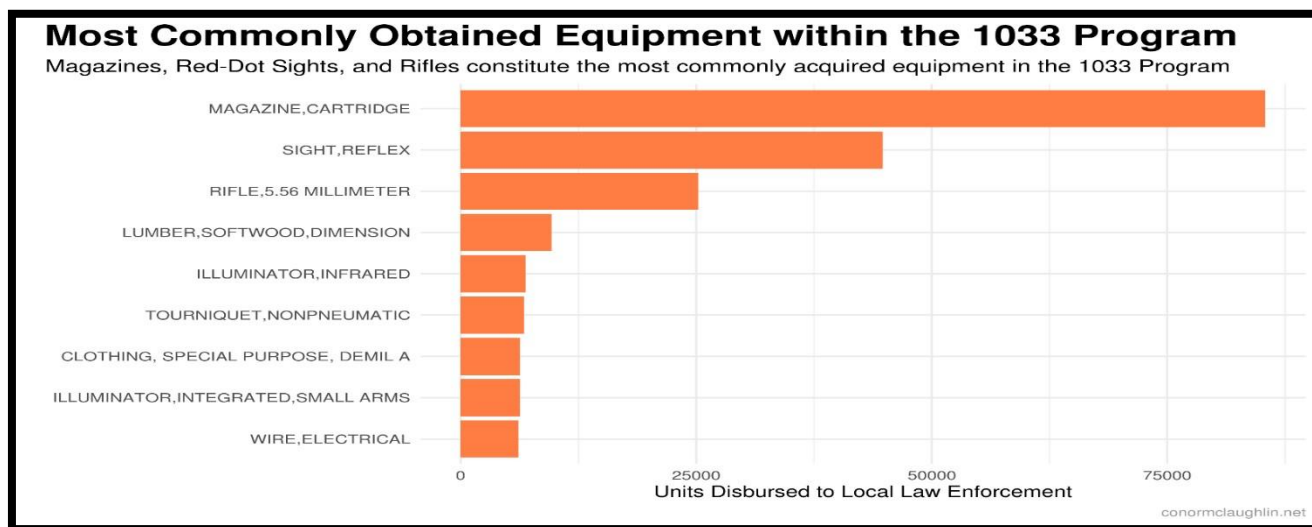
The MRAP, a type of armored vehicle obtained through the 1033 program, has been recognized for its efficacy in saving human lives during crises. In August 2016, in Fort Smith, Arkansas, two law enforcement officials and three civilians were confronted by an active shooter carrying a potent semi-automatic assault rifle. The MRAP played a critical role in protecting these individuals and contributing to the preservation of at least five lives (Rains, 2016).

Similarly, in October 2015, in San Marcos, Texas, the police successfully employed their MRAP to rescue more than 600 individuals who were trapped by the sudden rise of floodwaters. This intervention averted a potentially tragic outcome (Jackson, 2015). Furthermore, during the floods of the same month in Florence County, South Carolina, the MRAP proved instrumental in saving lives, once again highlighting its effectiveness in crisis management situations.

Moreover, the acquisition of the MRAP enhances the military culture of an organization by augmenting its martial language and implementing military arrangements, such as elite units. The willingness to engage in high-risk situations also increases with the deployment of such equipment, as demonstrated by successful interventions during crises (Balko, 2014).xxvii

Does Military Aid to Police Decrease Crime? By Anna Gunderson, Elisha Cohen

Recently, two notable econometric studies evaluated the impact of transfers of surplus military equipment through the 1033 Program on crime rates and other positive externalities related to public safety and policing in the United States (Bove and Gavrilova 2017, Harris et al. 2017).



Both studies have concluded that the transfer of military surplus equipment results in a decrease in crime rates. The militarization of police is favored by many public policymakers at different levels of the intergovernmental hierarchy (Turner and Fox 2017). The 1033 program not only saves lives but also promotes the efficient use of taxpayer funds. Rather than disposing of equipment purchased with taxpayers' money, the program reissues it, thereby reducing unnecessary spending.xxviii

The usage of military equipment leads to a natural increase in military-style training, which in turn can contribute to the various aspects of militarization. In conclusion, a program to transfer surplus weaponry and supplies from the military to law enforcement forces in Pakistan would be beneficial in enabling the security forces to combat the threats of terrorism and criminality more effectively. This initiative would equip law enforcement agencies with modern weapons, enhancing their capabilities and confidence while reducing the burden on smaller districts that lack the resources to do so.

Enhancing Security in Remote Areas: The Need for Provincial Border Police

Provincial Border Patrol

Globalization has undoubtedly facilitated the convergence of different nations, nevertheless, the fundamental principle of sovereignty remains unchanged. Despite the emergence of various free market systems such as the European Union^{xxx} and US-Canada, the concept of sovereignty pertains to a nation's inherent right to self-governance and autonomy without external or internal intervention.^{xxx} However, in the modern world, countries are no longer homogeneous entities but rather complex amalgamations of various territorial divisions such as states or provinces, resulting in intricate issues surrounding the provision of services to citizens. Provinces possess their own sovereign status and legal structures, which at times hinder cooperation between different regions within a country. The same predicament arises in Pakistan, a country with four major provinces, each boasting distinct cultural, ethnic, and linguistic identities, and endowed with provincial autonomy and sovereignty as per the constitutional provision of the provincial list. One of the matters that should be under the purview of provincial governments is security. However, the current legal framework creates barriers to extradition and mutual cooperation between provinces, impeding the provision of internal security to the country.

Our white paper focuses on the issue of criminal safe havens, specifically in the desert terrain of Cholistan and Thar, which result from border legalities between the provinces of Punjab and Sindh, compounded by the lack of police patrols in these areas. The porous borders of these deserts provide no resistance to the movement of criminals from one province to another, while there is no clear framework for apprehending or containing these criminals through mutual cooperation. The local police force is entrusted with a colossal responsibility of not only securing major infrastructure and VIPs but also

maintaining law and order under rigorous job timing, sometimes extending to 15 -20 hours of duty. Without a mutually agreed-upon understanding between the provincial governments, the eradication of criminals from this area remains a distant aspiration.

Pakistan possesses an abundance of law enforcement forces, which safeguard the national borders, encompassing India, Afghanistan, Iran, and the shores. Considering this, it is plausible to establish a specialized unit that can ensure the protection of provincial borders against any criminal incursions. To effectively implement the proposed strategy of providing access to criminal hotspots, a vigilant patrol force can be set up to monitor the unrestricted movement of weaponry and criminals along provincial borders. A distinct entity of the Provincial Border Police Force, akin to the Motorway Police, can be formed, having separate financial allocations and regulatory frameworks. The primary objective of this police force would be to secure the most secluded areas of provincial borders, bordering the deserts of Thar, Thal, and Cholistan, as well as the challenging terrain of Sindh-Balochistan. This measure would not only purge the Kacha area of criminals but also curb the smuggling of arms and narcotics into the provinces of Sindh and Balochistan. The Provincial Border Police would be authorized to undertake covert operations and surveillance within the jurisdictions prescribed by the provinces, subject to legal mandates.

Implementation Requirements

To mitigate criminal activities and secure the provincial borders of Pakistan, it is recommended to establish a Provincial Border Police force that focuses on the porous and desert border areas of Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan. This federal agency can be established after mutual agreement among the provinces on its jurisdiction and stature. To assist this agency, MOUs can be signed with the provincial civilian security forces and the military forces. The command of this agency should rotate among provinces every year, and the federal government should appoint the head of the agency from the names provided by the province with mutual understanding.

The Provincial Border Police force should have sub-departments similar to customs and highway patrol polices, and it should work in cooperation with other provincial law enforcement forces. The force should be equipped with some of the latest weaponry, and the whole department should be based on paramilitary forces like Sindh and Punjab Rangers, and the FC police. To initially equip the force, the freshly retired personnel of the Custom police, paramilitary forces, and the Elite force having good physical and mental health under the age of 45 can be hired. Additionally, Motorway police vehicles and jeeps can be allotted under a bill passed by the federal government, and the provincial assemblies of these border areas will provide funding.

The Provincial Border Police force will have operational power in a specific length of area on both sides of provincial borders, where they will patrol and can operate operations. This force should have checkpoints specifically on the remotest areas which are far away from the population. The Provincial border police should also work with local police forces to assist them when needed or demanded. Initially, community policing will help understand the terrain and in quick operations in the remotest and difficult terrain.

The effectiveness of this system depends on political support and resources allotted to the program. Ceding of sovereignty in the border areas and MOU of intelligence exchange are also big hurdles to be dealt with. However, by establishing a Provincial Border Police force, Pakistan can ensure the security of its borders, contain any illegal passages, and prevent criminal activities in these remote areas.

In addition to the aforementioned, the Ministry of Interior is capable of supervising the entirety of the inter-provincial collaboration process. Similarly, the Council of Common Interests offers a platform for the enactment of departmental legislation and the subsequent signing of Memorandums of Understanding.

Gains from the Solution

The proposed deployment of a Provincial Border Police Force would offer a viable solution to combat smuggling and criminal activity in remote regions. By virtue of their singular focus, this specialized force would alleviate confusion among local police and mitigate their reluctance to conduct operations and extradition. Additionally, a better equipped and strategically located Provincial Border Police Force would not only offer regular patrolling but also serve as an emergency response team, given their proximity to the borders. To mitigate any potential issues of superiority complex, a rotating headship of the force could be implemented, thereby ensuring integration with provincial governments.

The deployment of a more sophisticated police force would serve to avert abduction and ambush of local police with outdated weaponry and inadequate operational training, and enable a prompt response during times of necessity. Through consistent patrolling, the construction of permanent hideouts and criminal havens would be deterred, and remote areas would be accessible and secured.

Moreover, by bolstering security measures in these remote areas, investors' confidence would be encouraged. The inclusion of the Provincial Border Police Force within Pakistan's forces would ensure security not only at the border of Sindh and Punjab but also in remote regions of Punjab-Balochistan and Sindh-Balochistan. The issue of province-federal tussle concerning security measures could be dealt with effectively as the Provincial Border Police Force would be federally administered but under the headship of a provincial civil servant. Furthermore, the need to call the army for sweeping operations due to the ineffectiveness of local police could be avoided, allowing local police forces to focus on internal matters within their respective provinces.

Real-Life Example

In order to ensure the security of a country, it is imperative to establish a basic security requirement such as a border police force, which is responsible for securing illegal movement, smuggling, and external harm. The Border Security Force (BSF) in India, the largest border force in the world with 270,000 personnel and 190 wings and departments, is responsible for securing the borders of India with connected states and maintaining law and order in the border area. Pakistan also has the Punjab and Sindh Rangers obligation with securing the borders with India. However, the issue of illegal smuggling and the presence of criminals in the remote areas of provincial borders is still a pressing concern. This problem is very similar to the condition of the Mexico-US border, which has been porous and a hub for smuggling and illegal immigration. The increased border patrolling and security measures

have been able to contain much of the smuggling and illegal immigration on the US-Mexico border, which suggests the inauguration of a similar border force for the provincial borders of Pakistan.

Australia and Canada have also implemented unique border policing strategies. The Australian police have increased the concept of "Special Constables," who are sworn on the statute of all the border states, and are trained with the environment and culture of each state to perform their tasks effectively. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) in Canada^{xxxiii}, with 30,000 employees since 1920, is responsible for internal security provisions and maintaining law and order situations by the local authorities. The force is well-equipped to deal with any insurgency or crime and has the highest rating of approval and confidence in the Canadian masses than local police.^{xxxiv}

Furthermore, in 2021, the National Action Plan announced the establishment of an Inter-Provincial Border Committee tasked with overseeing security conditions, particularly in the tri-border areas of Punjab and Balochistan. Regrettably, this plan has yet to be implemented on a national scale. Additionally, the National Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Act of 2019 proposed a similar strategy to combat human trafficking within the country^{xxxv}. Chapter II, point 4(IX) of the Act included comparable provisions aimed at preventing smuggling and trafficking. In addition to this, an Inter-Provincial Coordination Committee was established to facilitate cooperation between provinces, however, it has been limited to sports-related matters.

Therefore, establishing a provincial border police in Pakistan not only helps to overcome cooperation dilemmas of police departments but also deals with the smuggling of weapons, drugs, and abducted persons. Border patrol will oversee the law-and-order situation in remote areas of provincial borders, ensuring a safer and more secure environment.

Alternative Solutions

Gendarmier^{xxxvi} is a concept that is being used especially in the European countries to control the law-and-order situation in the remote areas. Gendarmier are the security officers under the direct command of military. They are responsible for providing security services which are to be expected by the local police authorities. Gendarmier are military trained and have military grade equipment. They are best in emergency response operations. By considering this type of security measures can directly eliminate any threat of criminal activities. Other than that, for cleaning operation, military's attention will not be diverted.

Community policing^{xxxvii} is a method which is most effective in the recent times. In this method people from remote community directly participate in providing intelligence of any criminal activity and for timely report of some felony. This concept has been a great inclusion in the Rajasthan Police Department of India (State of Rajasthan borders Punjab and Sindh of Pakistan and the Kacha Area). The community members are called Beat^{xxxviii} CLG members and they work under a beat constable. The Community police members have their own livelihoods and voluntarily serves the community.^{xxxix}

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the prevention of crimes and dacoit gangs in the desert and remotest areas of Pakistan requires a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach. Through our research and case studies, we have presented innovative and pragmatic solutions that can significantly reduce crime and ensure the safety of citizens. By establishing a specialized police force, implementing community-based policing initiatives, and fostering strategic collaborations, we can create a more secure and prosperous society for all. It is our hope that policymakers and law enforcement agencies will consider these solutions and take the necessary steps to implement them. Together, we can pave the way for a safer and brighter future for Pakistan.

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