

CRITICAL EVALUATION OF POLICE REFORMS IN KP IN COMAPRISON WITH THE BEST PRACTICES IN THE COUNTRY AND AROUND THE WORLD

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Abstract:

The criminal justice system in Pakistan relies heavily on its three pillars: police, prisons, and judiciary. Since the enactment of the KP Police Act 2017, aimed at transforming the police into a professional and autonomous body, significant strides have been made. These include reforms in recruitment, training, and public accessibility, alongside the introduction of the Alternate Dispute Resolution Mechanism and ICT initiatives. However, challenges persist, such as weak investigation capabilities, difficulties in integrating ex-levies, and the need for an enhanced Counter Terrorism Department. Recommendations for improvement include ensuring full implementation of the KP Police Act, updating colonial-era police rules, developing forensic labs, and reinforcing investigation units. Enhancements in ICT, external accountability mechanisms, and legislative reforms are also vital. Addressing these areas is essential to achieving a more efficient and trustworthy police force, thereby strengthening Pakistan's overall criminal justice system.

Key words:

Police reforms, KP Police Act 2017, Criminal justice system, Law enforcement, Public service.

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Introduction

The criminal justice system in Pakistan is built upon three foundational pillars: the police, prisons, and the judiciary. Each of these institutions plays a crucial role in maintaining law and order, ensuring justice, and safeguarding the rights of citizens. Among these, the police force stands as the primary institution responsible for preventing and detecting crime and upholding human rights. An effective and professional police force is essential not only for the internal stability of the nation but also for its economic growth and development. Achieving Goal #16 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals—“Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions”—is closely tied to having a well-functioning and professional police force.

Historically, the police in Pakistan have operated under the Police Act of 1861, a law originally developed under the Irish Constabulary Model, which was used by colonial rulers as an instrument of oppression. This colonial legacy has left a lasting impact on the police force, with the need for comprehensive reforms becoming increasingly evident. Traditional approaches to police reform have often involved negotiations between political elites and police leadership, with minimal public consultation and limited parliamentary intervention.

Since Pakistan's independence in 1947, there have been numerous reports and recommendations aimed at reforming the police system, yet many of these have been poorly implemented. The Police Act of 1861 was eventually replaced by the Police Order 2002, which was later validated under the 17th and 18th Constitutional Amendments. More recently, the KP Police Act 2017 was introduced by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government with the objective of transforming the police into a depoliticized and autonomous public service.

While the KP Police Act 2017 represents a significant step forward, introducing several reforms to enhance the police's operational efficiency and public service capabilities, there remains substantial work to be done. Despite advancements such as improved recruitment processes, training, and public accessibility through initiatives like the Alternate Dispute Resolution Mechanism and various ICT advancements, the KP Police still face challenges. These include weaknesses in investigation processes, difficulties in integrating ex-levies, and the need for a more robust Counter Terrorism Department. Bringing the KP Police up to the standards of the best policing models globally will require continued reform efforts and strategic

enhancements.

Problem Statement

Since independence, approximately two dozen committees and commissions have been established to reform the police in Pakistan. However, due to weak political ownership and ineffective implementation, these reforms have largely remained aspirational. There is a limited understanding that without a commitment to democracy, transparency, accountability, and fundamental rights, police reforms will continue to be extensively discussed but minimally implemented. In the post-9/11 era, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) has faced significant challenges due to militancy, which has intensified the drive for police reform. The KP Police leadership, recognizing the need for reform, proposed several initiatives to the provincial government. For the first time in Pakistan's history, a provincial government demonstrated strong political will by enacting the KP Police Act 2017, increasing financial allocations, and supporting structural reforms.

This paper aims to explore key research questions, including the factors driving the reform process, the legal and structural framework of these reforms, significant changes within the KP Police, challenges encountered during the reform process, and recommendations for moving forward.

Scope of Research

This research focuses on the police reforms implemented in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), particularly those introduced under the KP Police Act 2017. It aims to evaluate the effectiveness of these reforms, examining their impact on the broader criminal justice system and identifying both successes and challenges in their implementation. The study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how these reforms align with the overall criminal justice framework in Pakistan. By offering detailed insights into the legal, structural, and operational changes, the research will be valuable to policymakers, law enforcement officials, and scholars. Policymakers will benefit from a critical analysis of the reforms, guiding future legislative decisions, while prospective police officers will gain practical insights into navigating the evolving landscape of law enforcement in KP.

Research methodology

This research adopts a qualitative methodology to provide an in-depth

analysis of the police reforms in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), focusing specifically on the KP Police Act 2017. The study will utilize a range of secondary data sources to support its findings. This secondary data includes a comprehensive review of the KP Police Act 2017, as well as editorials, articles from leading newspapers, research papers, and working papers. In addition, the research will draw on relevant online resources to ensure a broad perspective on the topic. Data will be collected from various offices, including the Central Police Office in Peshawar and Lahore, to gain practical insights and supplementary information on the implementation and impact of the reforms. This methodological approach aims to provide a thorough and nuanced understanding of the police reforms, capturing both theoretical and practical dimensions of the subject.

Literature Review

The review of literature for this research involved examining various articles and reports by prominent researchers, social scientists, and police officers concerning police reforms. These sources included publications in newspapers and magazines, as well as data collected from the KP Police and Punjab Police Headquarters.

The Law and Justice Commission report titled **Police Reforms: Way Forward**, submitted to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, proposes several administrative and legislative measures. It advocates for a uniform police law across the four provinces, amendments to the Police Rules, and changes to the Qanoon-e-Shahadat Ordinance 1984, among other recommendations.

Dr. Shoaib Suddle, a former Inspector General of Police (IGP), explores the historical perspective of police reforms in the subcontinent and identifies key challenges in the reform process (Suddle, 2020). Mr. Syed Abbas Ahsan argues for the establishment of independent oversight bodies in the form of Public Safety Commissions (Ahsan, 2020). Ms. Maria Taimur emphasizes the importance of technology-based and gender-sensitive policing (Taimur, 2021). Mr. Ahmad Saeed Minhas and Mr. Akhtar Ali Shah provide a comparative analysis of different police laws across provinces, recommending enhancements to the investigation wing (Minhas & Shah, 2019). Mr. Kaleem Imam advocates for a proactive approach to combating crime and underscores the need for security of tenure for the IGP and other police officers (Imam, 2021). Lastly, Mr. Muhammad Ali Babakhel addresses the challenges faced by KP Police in the Newly Merged Districts (NMDs) (Babakhel, 2022).

Important Factors that Led to Police Reforms in Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa

Political will

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) formed a coalition government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa following the 2013 general elections. The campaign slogan for PTI was "Vote for Khan, Vote for Change," reflecting their promise to bring positive reform to the province. The people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa supported PTI with the expectation of transformative changes. Under the leadership of Pervez Khattak, the government prioritized three key areas: police, education, and health. Significant efforts were made to implement concrete improvements in these departments (Babakhel, 2020). The police force underwent structural revamping, and resources were allocated to enhance its efficiency and effectiveness in maintaining law and order and addressing terrorism. A positive image of the police was cultivated through modern social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. PTI leaders, including Imran Khan, described the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police Force as a "model police" for the nation. Gradually, the public acknowledged and appreciated the improvements. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government enacted the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police Ordinance 2016, followed by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police Act 2017, both of which marked significant milestones in enhancing the police force's performance in the province.

Positive Role of Police Leadership

The leadership of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's police played a crucial role in reforming the province's police system. Nasir Khan Durrani, the then Inspector General of Police (IGP) for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, spearheaded the reform process alongside Chief Minister Pervez Khattak. Durrani led with a proactive approach, providing the police force with much-needed motivation and direction. Under his leadership, the police force, previously plagued by terrorism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and erstwhile FATA, experienced significant changes. He dismissed over 400 officers who were involved in bribery, professional misconduct, or serious crimes. Durrani conducted regular crime meetings and held underperforming officers accountable, emphasizing the importance of timely solutions to the issues faced by the public at police stations. His efforts inspired KP Police officers to follow his example, contributing to the development of the KP Police as a model for the rest of the country.

Counter Terrorism and Extremism

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was the front-line province in the war on terror, bearing the brunt of terrorist attacks and their nefarious designs. As the main pillar of the state responsible for maintaining law and order, the police force became a primary target for terrorist organizations aiming to weaken it. The police were instrumental in the struggle between success and failure in the war on terror. Daily attacks, including bombings, ransom cases, and suicide bombings, were common in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The KP Police made immense sacrifices to combat terrorism, often at great personal risk. Officers, from the Inspector General of Police (IGP) to constables, laid down their lives to protect their homeland. In response to the escalating threats, both the police leadership and the provincial government decided to revamp the police structure in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to more effectively address the terrorism menace (Babakhel, 2022).

Judiciary

The judiciary has been a key supporter of police reforms, passing judgments and issuing directions to both federal and provincial governments on related matters. In the landmark judgment of Criminal Original Petition No. 89/2011, concerning Contempt Proceedings against the Chief Secretary of Sindh, the Supreme Court of Pakistan declared all out-of-turn promotions within police organizations across the country as illegal, unlawful, unconstitutional, and un-Islamic. As a result, thousands of officers were either repatriated to their parent departments or demoted to their original ranks. The court also halted the practices of cronyism and rewarding favored officers by influential figures within the police department. In September 2018, following directives from the Supreme Court, the Ministry of Law and Justice formulated a comprehensive report on police reforms. This report outlines a path forward for implementing meaningful reforms in Pakistan's police system.

Media

The media has played a proactive role in advocating for police reforms, especially when issues of human rights violations, police brutality, and interference in police work arise. For instance, media coverage of the rape and murder of 8-year-old Zainab in Kasur, Punjab, led to amendments in rape laws and the drafting of new Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) by the police to handle such cases more effectively. Similarly, the gang rape of a woman on the motorway in Lahore garnered significant public attention and protests after being highlighted by the media.

Public Pressure

Public opinion and reaction are powerful tools that have pressured police officers and governments to implement meaningful changes. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the case of Aamir Tehkali serves as a notable example. After a video showing the torture of Aamir Tehkali, an Afghan national, by a Station House Officer (SHO) went viral, widespread protests erupted in Peshawar. This public outcry led to the installation of CCTV cameras in police lockups and SHO offices to prevent custodial torture. More recently, large-scale public protests against militancy in Swat and surrounding districts compelled the police and intelligence agencies to redirect resources and address the terrorism in the region.

The Legal and Structural Framework and Major Reforms in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police

Legal Framework

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police Act, 2017 (Substantive Law)

The successful implementation of initial reform measures motivated the PTI-led provincial government to enact the KP Police Ordinance 2016, which was followed by the KP Police Act, 2017. This law was enacted with the goal of making the police service apolitical, operationally autonomous, and accountable to civilian oversight. It is notable for granting the Inspector General of Police (IGP) complete operational autonomy. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police Act is a comprehensive document, consisting of 14 chapters divided into a total of 144 sections. The Act provides a framework for the police's operational efficiency, public service, swift response, and accountability, establishing internal accountability mechanisms that had previously been either dysfunctional or selectively applied (Taimur, 2021).

Rules

The KP Police adheres to the Police Rules of 1934 and the Rules of Business 1985 for interactions with provincial and federal governments. Additionally, the KP Police Efficiency & Discipline Rules of 1975 govern disciplinary proceedings against provincial police officers up to the rank of DSPs.

Regulations

Regulations for police functions are issued by the IGP and include Standing Orders, Operational Guidelines, and Policy Guidelines.

Structural Framework

Territorial Units

The KP Police is organized into 7 regions and 33 districts to maintain law and order.

Functional Units

The KP Police includes several functional units: Elite Force, Special Branch, Counter Terrorism Department (CTD), Frontier Reserve Police (FRP), and Traffic Police.

Dispute Resolution Councils (DRCs)

In 2014, the KP Police introduced Dispute Resolution Councils (DRCs) to formalize local involvement in maintaining law and order. These councils are an alternative dispute resolution system involving victims, offenders, and local community elders to resolve disputes amicably (Warraich, 2021). Thirty-five DRCs have been established across KP, providing an effective alternative dispute resolution mechanism. Over the past four years, DRCs have resolved 19,107 cases in KP (Babakhel, 2020).

Annual Police Plan

Chapter 4, Section 17(6) of the KP Police Act, 2017, requires the provincial police officer to draft an annual policing plan. Additionally, Chapter 4, Section 22(2) assigns responsibility for this plan to the district police officer (DPO), ensuring alignment with the provincial plan (Babakhel, 2020). The policing plan outlines priorities and strategies at both the provincial and district levels for crime control.

Public Safety Commissions

Chapter 5 of the Police Act 2017 establishes Public Safety Commissions to oversee police activities. These commissions act as a bridge between the police and the public, with well-defined criteria for member selection (Government, 2017).

Improving the Quality of Investigation

Prior to the 2017 Act, the quality of police investigations lacked professional attention and adequate resources. Chapter 4, Section 26(8) of the Act mandates that the SP Investigation report to the concerned DPO, whereas previously the SP Investigation reported only to the AIG Investigations (Babakhel, 2020).

Implementation Commissioner

The KP Police Act, 2017, introduced a legal framework for overseeing implementation with the creation of the office of an 'Implementation Commissioner' under Section 143 (Government, 2017).

Public Liaison Councils

The Police Act 2017 facilitates public-police coordination through Public Liaison Councils, as outlined in Chapter 5, Section 47. These councils, comprising 70% members from village councils and 30% from local notables, assist the police in crime prevention, public order maintenance, and reporting hate speech (Babakhel, 2020; Government, 2017).

Police Policy Board

A Police Policy Board, consisting of senior police officers, meets quarterly to address major policy issues and challenges faced by various police formations.

Policy and Operational Guidelines

Policy Guidelines (PGs) and Operational Guidelines (OGs) provide directives for police activities, including history sheet preparation, safety procedures during raids, and responses to terrorist attacks.

Police Training Schools

Eight specialized training schools, such as the School of Intelligence in Abbottabad and the School of Explosives Handling in Nowshera, have been established to enhance the operational capacity of the KP Police.

Recruitment and Promotion Exams

To ensure transparency and merit, recruitment for constable ranks is conducted by accredited testing agencies like ETEA. Promotion exams for junior police officers are also administered by ETEA.

Posting of SHOs

A transparent mechanism for posting Station House Officers (SHOs) involves a pool of reputable officers maintained at the RPO Office, with selection done by a panel including the RPO, DPO, and SP Investigation. The tenure for SHOs is fixed at one year.

DDO Powers to SHOs and OIIs

All SHOs and Officers In-Charge Investigations (OIIs) in KP Police have the powers of Drawing and Disbursing Officers, allowing them greater budgetary autonomy and operational efficiency.

Police Assistance Lines (PAL)

Police Assistance Lines across KP offer 13 different services to the public, such as issuing Police Character Certificates, tenant registration, and lost item entry.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Initiatives

The KP Police has developed Criminal Record Verification System (CRVS) and Vehicle Verification System (VVS) software, which field officers use on tablets to identify criminal records and stolen vehicles. These tools have led to the arrest of 3,567 criminals and 234 stolen vehicles (Government, 2022).

Internal Accountability

A robust Internal Accountability Wing, headed by a DIG, has been established, resulting in over 7,000 police officers receiving minor and major punishments (Government, 2022).

Merger and Training of Ex-Levies and Khasadars

Following the 25th Constitutional Amendment, over 26,000 ex-levies and Khasadars were integrated into KP Police. Over 23,000 have been trained in collaboration with the Pakistan Army, with the remainder expected to complete training by March 2023 (Government, 2022).

Comparative Analysis

London Metropolitan Police Model

The modern police force in England was established by the Metropolitan Police Act of 1829. The key features of English policing are:

1. The police force in England is preventive in nature, with a primary aim of prominent patrolling by officers in uniform.
2. The command and control style is based on a centralized and quasi-military organizational structure.
3. The police force in England is professional, impersonal, and patient.
4. The authority of the English constable is derived from three official sources: the Crown, the law, and the approval and cooperation of the citizenry.
5. The Secretary of State does not have explicit or implicit authority to direct or oversee police operations.

For the past 193 years, policing in Britain has adhered to these principles. The Metropolitan Police Act of 1829 ensures the independence of the chief

constable, who is insulated from political maneuvering and influence concerning individual case decisions. Additionally, the London Police have specialized investigation units for homicides, robberies, terrorism, etc., and all police officers are recruited at the constable level.

Punjab Police

The Punjab Police force is the primary governmental organization responsible for maintaining law and order in the Punjab province. Operating under the leadership of the Inspector General of Police, it manages and addresses all criminal cases and functions under the Police Order of 2002. Established on March 22, 1861, the Punjab Police is the oldest police force in Pakistan and also the largest, with over 220,000 employees (Babakhel, 2020). It has jurisdiction over an area of 205,344 km², with its headquarters located in Lahore, Punjab.

Comparative Analysis of Punjab Police and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police

S #	Item	Punjab Police	KP Police
1.	Police Law	Police Order 2002 is in place. The IG does not enjoy complete operational autonomy. Posting of senior field officers is decided in consultation with the CM.	Police Act, 2017 is in force. The IGP enjoys full operational autonomy in the transfer and posting of field officers.
2.	Financial Autonomy	The IGP receives a one-line budget from the Finance Department and utilizes it according to requirements.	The IGP receives a PS-wise budget from the Finance Department and must frequently seek grants and reappropriations through the Home Department.

3.	Investigation	Specialized units, such as the Homicide Unit, are established. There is a higher conviction rate (9%) in major crimes in 2021. (Government, 2022)	No functional specialization. The investigation branch is weak with a low conviction rate (5%) for major crimes in 2021. (Government, 2022)
4.	CTD	Well-established CTD with regional headquarters and specialized personnel (corporals). Strength of 5,900, 14 PSP officers, and a Rs. 200 million secret budget. (Government, 2022)	CTD has facilities in only two regions and lacks specialized workforce. Strength of 3,200, one PSP officer, and a Rs. 5 million secret budget. (Government, 2022)
5.	FSL	The Punjab government has established a state-of-the-art independent FSL lab (PFSA), which aids in crime investigation.	No well-equipped FSL.
6.	Specialized Police Training Schools	Punjab has 3 basic recruit training schools and one specialized elite school.	KP has 4 basic recruit training schools and 8 specialized schools.

7.	Information and Communication Technology	Punjab Police, in collaboration with PITB, has developed HRMS and PSFMS. Additionally, they have computerized FIRs. The Safe City Project in Lahore is another successful IT initiative.	Work on HRMS and PSFMS is in progress. There is no computerized FIR system. The Peshawar Safe City Project has not yet started.
8.	Alternate Dispute Resolution Mechanism	No such system in place.	Thirty-five Dispute Resolution Councils (DRCs) have been established across KP, assisting the public with civil nature cases.
9.	Recruitment	Recruitment of constables is conducted by Punjab Police officers and ASIs are selected by the Public Service Commission.	Recruitment of constables is done through an accredited testing agency (ETEA) and ASIs are selected through the Public Service Commission.

Issues and Challenges

FATA Merger

Following the 25th Constitutional Amendment, the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) were merged into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). FATA had a distinct governance structure, different from the rest of the country, where the Political Agent served as the police chief, judge, and administrator. With the merger, the jurisdiction of the police extended to FATA, and more than 26,000 ex-levies and khasadars were absorbed into KP Police. The levies and khasadars are mostly illiterate, untrained, and poorly equipped. More than 23,000 of them have been trained with the help of the Pakistan Army (Government, 2022). Infrastructure development, training, and the supply of arms and ammunition to the police in the newly merged districts (NMDs) are underway. The resurgence of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and militancy, post-U.S. withdrawal, along with maintaining law and order in the NMDs, remains a major challenge for KP Police.

Resurgence of Militancy and Role of CTD

The number of terrorism incidents in KP has increased by more than 50% this year compared to last year. So far in 2022, over 75 police officers have lost their lives in militant attacks, and 123 have been seriously injured (Government, 2022). The total number of terrorist incidents this year exceeds 500 (Government, 2022). The TTP and IS-K are the primary terrorist groups responsible for these attacks. The situation has worsened since the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and the release of many terrorists from Afghan prisons. The southern districts of KP are experiencing a significant increase in terrorist attacks. While the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) has made some progress, much work remains. The CTD in Punjab is well-established with resources and infrastructure at the regional and district levels, and its intelligence gathering and monitoring mechanisms are highly professional. In contrast, the CTD in KP lags behind Punjab's CTD in all aspects.

Weak Investigation Wing and Low Conviction Rate

Historically, the investigation wing of KP Police has been weak. Although KP Police has remained operationally effective, the investigation branch is under-resourced, leading to poor investigations and low conviction rates. The conviction rate for major crimes is only 4% (Government, 2022), compared to Punjab's 11% and the U.S.'s 17%.

Forensic Science Laboratory

KP lacks a state-of-the-art Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL). The existing FSL in KP Police is under-resourced in terms of both human resources and finances. This inadequacy results in early bails and a low conviction rate. In cases of sex crimes, KP Police often rely on Punjab's FSL, which is both time-consuming and expensive.

External Oversight and Public Safety Commissions

KP Police frequently faces scrutiny regarding issues such as custodial torture or high-handedness. The case concerning the scrutiny committee for selecting members of the Provincial Public Safety Commission is currently sub judice in the Peshawar High Court, rendering the PSCs non-functional. Additionally, the position of the implementation commissioner has been vacant for four years.

Equipment and Barracks; Budget Issues

In KP Police, there are barracks for only 21,000 police personnel, with the remainder living in rented accommodations (Government, 2022). The provincial government is facing a financial crunch, having released only 2 billion rupees against a demand of 19 billion for FY 2021-22 (Government, 2022).

Financial Autonomy; Attached Department

The police remain an attached department of the Home Department. Although the Police Act has granted the IGP the status of an ex-officio secretary, he lacks financial autonomy. Summaries for the Chief Minister must go through the Home Department.

Shortage of PSP Officers; Salary Package and Hard Area Declaration

There is a shortage of PSP officers in KP Police, impacting overall administration and performance. There are only 65 PSP officers in KP from BS-17 to BS-21, against a sanctioned strength of 164 (Government, 2022). KP has not been declared a hard area by the Federal Government, and the salary package is considerably lower compared to that of Punjab Police.

ICT Initiatives

ICT initiatives facilitate informed decision-making and enhance transparency

in transactions. KP Police should focus more on ICT and seek assistance from the KP IT Board or PITB. Safe City Projects could improve law and order in the province.

HRMS and Police Station Record Management System

The Human Resource Management System (HRMS), Case File Management System, and Police Station Record Management System are not yet in place. This lack of systems leads to inefficient use of human resources and weak investigations, which ultimately results in acquittals and a low conviction rate.

Conclusion

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Police has a storied history of sacrifice and valor, evolving significantly since the country's independence in 1947. The KP Police Act of 2017 represents a modern approach to policing and a positive step forward. It has granted the much-needed operational autonomy to the police, reducing political interference. Additionally, KP Police has implemented quality reforms in workforce recruitment, training, promotions, and the transfer and posting of officers. The introduction of the Alternate Dispute Resolution Mechanism, through Dispute Resolution Councils (DRCs), has been widely praised across the country. Public access to police services has been simplified with the establishment of Police Assistance Lines (PAL) centers and ICT initiatives. The internal accountability mechanisms are also robust. These reforms have significantly improved the image of KP Police as a service-oriented and approachable force.

However, there is still room for improvement. The investigation branch remains a weak link and requires strengthening. The challenge of integrating and training ex-levies and khasadars from the former FATA region continues. The resurgence of militancy underscores the need for a revamp of the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD). Furthermore, Public Safety Commissions need to be made functional to ensure effective external oversight by the public.

Recommendations

To enhance policing in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and across Pakistan, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Implementation of Police Act: The KP Police Act 2017 is a progressive law, yet its full potential has not been realized due to the vacant position of

Implementation Commissioner for four years. This position should be filled promptly, and both the Police leadership and political executives must adhere to all provisions of the Act.

2. **Police Rules 1934:** Currently, KP Police follows the outdated Police Rules of 1934, which are based on the colonial Police Act of 1861. New rules should be drafted in alignment with modern policing practices and the Police Act 2017, and then submitted to the Provincial Cabinet for ratification.
3. **Forensic Science Lab:** KP should establish Forensic Science Laboratories similar to the Punjab Forensic Science Agency (PFSA). A proposal for this has already been sent to the provincial government and should be actively pursued for prompt implementation.
4. **Investigation:** KP Police plans to recruit over 500 law graduates as Investigating Officers (IOs) at the Sub Inspector level. This process should be expedited in coordination with the KP Public Service Commission. Additionally, specialized units like Homicide Units should be developed following the Punjab Police model.
5. **Information and Communication Technology Initiatives:** KP Police is implementing a Human Resource Management System (HRMS) and Case File Management System (CFMS) similar to Punjab's systems. This implementation needs constant supervision and acceleration. Computerization of FIRs and completion of the Peshawar Safe City Project should also be prioritized to enhance crime detection and prevention.
6. **Police Accountability:** The Public Safety Commissions are non-functional due to a pending case in the Peshawar High Court regarding the appointment of members. Police leadership should actively pursue this case to expedite the functioning of these commissions.
7. **Alternate Dispute Resolution:** The Dispute Resolution Councils (DRCs) have effectively reduced the burden on police and the judiciary. DPOs should ensure that reputable individuals are appointed to DRCs, which should also be extended to Newly Merged Districts (NMDs).
8. **Counter Terrorism Department:** Recent terrorism has undermined public confidence and affected local businesses. The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) needs to be strengthened based on the Punjab model. The provincial government's willingness to allocate additional funds and seats should be followed up for timely implementation.

9. Merger of Ex-Levies and Khasadars: The training of ex-levies and khasadars should be expedited, and new recruitment should be undertaken for vacant positions in NMDs. The apparatus of CTD, Special Branch, and Elite Force in these areas also needs enhancement to address emerging threats.
10. Centralized Database: Currently, there is no centralized database for police organizations in Pakistan. KP lacks integration of computerized criminal records across units and districts. Establishing a centralized database at both central and provincial levels is essential for effective monitoring and sharing of criminal information.
11. Security of Tenure: Police officers, from the rank of IG to Constable, lack security of tenure. Achieving meaningful improvements in policing requires ensuring security of tenure as mandated by the Police Act. Both senior police officials and political leaders should uphold this principle.
12. Legislative Reforms: Effective police reforms require concurrent reforms in the prison and judiciary sectors. Legislative changes in the laws of evidence and police rules are necessary. Additionally, the police should be removed from the attached department status by altering the rules of business, allowing summaries for initiatives to be submitted directly to the Chief Minister through the Chief Secretary. A one-line budget, similar to that of Punjab, should be allocated to the IG to enable prioritized spending.

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