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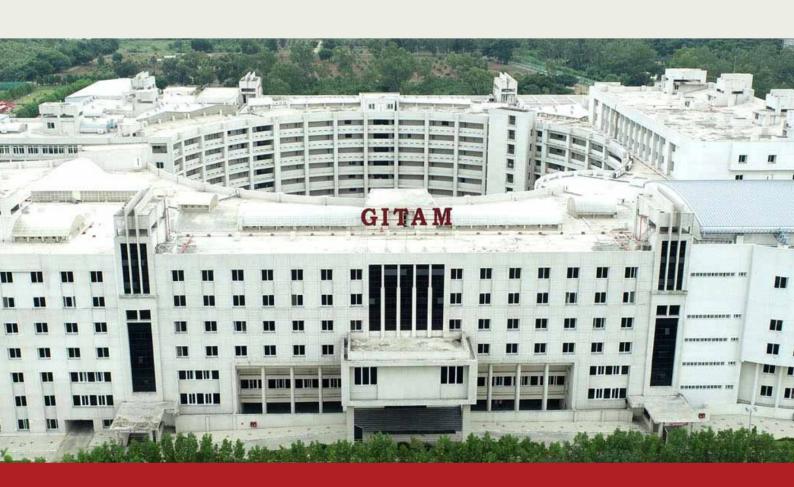
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Policy Review - Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act, 2019

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Abstract

This policy review uses the Narrative Policy Framework (NPF) in the analysis of the 2019 amendment to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), tracing the implications of this amendment for public discourse, policymaking, and democratic values. The Act has been made more expansive by the amendment with the empowerment of the government to declare people terrorists and extending the jurisdiction of the National Investigation Agency. Proponents argue that such provisions fortify national security and the capacity for countering terrorism, whereas opponents argue they violate civil liberties and provide opportunities for abuse. The review deconstructs government and opposition narratives in how heroes and villains are framed, along with victims and moral imperatives. And while the government speaks about protecting sovereignty from terrorism, its critics warn that this will crush dissent and reduce democratic rights. The study focuses on the trade-offs between security and freedom, and how policy narratives shape public perception and consensus. Although the amendment strategically uses institutional models and narrative framing, it is still likely to weaken trust in governance by giving preference to state control over individual rights. The review emphasizes the need for robust oversight to balance security imperatives with democratic accountability.

Keywords: UAPA Amendment 2019, Narrative Policy Framework, Institutional Model, Constituent Policy, Terrorism

Introduction

This paper seeks to critically examine the 2019 amendment of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) through the lens of the Narrative Policy Framework (NPF). It investigates how this change impacts public conversation and policymaking processes by looking at the stories or narratives that shape both for and against the policy. The paper goes on to narrate how each of the main stakeholders, comprising government actors and civil liberties organizations, as well as the general public, constructs and circulates their particular narratives to change the policy space by applying the NPF.

Historical Background

In order to curb any activities that were deemed to be against British rule, the colonisers put in place several laws. For instance, the Criminal Law Amendment Act in 1908 used the term "unlawful association" to outlaw and criminalise the Indian national movement towards freedom. In an ironic twist, following India's independence, the newly-established government used the very same powers to curb political dissent through the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act of 1967 (Singh, 2012). The Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act of 1911 — a draconian act implemented by the British — formed the basis for the following acts:

- Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA), 1971

- National Security Act (NSA), 1980

- Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA), 1985

- Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA), 2002

- The amendments of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 in 2004, 2008, 2012, and 2019. (EPW Engage, 2022)

Moreover, the UAPA traces its legacy to the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act, or the Rowlatt Act of 1919, which was passed by the Imperial Legislative Council. (EPW Engage, 2022)

The UAPA can thus be elaborated on as an Act that seeks to provide for the more effective prevention of certain unlawful activities of individuals and associations, and for dealing with terrorist activities, as also for matters connected therewith. (India Code, n.d.)

Ever since its enactment in 1967 to curb secessionist movements while preserving India's sovereignty, the UAPA has undergone several amendments to ensure the prevention of unlawful activities in the country. The UAPA was amended in 2004 after the POTA was repealed, wherein the amendment incorporated provisions to address terrorism (Parliament, 2004). Post the 2008 Mumbai attacks, amendments sought to enhance counter-terrorism measures by expanding the definition of terrorism (PRS Legislative Research, n.d.-a). Further, the 2012 amendment aligned the UAPA with international conventions as it criminalised terror financing and empowered authorities to freeze assets (PRS Legislative Research, n.d.-b). The most recent 2019 amendment is the subject of this policy review, which has been further elaborated upon below.

On the 8th of July, 2019, the Minister of Home Affairs — Shri Amit Shah — introduced the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Bill in the Lower House, or Lok Sabha. The Bill sought to bring in some changes to the existing Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. These amendments include the following:

- Who may commit terrorism

- Approval for seizure of property by NIA

- Investigation by NIA

- Insertion to schedule of treaties

The bill is an amendment to an already existing policy which aims to make it easier for the National Investigative Agency (NIA) to nab people engaged in unlawful activities. The genesis of the bill can be attributed to the NIA's difficulties while prosecuting people (PRS Legislative Research, n.d.-c) when they commit acts of treason against India's sovereignty. This amendment would help enhance India's counter-terrorism framework by smoothing the process and helping apprehend the terrorists efficiently.

The mechanism that the 2019 amendment uses to enhance India's counter-terrorism framework involves broadening the scope of the UAPA through the designation of individual actors as terrorists and giving the NIA the jurisdiction to enter any state without prior approval. Through this broadened scope, the amendment aids the NIA in taking decisive actions in matters pertaining to terrorism, thereby ensuring the safety and security of the country.

Public Policy Theoretical Framework

"The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act is a nasty tool being used by BJP to arrest anyone who dissents against them. If you're arrested under UAPA, you can be jailed for 180 days without even a charge sheet being filed." (Taneja, 2020)

"Other than the 2019 amendment, every amendment to the UAPA act has happened under a Congress regime (1969, 1972, 1986, 2004, 2008, 2012). So if you now feel this UAPA law can become [an] "instrument of torture" then it's your party [that is] responsible for it." (Bhushan, 2022)

That the 2019 amendment of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act has been contentious is not novel. Several people have several views on this amendment: some are concerned, while others believe this to be an amendment that will truly route out any form of terror in the country. The policy review shall use the "Narrative Policy Framework" (NPF) to analyse this amendment, as this policy theoretical framework provides the optimum lens through which to evaluate the 2019 amendment to the UAPA. The NPF shall aid analysis by identifying the narratives posed by the government and law enforcement agencies to justify the amendment, through the primary reason of safeguarding India's sovereignty. Additionally, it also helps in discerning the narratives posed by the critics (including civil society organisations, activists, and political opponents/dissidents) who argue that the amendment clamps down on people's freedom of expression and perpetuates human rights violations.

The Narrative Policy Framework (NPF) gives a systematic understanding of how policy making is affected by narratives put forward by the various stakeholders in the process. It emphasizes the interplay of various contextual factors of the narrative through which policy is designed and implemented. We look at the form, content, and context in shaping public opinion, policymaking, and implementation.

A policy narrative consists of a few core elements that render it persuasive and effective. The setting is the background against which the issue plays out, including geography, demographics, legal frameworks, and evidence. In the case of the amendment of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, for example, the setting involves the legal framework of anti-terrorism laws and the social and political context in which such laws are used. Next element are the characters, the narrative revolves around key actors who have pre assigned roles such as the victims who can be defined as ones who are harmed or at risk, villains are those who are blamed for causing harm, and the heroes are the ones who provide the solutions.

The narrative then links the people to their surroundings, which establishes relationships and explains causality by answering the "what," "how," and "why" questions relating to the issue in question. A narrative on tighter anti-terrorism legislation for instance, may highlight an impending threat, providing roles to the actors and placing them within wider cultural or policy contexts. The plot might involve emphasizing the issue which needs to be immediately addressed via stricter laws, and the characters are situated within a given narrative, tying the event to broader cultural or policy frameworks. The next component is the moral, which accounts for the narrative's ultimate purpose, the actual call to action or the proposed solution.

Narratives are therefore molded by context. Systems, timing, and audience interactions form a complex mixture of how stories get shaped into meanings. It all depends on when, where, and how the story is delivered. While the narrative interpretations vary they are not unlimited, different cultural norms, ideologies, and shared experiences shape how people perceive narratives.

The policy actors tend to employ various strategies to shape narratives, build support for their own arguments and achieve their aimed policy goal. The scope of conflict determines whether a policy issue is expanded to involve more stakeholders or contained to limit debate amongst the stakeholders. The policymakers tend to portray the narrative via assigning blame or responsibility to explain why the policy issue exists. The actors often frame themselves as "angels" to enhance their narrative, while portraying opponents as "devils".

The narrative tends to work on different levels, influencing individuals, groups, and societies, simultaneously. At a micro level, the personal beliefs and opinions are targeted, at the meso level the groups and coalitions come into play, such as various NGOs and media

campaigns, and at a macro level the national and cultural sentiments are targeted for larger impact.

The core of NPF is based on the idea that humans are natural storytellers — Homo Narrans — and they tend to shape the understanding of the world around them, influence decisions, and drive action. Thus the narrative policy framework demonstrates how through constructed narratives policies are influenced. It emphasizes that narratives are not mere stories but powerful tools that influence public perception, shape debates, and guide policymaking.

Rationale for Employing the Narrative Policy Framework (NPF)

The Narrative Policy Framework is an appropriate analytical tool for understanding of the 2019 amendment to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) as it focuses on how narratives structure the dynamics of policies, public opinions, and actions of the stakeholders (Weible, 2023). In this regard, the 2019 amendment further extends India's gamut of counter-terrorism policies in an extremely charged context of debates relating to national security, sovereignty, and civil liberties. The amendment tactically extends the scope of conflict by pointing out individual actors and increasing the jurisdiction of the NIA (PRS Legislative Research, n.d.). NPF helps in examining the way that the narrative expansion itself creates public and political consensus, underlining the stakes involved and therefore justifying the greater authority that the state possesses.

The 2019 UAPA amendment uses narratives to describe the policy as a necessity in order to achieve national security, targeting individuals specifically engaged in unlawful activities. The government's narrative has framed terrorism as a direct threat to India's sovereignty and safety and called for immediate and effective action. Using the NPF allows for a systematic exploration of how these narratives construct heroes, villains and victims for

a well-supported portrayal of the narrative put forward to support the rationale behind the amendment.

This amendment has sparked significant debate, with competing narratives emerging from civil liberties groups and opposition parties. Proponents believe that the amendment strengthens India's hand in its fight against terrorism, while opponents think it might be misused to suppress dissent and infringe on fundamental rights. The NPF enables a critical study of these counter-narratives by exploring how such narratives challenge the mainstream government narrative and shape public discourse.

The amendment assumes that enhanced security measures outweigh potential risks to civil liberties. The NPF helps identify these assumptions by analyzing how narratives favour security over democratic rights. Such analysis is necessary to determine whether the policy strikes an appropriate balance between citizen protection and freedoms.

The NPF's ability to analyze narratives at three different levels — namely, micro, meso, and macro (Weible, 2023) — makes it quite effective in understanding the 2019 UAPA amendment. At a micro level, it analyzes how different people like policymakers and activists interpret and build narratives about the policy. For example, different members of Parliament stated the amendment to be an important tool for the protection of citizens. At the meso-level, the analysis describes how collectives — including political parties, human rights organizations, and law enforcement entities — are disseminating their narratives in order to influence stakeholders. Here, supporters of the amendment cast it as a question of national security, whilst opponents framed it as something dangerous and prone to potential misuse. Now, at a macro-level, we look at the societal narratives about terrorism and security that shape public opinion. The overarching narrative of an "Anti-terror law" and the portrayal of

terrorism as an existential threat form the broader context within which the amendment operates.

Given the issue's contentiousness and complexity, the NPF's focus on narrative construction, conflict, and its multi-level analysis (Weible, 2023) makes it an indispensable tool for comprehensively understanding the UAPA amendment and its implications for both policy and public perception.

Objectives

The analysis of the 2019 UAPA amendment through the lens of the Narrative Policy Framework (NPF) will serve to bring about an understanding of how narratives have shaped and continue to shape the policy's framing, debate, and acceptance by the various stakeholders. The primary objective is to examine the dissonant views held by stakeholders — including the government, the opposition, civil society organisations, and the media — as also to determine how these narratives have influenced public perceptions and policymaking.

To do so, the setting (increasing terrorism threats and political context) needs to be examined; the characters (heroes, villains, and victims — differ depending on which side is floating the narrative) need to be identified; and the plot needs to be evaluated along with the proposed solutions. The analysis of levels as well as the strategies used will also be studied in the policy review.

This analysis shall attempt to place the various existing narratives under the aegis of the Narrative Policy Framework, to evaluate their long-term implications on public opinion, institutional conduct, and policymaking. The trade-offs involved in balancing the key themes of national security and civil liberties shall be touched upon in the policy review.

Policy Analysis

Policy Description

The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment (UAPA) Act, 2019, enacted by the Government of India, aims to enhance anti-terrorism laws to resolve evolving security issues. UAPA allows organizations, and individuals, to be termed as terrorists based on their involvement in terror activities. Its key objectives include strengthening national security, enabling preemptive action against potential threats, and considering India's obligations under FATF guidelines.

Goals of the Policy

The Unlawful Activities Prevention Act 2019 (UAPA) was intended to strengthen the anti-terrorism laws of India and provide the Union government more powers to combat terrorism. The amendment was made to reinforce India's zero-tolerance policy towards terrorism.

Instruments of the Policy

Designating Individuals as terrorists was the main aim of the UAPA amendment act of 2019 as before this amendment only organizations could be labeled as terrorist organizations. It also empowers the officers of NIA, who are of the rank of inspector or above, to investigate cases. The Director General of NIA can also approve the seizure or attachment of property representing proceeds of terrorism.

Type and Model of the Policy

The policy type the amendment follows is the Constituent Policy. The reason the amendment comes under the Constituent policy is because it aims to modify the existing structures, rules and institutions of the government, and more particularly the existing UAPA act. It does this by broadening the scope of the UAPA. Since the major goal of this policy is

to influence or alter the existing law enforcement structure, we can call it a Constituent policy type. In the case of this policy, the coercion method is immediate as after the successful implementation of the amendment, the law is changed immediately hence there will be no delay in the change of the same and the other reason being that all citizens will directly have to follow the new rules in the given amendment, making the coercion type as immediate, which is a key factor of the constituent policy type. The amendment does not impact the nature of behaviour of the citizens directly but impacts the broader environment in which we shall function. This is through the change in the nature of behaviour from the NIA as they would be allowed to act without much obstacles throughout the country, as their jurisdiction has been increased while at the same time the value of their approval has been enhanced as it can be a substitute for the approval of a Director General of Police of the state. The benefits of this amendment would help in prevention of terrorist activities, as the law enforcement organizations can work much more effectively and with lesser red tape but it has also sparked the speculation of the cost of freedom where the government could use these agencies to settle scores with elements that are standing against the government. The individuals in the system would be a party that would benefit from this new amendment because it makes their operations smoother. The amendment follows party politics/ national interest, as the stated aim of the policy is to ensure the safety of the population at large, and is also influenced by the party ideology at large, hence making it a characteristic of the constituent policy.

While discussing the UAPA amendment's policy type, we must also highlight the larger policy type of the UAPA too. The UAPA shows the characteristics of the Regulatory policy type too. By definition, the regulatory policy type entails the enactment of laws to control or restrain certain behaviours, with one of the uses being to maintain law and order. There is immediate coercion and the focus, though on the local level, is also prominent on the

system level as it has added a layer to the working of the law enforcement. The impact is on the conduct of the individual at large but by setting up regulations. While there might be the interest groups, like the defence ecosystem advocating for them, but we can't ignore the role of party politics in it too, with some parties having national security as a key political plank. But, for the sake of this assignment, we shall restrict our further analysis only to the amendment, as the ambit of the UAPA is too large for this one paper to do justice with.

The model the amendment falls under would be the Institutional model. We can see that the institutional model in general has been characterized by 3 major characteristics: investment in legal authority, universal application and use of coercion. The application of the new UAPA would be universal as it endows the government agencies to take decisive actions in the face of threats the country faces, without any restriction or without giving special emphasis on any sub-section. The amendment emphasises the role of formal institutions by making the and has increased the power and the authority provided to the NIA, showing the increase in the investment in the legal authority through this amendment. Additionally, it is apparent that there is a clear case of coercion, and when it comes to the amendment in particular, the enforceability of the law on individuals too, though the amendment, shows that the coercion is involved, With all three characteristics matching, we can justify why the amendment falls under institutional model.

The amendment is apt for using the Institutional model and the Constituent Policy type because it focuses mainly on the workings of the government. There is no second or third party that is involved in this policy therefore making the model and the type apt for this amendment. From this we can extrapolate that the policy aims to improve/ upgrade the existing government structures that exist. The Institutional model and Constituent policy fits well with this amendment because these two components aim to make the working of the UAPA faster.

Critical Analysis from a Narrative Policy Framework

While applying the Narrative Policy Framework, we must do a comparative analysis of the narratives of both the sides when it comes to the amendment - we must compare the narrative in favour and the narrative against the UAPA Amendment Act of 2019. Let us break down the grand narratives of both sides into the elements of the narrative and appropriately make a comparison of the same.

The Narrative in the favour:

The grand narrative by the government in favour of this policy was that the policy aimed at securing the country and by allowing the enforcement agencies to act swiftly and catch all the terrorists and other anti-social elements. The major idea was the portrayal of the government as a strong one (*Designation of Organisations/Individuals as 'Terrorist Organization'/ 'Terrorist' Under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA)*, n.d.) that prioritized national security and the safety of the people and would not go soft on the terrorists.

The setting of the narrative hence became that there is an existing legal framework (the existing UAPA act) that is aimed at tackling terrorism in the country, but due to unfortunate reasons, the act was not 'strong' enough (Swarajya Staff & Swarajya Staff, 2019) to tackle the same and there was a need to 'strengthen' the act and for that amendment was required. The government hence came up with this amendment to fulfill their goal of ensuring national security. The heroes of this narrative were the law enforcement agency, who are portrayed to fight the inefficiencies and the terrorists both (Swarajya Staff & Swarajya Staff, 2019) while the greater hero was the government that was actually making this amendment and helping the law enforcement agency to tackle terrorism and help ensure the safety of the citizens. The victims in the narrative hence were the citizens and the state in

general, who are victims of terrorism as they are not only facing material damages and loss but also the psychological terror and fear. It was these victims that the heroes were trying to rescue or help. The villains are classically the terrorists and terrorist-supporters who are situated outside the country and want to undermine the state and put the lives of the citizens at jeopardy. These villains need to be countered by the heroes which gives rise to the need for this amendment. There are also allies of the villain, who are shown to be various civil society organizations and even opposition party members that are 'terrorist sympathisers' (Swarajya Staff & Swarajya Staff, 2019) and need not be taken seriously or listened to as their goal is not to safeguard the victim, hence the points raised by them are invalid. The plot hence is that the government who is the hero, along with their agencies is trying to safeguard the victims from the villains and their allies, and in order to do so they are trying to implement an amendment to the existing framework which is being opposed by the villains and their allies. The moral here is that the government needs to help the enforcement agencies and that is why there is a call to change the existing UAPA and broaden the mandate of these agencies.

We can focus on various elements, which, as per Weible, are the foundations of establishing the concept of *homo narrans*. There is the idea that humans will be boundedly rational, meaning that the stance they will take will not be extremely non-conventional or will not be an unexplored idea. The majority of the opinion hence will fall into a dichotomy - of support or of opposition to the amendment. That idea is applied here, wherein we see that there is no nuanced understanding of terrorism or dissent, and a general negative connotation is attached to it (Waje, 2019). There can be use of heuristics where the people are reminded of the various terrorist (Swarajya Staff & Swarajya Staff, 2019) attacks and are hence anchored to the opinion that there must be stronger legislation for counter-terrorism. Playing on emotive memories like those of terrorist attacks also serves to work on the primacy of affect where we can see that people might get emotional in their opinion about the amendment and

will not rationally think about it but will rather think emotionally and will even agree to take stronger or more drastic measures. Coming back to the policy type, we see why this policy also affects party politics as national security is closely linked to the ideologies of the parties,(*Bharatiya Janata Party*, n.d.) and we see three mechanisms at play here: the confirmation bias (where the primary supporters of the party and/or the ideology are only accepting information that adheres to their pre existing bias), selective exposure (the network of the policy makers or people who advocate for this policy stance might be the ones who are only allowing selective news to flow out and could possibly restrain the news about government excesses) (Correspondent, 2019) and the concept of identity-protective cognition (these two biases play out in a way that we can only think in manner that suits our early biases about ourselves and about our reality, which in this case was the citizens seeing themselves as victims).

When it comes to the application of multilevel narratives, there are various facets that can be explored. When we look at the narrative from a microlevel, we see that there are two hypotheses that are actually applicable here. The hypothesis that as the narrator's trust increases, so does the likelihood of persuasion by the narrative. This hypothesis works out as the government was led by BJP who had individually more than 300 seats while their alliance had more than 350 seats, (*Lok Sabha Elections Party Wise Result*, n.d.) which suggests that in terms of legislative power, they had a higher trust, buoyed by their recent electoral victory, which might have contributed to a better adoption of their narrative. The second hypothesis is that portrayal of policy narratives through characterisation, i.e., through assigning characters to people, has a greater influence than explaining the policy through scientific or technical information. This has been particularly true as the pro-amendment group was able to influence the narrative by tainting the villains as 'anti nationals' (Waje, 2019) while the heroes were seen as 'protectors of the nation'. This was helpful for them to better promote their

amendment. This hypothesis also adds up to the devil-angel shift, where we see that the opposition from civil societies was portrayed to be the one with evil intentions and with the devilish idea of being terrorist sympathisers, someone who would keep their interest above the safety of the nation while there was an angel shift in the favour of law enforcement agencies who were shown to be dutiful and sacrificing people who are trying to serve the nations and their work is only hindered by the devil or the civil societies. The government even tried to use separate causal mechanisms: they showed that the actions of the civil society were intentional, and they were deliberately trying to cause chaos (Business Standard, 2019) while the compromise on the rights of individuals were due to mechanical causes, and faults in the system and not deliberate attempts by the government. Finally, we see that the government is trying to contain the scope of conflict by not allowing civil societies and others to raise concerns about civilian rights and make it only about security concerns (Business Standard, 2019).

Narrative of the Opposition

The grand narrative that was set by the opposition against the policy by claiming that the intention of the government was to curtail the civil and individual rights and they were using national security only as a pretext to enforce authoritarian laws on the citizens. The central argument, hence, was that the UAPA amendment act was a tool of the oppressive regime to dictate control, and it is the civil societies and opposition parties who are working to safeguard the civilian rights.

The setting of the narrative, hence, is that there is already an efficient framework that aims to counter terrorism without actually hampering the freedoms of the citizens at large, while now there is an oppressive regime in power who displays authoritarian tendencies (Express News Service, 2019) and they are furthering their agenda of curtailing the rights and

freedoms of citizens hence suppressing any dissent that comes their way. The heroes of this narrative were the civil societies, the opposition parties, and the individual young protestors who are protesting against this amendment act(Poddar, n.d.). While there is no lesser or greater hero in this narrative, particularly because this narrative was to counter the act and not take credit for the introduction of any particular act. The heroes hence are the greater protectors of individual rights who are willing to take up the fight in order to ensure that individual rights and the democracy at large survives against the atrocities of the authoritarian government. The victims in this narrative are the same as the narrative in support - both are keeping citizens at large as their victims. The victimisation here is by curtailing the rights of the citizens who shall lose their freedom on the implementation of the amendment (Poddar, n.d.). There is another victim in my narrative, which is presented as democracy, which shall get eroded by the amendment as there will be no scope for dissent. The villains in this case are obviously the government and the ruling party members. They are the ones with the intention to undermine democracy and gain absolute power when it comes to ruling the nation. There have been no explicit allies of the villain made over here, particularly due to the absence of any financial aspect to it, which would have otherwise added the corporates as the allies. The plot in this case is that the villain of an authoritarian government is out to get the citizens by stealing their rights and removing their freedoms, hence ultimately leading to erosion of democracy and it is for the heroes, the civil societies and the protesters, to safeguard the victims from the villains and save the democracy at large. In this narrative, the moral is that the civil societies and the opposition must fight against the government and stop them from implementing the given amendment. It is a call for action to the citizens who are encouraged to stand up against the government and work towards safeguarding their rights (Prasad, 2021).

We must also decode the concepts of *homo narrans* with regards to this narrative as well. Firstly, while looking at bounded rationality, we once again see that it is ideal that people will only think in dichotomies. The support here for the new narrative was determined by the fact that there were 2 provisions that could directly affect the people - labeling people as terrorists could, in particular, be scary for people as the fear induced by the narrators that they can be targets of this amendment. The second provision of properties being attached of people labeled as terrorists is also enough to induce fear as it directly impacts the long-term assets of the people, something that people spend their lives building in India (Prasad, 2021). When it comes to the use of heuristics, cases of suppression of dissent by the government (Anwar, 2019) might be easily floated and shown to the people as proof of excesses of the government, and the impression of the same can be easily retained and used to promote fears about the amendment and suspicion about the intentions of the government. Just like the cases of primacy of affect in the case of the previous narrative, here too, just like the cases of terrorist attack, cases of students being targeted by the government (Garg, 2021) or the images of Batla House operations (Correspondent, 2012) were used to charge up the emotions of the people and make them oppose the amendment. As the policy had party politics linked to it, we can see that even the counter narrative will be built with similar mechanisms. There will be confirmation bias, and the opposition members and others will possibly only support those facts that support their narrative, similar to the case of selective exposure, where they might completely rule out the arguments of the government with regards to national security by calling it a facade or a pretext to further their authoritarian agenda, hence ignoring those aspects. They have been playing the identity-protective cognition by highlighting how the government's agenda is to suppress those who do not tiptoe their line, hence making opposition to this "fascist regime" (Times, n.d.) an identity in itself that needs to be protected.

This narrative, too, operates on multiple levels, whose facets need to be explored. While looking at it from a microlevel, the converse of the hypotheses can actually be applied in this case. When discussing how the narrator's trust positively affects the ability to influence, the converse that the narrator of the previous narrative, the government in itself, if has shown hostile tendencies towards any particular communities or has been suppressing dissent, then the same can make people beware of their intentions. The characterisation as a tool is actually quite successfully deployed here too, where we see a David vs. Goliath like stories with individual protesters were taking on the combined might of the government and fighting to ensure that the rights of the people and the greater right of democracy prevail and, in turn, are becoming saviors of the people, a story that is very impressive and can have long sustaining impressions on the minds of the people. This is akin to the devil-angel shift where we see the government, who is already being labeled as "fascist, oppressive, authoritarian" (Times, n.d.), can be seen as the devil while the protesters are being labeled as "students and civil societies" showing them to be innocent angels, willing to sacrifice and take up the daunting task of standing against the devil. Even they tried using separate causal mechanisms, showing the government's actions to be intentional and the reason behind this deliberation was their agenda to take complete control and erode the democracy while the government's counter of the terrorist attacks are due to the mechanical causes which is the feasibility of having a more comprehensive policy without restraining the freedoms. In terms of the scope of conflict, the opposition tries to expand the scope by including the rights of all citizens within the tradeoff between freedom and security and safety, hence putting the government on the back foot.

Strengths from a Narrative Perspective

The narrative framework of the 2019 UAPA amendment gives the government a structure to support preemptive measures to increase and enhance vigilance, while protecting

its citizens. Such an approach is dynamic in nature and is used to frame compelling stories that garner support for the government, sub classifying the framework as proactive. Further, a narrative requires a protagonist and an antagonist, ie, heroes and villains. In this particular policy, the heroes are the official actors, ie, law enforcers, government and other authorities, the villains are those who are identified as terrorists, or who pose a threat to the nation's security, or even those who hinder the orderliness of the nation. This path establishes credibility for the stringent measures that come with the implementation of the policy.

To make this amendment globally acceptable and meet the international standards of protecting the citizens of a democratic nation, the policy aligns itself with the Financial Action Task Force, an international measure to tackle the illicit flow of money, including terrorist funding.

The narrative framework, together with the institutional model, provides the 2019 UAPA Amendment Act a robust framework that can justify the actions and decisions taken by the regime, overall increasing the strength and legitimacy of the policy.

Shortcomings from a Narrative Perspective

The policy tends to ignore the nuances of otherwise complex issues and reduces them into binaries of heroes and villains. It also legitimises overlooking the fundamental constitutional rights provided to the country's citizens, and may marginalise voices of dissent as disturbing order, providing a large window for misuse of the provision. Thereby, the amendment act places security over and above individual rights, which weakens the thread of democracy. This precise aspect could also compromise public trust in the government, which could have longer, cross-cutting impacts on the maintenance of law and order in the country.

Regardless of the strengths and the shortcomings, because of the polaristic nature of the policy, it has received support and opposition respectively. The implementation of the policy has been effective in making outcomes measurable by expanding the definition and designation of 'terrorists', particularly in the individual cases of Umar Khalid and Arundhati Roy. Another powerful tool in the authority's aid is the seizure of assets, which links the confiscation of private property and assets to terrorist activities.

Impact of the Policy

The stakeholders of the policy have been broadly categorised as the government, the general public, and the civil society. The UAPA Amendment Act enhances the enforcement capacities of the government, while creating a perception of increased security and peace for the general public, tapping into the patriotic and nationalist sentiments of the citizens. However, civil society focuses on the aspects of curbing individual freedoms of speech and expression, which inherently are inalienable and undeniable human rights of a citizen by the virtue of being born in India. It further increases the risks for individuals of being detained wrongfully without hard evidence but on mere speculative grounds.

To sustain the UAPA amendment, an effective mechanism to prevent oversight and misuse of the policy is imperative. Without that, the public confidence in the government faces the threat of corrosion, with increased international backlash and criticism, subjecting India to global scrutiny.

Observations

The policy type, model and framework of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act, 2019 were evident in the structure of the policy document itself. Owing to its controversial nature, the act has been widely studied, criticised, supported and discussed in

national and international discourses. The reasoning behind the act and opposition against it, therefore, was seamless to find. Due to the abundance of data, the fragmentation and sorting of the degree of relevance became challenging. Furthermore, the ambiguous and vague usage of the terms "unlawful" and "terrorist" made it particularly difficult to interpret the intent and the goal of the policy. The narrative consisted of multiple actors, making it difficult to reduce to two binary narratives, which should ideally be concise in nature.

The process provided us with numerous insights into the policy process. The trade-offs made between national security and individual, civilian liberties are difficult to navigate through, with a very thin line between maintenance of order and violating human rights, undermining the constitutional values by extension. The group realised that each policy model, type and framework has a discrete nature which can be balanced and combined with each other to make the policy process smooth. This implies that the policy elements are tools, which when used efficiently, can render positive results. Another aspect revealed is the importance of counterbalancing opposing perspectives and objectives to implement a policy free of obstacles. Radical tones and phrases should be avoided so that the aforementioned can be achieved.

The change in the policy was found to be drastic, and mapping the stakeholders of a policy so widespread in its formulation, encompassing the entire population of the country, became a group-centric challenge. Overall, the group was able to navigate through the policy holistically, following an agnostic approach. There was coordination and cooperation in the group, having arrived at a common understanding.

Conclusion

The UAPA law, owing to its narrative framework, tends to create a polarity between nation security and individual liberty. Though the law came in to help curb terrorism, the

vagueness and ambiguous definitions- stemming from its model type, i.e., institutional- provide the law enactors a structured lens, through which they can paint the image of who is a terrorist and who is not, what is unlawful and what is not. Thus, they interpret, shape and use the law according to what the centre deems fit.

The structure of the policy hints at the dominance of the centre, as opposed to a decentralised state. The institutional efficiency of UAPA often ignores the democratic freedoms, making the unofficial actors vulnerable to the official actors' power. The narrative used in UAPA is detrimental to the health of a democracy, particularly the elements of polarisation, a tainted sense of security which brings legitimacy to ignore the already overlooked aspects. This also reveals a powerful duo of narrative frameworks and institutional models. From the standpoint of the government, it is imperative for the two to go hand in hand when bringing in reforms which are drastic in nature, such as this one.

To conclude, it can be deduced that the successful acceptance and implementation of the UAPA law without any major hindrance means that the official actors have been able to establish a sustaining relationship between the narrative framework and the institutional model.

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