**Predictive policing**

**To apprehend criminals, technology can be a game-changer.**

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In a desperate bid for help, she cried, begged, and yelled, but her stone-hearted perpetrators remained unmoved. These heinous individuals sought to teach her a lesson for daring to marry the man of her choice. In their twisted, misog­ynistic minds, raping her was the only way to satisfy their thirst for vengeance. In a fate­ful evening, two miscreants breached her home while three waited outside, eager to partici­pate in this despicable act.

This tragic incident recently took place on the rural outskirts of Islam­abad’s capital city. Although the author­ities have registered the case at Kirpa police station, there are scant chances of catching these culprits and admin­istering exemplary punishment. The wounds of this traumatic experience will haunt her for the rest of her days. She must bear the weight of this ordeal and the piercing judgmental gazes of men in society.

Only a few weeks ago, another young lady suffered a similar fate in the bus­tling F-9 park of Islamabad. After the gruesome assault, the culprits had the audacity to admonish her, telling her not to come to the park at that time. This reminds me of the callous and indifferent remarks made by police chief Lahore concerning the shame­ful incident of a woman’s humiliation in front of her children on Sialkot-La­hore Road a few years ago. He said, “Why did she come out at night?” Such victim-blaming is a shocking example of misplaced blame.

[Nawaz Sharif calls for full court in Punjab, KP elections case](https://www.nation.com.pk/31-Mar-2023/nawaz-sharif-calls-for-full-court-in-punjab-kp-elections-case)

In the modern world, even in plac­es like the Middle East, girls can wan­der about at night without fear because systems have been implemented to en­sure their protection and punish the perpetrators severely. Women are vig­ilant and know how to defend them­selves. Rape is the guilt of the rapist, not the victim. In an ideal world, edu­cating people to respect and support one another would be the best way to prevent potential rape. However, being informed can go a long way in avoiding dangerous situations.

According to a recent study by USIP analysing crimes across the coun­try from 2016 to 2022, the situation is startling: gang rape cases increased by 36.87 percent in 2022 compared to 2021. There were 542 gang rape cas­es registered in 2022, compared to 396 cases in the corresponding period of 2021. In 2021, this vile crime was 28.99 percent higher than in 2020 (396 cas­es in 2021 compared to 307 cases in 2020). The rising number of rape cases is a cause for serious concern, and the scourge must be eradicated.

[KP caretaker govt appoints under inquiry officer as DG Health](https://www.nation.com.pk/31-Mar-2023/kp-caretaker-govt-appoints-under-inquiry-officer-as-dg-health)

Overall registered crime in 2022 was 27.70 percent higher than the same pe­riod in 2021 (841,455 cases in 2022 versus 658,931 cases in 2021). Simi­larly, overall registered crime in 2021 was 22.04 percent higher than in 2020 (658,931 cases in 2021 versus 539,912 cases in 2020). Since 2017, crime rates have been continuously rising. It is worth noting that these statistics only include registered crimes. If unreport­ed crimes, especially in other offenc­es, are considered, the figures could be even more appalling.

The study also reveals that despite their tall claims, the law enforcement performance has been abysmal, and they are not keeping up with interna­tional best practices. Crimes could have been prevented through predictive po­licing, which involves becoming less reactive and using data from various sources to anticipate, prevent, and re­spond more effectively to future crimes.

The question arises, could these hei­nous crimes be prevented? The an­swer is affirmative, and this brings us to a phenomenon known as “predic­tive policing”. The predictive vision moves law enforcement from focusing on what happened to focusing on what will happen and how to effectively de­ploy resources in front of crime, there­by changing outcomes.

[Minority-ruled benches will compound existing crisis, says Tarar](https://www.nation.com.pk/31-Mar-2023/minority-ruled-benches-will-compound-existing-crisis-says-tarar)

When my son wanted to take admis­sion to a university, he had many ques­tions in his mind, such as its ranking, faculty, learning environment, and pros­pects. Thanks to technology, all the data is available on universities’ websites, helping students or their parents make informed decisions.

Similarly, in the corporate world, num­bers matter. Based on performance, one can get a promotion or be fired. Behind all this, there is always a computing el­ement that can predict a potential out­come. Have you ever noticed that be­fore the summer season, stores put winter clothing on sale? As the weath­er changes, shelves are brimming with T-shirts and shorts. This is a preemp­tive move by the owners based on their experience and sales figures - what to keep, what to get rid of, and what new to introduce. Predictive policing works along the same lines.

In government departments, the op­posite is true - maintaining the status quo. I remember when I was in the po­lice academy, our commandant sarcasti­cally said, “The best among you will be those who maintain the status quo, and the others will disappear into oblivion.” So, the first lesson was not much could be done in the ailing system in place.

[Heart-wrenching quest for dole-outs snatches 11 lives in Karachi](https://www.nation.com.pk/31-Mar-2023/heart-wrenching-quest-for-dole-outs-snatches-11-lives-in-karachi)

Maintaining figures is not a novel idea. We have been doing it for a long time. But what can be achieved through sta­tistics needs to be seen from a fresh an­gle. Sadly, we continue to tread on the same old path - the infamous and or­thodox FIR system, the crime diary, and Moharrir’s roznamcha, etc.

The efficacy of law enforcement mea­sures is often judged by their ability to apprehend criminals post facto. How­ever, a more proactive approach is to analyse crime statistics and utilize this information to anticipate criminal activ­ity. A prime example of this is the ram­pant aerial firing by reckless youth on New Year’s Eve, which can be curbed by preemptive measures that identify and address the underlying causes of this behaviour. Predictive policing, when combined with community-led initia­tives such as self-help chowkidari and community policing, can catalyse trans­formational changes in our society.

To apprehend criminals, technolo­gy can be a game-changer. Techniques such as geofencing, CCTVs, and safe city projects all fall under the ambit of predictive policing and can signifi­cantly bolster the law enforcement ar­senal. However, to maximize the po­tential of these tools, we must take them to the next level.

[LHC bars caretaker govt from handing over land for corporate farming](https://www.nation.com.pk/31-Mar-2023/lhc-bars-caretaker-govt-from-handing-over-land-for-corporate-farming)

In the commercial realm, cutting-edge tools such as SAP (systems appli­cations and products) programming have proved invaluable in fraud preven­tion, enhancing authenticity, and boost­ing targets. Supply Chain departments rely on SAP Ariba to ensure transpar­ency in procurement, while the HR divi­sion keeps itself updated with the latest trends. A digital evidence management system (DEMS), such as VIDIZMO, can revamp conventional data management systems and align them to global stan­dards. It can also streamline operations and reduce expenditures, leading to long-term benefits.

Rather than wandering blind like a deer on a freeway, let’s turn our data into insights. Predictive policing algo­rithms are a better tool than the web of police to curb crime. Successful law enforcement is not measured by how many people it catches, but by how many crimes it prevents.

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