

DETRACTORS IGNORE THE BIG SHIFT IN KASHMIR

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KZINE

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OPENING KASHMIR'S EYES



**Why JK Police
Must Lead The Fight
Against Terror**

We are watching Kashmir's own *Not In My Name Movement*

Slowly, steadily, Kashmir wakes up a spate of dastardly inhumane acts of violence by terrorists. And we are watching Kashmir's own *Not In My Name movement*. The fear is there. So is the hatred for terrorist acts. Every soul in Kashmir is mourning the killing of innocent unarmed civilians. Kashmir is watching with pain that there is no consideration of religion, caste, colour or creed. Just total unadulterated evil and brutality.

This deep undercurrent in the society makes us believe that our society is back to the living. The Pakistan constituency is shrinking every day. This constituency may be celebrating death. The society as a whole is in a state of mourning. Some are mourning it silently. Some are expressive. Some are agitating. But all are mourning.

The killing of innocent, unarmed civilian teachers belonging to minority communities in the Eidgah area of Srinagar city has shaken the collective conscience of the people of Kashmir. Late it is, but the hope is alive. From teachers associations to civil society organizations, media and politicians –everyone is condemning the brutal killings. The fearless Sikh community as usual took the lead in hitting the streets against the barbaric



killings. The majority community should follow the suit. Yes, condemnation is there. People are also mourning. But we need to agitate, protest and send the message across that the killings had never been, are not and shall never be in my name.

Not. In. My. Name. Perhaps every society accepts violence for a period. Perhaps every society accepts violence up to a limit, particularly when the society has a long list of perceived grievances. In Kashmir, the violence has reached saturation point. The time has come for Kashmiris to rise to the occasion and reject violence in all its manifestations. Time has come for us to reject violence for all the justifications whatsoever attributed to it. This decisiveness shall make us a living society and living people.

Bashir Assad

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INCULCATE DEMOCRATIC SPIRIT

KZINE

OPENING KASHMIR'S EYES

Why JK Police Must Be Given Leadership Role In The Fight Against Terror



G

lobal learning in the fight against terrorism has consistently established that militants are defeated most effectively and comprehensively by local anti-terror forces.

J&K Police has the ability to win the war against terror because of its local connect, and local roots. The Army and the para-military forces can ably play the supportive role. The long-term fight continues to be the role of JK Police. The police leadership of Jammu and Kashmir has been able to lead the fight by building teams that have fought the terror ecosystem.

Terrorism containment has two aspects. One is killing a terrorist. The other is building an atmosphere of goodwill. Both tasks have equal significance. J&K Police is conditioned to take challenges on both fronts. It has the ability to build connect with the local population, restore faith and confidence in the system. At the same time, the force has the competence to trace out the terrorists and neutralize them.

APPEASEMENT POLICY HARMED THE SYSTEM

The policy of appeasement of the adversaries earlier followed by the state led to disastrous consequences.

The political leaders had adopted the policy of reaching out to the adversaries or trying to appease them at all times. The political strategy was to accommodate the adversaries and seek their help in normalizing a troublesome situation. The adoption of this political mantra forced the police and civil officers to follow suit and execute these guidelines as state strategy.

Over a period of time, a few officers developed vested interests in this strategy and used it for personal gains. A few corrupt elements across the bureaucracy, the police and the military forces made appeasement of the state adversaries into a business.

The appeasement policy backfired and proved fatal for the state. Jammu and Kashmir must now continue to follow a clear-cut policy where do's and don'ts are defined, and everything is in black and white. Grey spaces can be part of the political arena. In policing, all action must be in black and white.

Counter terrorism expertise from outside can significantly help. The most potent weapon of the terrorists is anonymity and the advantage of launching a surprise attack. The local leadership and the local policing networks remove one key element from this equation – surprise. The information network of the local

J&K Police has the ability to win the war against terror because of its local connect, and local roots. The Army and the para-military forces can ably play the supportive role. The long-term fight continues to be the role of JK Police



Contribution of JK Police Is Beyond Measure

The contribution of JK Police in the service of the state is beyond measure. It is so huge that it cannot be measured or quantified. Officers and men of JK Police sacrificed everything for the nation. They continue to lead from the front in the fight against terror.

JK Police has the ability and the mettle to take forward this fight for the state and deliver the right milestones every time. JK Police have ably fought the war against terror through effective policing and also through effective administration. It is essential to empower JK Police to achieve all that the force is capable of delivering and achieving in the fight against terror and in bringing back peace and stability to the region.

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policing forces enables the security grid to chart the movement of terrorists, and initiate action to eliminate further acts of terror.

A basic truth is at play here. It is the Kashmiri mind which can outplay the Kashmiri mind. Nobody can outmaneuver the terrorists more than the local officers.

THE GAME OF BUILDING NETWORKS

Counter-terrorism is a game of building networks that provide actionable information. It enables the police to stonewall terror attacks. This is why the local police must be given leadership role to deal with the crises. They are able to create own assets locally in terms of a network and build bonds with the local population.

These networks help in the identification of designated terrorists and the unorganized over-ground workers (OGWs), and track their movement to launch quick action when required.

THE CHARGE OF ARROGANCE

After the creation of the UT, a constant charge against the local bureaucrats and police officers is that they have become arrogant. This charge is leveled often by the politicians. This is true in many cases. Earlier the politicians who held positions of authority were arrogant. Now the bureaucrats and police officers who hold authority are arrogant. As long as delivery of services does not improve, for the common man the story largely remains the same.

After the creation of the UT, a constant charge against the local bureaucrats and police officers is that they have become arrogant. This charge is leveled often by the politicians. As long as delivery of services does not improve, for the common man the story largely remains the same

Misplaced Narratives, Detractors Ignore The Big Shift



**MAJORITY
COMMUNITY OF
KASHMIR HAS
REJECTED
VIOLENCE IN ALL
ITS
MANIFESTATIONS**

Violence in Kashmir is architected and engineered from across the border. It is not indigenous. Hence it shall be difficult to totally wipe it off from the Kashmir landscape

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**Gun Has Lost
Societal Approval**



KASHMIR EXCLUSIVE

Violent expression of what the detractors call as “insecurities” has lost meaning. This is the reality of the day

by Iqbal WANI

In the aftermath of the recent civilian killings at the hand of terrorists of Kashmir, the vocals take a dig at the government’s claim of restoration of normalcy post August 2019 events. They are up in arms to demolish the so called “normal Kashmir” narrative. This vocal section comprises of politicians, media persons and opinion leaders. They provide statistics of violence and killings in favour of their argument to nullify the claims of a normal Kashmir.

The statistics are indeed disturbing, 28 civilians have been killed since the beginning of this year. This is perhaps the highest number of civilians killings executed by militants in the recent past.

This is worrying, and the claims of normalcy could be termed as immature. The

antagonists attribute the spurt in civilian killings to the sense of insecurity brewing in the majority community post the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution. According to them, the abrogation and subsequent government actions are responsible for the spurt in killings. The detractors claim that the government has failed in restoring the faith and confidence of the people in the system. Indeed the situation is grim and scary.

In the first place, both New Delhi and Srinagar should not draw immediate conclusions on the current situation. This is because violence in Kashmir is architected and engineered from across the border. It is not indigenous. Hence it shall be difficult to totally wipe it off from the Kashmir landscape.

At the same time, the antagonists intentionally or otherwise ignore a fundamental truth about the current situation in Kashmir.

THE GROUND REALITY

The majority community in Kashmir may or may not be happy with the developments of August 5, 2019. The insecurities may or may not have increased. Kashmiri Muslims may still have genuine grievances with the state.

But there has been a major shift amidst the majority com-

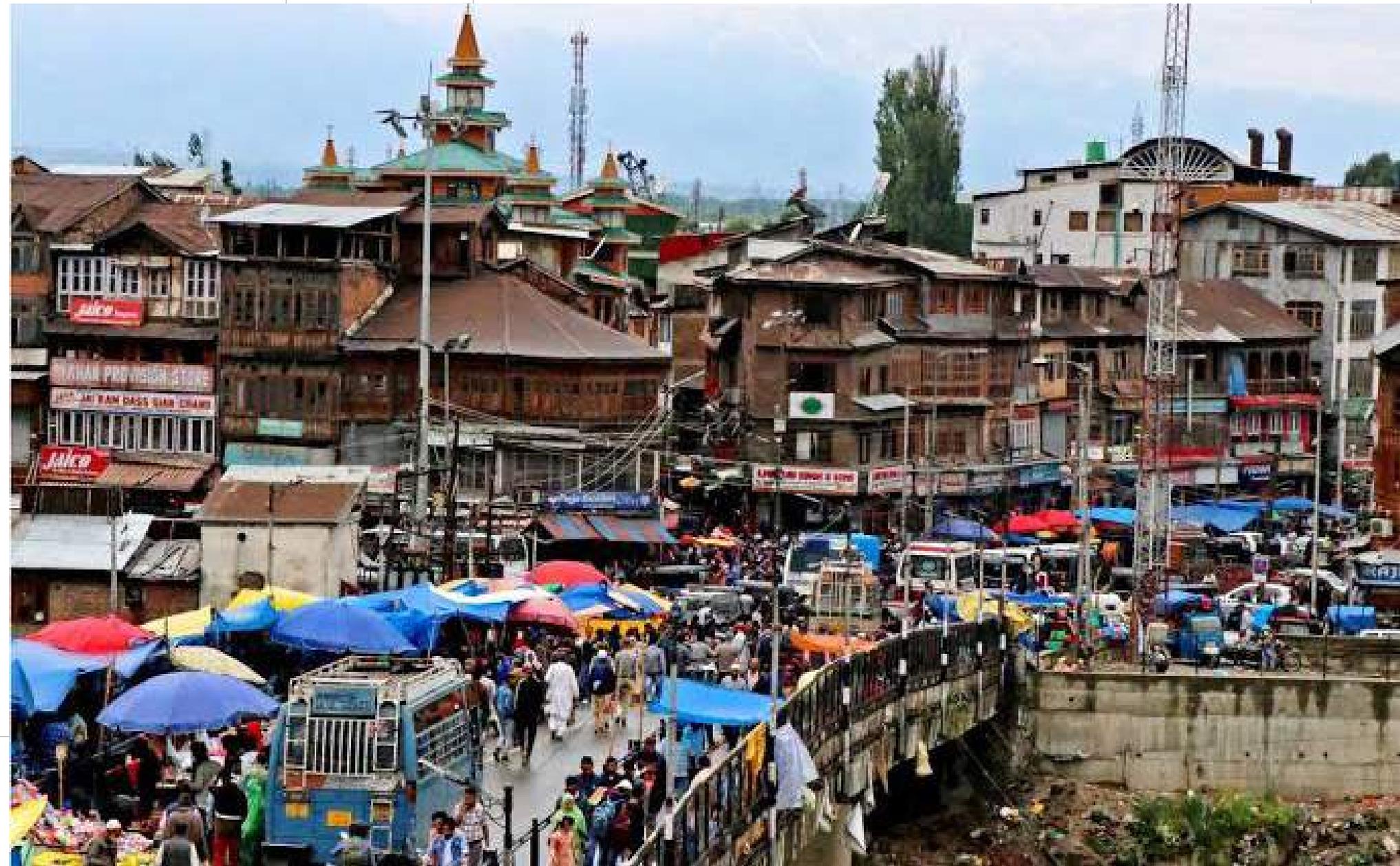
munity in Kashmir, particularly after the events of August 5, 2019. The majority community has rejected violence in all its manifestations. The gun has lost the societal approval. Violence in all other forms has lost societal approval. Violent expression of what the detractors call as “insecurities” has lost meaning. This is the reality of the day.

Killing of innocent civilians by armed gangs is a new culture imposed by Pakistan. Without going into the success and drawbacks abrogation of article 370, there are certain measurable parameters which suggest

that Kashmir society has rejected violence. There is realization that violence in any form is self-inflicting injury.

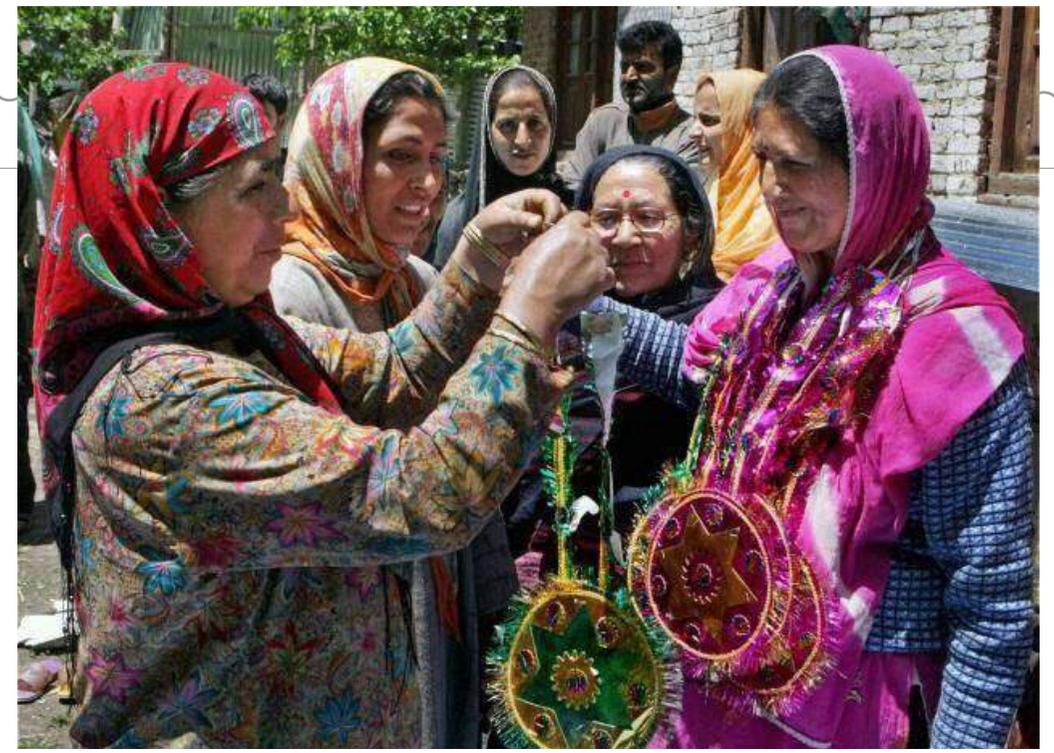
Kashmir has suffered immensely because of violence. It is not ready to suffer more. The support in killings should be seen as an attempt by foreign powers to destabilize Kashmir yet again, essentially because Kashmiris are not willing to take upon themselves the designs of the foreign power. The antagonists ignore this new reality and keep beating around the old bushes. Their machinations are deliberate and intentional.

KASHMIR LIFE



Pakistan is Disintegrating Kashmir's Brotherhood On Our Watch

**WE ARE
THE LOSERS
DAILY**



Muslim women garland Pandit women upon their return. PHOTO CREDIT:- FAROOQ SHAH

We have willy nilly become party to Pakistan's venomous game. We are losing everything. Our unique identity which we wish to protect. Our indigenous culture. Our social values. Everything is being ripped apart by this war of hate heaped upon us

by Waseem GUL

As many as 28 civilians have been killed by terrorists this year. Five of them belonged to local Hindu and Sikh communities. Two were non-local Hindu labourers. The rest of the 21 people killed by terrorists were Muslims.

The writing is on the wall. Kashmiri Muslims are the biggest casualty of the bloody proxy war imposed by Pakistan. We are back to the times when each dawn seems to bring a new conspiracy, a new attack to disintegrate the brotherhood of the Valley.

An evil and malicious feud is

being fought in our name – in the name of the Kashmiris. We have willy nilly become party to this venomous game. The tragedy is that we are the losers daily. We are losing everything. Our unique identity which we wish to protect. Our indigenous culture. Our social values. Everything is being ripped apart by this war of hate heaped upon us.

All this is happening under our watch. As one horrific act after another plays out before us, we are watching Kashmir again turning towards the 90s. The recent killings of five local Hindus or Sikhs and two non-local labourers have jolted us. The killings have brought forth the grim picture

of the environment of fear and intimidation. We are giving our children and grandchildren this environment built on the basis of an anarchic narrative that claims to represent the majority community.

Hizb-ul-Mujahideen chief Riyaz Naikoo had said in February 2019 that “if the Indian government scraps Article 370/35A, no non-local can stay in Kashmir”. The terror blogger Kashmir Fight has been lighting this fire. The terror groups operating in Kashmir, sponsored and remote-controlled by Pakistan, have executed a spate of killings to execute Pakistan's xenophobic vision for Kashmir.

ISI's Blueprint For Kashmir, Executed by Terror Groups

The terror blog Kashmirfight.wordpress.com, run by anonymous handlers in Pakistan and UK, uploaded content on September 24 viciously targeting the non-locals. The blog listed 21 strategies, out of which eight strategies have been executed. This cannot be a mere coincidence that a terror blog lists strategies, and within days action is carried out. The following is the horrific plan of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence for Kashmir. All the human rights defenders whose hearts bleeds for Kashmir must take note of this gruesome blueprint. It must invite global condemnation. Terror groups have acted upon the points marked in bold.

- 1. Target every non-local official whether in the valley or at their native places**
- 2. Target non-locals whosoever comes to valley for long stay**
- 3. Kashmiri Pandits who have migrated from Kashmir in early 1990s and now are planning to shift back**
- 4. Every non-local employee whosoever it might be irrespective of the department he/she is employed with/in**
- 5. Target every house of JK Police personnel whosoever is involved in anti-Kashmir struggle**
- 6. Petrol bombs, stones etc. to be thrown towards informers locations locally**
- 7. Wherever any non-local is located he is to be warned to leave Valley at earliest (it will not damage the image of JK but in fact will safeguard the sanity and culture of JK)**
- 8. Local Government employees should show their resentment against such orders/circulars which tries to curb their freedom and goes against their work**
- 9. Sports events organized by occupier regime and its stooges has to be banned/boycotted**
- 10. Whosoever is involved in government/occupational forces events has to be dealt harshly**



- 11. Don't welcome those Kashmiri Pandits who have migrated from Kashmir and are now showing their filthy faces again in the Valley**
- 12. Target those heads of educational institutions who are hand in glove with the occupier**
- 13. Boycott all those media outlets who names have emerged as collaborators**
- 14. Maintain distance with the occupier stooges and its forces especially JK Police whosoever is directly or indirectly involved in anti-Kashmir cause**
- 15. Identify every collaborator and traitor**
- 16. Freedom Fighters have to prioritize their targets according to the Kashmir cause**
- 17. Locals should shun their dependence on non-locals**
- 18. Keep distance from such elements who are against Kashmir cause**
- 19. Try to understand the negative impact of non-locals residing in JK**
- 20. Non-locals to be targeted irrespective of their nature of work (this act might look vague but in the long run it will prove beneficial and effective for Kashmir Cause)**
- 21. Since outsiders come to JK for harassing, brutalizing and controlling JK affairs so it becomes mandatory to expanding operation outside JK and it is to intensified**



Kashmiri Pandits and Muslims praying together at Dargah Hazratbal shrine. PHOTO: FAROOQ SHAH

It is unfortunate that the politicians of Kashmir have added fuel to this fire with their statements.

THE ROLE OF THE LAND MAFIA NEEDS TO BE INVESTIGATED

The role of land mafia in threatening the minorities in Kashmir cannot be ruled out. Several sections of the society including the land mafia have developed huge interest in the bloody conflict. Over the years these sections of the society have amassed wealth beyond one's imagination. The conflict as such has turned out to be a huge industry for these conflict managers.

Interestingly, the majority of the land mafia has direct or indirect links or relations with one or the other separatist leader, terror group or terrorist commander. The land mafia is controlled by the separatists. Through the separatists, this mafia is connected to Pakistan.

The orders issued for the retrieval of the immovable property of the minority community may or may not be based on rationale. But this has added to the insecurity of the people who are party to the distress sale of minority property.

There is a possibility that the land mafia – which has links with terrorist groups and organizations – may have hired groups and individuals to threaten and kill the people of the minority community. This may have been done to resist the imposition of the government order. This needs to be investigated.

In 1990, when Kashmiri Pandits were forced to flee from the valley, their properties were confiscated by the land mafia. Many of these properties are still illegally occupied. Many Pandits were forced into distress sale of their properties.

The state has started a campaign to remove illegal occupation of the properties of Kashmiri Pandits. Pandits are filing complaints of possession of their



Kashmiri Pandit House in Anantnag. PHOTO CREDIT - THE WIRE

properties. The land mafia in Kashmir has benefited hugely by selling Pandit properties. Some Kashmiris are of the view that with the talk of Pandits returning and reclaiming their properties, the land mafia is deliberately snuffing out all such possibility by activating the terror cells. At the same time, most Kashmiri Muslims believe that Pandits and Sikhs are an integral part of Kashmir, and their exit is unacceptable.

A terror blog lists the horrific plan of Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence for Kashmir. All human rights defenders whose hearts bleeds for Kashmir must take note of this gruesome blueprint. It must invite global condemnation

The killings have brought forth the grim picture of the environment of fear and intimidation. We are giving our children and grandchildren this environment built on the basis of an anarchic narrative that claims to represent the majority community

OUR POLITICIANS ARE FANNING HATRED BY RAISING LOCAL VS NON-LOCAL NARRATIVES



by GM MIR

The terrorists are attempting to normalize exclusion. Terror blogs and terror operatives on ground level have categorized outsiders as unacceptable in Kashmir. Their killing has been advocated.

It is highly unfortunate that

our politicians are deepening this perception in society. Our politicians are justifying the logic of exclusion. They are reinforcing the perception of outsiders as a burden upon Kashmir.

This is a reality we shall have to confront. If we don't speak out against what is wrong, our silence indicates our complicity. Through

our silence, are we Kashmiris encouraging xenophobic and racist rhetoric?

Our political leaders, our political parties – all of them are deepening the dislike of the outsider. The political parties have intentionally built the local versus non-local narrative to create an environment of fear among the non-locals and

minorities. This is being done under the garb of giving protection to indigenous identity and culture. These same politicians, academicians, journalists etc urge the state to create opportunities for higher studies and employment for Kashmiri youth across mainland India. On the other hand, they deny such opportunities for non-

locals in Kashmir.

Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti have been consistently demanding reservations for Kashmiri youth in professional and technical colleges outside Kashmir. Our youth have benefited from the unique scholarship scheme for Kashmiri students called the Prime Minister Special

Scholarship Scheme (PMSSS).

But when similar benefits are extended to students from outside, our politicians oppose it vehemently. Recently, the government decided to reserve 15 per cent seats for outside students in the medical colleges of J&K. This invited sharp criticism from our political leaders. They took the stand that non-lo-



cals should not be given any kind of reservation in J&K.

On October 6, Najmu Saqib, spokesperson, PDP termed the 15 per cent reservation as “systematic decimation” of the healthcare sector in J&K. “If non-local specialists study here and then leave this place, who would serve the people of Kashmir?” PDP questioned.

It is evident that politicians are inflaming the locals that their jobs are being snatched because Jammu and Kashmir is a union territory. By taking a harsh position, political parties are fanning hatred in the society against non-locals, whether it is the issue of domicile certificates, post-graduate seats or land laws.

With these constant offensives, anger against the locals is rising to the fore. Political parties are fuelling this hatred to strengthen their domestic base. The politicians are channelizing the anger against the non-locals.

Following the recent terror attacks in Kashmir, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Vijay Kumar said, “These acts are committed by newly recruited terrorists, or those who are about to join the terrorists’ ranks. In some cases, OGWs (over the ground workers of terrorist organisations) have been found directly involved.” If locals youngsters of a violent mindset are carrying out these attacks, it is indicative of the intensity of hate and the depth of

radicalization.

And when any non-local or non-Muslim is brutally killed by terrorists all political parties come with crocodile tears for condolences.

Global studies have established that the deepening sentiment of xenophobia and racism in a society may prompt physical or psychological attacks against those considered as outsiders. More and more members of minority communities who had stayed in Kashmir for years are now leaving in panic. We are increasingly becoming a homogenous society. We are exposing our children and grand-children to the extreme dangers of enforced cultural homogeneity.

Terror Ecosystem forcing us to deny how we benefit from the services of outsiders

The terror eco-system is forcing us into complete denial of the multiple ways in which Kashmir is benefitting from the services of outsiders. According to a report in The New Indian Express in August last year, 40,000 non-Kashmiri migrant workers were engaged in different works in the Union Territory prior to the pandemic. By August 2020, about 25,000 non-Kashmiri migrant workers, who had gone to their respective states after the Covid outbreak, returned to Jammu and Kashmir, the Divisional Commissioner (Kashmir) was quoted in the news report.

TERROR GROUPS IN KASHMIR IDENTIFY WITH PAK & PAKISTANI TERROR NETWORKS

No Scope For Describing Kashmir Crisis As Indigenous Or Spontaneous



All the terror groups operating in Kashmir identify themselves with the Pakistan and Pakistani militia groups. Their allegiance to Pakistan and the groups operating from its soil is acknowledged widely. So there is little scope for describing the Kashmir crisis as indigenous or spontaneous. Of course the grievances are local, which include the perception of injustice and oppression. But the crises are manufactured and exported by Pakistan to Kashmir. This is the same way in which the theological support for the conflict is exported by Pakistan to Kashmir. There is immediate need to focus here on the resource base of the Kashmir crisis.

The Indian security forces and the Jammu and Kashmir

Police at the moment are dealing with ideologically hardcore militants in Kashmir. This is undoubtedly the most dangerous phase of Kashmir militancy. The number of militants or terrorists operating at the given point of time is far more less than we had in the early 1990s. But adherence to extremist ideology and their devotion to the violence is unprecedented.

The current breed of militants or terrorists fighting in Kashmir has strong ideological, rather theological support emanating from two sources. One, the hardcore Pakistani terrorists operating in Kashmir are trained in indoctrinating the youngsters in Kashmir to unimaginable levels. Second, the mushrooming of madrasas of the Deobandi, Wahabi, Jamaat e Islami and even Tableegi sects is phenomenal across Kashmir valley.

Different sects of Islamists are engaged in competition in producing more and more radicals from their madrasas. The 2016 agitation in the aftermath of the killing of Hizbul Mujahideen poster boy Burhan Wani was sustained in South Kashmir by the Tableegi Jamaat. Deobandi, Jamaat e Islami and Wahabi sects were supporting from the back. They would take care of logistics in terms of providing food to the agitating youth.

The Real Challenge Are The Radicalized Youth

The extremist religious groups are providing theological and human resource support to the militant organizations active in Kashmir. The problem is less about the armed militants. The security agencies in Kashmir are facing a bigger challenge which is more dangerous from the unarmed radicalized youth who are ready to join the militant ranks or take up violent activities without identifying as militants. Police accepts that the number of militants active at a given point in time would have been much larger if guns and ammunition were available with the militant groups.



Of course the grievances are local, which include the perception of injustice and oppression. But the crises are manufactured and exported by Pakistan to Kashmir. This is the same way in which the theological support for the conflict is exported by Pakistan to Kashmir

Illegal Constructions Carry On Unabated In Green Belt Around DAL LAKE

The State Should Take Concrete Steps Against Those Who Are Abusing Its Natural Beauty & Those Who Are Allowing This To Happen

A hotel on the bank of Dal Lake



by Mir SOHAIL

Politics in Kashmir is “as filthy as Dal lake”, US ambassador to India David Mulford famously said in 2006. Fifteen years later, the condition of the Dal – the pride of Srinagar – has become far worse.

Research by the University of Kashmir in 2016 found that only 20 percent of the lake’s water was relatively clean while 32 percent was severely degraded. The socio-economic survey conducted by Urban Engineering Environment Division (UEED) in 1986 and a detailed project report submitted by NIT Roorkee in 2000 revealed that the houseboats produce 0.8 million litres of sewage per day. The local population of Dal Lake generates 5 million litres of sewage daily, and the peripheral areas make up to 44.2 million litres of sewage daily.

To save the Dal Lake, “Save Dal Lake” project was introduced in 1997. The project comprises two components: Conservation of Dal Lake and rehabilitation of Dal dwellers to some other place. In order to implement this, the Lakes and Waterways Development Authority (LAWDA) in 2007 announced a plan to prepare housing plots for Dal dwellers at the Rakh-E-Arth Resettlement Colony in Bemina, on the outskirts of Srinagar. The eviction drive began in 2011. To curb illegal encroachment, the government approved a Master plan in 2019. Green belts were marked in the vicinity of Dal Gate, to be maintained as No Construction zones. The government demarcated other strategic areas in Srinagar including Nigeen lake, Shalimar garden, and Nishat gardens. Construction continues on the sly by greasing the palms of the officials concerned.

DEMOLITION OF UNAUTHORIZED STRUCTURES - AN EYEWASH

Sources say that the rich are freely constructing or renovating their houses within the green belt. Some token action is taken against the poor as a show of authority. Sources reveal that LAWDA officers grant permission for illegal structures for financial favours. Fake FIRs are reg-



New construction on first floor, shops on ground floor

istered against owners. LAWDA officials demolish a bit of construction as eyewash. Thereafter, house owners are allowed to carry on with construction as they please. No illegal structure has been demolished fully till date or stopped from completion.

When KZINE met the residents of the green belt adjoining Dal Lake, they accepted that they are carrying out illegal constructions. They added that they shall continue to do so, taking the plea that they have no option.

When questioned by KZINE, Vice Chairman LAWDA Dr Bashir Ahmad Bhat did not agree with the correspondent that LAWDA and the Enforcement Department is involved in allowing illegal constructions. He said that these are all just allegations.

WHY DON'T PEOPLE WANT TO RELOCATE?

Diverse reasons are offered for not shifting to Rakh-E-Arth Resettlement Colony.

1. People say they are not getting the true monetary value of their land
2. They are getting less land as compared to what they have adjoining Dal and around.
3. People are not happy with the Bemina

location.

4. Shikara walas fear that if they shift to a new location it will affect their business. For instance, if any customer comes in the late hours, they won't be able to attend to him.



DEPUTY SP ENFORCEMENT LAWDA ABDUL AZIZ QADRI

LAWDA has 4 branches. I joined the Enforcement Department in April. From that time, we have demolished 294 structures, 156 FIRs have been registered against the violators. Five trucks and 3 struc-

“There is no illegal construction in and around the Dal Lake”

LAWDA Vice chairman Dr Bashir Ahmad Bhat In Conversation With KZINE

LAWDA Vice chairman Dr Bashir Ahmad Bhat says there is no illegal construction in and around the Dal Lake. According to Bhat, LAWDA demolished more than 200 illegal structures this year around the Dal Lake in green belt area, and FIRs were registered against defaulters.

How many families have been relocated according to the Rehabilitation plan?

Till now 3260 families have been rehabilitated through this scheme, and 5700 families are yet to be shifted from the Dal Lake.

Why haven't all of them shifted?

Because of certain issues they have not been shifted yet. One of them is the 2014 flood.

The rehabilitation program was a project under the Prime Minister's Rehabilitation Program (PMRP). This was a Rs 356 crore project which started in 2012. It is voluntary in nature. There cannot be any forcible eviction. This is done through the high level committee (HLC) headed by the Divisional Commissioner. Before the flood, the program scheduled to be implemented cluster wise, where we rehabilitate the cluster of families and dredge out that area. Because of the flood, the structures were damaged. There are state government and high court's moratorium for reconstructing the structures. Then they did around 470 flood reservations. Four to five HLCs discussed the matter. For the last two to three years, a committee of experts suggested that rehabilitation should be kept on hold because 3-4 HLCs are being investigated by the Anti Corruption Bureau. Now we have recently done HLC and are starting the program again.

How are the residents of the area responding to this initiative?

This is a voluntary exercise. We cannot force anybody. There are some hurdles in the resettlement process at Rakh-E-Arth Colony. Some are saying that that land is of less value.

In 1986, a socio-economic survey was done on Dal Lake by UEED (Urban Engineering Environment Division), which used to monitor Dal Lake at that time. Numbers were allotted to structures depending on the number of family members and this still continues. The PMRC survey was done separately. One family gets one plot of 7 marlas. Structure compensation is given according to Roads & Building schedule, and Rs 3.6 lakh is given for 1.5 kanal.

If the scheme doesn't fit all stakeholders and isn't feasible for them, why hasn't the policy been reviewed till now?

We are taking up the applications of those who come to us for rehabilitation. There are some demands and also limits. We will see what can be done.

Sir, who gives permission for construction in green belt areas?

No construction can be done in green belt areas. The construction done in these areas is illegal and we demolish those structures regularly.

Sir, when we went to the site, we found many illegal structures constructed recently and completed. The local residents also accept that they are doing constructions and will continue to do so until some concrete steps are taken by the government regarding their demands.

In the last two years 715 structures were demolished.



tures have been seized. We can demolish only those structures for which owners have not taken permission from LAWDA. If the owners have permission, the structures cannot be destroyed.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

In its 13th edition published on September 11, KZINE had highlighted the poor condition of Dal Lake at various points.

On September 29, the High Court directed LAWDA to proceed ahead on the lines of the scheme and concentrate on de-weeding, dredging and stopping the flow of all drains and waste into the Dal. The High Court urged LAWDA to ensure that there is no encroachment in and around Dal Lake.

On October 2, Jammu and Kashmir's Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha said that there was "no denying the fact that the famous Dal lake wasn't cleaned up to the level it was supposed to, but UT administration will hire more machines to ensure proper cleaning of the lake in the weeks ahead".

The LAWDA authorities were aware of the dirt and weeds accumulating in the lake, and the waste and sewage dumped into it. They are also aware of the hurdles being faced in the rehabilitation scheme. Have these issues been given the attention they deserve, considering the hundreds of crores pumped in for the cleanliness and upkeep of Dal Lake?

The menace of illegal construction in and around Dal Lake needs to end. Accountability must be fixed with officers who did not discharge their duties properly, causing the current deterioration of Dal Lake.

The salary, increments and promotions of the LAWDA staff should be subject to the improvement

of Dal Lake. There should be hard hitting rules for those who undertake illegal constructions. Dal Lake is Srinagar's pride. The government should take concrete steps against those who are abusing its natural beauty and those who are allowing this to happen.



New construction with the old look retained at places



One side painted, the other side still bricked. A new construction adjoining Dal Lake



New construction in multi-story house. Adjoining it, a recent construction



Front view of the house



<< A recent construction in the green belt of Dal Lake



A recently constructed white house in a lane adjoining Dal Lake >>



House with red roof under construction, seen in the background



New construction given old look on the upper floor. Door not installed yet



In the foreground, a house under construction. In the background, a newly-constructed house with the red roof



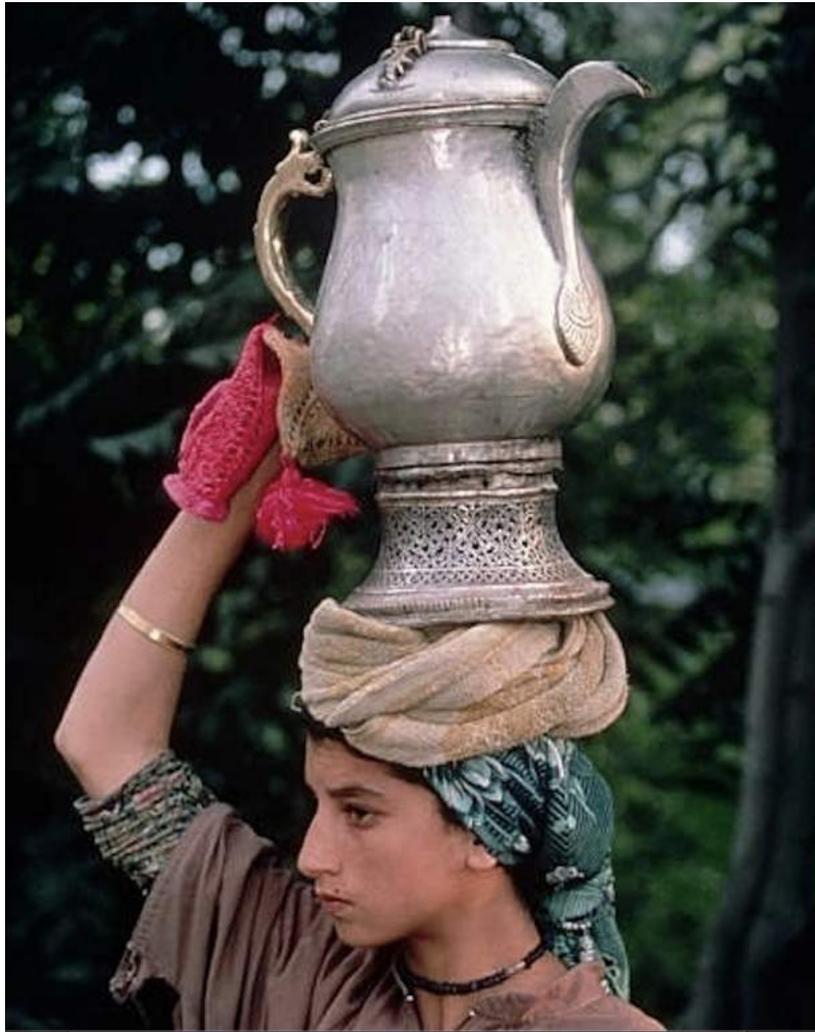
Fresh construction with old timber used in the upper part



<< A newly constructed house on the back side of Dal Lake

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A young kashmiri woman carries hot tea to her family in a silver Samovar (self-boiler) balanced on her head.

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