

WE SUFFERED THE WRONG REVOLUTION

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KASHMIR CENTRAL

A KZINE INITIATIVE



**Pakistan Operatives
In Kashmir Have
Singular Focus For 2022**

**Heavy Recruitment Of Kashmiri
Youth In Terror Networks**

KASHMIR CENTRAL
Volume 2 Edition 12
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CENTRAL

KASHMIR JOURNOS DEBUNK GLOOM REPORT BY PCI PANEL

A curious situation has emerged regarding the Kashmir media.

A “fact-finding committee” (FFC) of the Press Council of India (PCI) has stated in its report that journalists in Kashmir are harassed for not toeing the government line. The committee has further stated that evictions from government housing, denial of government advertisements and harassment by security forces are being used as tools to make the media support government schemes and policies.

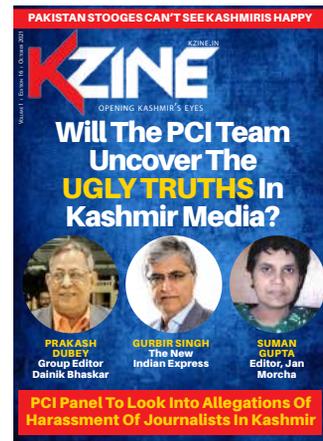
This and more in the report of the “fact-finding committee” would have been accepted as the gospel truth on Kashmir. The twist in the tale came when Jammu & Kashmir Press Corps (JKPC), a well-known body of Kashmir-based newspapers and news media debunked the PCI report as “false and malicious”.

The press release issued by JKPC said, “It appears that FFC of PCI has written the report only to create sensation to defame editors and newspapers without taking into account their deposition and subsequent narration of truth. The truth as told by prominent editors has been conveniently erased by the FFC from the report. In breach of every established norm of free and fair investigation and complete negation of the guidelines and ethics of such probe, FFC concluded its report without incorporating the version of editors, publishers and journalists who appeared before it.”

These are serious charges. In its press release following the PCI report, JKPC metaphorically ripped apart the PCI report. It said, “The entire tone, tenor and phraseology of said report are misleading and laden with premeditated fatal mis-statements about Kashmir-based newspapers. There is no basis on which the inferences have been drawn by the FFC,” JKPC said.

Truth cannot be so polarized. The members of Press Council of India who prepared the report must introspect on the charges made by JKPC. If Press Council of India fails to address the points of concern raised by a sizable section of Kashmir’s media, its credibility among the public shall be compromised.

Bashir Assad



**KZINE Edition 16, October
2021, ahead of the visit of the
PCI team**

razor sharp analysis

INCISIVE REPORTING

INVESTIGATE
THE TERROR
ECOSYSTEM

expose
deception

RESTORE
ORDER

MAKE A SPLASH

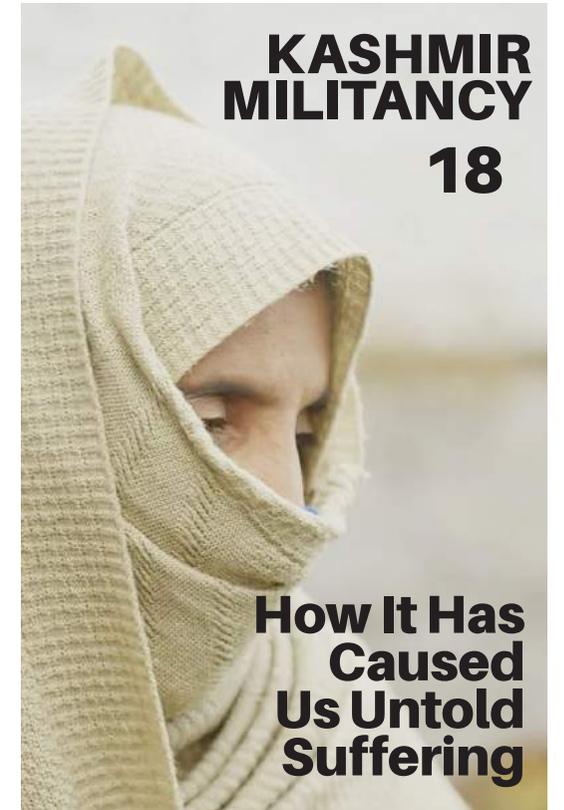
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DEMOCRATIC SPIRIT



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SEEKING MY HELP IN
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MEN FROM FAHAD SHAH'S TEAM ARE SEEKING MY HELP IN GETTING HIM RELEASED

The Weakening Of The Terror Ecosystem In Kashmir

by Bashir ASSAD

I have a journalist friend in Delhi, Mou Sarkar. For the last couple of weeks she had been asking me repetitively that her two 'journalist friends' in Srinagar want to meet me, and that I should connect with them. I was in Jammu, so I could not accede to her request.

Incidentally when I came to Srinagar some days ago, she again asked me to meet her journalist friends here. I asked her which media house are they working for, and what are their names.

She said I don't know the media house or their names. Please meet them.

I told her Okay, tell them to come to my office.

When these two journalists landed at my office, I found that they were from the local magazine Kashmir Walla. I was perplexed about why they should want to meet me. After doing some small talk, they stated what they had come for. Fahad ko nikalne mein madad karo. Help us in getting Fahad released.

For those not in the know, Fahad Shah is the Editor of Kashmir Walla. He had been arrested by J&K Police on February 4. The police statement said that Fahad has been arrested for glorifying terrorism, spreading fake news and inciting the general public for creating law and order situations. In addition, he has been arrested for social media posts tantamount to glorifying terrorist activities and causing dent to the image of law enforcing agencies "besides causing ill-will and disaffection against the country."

Now men from Fahad Shah's team are requesting me to get him released. The messaging carries significance.

**JOURNALISM
BANKROLLED BY
PAKISTAN IN KASHMIR**

I have nothing personal against Fahad Shah. My concern is the kind



I have nothing personal against Fahad Shah. My concern is the kind of journalism he has carried on with for years with seeming impunity. A journalism where lies and half lies are sold as truth. A journalism where fraudsters and imposters like Khurram Pervez are projected as human rights protectors. A journalism where pillars of the terror ecosystem in Kashmir - including some prominent local lawyers - are built up as the conscience keepers of Kashmir

of journalism he has carried on with for years with seeming impunity. A journalism where lies and half lies are sold as truth. A journalism where fraudsters and imposters like Khurram Pervez are projected as human rights protectors. A journalism where pillars of the terror ecosystem in Kashmir – including some prominent local lawyers – are built up as the conscience keepers of Kashmir.

This kind of journalism flourished in Kashmir because it was lavishly bankrolled by Pakistan and embedded by the terrorists' guns. This

journalism has consistently sold the Pakistan narrative for Kashmir domestically, nationally and internationally.

Fahad Shah, through his magazine, perfected the Pakistan narrative on Kashmir where Kashmir must always be projected as bleeding and oppressed. This is the narrative where terrorism and militancy are whitewashed. Actions of the security agencies against militants and over-ground workers are discredited by spinning yarns around so-called "multiple and conflicting versions".

“THINKERS” IN MAINLAND QUICK TO FORM OPINION ON KASHMIR, BASED ON INFO FED BY DUBIOUS LOCAL CONTACTS

The so-called “independent thinkers” of the mainland have zero appreciation that Kashmir is a huge industry for all those who gain from the conflict here. Without having any real understanding of the dynamics that drive Kashmir, these “independent thinkers” base their opinions on some specific versions on Kashmir given by their contacts in Kashmir, their Facebook friends or others. Then they become judge and jury on what ails Kashmir and start propagating their opinions.

Are these “thinkers” aware of the insidious propaganda carried out by

the so-called journalists that they stand up for? Do they know of how poisonous and dangerous these narratives are in indoctrinating the local youth? Sitting in their comfortable cities, they connect with some friends and start believing these single story narratives on Kashmir. I concede that this is not done intentionally. Many of these “independent thinkers” may innocently fall into the trap of the terror ecosystem. In this way, they unwittingly start amplifying the voice of the terror ecosystem.

But in a conflict region where the

indoctrinated youth take to the path of violence and get killed, the choices one makes and the standpoints one takes must be carefully studied.

AGENDA-DRIVEN PROPAGANDA BY SO-CALLED JOURNOS

Fahad Shah’s call for his magazine is ‘Support Independent Journalism’. Such woke phraseology is all it takes for so-called independent thinkers to stand up and oppose Fahad Shah’s arrest and demand his release.

THE THAROOR ACT ON KASHMIR

Are these “thinkers” aware of the insidious propaganda carried out by the so-called journalists that they stand up for? Do they know how poisonous and dangerous these narratives are in indoctrinating the local youth?



NDTV.COM



The news room of The Kashmir Walla The magazine of which Fahad Shah is Editor (AP Photo/Dar Yasin, File)

One such “independent thinker” is MP Shashi Tharoor. Speaking in the Parliament on February 11, Tharoor demanded the “immediate and unconditional” release of Kashmir journalists Fahad Shah and Sajad Gul “in the interest of preserving the freedom of press in our country”. Some other “independent thinkers” joined Tharoor in supposedly standing up for freedom of the media in Kashmir by demanding Fahad’s release.

Tharoor and Co must closely study the journalism that Fahad Shah and his ilk pursue in

Kashmir before demanding his immediate and unconditional arrest. They are not alone. I often encounter this warped thinking on Kashmir, and it perplexes me every time.

CHALLENGING THE IDEOLOGICAL HEGEMONY OF KASHMIR’S TERROR ECOSYSTEM

Beginning November 2020, we started challenging the ideological hegemony of the terror ecosystem

in Kashmir. First with MAC Letter, our digital news letter; then our digital magazine KZINE and now with KASHMIR CENTRAL, we have consistently exposed the machinations of the terror players and the dynamics that drive Kashmir.

Our efforts are part of our conviction that the counter narrative on terrorism and Kashmir’s terror ecosystem must be driven by the locals. Fahad Shah and Co have romanticized terrorism and militancy as the “resistance of our boys”. This subterfuge is being questioned and exposed now.

In a conflict region where the indoctrinated youth take to the path of violence and get killed, the choices one makes and the standpoints one takes must be carefully studied

AN OGW SPEAKS TO KASHMIR CENTRAL



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**ATTEMPT TO MAKE EVERY
TERROR ACTIVITY LOOK LIKE
INDIGENOUS, LOCAL PROTEST
AGAINST STATE**

Over the next few months, Pakistan operatives in Kashmir are going to initiate heavy recruitment of Kashmiri boys and young men into the OGW (Over Ground Worker) network and sleeper cells.

A large number of them will be what the police call hybrid militants. They will lead normal lives and will carry out some terror activity like throwing grenades or going in for target killing.

All the ISI operatives who have come into Kashmir or have been here for long – they have been given a singular task. Carry out mass recruitment of local youngsters into the terror circuits in Kashmir. They have been told to focus only on this. It is their special task. They have been told to give it top priority.

Their strategy is to involve more and more Kashmiris in the anti-state operations. Pakistan's purpose is that all terror activities must look like they are solely the handiwork of local youth. They want that every terror activity must look like an indigenous and local protest against the state.

The youth are being recruited for small tasks like grenade blasts or target killing of some person. They are not being involved in any big mission as of now.

For the purpose of recruitment into sleeper cells or hybrid networks, ISI operatives hunt for those youngsters who have gone to jail for OGW activity, stone pelting etc. Once these young men go to jail, most of them do not have any fear of law. Their thinking becomes like this: There are already cases registered against me. What difference will it make if some more cases are registered?

Youth are being recruited for small tasks like grenade blasts or target killing. They are not being involved in any big mission as of now



PHOTO COURTESY: TIMES NOW

ISI operatives paise bhi phenkte hain bohot. For boys and also girls from poor and needy families, sometimes involvement becomes a majboori. They are also psychologically brainwashed to think that they are doing a very big task

Vo paise bhi phenkte hain bohot. The ISI operatives give a lot of money to boys and girls whom they want to recruit in the terror circuits. For the boys and also girls from poor and needy families, sometimes the involvement becomes a majboori. One, they get money. Second, they are psychologically brainwashed to think that they are doing a very big task.

Once the boy gets involved in even a single terror activity, there is no escape for him. There is no exit door. He is trapped.

The statistics, the data – all of it reveals that

youngsters who have been arrested earlier for OGW or stone pelting activities are most vulnerable to be recruited in sleeper cells or as hybrid militants.

Now new ISI operatives have come into Kashmir. The police, the Army and the security agencies are aware that about 20 men have infiltrated from the Karna sector. They have come in two to three groups of seven to eight persons each.

They have been given tasks. Vo yahan terror network ke liye finance handle karenge. They will work upon the strategies for attacks. They will choose the locations for the action to be carried out.

Attempts To Create DISTURBANCES Outside Kashmir Region

There is a shift in the strategy of the terror operatives. Attempts are being made to create disturbances on the other side of the Jawahar tunnel. Recently, there was a blast at a busy junction in Udhampur in which one person was killed and some others were injured. The blast was caused by an IED set up by militants. This was the first terror attack in Udhampur in seven years. Grenades were found by the police in Jammu.

The message is clear. The terror operatives are covering more and more area. The blast at a busy junction in Udhampur obviously means that the terror operatives have a network in the town. Without local sleeper cells, OGWs or hybrid militants, such an activity cannot take place. Regarding the grenades found in Jammu, a local network is supporting that too.

The Police, the Army, the security agencies – they are aware that some Pakistani terror operatives have infiltrated into Kashmir. Many cordons have been organized, many searches have been held in north Kashmir and also in south Kashmir, but they have not been able to trap anybody.

“Police Come To Know Of Pakistani Terrorists Only After They Are Killed”

I find it funny every time when the police say that so and so terrorist killed in anti-insurgency operation was found to be a Pakistani. Look at what this reveals. They come to know that the man was a Pakistani only after he is killed. All these months when he was circulating around in Kashmir - living here, planning his activities here - the police or the security

agencies did not come to know about him.

It is so strange that after the recent Hazratbal incident, a senior police officer gave the statement to the media that the killed terrorist was identified as Manzoor alias Haider, a Pakistani national. The police officer even said that man had been active in the Valley for a long time.

When I read such statements, I think that if the man had been active here for a long time, what was the police doing? What were the Army and the security agencies doing? The Pakistani terrorists keep moving about. They have such a high degree of familiarity with the local terrain. There is a whole network which supports them here. The backing is given by the locals.

Terror operatives are covering more and more areas. The blast at a busy junction in Udhampur or grenades found in Jammu mean that terror operatives have networks there. Without local sleeper cells, OGWs or hybrid militants, such an activity cannot take place

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POLICE, ARMY MUST BUILD DEEP CONNECTS WITH OGWs, STONE PELTERS

I have observed that the Police, Army or other security agencies usually don't have the deep intelligence to usually catch the terrorists alive. But how will they come to know of the terror operatives or any such underground activity if they do not have links among OGWs, stone pelters, others associated with the terror network? If they do not have strong connections with those in the terror network, how will they build deep connections with them?

What is the benefit if they keep taking their information from some man who is identified with the Army? What input will he have?

You will get deep intelligence from deep connects within the same network. A man comes from Pakistan and starts living in Kashmir. The police and other agencies usually come to know about him only after he is killed.

Pakistanis Operatives Play With Minds Of Kashmiri Youth

AN OGW SPEAKS TO KASHMIR CENTRAL



Indian Agencies Ko Bhi Ladko Ki Soch Ko Influence Karna Hai, Phir Masle Hal Ho Sakte Hai

All the Pakistanis who come here to Kashmir are trained in brainwashing the local youth within the matter of an hour. Their talk is scripted. They are fully trained in what to say to the local youth in order to involve them in terror activities. That is why the boys get trapped very fast.

Many youngsters of Kashmir already have warped thinking. Their brains are programmed by the software that they have been exposed to since early childhood. Words like azadi, ghulami etc are drilled into their head. They are vulnerable to talk like shaheedi. The Pakistani operatives know very well how to trap these youth.

Vo ladko ki soch ke upar kaam karte hain. Agar yahan waale bhi ladko ki soch par kaam kare to bohot saare masle hal ho sakte hai.

I have come across many boys who have no previous involvement in any militant activity or OGW network. But they say Hum directly active ho jayenge. Allah ke raah mein shaheed ho jayenge.

The Pakistani operatives feed the same to the boys. Then what else will you find but a terrorist?

Ye saara soch ka khel hai. The ISI operatives play upon their soch. The Indian state can also powerfully impact their soch. But again and again, I see that the same effort is not being taken from this side.

THE SYSTEM MUST CALIBRATE PUNISHMENT FOR RAW RECRUITS FOR MINOR OFFENCES

If a youngster has serious involvement in OGW network, then police have to be tough with him. But if his involvement is not deep, then police must calibrate the approach towards him.

If a youngster has only been involved in a minor role like reaching food or dry fruits to someone in the terror network, the security forces should be lenient towards him. A tough approach will harden him. He will get into the mindspace ki us ke saath bohot zulm hua. It is easy to slap cases on him, but changing his mind is very difficult.

To take revenge against the system, the youngster can turn into a dangerous force. It can happen because some insensitive officer hardened that young man. Then his hatred level peaks. That is why it is very important for the system to calibrate the punishment to be given to raw recruits for their offences.

Suppose an officer comes to know that a youngster is an OGW or a raw recruit in the terror network. They directly go and arrest him. Then they come to know that the youngster has very limited information.



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It is very important to correctly deal with the latent anger among indoctrinated youngsters. The system needs people who have the right approach. The aim must not be punishment for the boys but to reform them and get them on the right track

Perhaps a better approach shall be to trail him with human and technical resources. Then one can reach his handler, one can reach the network with which the youngster is associated.

When the police or any other security agency arrests an OGW early, his support system gets alerted. They change their modus operandi. In this way also, early arrest of a raw recruit does not help.

This is what is most important to deal with the latent anger among indoctrinated youngsters. The system needs people who have the right approach. The system needs people whose aim is not punishment for the boys but to reform them and get them on the right track.

Did The Pakistani terrorist want to take hostages?

On March 10, a Pakistani terrorist was killed in a brief shoot out outside the Dhobi Ghat gate of the revered Hazratbal shrine.

The intelligence agencies are yet to ascertain whether the Pakistani terrorist and his local accomplices were planning to repeat the 1993 hostage drama by JKLF terrorists when they barged into the holy shrine and refused to come out for many days.

There are contrasting reports about the recent incident. One intelligence agency believes that the Pakistani terrorist and two OGWs were there to snatch the rifles of the cops deputed on the spot. The promptness of the security guard who was called by the militants to come out averted the tragedy.

Efforts are on to nab the two OGWs who escaped from the spot. The picture shall be clear after they are arrested. Police say the youth have been identified and shall soon be behind bars.

The question is – Why should a Pakistani terrorist walk on the busy lane along the Hazratbal shrine for rifle snatching? If snatching a weapon from a policeman was their sole intention, the trio could have chosen a more

convenient spot.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

The sequence of events is like this:

There are always some police officials in civil dress who keep a watch on suspicious objects and persons. On March 10, a policeman in plain clothes observed the suspicious presence of three boys outside the Hazratbal shrine. They had been sitting in a shop facing the shrine for long.

The policeman, who was armed with an AK 47, asked the boys to leave. The two local boys silently started walking out. The third, a Pakistani terrorist, refused to leave. When the policeman insisted that he must leave, the Pakistani terrorist removed a pistol from his bag. Before he could open fire, the vigilant police officer responded quickly and shot him dead.

The two local boys ran towards the shrine in fear. On seeing them running inside the shrine, the officer in charge ordered his men not to open fire. The boys took advantage of the restraint observed by the security forces deployed there. They ran away from the opposite side where they jumped

Police outside Hazratbal shrine after the killing of a Pakistani terrorist there. Photo courtesy: Umar Ganie for Rediff.com



in an auto and disappeared from the scene.

CONSTANT VIGILANCE ESSENTIAL

What would have been the scenario if the Pakistani terrorist had escaped? According to some police officers, in that case the chances of a hostage drama were high. He may have entered the shrine and held the

devotees hostage. Even if this had not been planned, he may have instantly opted for it

Pakistani terrorists are trained to create situations which can immediately impact the discourse. The Pakistani terrorist was killed outside the Hazratbal shrine. It is understood that the security forces shall have to keep an eagle's eye on movements at strategic places in order to avert any potential tragedies.

Why The Terrorists Want to Grab Headlines

To ascertain the truth about this incident, we must understand the dynamics of a terrorist operation.

Terrorists strike mainly for creating a buzz. It has been their consistent strategy to mark their presence in such a way that they are able to grab headlines. Publicity gives them the boost they need.

Going after soft targets is also part of the Pakistan strategy for Kashmir. It wants to instill constant fear among people. But incidents like taking control of revered religious places, killing or kidnapping a high-profile person with huge following are meant to attract the attention of the people and be in the news for some time.

In this particular case, we have no clarity yet. Were the militants up to something huge? Did they plan to occupy the shrine by barring its doors and not allowing anybody to come out or go inside?

What would have been the scenario if the Pakistani terrorist had escaped? According to some police officers, in that case the chances of a hostage drama were high. He may have entered the shrine and held the devotees hostage. Even if this had not been planned, he may have instantly opted for it



KASHMIR MILITANCY

**How It Has
Caused
Us Untold
Suffering**

by Mareaya FAYAZ

Terrorist and secessionist violence in Jammu and Kashmir has been sponsored and supported by Pakistan for more than three decades now, and has claimed thousands of lives.

The precarious situation of Kashmir has cast a heavy toll upon the local populace. How tragic it is for a region that killing has been normalized. Whether innocent civilians or security personnel or even militants – it is Kashmiris who are dying. It is Kashmiri blood that has been split. The annual report of the Ministry of Home Affairs for the year 2019-2020 provides the following chilling statistics for Kashmir.

Year	Incidents	SFs Killed	Civilians Killed	Terrorists Killed
2014	222	47	28	110
2015	208x	89	17	108
2016	322	32	15	150
2017	342	80	40	213
2018	614	91	39	257
2019	594	80	39	157

The report also reveals that the Central government contributed Rs 8192.29 crore to the Government of Jammu and Kashmir (including 786.64 crore in 2019-20 through December 31, 2019) in Kashmir under Security Related expenditure.

There have been innumerable reports of young women in Kashmir who were forcibly married to militants. Women in far flung areas were kidnapped and tortured by the militants until they would agree to marry them. These forced marriages wreaked havoc on their lives

WE SUFFERED THE WRONG REVOLUTION

Talking among peers, we have often dwelt upon the words of Noam Chomsky: A revolution that may turn out to be worse than the regime it replaces.

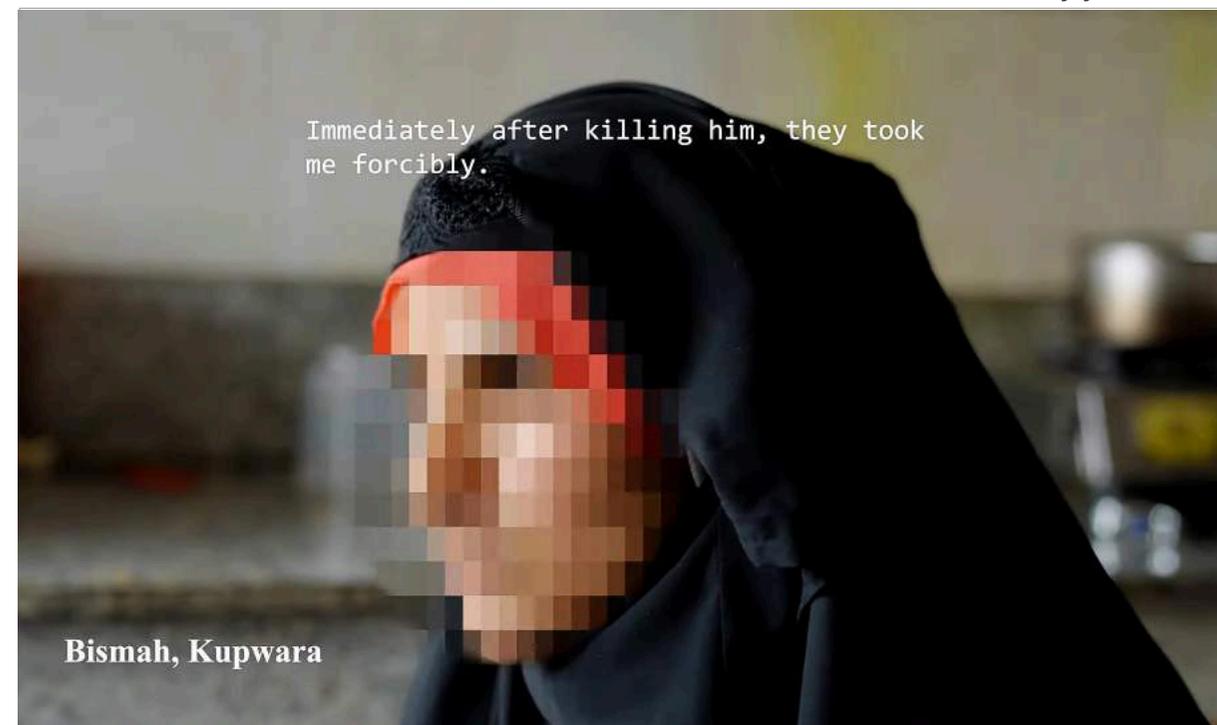
This is what we Kashmiris have suffered. We have suffered the wrong revolution. On every side, our brothers, sisters and children were the casualties. Those who were dying and suffering, and those who continue to die and suffer are Kashmiris. They may be innocent passers-by, policemen, the unfortunate parents whose indoctrinated boys became militants and others like them. We have been at the receiving end of it all.

The worst of the sufferers of this mindless conflict have been women and the children. This is no secret. Wherever there is conflict, the brunt of it is always borne by the most vulnerable class – the women and children.

The United Nations has noted that higher levels of gender-based violence against women and girls such as arbitrary executions, torture, sexual abuse and forced marriage can result from conflict. Sexual violence is predominantly and increasingly directed at women and girls, though sometimes men and boys also emerge as victims of sexual abuse.

Due to widespread breakdown of the rule of law,

Photo courtesy: youtube video



Immediately after killing him, they took me forcibly.

Bismah, Kupwara

We do not want to acknowledge that in hundreds of cases, militants have raped Kashmiri women at gun point. Women and girls have been brutalized for years, many times with the knowledge of the family. These militants called themselves the “upholders of justice”. But many among them did not spare girls as young as 12 years

the availability of small guns and the dissolution of social and family institutions, there is normalization of gender-based violence in conflict societies. Trafficking is intensified during and after conflict due to the breakdown of political, economic and social structures, and also high levels of violence.

As a result of conflict-related sexual violence, women and girls are at a higher risk of unplanned pregnancy, maternal mortality and morbidity, severe sexual and reproductive injuries, and contracting sexually transmitted infections. To make matters worse, access to essential services such as health care, including sexual and reproductive health services, is disrupted.

According to data from India's National Crime Records Bureau, the number of cases of violence against women in Jammu and Kashmir grew by 11% in 2020. The figures stood at 3,069 in 2019 to 3,414 the following year. This was despite the fact that the national average fell by 8.3%.

There were 1,744 cases of “attack on women with the intent to violate her modesty” registered in 2020, as well as 243 occurrences of rape.

Given the low reporting rate and the cloak of violent shame and social boycott that surrounds rape – particularly in a community as conservative and patriarchal as Kashmir – the correct figures are likely to be much higher.

Sexual Exploitation Of Women And Girls By Militants

Marriages aren't always made in heaven. As many women and young girls in Jammu and Kashmir will tell you, some are solemnized at the barrel of the gun.

There have been innumerable reports of young women in Kashmir who were forcibly married to militants. Many newspapers reported how women from far flung areas were often kidnapped and tortured by the militants and their associates until they would agree to marry them. In the insurgency-hit state, forced marriage to militants has wreaked havoc on their lives.

The recently report in The Diplomat about how militants sexually exploited young women became a talking point in Kashmir. This is a known fact that we do not like to dwell upon or discuss. We do not want to acknowledge that in hundreds of cases, militants have raped Kashmiri women at gun point. Women and girls have been brutalized for years,

many times with the knowledge of the family.

These militants called themselves the "upholders of justice". But many among them did not spare girls as young as 12 years. For decades, these girls and women were not able to tell anyone about their ordeal. They remained silent, fearing that if they spoke up, their loved ones would be killed.

A large percentage of women who were married to militants were left widowed after their husbands got killed in encounters. Many had to live a destitute life after their husbands crossed into Pakistan and never returned. The women were left with children but no one to feed these families.

FACING SOCIAL STIGMA, IGNORANCE

Because of the stigma and even ignorance, the widows of militants or the women deserted by them



First they came asking for food and shelter.



Wives and children of dead or run-away militants often live destitute lives. These women are many times forced to adopt drastic measures like selling their bodies to make ends meet. Their children face a dark future

don't even apply for government welfare schemes. This leaves them poor and helpless. Their kids face a dark future ahead. These women are many times forced to adopt drastic measures like selling their bodies to make ends meet. Then they are judged by society and regarded as bad women.

Many such accounts have been reported where women who were deserted by their militant husbands are judged by people. Their children live as orphans. They do not have any documents which can enable them to avail government schemes.

There were more ways in which women suffered, and continue to suffer. Even now, women associated with militants and pro-liberty advocates face government and state disinterest, an-

tagonism and hatred. Those who are linked to counter-insurgents or renegades are regarded as social outcasts.

While many schemes have been provided by the Centre and also the state, wives and children of dead or run-away militants are not able to benefit from these schemes. There is social stigma attached with these women which makes them vulnerable.

The state departments fail to help them because of their association with militants. This stigma is there for both the widows or deserted wives of militants and their children. The society by and large ignores them.

Separatists Collected Huge Grants Abroad In The Name Of Militant Families, Passed On Nothing

FAMILIES OF MILITANTS LEFT TO LIVE POOR, DESTITUTE LIVES

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During the first phase of militancy, the separatists used to provide some token assistance to the families of militants. They used to collect huge funds from the Gulf, Europe and other regions to supposedly help the families of militants. Over the years, it was revealed that only a nominal amount was given to the families of militants. The rest was cornered by the separatist masterminds.

This was the situation. Those in the separatist camp lived plush lives with the money that they had collected in the name of the families of militants. They told the women that their husband had acquired Jannat for them as well. They told the children that their fathers had acquired Jannat for them. The women and children lived penniless lives.

The separatists even sold the seats that Pakistan had reserved in medical colleges for the kin of militants. The militants usually came from poor families. Their family members had no idea of medical seats reserved for them by Pakistan. The families were left to life alone and desperate.

The women and children could not take the help of the state because they were linked to militants. But they deserve compassion and help, which is being denied to them.

Recently, there were media reports that the Pakistani wives and ex-wives of Kashmiri militants

demanded Indian citizenship or deportation to Pakistan. They held protests outside Press Enclave at Lal Chowk, Srinagar. Kashmiri women who married militants are suffering. Pakistani women who married militants are suffering. On both ends, women and children are suffering.

The lives of Kashmiri women are entangled in a complex web as a result of the struggle. They must make peace with the current and imposed socio-cultural order in society. Women's lives are impacted by all these situations, and their challenges are often overlooked by both society and state organizations.

Getting compensation from the government is already difficult. In Kashmir, this is also fraught with societal stigma. There is social and cultural opposition to any state assistance because it is believed that it weakens the common cause.

The situation is so paradoxical. Since there is poor investment in the private sector, Kashmiris hanker after government jobs in every sector – be it bureaucracy, police, academia, medicine etc. At the same time, social stigma is attached to seeking state assistance. They say the state that is providing the money or the job is also responsible for the prevailing conditions. A spiral of loss is created by the double-bind: hopes, stigma, conflict, and guilt. Whatever one accomplishes, he or she is bound to be trapped in conflict and guilt.

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WIVES OF POLICEMEN IMPACTED BY CONFLICT

Another set of desperate Kashmiri women affected by the violence are the widows of policemen killed in militant attacks. In 2017, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen militants said that those working with JK Police should stay at home and not participate in counter-insurgency actions. In an 11-minute video that appeared on social media, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen commander Riyaz Naikoo warned, "We are urging police officers to sit in their homes, same as other agencies' employees are doing. The fate of the policeman who attends duty would be nothing but death."

Militants continue to kill the policemen. Their wives and children are left behind. The government has special schemes for these women, but applying for the schemes is a challenge. Since policemen are treated as anti-Muslim, their wives are treated in the same way. They are not provided with any help.

The conflict has driven women and children from diverse backgrounds into poverty and helplessness.

The situation is paradoxical. Since there is poor investment in the private sector, Kashmiris hanker after government jobs. At the same time, social stigma is attached to seeking state assistance. They say the state that is providing the money or the job is also responsible for the prevailing conditions. Herein lies the contradiction

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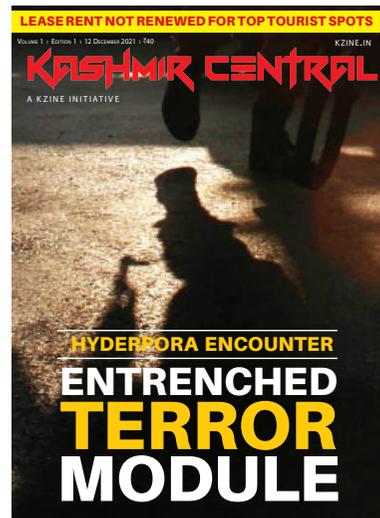
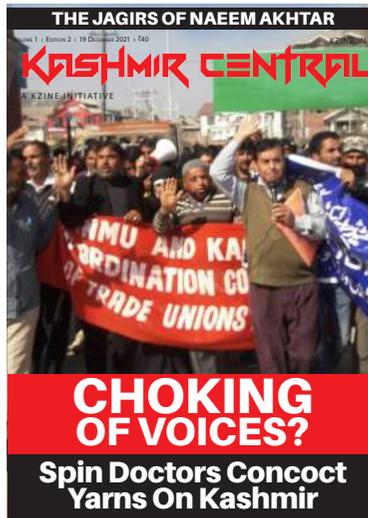
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