

NORTH KASHMIR, SOUTH KASHMIR: WHY SECURITY FORCES ARE VIEWED DIFFERENTLY

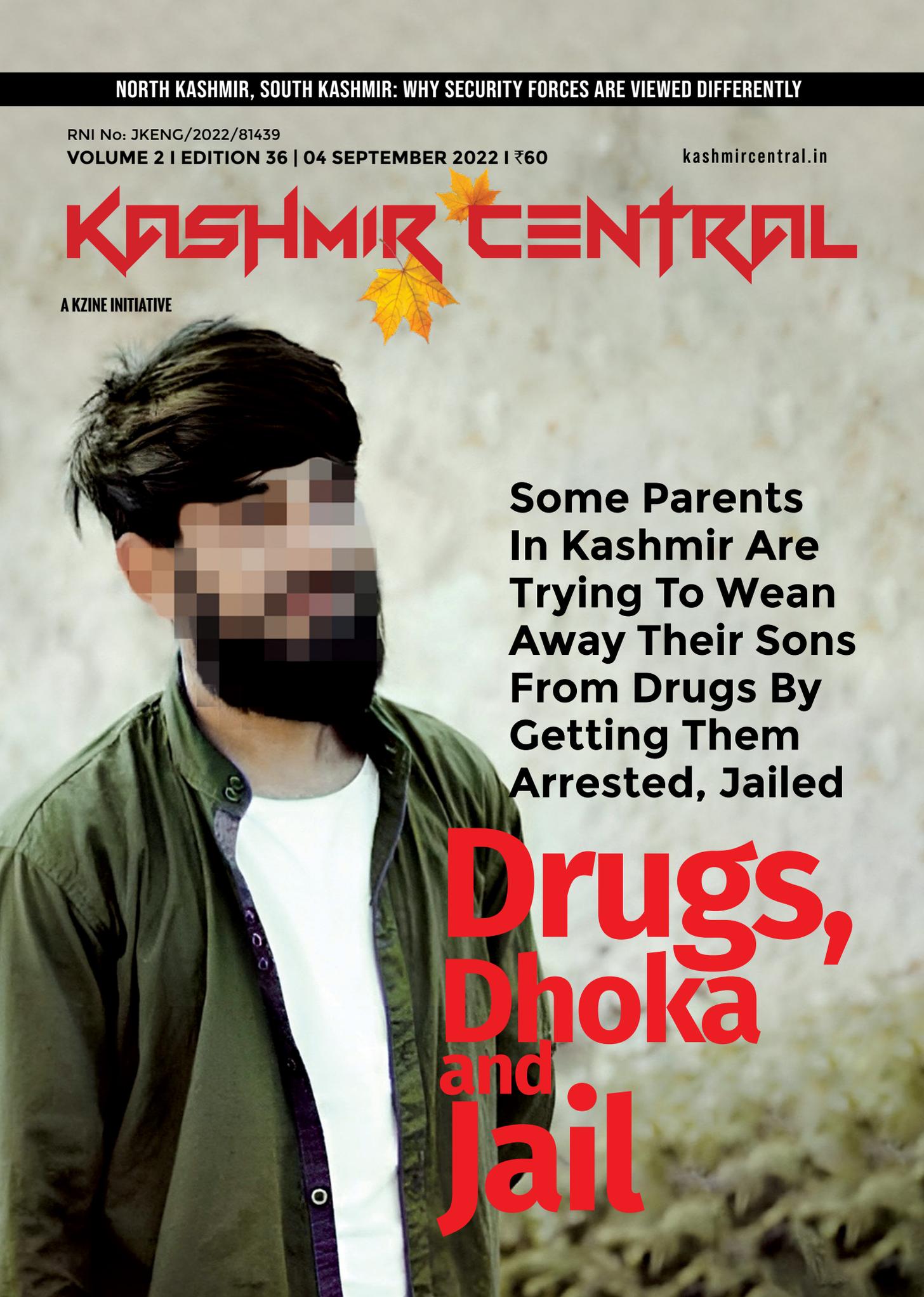
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KASHMIR CENTRAL

A KZINE INITIATIVE

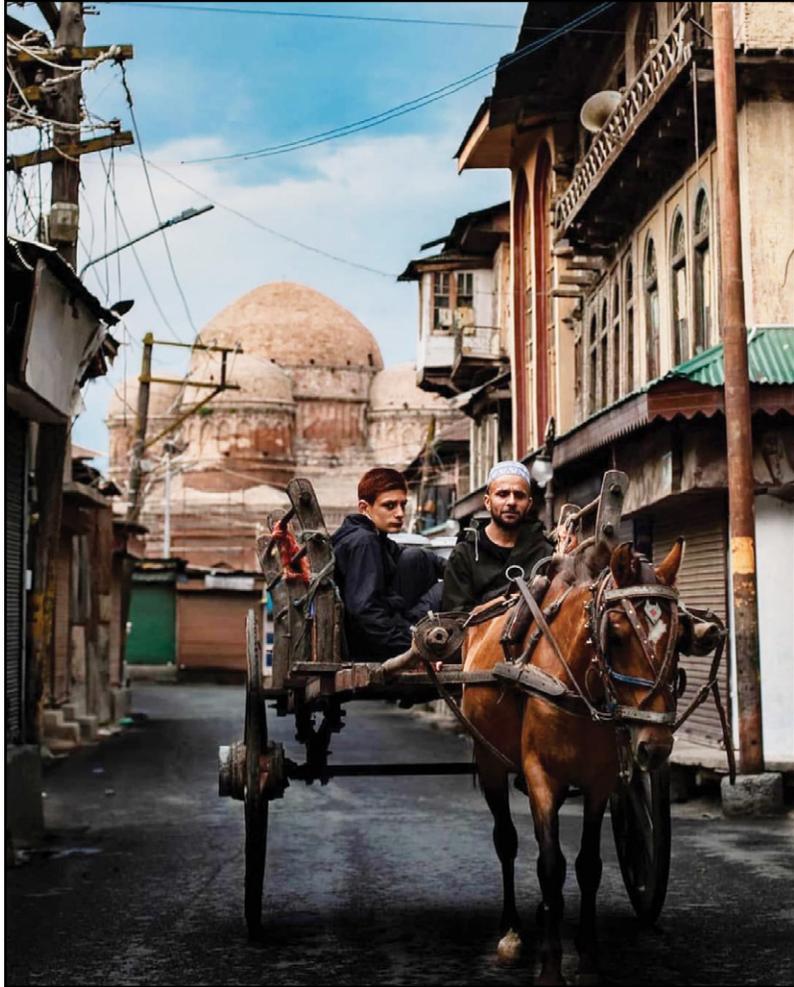


**Some Parents
In Kashmir Are
Trying To Wean
Away Their Sons
From Drugs By
Getting Them
Arrested, Jailed**

**Drugs,
Dhoka
and
Jail**

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KASHMIR

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VOLUME 2 | EDITION 36
04 SEPTEMBER 2022

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Drug Abuse Networks TAKE STERN ACTION AGAINST ALL INVOLVED

The current week is being observed as the Drug Awareness

Week in Jammu and Kashmir. Awareness camps

are being organized throughout the Union Territory. Students of schools, colleges and universities are carrying out rallies against the deepening drug menace in Jammu and Kashmir. It is heartening to see school children passionately participating in anti-drug rallies in Kashmir valley. The UT Administration is also facilitating such programs in schools and colleges.

Drug abuse in the Valley is alarming. It remains a cause of concern for every parent in Jammu and Kashmir. Youth are fast becoming victims of drug abuse. According to a survey, 23% of youth in Kashmir valley are into drugs consumption. This is worrying. Going by the unofficial surveys, if the flow of drugs continues on the same speed in Jammu and Kashmir, it will leave Punjab behind soon. Managing Editor of Kashmir Central Ms Bisma Nazir correctly observed at a recent event, “We have lost one generation to terrorism, and are at the verge of losing another generation to drug menace”.

Drugs are imported to Kashmir valley through multiple routes from neighbouring countries, and budding youth are falling prey to it at a high speed. Drug peddlers need to be seen as terrorists. They must be dealt under appropriate law to send out a loud and clear message that the state shall not let off those who are doing business over human lives. Stern action needs to be taken against government officials, particularly in police and revenue departments, who provide cover to drug peddlers for monetary benefits. It shall be appropriate to invoke Article 311 of the Constitution against the erring officials. They pose a real threat to the security and stability of the state.

Bashir Assad



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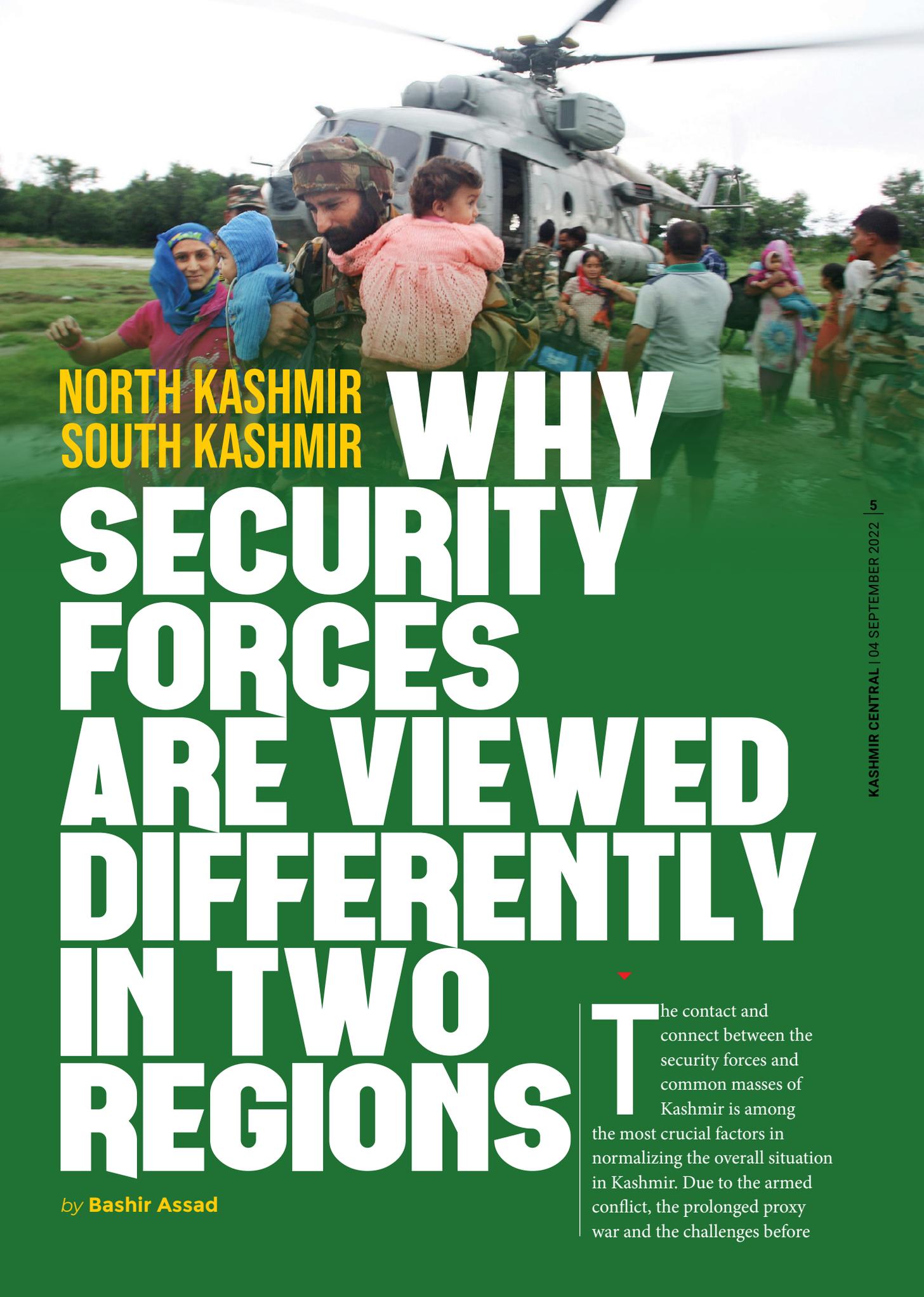
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**NORTH KASHMIR
SOUTH KASHMIR**

WHY SECURITY FORCES ARE VIEWED DIFFERENTLY IN TWO REGIONS

by **Bashir Assad**

The contact and connect between the security forces and common masses of Kashmir is among the most crucial factors in normalizing the overall situation in Kashmir. Due to the armed conflict, the prolonged proxy war and the challenges before



Taking into consideration the geographical and topographical proximity of north Kashmir with Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir, this area should have been more disturbed and militancy-infested as compared to south Kashmir. But this is not the case

the security establishment, the socio-political and economic factors remain suppressed. The narrative is always about the security scenario.

The state and its institutions have been consistently trying to build an alternate narrative. But the security challenge continues to dominate the discourse locally and nationally. This is essentially because the any eventuality in terms of the security situation is noisy. The other factors – rather the whole socio-political and economic scenario – get lost in the din. The result is that Kashmir continues to be defined by the security situation.

In this context, the behaviour of the security forces vis a vis the local population – and vice versa – dominates the discourse.

The connect or the disconnect between the security forces and the local population is what matters the most. It needs to be remembered that the state is synonymous with the behaviour of the security forces vis a vis local population.

The final objective of terrorism is to create a gulf between the state forces and the local population. The state, through its various institutions, attempts to bridge the gulf through various channels. These include the socio-economic upliftment of the general public.

The adversaries of the state are focused on widening the gulf. That is why there are violent provocations. The collateral damage in security operations provides a breather to the adversaries of the state.

The magnitude and the intensity of the conflict is proportional to the eventualities through provocation. The confidence-building measures are dealt a severe blow by any irrational response of the state to the provocations by the terrorists.

FASCINATING COMPARISON

The violent conflict in Kashmir provides interesting data to the researchers and the scholars who study conflict management and resolution. The behaviour of the security forces (both military and paramilitary) provides an interesting contradiction when the situation in north Kashmir is compared with that in South Kashmir.

The inputs and observations of citizens reveal that it is not difficult to understand why the interface between the citizens and the security forces is vastly different between north and south Kashmir. The comparison is highly fascinating.

I have been studying the Kashmir dynamics for about three decades. This difference between the patterns of north and south Kashmir has not attracted the attention of scholars and researchers.

There is a moot point here which must be acknowledged. Taking into consideration the geographical and topographical proximity of north Kashmir with Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir, this area should have been more disturbed and

militancy-infested as compared to south Kashmir, which is comparatively far away from the Line of Control (LOC) dividing India and Pakistan. For decades now, infiltration of terrorists has taken place from the Uri, Machil, Gurez, Tangdar, Keran and Kupwara sectors in North Kashmir.

After crossing LOC through north Kashmir, terrorists move through difficult terrains to south and central Kashmir. Despite this, it is interesting to watch that north Kashmir is relatively peaceful, less militancy-infested and less volatile.

PLAY OF DIFFERENT FACTORS

South Kashmir is more volatile and militancy-infested because of the play of diverse factors. Two major factors here are one, extremist religious indoctrination here. Second, the relationship between the security forces and the common people.

A study of the same factors reveals why north Kashmir behaves differently. The presence of radical extremists in north Kashmir is restricted to a few pockets like Sopore and its peripheries and old town Baramulla.

When we look at the historical perspective of extremist separatism, the big names in the separatist history of Kashmir hailed from north Kashmir. These include



In an interaction with KASHMIR CENTRAL, General Officer commanding (GOC) Kilo Force Major Gen SS Salaria observed that the Army in north Kashmir enjoys a highly cordial relationship with the locals. There is a robust working relationship between the Army and the general public. “We are dependent on each other,” General Salaria noted.

Maqbool Bhat and Amanullah Khan of Liberation Front, Syed Ali Geelani, Mohd Ashraf Sehrai, Gulam Mohd Sofi of Jammate Islami, Mohd Akbar Sofi of Mahaz-e-Azadi etc.

But it is amazing to observe that the aforementioned leaders had a much larger support base in south and central Kashmir than their native places. Their support base in the north Kashmir is limited to few pockets. Even today, the religious extremist organizations have a wider support base in south Kashmir as compared to the north.

DISTRUST, FRICTION HIGH IN SOUTH KASHMIR

The second important factor which defines the security scenario in Kashmir is the friendly relationship between the security forces and the local population in north Kashmir. In south and central Kashmir, the relationship between the awam and the jawan is strained. It is marked by distrust and friction.

These twin factors of distrust and friction in south Kashmir and central Kashmir's relation with the security forces has a direct bearing on the security environment in south Kashmir.

MAN'S HOUSE SEARCHED, SAYS HE WAS IMPRESSED BY GENTLE ATTITUDE OF SEARCH TEAM

The populace in north Kashmir is largely satisfied with the conduct of the security forces, particularly the Army. While speaking to KASHMIR CENTRAL, Mohd Saleem, a native of Rajwara in Kupwara district said, "I am witness to the gentle and cordial behaviour of the security forces. My house was searched by the Army recently as the forces had reports of militants hiding in my house. The men who came to the spot politely asked for permission to search my house. Their gentleness was highly appreciable. I readily agreed to the search of my house as I had never harboured any militant. They searched the house and left. Before leaving, the official in charge of the search party asked for pardon for searching my house. It was a most cordial interaction on both sides, and I shared this experience with many friends and relatives," he said.

A civilian told KASHMIR CENTRAL about his recent experience. "I and my friend got stuck late evening at a distant place. The security personal deployed there facilitated our return to home. They were also highly gentle and cordial in their behavior." Lateef Shah of Baramullah told KASHMIR CENTRAL, "I credit the Army personnel for always being there to help the civilians as and when required. I have observed that 2001 onwards, the security forces have consistently maintained humble and well-mannered behavior with civilians."

THE CONTRAST IN SOUTH KASHMIR

In South Kashmir, a number of people talk bitterly about the Awam and Jawan contact. It must be admitted that at times, the security forces have maintained remarkable restraint in volatile situations, particularly at the encounter sites. At many places in south Kashmir, the locals talk of the gentle, cordial behavior of the Armed Forces personnel.

But at many places, the locals allege that the security forces personnel are not cordial and gentle in their interaction. A young man from Kulgam who did not want his name to be revealed told KASHMIR CENTRAL, "It is impossible to get a Tavera or Sumo taxi to my village after 6 pm. The security forces put up many naka for security checks. But most of the time, people are harassed in the name of security checks. The main roads which connect to

the district headquarters wear a deserted look after sunset. This is because the security forces keep patrolling there. Most of the times, they order the general public, especially the youngsters to remain indoors, as if some untoward incident is just going to happen. We agree that peace is always fragile in Kashmir. But people must be allowed to live a peaceful, normal life on daily basis. Security forces must always keep in mind the human aspect."

Good Relations Between JK Police, Army, People

Pulwama Sets An Example

In many districts, one can see clear signs of improvement. J&K police has been liaison factor for a better relationship between the locals and the security forces. Pulwama district can be presented as a case study. The district police have successfully build a very cordial relationship with the locals.

One can see hundreds of locals visiting the SSP's office daily for the redressal of their grievances. During operations too, the district police assists the security forces to minimize any chances of friction with the people.

The success rate of security operations in Pulwama district during the last one year has been phenomenal. This is essentially because JK Police have built a strong connect with the people, and the Army too has worked on a cordial and people-friendly image.

Talking to KASHMIR CENTRAL, SSP Pulwama Jeelani Wani (KPS) said that people have minimum grievances now against the security personnel because all the belt forces are coordinating in an efficient and cordial manner. "Our motive is to ensure the safety and security of our people and also earn their goodwill. I am happy to say that to a significant extent, we have been successful in this endeavour".



SSP Pulwama Mr Jeelani Wani

Our motive is to ensure the safety and security of our people and also earn their goodwill. I am happy to say that to a significant extent, we have been successful in this endeavour

Some Parents In Kashmir Are Trying To Wean Away Their Sons From Drugs By Getting Them Arrested, Jailed

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Drugs, Dhokka and Jail

by **Gayatri Mohan**

This isn't happening at the level of the top officers of JK Police. Probably the Station House Officers (SHOs) of some police stations may not be involved, though that seems difficult to believe. But over the last few years, parents of some drug addicts in Kashmir have adopted a shocking method to wean their sons away from drugs. In a number of cases, these parents have bribed cops at their local police stations to book their sons under PSA (Public Safety Act). The youth are arrested and sent to jail, and parents desperately hope that their sons will return from jail freed of drug addiction.

Sources reveal that most such cases of false arrests of drug-addicted youth have happened with the help of the constabulary. On the record, it is possible that police may deny this. But the ugly underside of our daily life cannot be negated. It happens away from public glare. As they say – life is stranger than fiction.

A Top Police Officer of North Kashmir Confirms That At Times, Families Ask For Arrest Or Detention Of Youth Addicted To Drugs

'Yes, Parents Make This request'

▼
“ In desperation, people who do not know about de-addiction have in the past requested for arrest or detention of their addicted kin, where they feel it will scare or reform them. However, they're always provided with the alternative of rehab, which is the suitable course of action for such youth. No such issue has been

reported where a youngster addicted to drugs was arrested on charges of disrupting law and order.”

JUNAID, MOHALLA JAMIA, OLD TOWN BARAMULLA

▼
In Mohalla Jamia in Old Town Baramulla, many knew that Junaid (name changed to protect

identity) was a drug addict. Junaid's father paid Rs 30,000 to some local policemen for his son's arrest and jail detention under the J&K Public Safety Act (PSA). The incident happened about a month ago.

Junaid's arrest was facilitated by Aslam (name changed), who is a drug peddler in the area. Junaid's father knew Aslam as his son's friend, not as a drug

peddler. After Junaid's father came to know of his son's drug addiction, he stopped giving him any money. He discussed with Aslam how to break their son's drug addiction.

Aslam convinced Junaid's father that if the young man stays in jail for two to three months, it will break his habit of drug consumption. Aslam also told Junaid's father that he has to give money to some policemen who would arrest the young man and put him in jail.

Convinced by Aslam, Junaid's father gave him Rs 30,000 to secure his son's arrest. Aslam called Junaid to his house on some pretext, where he tied him with ropes with the help of some associates. Some policemen thereafter arrested Junaid and took him away. Junaid, a drug addict, was charged by the police under PSA for his involvement in stone pelting. He is currently serving his sentence at the Central Jail in Kot Bhalwal, Jammu. Junaid's mother is unaware that her husband got their son arrested to wean him away from drugs.

USING POLICE AS A SHIELD

Aslam does not undertake his drug peddling activities during the day. He is a silent operative in the day, and sells drugs only at night. Baramulla police had caught hold of Aslam for drug peddling, but booked him under the charges of stone pelting. Aslam deals in the supply of



Most such cases of false arrests of drug-addicted youth have happened with the help of the constabulary. The police may deny this. But the ugly underside of our daily life cannot be negated

heroin, brown sugar and other drugs.

One of Junaid's relatives is an SPO. This relative went to Aslam's house and fought with him for misleading Junaid's father and getting the young man arrested as a criminal. In turn, Aslam's family registered a case against Junaid's relative, claiming criminal intention to harm them.

Locally, people think that Aslam is a police informer and has close jaan pehchaan with the police. What people are not aware of is that Aslam is using police as a shield to conveniently carry out his own activities. "He may be giving some halki-fulki

information to police regarding some minor militant or OGW (Over Ground Worker) activities in the area. But his real purpose is to keep the cover on his own activities by keeping up the façade of being friendly and cooperative towards police," a Baramulla resident told me.

Baramulla residents claim that there are many young men who are police sources and also sell drugs. "They project themselves as cooperative towards local police. They keep sharing some minor information with the policemen. In this way they come less in police radar. There may be cases in which the local policemen are complicit with them for petty gains," said a resident of Mohalla Jamia.

"In order to counter this subversive activity, police needs to keep a close watch on their sources. Police need to track whether these men are using the law and order force as a shield and misusing their access to the cops," highlighted the local resident.

Order For Junaid's Detention



Office Of The District Magistrate Baramulla
Subject: Detention Under Public Safety
Act, 1978

Dossier Under Number CS/
PSA/2022/6433-36 dated 23-07-2022

1. Whereas you have been detained vide
order number 67 DMB/PSA/2022, dated:
28/07/2022 made by me under Section 8
(a) of J&K Public Safety Act, 1978...

Signed
District Magistrate,
Baramulla
Dated: 28/07/2022
DMB/PSA/2022/362-366

Copy to the
Financial Commissioner (Addl. Chief
Secretary) to Govt. Home Department J&K
Jammu/Srinagar for information.

Special Director General of Police CID,
J&K Jammu/Srinagar for information.
Senior Superintendent of Police,
Baramulla, along with copy of grounds of
detention and material relied upon....

THE CASE REGISTERED AGAINST JUNAID

Address: Jamia Mohalla, Baramulla.
District: Baramulla. Age: 24 Years

You were reportedly born at your native
place and is 24 years of age. You got your

primary education from Public School
Baramulla up to 10th standard. You have
passed your 12th class from Boys Higher
Secondary School, Baramulla. You are

pursuing your Bachelor's Degree at Govt. Degree College, Baramulla. You have played a major role for a long period of time in disturbing the public order while indulging in rioting and illegal activities in District Baramulla and instigating the youth for stone pelting in Baramulla area. You are involved in case FIR No. 62/20/2018 U/Ss 307, 148, 332, 336, 353 RPC of Police Station Baramulla which is under investigation.

You with the passage of time developed contacts with anti-national elements who motivated you to work with them. You got readily motivated and started indulging in various anti-national activities which facilitated strengthening of network of anti-national grid in District Baramulla to provision of logistics to the anti-national elements operating in the area. Your activities are highly objectionable as it has been established that you are adamant to disturb peace and tranquility in Baramulla and its adjoining areas. In view of your profile and your involvement in the anti-national activities, you have been specifically identified as an accused in the aforesaid criminal case. Your aims

and objectives as per the reports received by the police from field formations is to secede the J&K from the Union of India and to motivate the youth towards secessionist ideology. Your remaining at large at this point of juncture may adversely effect the maintenance of the security of the state. In order to stop you from indulging in such activities which are prejudicial to the maintenance of security of the state, your detention under the provisions of Public Safety Act-1978 has become imperative at this stage, as normal law may not be sufficient to stop you from indulging in such activities, which have a direct bearing upon security of the state. In view of the above, you are hereby detained under the provision of J&K Public Safety Act-1978. You have a right of making a representation before the Government in the Home Department or to the undersigned against your detention, within prescribed time limit, if you choose so.

Signed
District Magistrate
Baramulla

Question Mark On Police Functioning

Stone-Pelting In 2018, Case Registered In 2022

The youth addicted to drugs need drug de-addiction and rehabilitation, not punishment. But over the last few years, simple parents of youths addicted to drugs assumed that serving time in prison will reform their son. This led to the negative social trend where parents started requesting police to arrest their drug addict sons. Such parents usually

told the police, "Hamare bachhe ko ek saal jail me rakho. Ye theek ho jayega".

Policemen who wanted to make quick money did not guide the parents correctly. In July 2022, Junaid was charged under PSA for a stone-pelting case relating to 2018. The question is – why did the police not arrest him for four years?

Ahmed Of Mohalla Mir Sahib, Baramulla

Another Drug Addict Sent To Jail By Parents for ‘Reformation’

Ahmed (name changed to protect identity), a resident of Mohalla Mir

Sahib in Baramulla, was arrested about six months ago. His family members got to know that he is a drug peddler and is also into consumption of drugs. In order to supposedly wean him away from drugs, his family members informed the police about his activities and got him arrested.

Such fake frame-ups ultimately lead to complications for all – the parents, the society, the police department and also for the nation, in terms of the security situation. Such youngsters are left with no will to live and frequently turn to militancy.

DESPERATE REQUEST MADE BY PARENTS IS INDICATIVE OF SERIOUS GAPS AT VARIOUS LEVELS

- There is lack of awareness among parents that a drug-addicted youngster needs treatment at a rehabilitation centre, not detention in jail
- It reveals that some cops are willing to extort money from desperate parents for sending their drug addict sons to jail. These youths otherwise have no criminal charge
- The cops involved in this fraud and also their parents are unmindful of the disastrous consequences of sending an otherwise innocent youngster to jail. They do not realize that jail detention shall harden a man as a criminal.
- The feeling of ‘betrayal’ by the parents is likely to severely isolate a young man from the loving fold of his community. He is then vulnerable to brainwashing by anti-social and anti-national elements, who have used such youth and pushed them into militancy.

When Parents Of a Youth Contacted Me to Get Him Arrested...

▼
The parents of a youngster contacted me about a month ago. They told me, “Our son is a drug addict. We are not able to get him off this habit. Please get him arrested.”

I was shocked at their request. I told them, “What is the logic in your request? Your son is a patient. He needs the hospital and medicine, not jail. He cannot get treated or rehabilitated this way.”

I also felt deeply sad for the parents. The youth is their only son. The parents have two shops where they sell cosmetics. It is a financially sound family. After the parents got to know of the son’s addiction, they stopped giving him money. Later this young man became a pick

pocket. Some people also caught him stealing wallets.

Parents need counseling if they think that a jail term shall reform their son. In many cases, even the mohalla presidents did not know that some local youth had been arrested because his parents had bribed the police for his arrest to wean him away from drug addiction.

This practice of imposing PSA leads to highly dangerous and negative consequences.

THE DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES

▼
What the parents do not realize is that the jail is no place for reform. It is a den of criminals

and terrorists. A youngster forms highly dangerous contacts in the jail which can derail his life forever. However much the jail authorities may try to control it, the boys get sucked into a wrong vortex.

The jail term dehumanizes the youth. They become anti-state and also hate their families for sending them to prison. Such youngsters become blind puppets for terror networks. They are trapped by terror operatives for violent and anti-national activities. Drugs negatively impact a society in so many different ways.

The matter becomes even more complicated because drug addicts are able to procure drugs even at drug de-addiction and rehabilitation centers.

Sabzar Bhat Was Drug Addict, Was Co-Opted By Militants

Says Former Militant From South Kashmir



Sabzar Bhat (left) with Burhan Wani

Sabzar Ahmad Bhat was considered to be the right hand man of Hizbul commander Burhan Wani. After Burhan's killing, he was area commander of Hizbul Mujahideen.

Very few people know that before becoming a militant, Sabzar Bhat was a drug addict and a thief. He used to indulge in petty thefts like stealing car batteries and tape recorders from vehicle. Some militants approached him and co-opted him in the terror network. He needed money for drugs and was easily trapped.

This was the story of a large number of youth who turned to militancy. The trigger was some strife within the family, problems with some family members which stressed these

boys and young men.

Pakistan's terror handlers have local modules. They know which youth are vulnerable and are facing acute financial or family problems, or may be drug addicts. These modules specifically target these youth. At that time, the trend was that militants were given huge hype. They were romanticized by the society. Hence it seemed an easy option for distressed youth to join militancy.

I know from personal experience that after becoming militants, many boys wanted to quit this violent life and return to their families. But they used to feel that they would have to spend 8-10 years in jail if they returned, so it was better to die.

Pakistan's terror handlers have local modules. They know which youth are vulnerable and are facing acute financial or family problems, or may be drug addicts. These modules specifically target these youth

They were also afraid that the hardened militants would attack their families if they returned.

Sabzar was involved in attacks on panchayat members and security forces, as well as the execution of civilians who he believed to be informants. He was killed in May 2017.

Many are facing severe distress, demand immediate payment of salary

ICDS Supervisors Not Paid Salary For Seven Months



by **Mareaya Fayaz**

The Supervisors in the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Department are facing severe problems because their salaries have not been paid for seven

months now. The situation is highly distressing. Some have family members who need treatment, but they cannot afford it. Some cannot organize the marriage of their children due to paucity of funds or are unable to pay for the education of their children due to lack of payment of salary.

“Director mam hum guzarish kar rahe hai ki agar kisi ko kidney ki zarurat paday gi hum supervisors bechne ko tayar hai”. This is message from a WhatsApp group of JK ICDS



SEWWA, posted by a supervisor in the ICDS Department. Most of them are highly qualified and have been appointed through proper channel in the ICDS department. Over 90 per cent of these employees are women. Many of them are widows or single mothers who have families to take care of.

ICDS Department works under the Social Welfare Department. The department is aimed at addressing the health, nutrition and the development needs of young children, pregnant and nursing mothers. The supervisors of the department have been demanding their salary for months and are now on an indefinite pen down strikes till the issue is resolved.

SALARY PAYMENT A CONSTANT STRUGGLE

Speaking to KASHMIR CENTRAL, Abida War, who is representing the fraternity as president of JKICDS Supervisors Union said that all these Supervisors are facing severe distress because their salary has not been paid. "Payment of salary is our fundamental right. When we work, we ought to be paid. For the last three decades, the Supervisors are facing this issue. Sometimes, Supervisors were paid salary after three months, and sometimes after five months. This time the issue has not been resolved for seven months. We were not paid even



The topmost demand of the ICDS Supervisors is the streamlining of salary system, so that they are paid on time every month. "This is grave injustice that even though we work so hard, we are not paid on time. During Covid, we were working even during the lockdowns," said an aggrieved Supervisor

on Eid, so anyone can imagine what a testing time it has been for us," said Abida, who is also the Chairperson of JKSEWWA.

Earlier, there were some reports that there is an all-India delay in the salary of the ICDS Supervisors. But Abida War specified that this is not the case. She said that she spoke to her colleagues working outside J&K UT. "I got to know that their salaries have been credited

on time and all employees have been paid in a routine manner," she said.

"Now that we are protesting, the department is pressuring my colleagues to break the

ICDS supervisors without salary for months, appeal LG to intervene



TARIQUE RAHEEM

Handwara, Nov 26: The supervisors working under the Social Welfare Department of the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) Thursday expressed resentment against the authorities for failing to release their salaries on a regular basis and appealed Lt Governor Manoj Sinha to intervene.

JKICDS Supervisors Union President Abida War along with the District Union Body told media persons in Handwara about the anguish the supervisors had due to the routine delay of salaries for the past two years.

"Despite being regular employees of the department, our salaries are released only ahead of the festivals or in March," she said.

Abida said that the supervisors working 24x7 even in pandemic for all programmes run under ICDS like Poshan Abhiyan, PMMVY and Beti Bachavo Beti Padavo and Ladli Betiwere being discriminated.

The other supervisors who were accompanying Abida said that they were not being promoted despite rendering years of service to the department.

They appealed authorities to provide pension benefits

“Despite being regular employees of the department, our salaries are released only ahead of the festivals or in March”

to those supervisors who had rendered maximum service as AWWs.

They also appealed Lt Governor Sinha and the concerned authorities to look into the matter and release the pending salary of the supervisors at an earliest so that they would not need to hit the streets or strike work.



strike,” said Abida. Many of them are feeling desperate now. A message posted on a WhatsApp group of the employees reads, “Now we will be forced to sell our body parts since we have already sold our jewellery and we have nothing left.” It is so disheartening to see young educated and employed women saying this, because they have not been paid their salary for the last many months.

‘DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN’

Abida said that this is also an issue of discrimination with the women of J&K, since 99% of the supervisory staff comprises women. Abida War regretted that the women have not been given any promotion. There is stagnation in promotions too, but right now the main issue is the payment of salaries. “We are suffering because our salary has not been paid. Many Supervisors are women whose children are dependent on them.

Today my son asked me when are you going to get paid Mom.” This is also from a WhatsApp group of JKSEWWA.

Abida said that the topmost demand of the ICDS Supervisors is the streamlining of salary system, so that they are paid on time every month. “This is grave injustice that even though we work so hard, we are not paid on time. During Covid, we were working even during the lockdowns,” said Abida.

Supervisors say that in the Department of ICDS, the employees get 90% salary from the center and only 10 % from the Union Territory. “The department is saying that the salaries have been delayed due to the delay in submitting utility certificates. This raises





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The department must have a well-defined promotion policy in place so that Supervisors can look forward to career progression

more questions. Why is the department so late in submitting the necessary documents? The ICDS employees are finding it difficult to make ends meet. They don't realise how we are managing things in our homes," said Abida.

"These women have to take care of regular family expenses like food, electricity bills, the fees of their kids etc. It is highly unfortunate that ICDS Supervisors should be made to suffer like this," she stated.

"The Worthy Director

may be trying hard to resolve the issue. But it seems that a lot of realities are hidden from her. Due to this miscommunication, so many families are suffering," said Abida. She demanded that the department must have a well-defined promotion policy in place so that Supervisors can look forward to career progression. "The Supervisors can be promoted to the level of ACDPOs. This will also boost the morale of the employees," highlighted Abida.

A Strong Connect Between People Of Mainland India And Kashmiris Shall Defeat Pakistan's Evil Designs In Kashmir: Speakers At The Release Of Editor Kashmir Central Bashir Assad's Book In Hyderabad

Build The Bond With Kashmir

22
KASHMIR CENTRAL | 04 SEPTEMBER 2022

by **Bisma Nazir**

As the saying goes, there is never too late. There is a realization among the opinion leaders and civil society members in mainland India, particularly in the southern states, that the conflict in Kashmir cannot be and should not be seen as a problem that is restricted to the union territory and the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

The growing opinion among the opinion leaders – irrespective of their political



From left: Mr Giridhar Mamidi, Mr K Arvind Rao, Editor Kashmir Central Mr Bashir Assad, Mr Abhishek Jagini and Mr Deepak release the third book 'Kashmir: The War of Narratives' by Mr Assad



*From left: Mr Giridhar Mamidi, Mr K Arvind Rao, Editor Kashmir Central Mr Bashir Assad, Mr Abhishek Jagini
On the dais: Ms Bisma Nazir, Managing Editor, Kashmir Central*

affiliation and ideological commitments – is that the prolonged conflict in Kashmir, besides being the creation of Pakistan, has internal dimensions also. There is a growing sense among the people from various walks of life that the persisting disconnect between the Indian civil society and the Kashmir society has further aggravated the problem.

On August 27, Utthista Bharatha, an NGO, organized the release of the third book by Bashir Assad, celebrity author and Editor-in-Chief of Kashmir Central at Hyderabad. The civil society of Hyderabad enthusiastically participated in the function. They expressed their views on the prevailing situation in Kashmir. Those who spoke on the occasion included Mr Giridhar Mamidi, renowned law maker and historian, Shri Aravind Rao, former Director General of Police Andhra Pradesh, Shri Rajesh Raina, Editor of News 18 Urdu, Shri Abhishek Jagini and others.

The prolonged conflict in Kashmir, besides being the creation of Pakistan, has internal dimensions also. The persisting disconnect between the Indian civil society and the Kashmir society has further aggravated the problem

WE NEED TO WORK ON THIS BOND

During the discussion, a very interesting observation was made by the learned speakers. This was that Kashmir is looked upon as a tourist destination by some and security problem by others. Some take interest in Kashmir for its serenity and scenic beauty, while others look at it through the security prism. Both sides have their opinions. Some want to explore Kashmir

to experience its mesmerizing beauty. Others avoid going to Kashmir on security pretext. Many carry a readymade template that “every Kashmiri is a militant or a militant sympathizer”.

The learned panelists made a fascinating observation. They said that for the people in mainland India, Kashmir has never been a priority in terms of having a cordial and working relationship with its people to supplement and compliment the efforts of the state. They made a passionate appeal to the people in the mainland to develop a strong connect with the Kashmiris.

In his address during the book launch ceremony, Shri Giridhar Mamidi said, “If we really want to end the terrorism in Kashmir and not allow Pakistan to fish in troubled waters, we must have a deeper bond with the people of Kashmir. We need to look at Kashmir beyond a tourist destination and a security issue.”



Editor Kashmir Central Mr Bashir Assad speaking at the launch of his third book at a function in Hyderabad

'MORE INDIAN MUSLIMS SHOULD VISIT HAZRATBAL SHRINE IN KASHMIR'

A question was raised about the disconnect between the Indian civil society – Hindus and Muslims alike – and the Kashmiris. Shri Mamidi observed that the disconnect could be analysed from the fact that Indian Muslims don't visit the Hazratbal shrine in Srinagar to pay obeisance at the shrine and catch a glimpse of the holy relic of the Prophet of Islam on his birth anniversary each year. What could be more auspicious for an Indian Muslim than having a darshan of the holy relic of the Prophet on the specified day, he questioned.

Shri Mamidi said that it would have been appropriate if Indian Muslims considered going to Kashmir to catch a glimpse of the Holy Relic as a devotional yatra every year. "This would have built both the spiritual and the emotional connect between the Kashmiri

Muslims and Indian Muslims," Shri Mamidi said. It would also have shed light on the beauty of the secular democratic character of the Indian nation.

He observed that Kashmiris in hundreds visit Ajmer Sharief on the Urs of Sufi Saint Khawaja Moinuddin Chishti. There is no such tradition among Indian Muslims to visit Hazratbal Shrine located on the banks of the world-famous Dal Lake, Shri Mamidi observed.

'WE NEED TO CHECK OUR CHANNELS OF INFORMATION ON KASHMIR'

Shri Aravind Rao said that the Indian civil society has left Kashmir to the conflict entrepreneurs in Delhi. "We get information regarding Kashmir through the medium of these conflict entrepreneurs who have a working relationship with their counterparts in Kashmir. The same connect reaches the western media. This way, the whole narrative is controlled by

If we really want to end the terrorism in Kashmir and not allow Pakistan to fish in troubled waters, we must have a deeper bond with the people of Kashmir. We need to look at Kashmir beyond a tourist destination and a security issue

this ecosystem" Shri Rao said.

Shri Rao stressed that it is incumbent upon the Indian civil society – both Hindus and Muslims – to build a spiritual and emotional connect with the people of Kashmir. This can greatly help in addressing the perception of alienation and isolation, Shri Rao observed.

Shri Rao said that the pilgrims who visit Kashmir for the darshan of the Holy Cave of Amarnath return with fond and loving memories of the Kashmiri Muslims who provide logistics for the Yatra. It could be a subject for research scholars to study how the annual pilgrimage of Amarnath has greatly helped in building an emotional connect at least with those Kashmiri Muslim involved and engaged in providing logistics to the pilgrims.

'WE NEED TO ADDRESS THE DISTRUST'

Speaking on the occasion, Editor Kashmir Central Bashir

Assad noted that it is extremely unfortunate that sometimes, the distrust between the Kashmiris and people in the mainland leads to violence. “Such kinds of situations arise essentially because of the misunderstanding or absolutely no understanding at all about Kashmir and Kashmiris. When people talk about terrorism in Kashmir, they take it for granted that entire Kashmir is a pasture of terrorism. They look at every Kashmiri with suspicion. These assumptions are not good for the nation or our society. They need to be addressed. The resolution lies in greater connect between people in the mainland and the Kashmiris,” Assad said.

Assad made the vital observation that in the strong connect between the people of mainland India and Kashmiris lies the defeat of the adversaries of the Indian state. The prevailing disconnect is fully exploited by Pakistan and its subversive terrorist organizations in fueling the sparks of terrorism in Kashmir.

Assad urged the people of mainland India to take the first step into this direction. “I assure you with full confidence that the people in Kashmir shall reciprocate with same spirit and enthusiasm,” he asserted. It merits mention here that the book, ‘Kashmir: The War of Narratives’ has earned international fame. Recently the book was released in London. The book is in demand in Europe and the US also.

‘The Bonds That Shall Heal’

In his address to the Hyderabad civil society, Bashir Assad said that the wider connect between the people of mainland India and Kashmiris is essential for bridging the gulf between the state and the people of Kashmir. The Indian civil society, he said, is a very important stakeholder in the conflict in Kashmir. It is entirely a different thing that they are fully aware of their responsibility towards Kashmir and the nation at large.

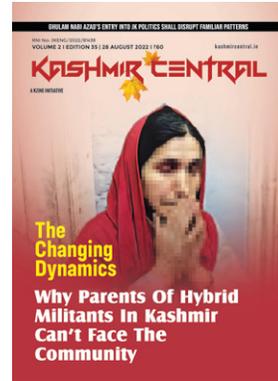
Assad said that Kashmir cannot be measured through the security prism or the tourist influx alone. “Let each Indian (both Hindu and Muslim) visit Kashmir with a mission. The mission of earning the goodwill of the people of Kashmir, winning their hearts and minds. Kashmiris are warm and loving people. They shall reciprocate your efforts in full measure, and you shall form deep bond of friendships for life. The goodwill generated by this initiative shall be immeasurable. It shall go a long way in resolving the challenges that we face in Kashmir,” Assad said.

Assad observed that a deliberate situation of distrust has been created by those who thrive on conflict both in Kashmir and the mainland. Because of this, people are reluctant in receiving the Kashmiris, particularly the students, in their homes in the mainland.

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A farmer empties a basket of collected saffron crocus flower in Pampore Kashmir

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