

TERRORISTS ARE DESPERATE TO NEGATE THE STATE'S CLAIMS OF A PEACEFUL KASHMIR

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THE SUMMIT & ITS POSSIBLE SABOTAGE

While Srinagar gets set and ready to roll for the G-20 summit, intelligence inputs tell that terrorists are probably looking to spoil the peace and the promise of progress.

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VOLUME 3 | EDITION 20
14 MAY 2023

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KASHMIR CENTRAL

READY FOR A RESET?

The violent protests against the Pakistani army following the arrest and subsequent release of their former PM is a sign that the people there have found their voice. What happens next, remains to be seen.



The massive violent protests against the Pakistani army, following the arrest and subsequent release of their former Prime Minister, is unprecedented. Whatever the triggering point, the fact remains that there was an undercurrent and the anger was brewing against the army for drenching the resources of that country and forcing the civilian population to live a miserable life.

As the saying goes: 'Countries have armies but in Pakistan the army owns a country'; allegations of provocations and instigations apart, anger was brewing up against the army but because of the fear of persecution, there was a silence of the graveyard. The political uncertainty and the animosity between the PML and PTI, of course, has a lot to do with the current situation in Pakistan, but the resentment against the Pakistani army seems to be across the board. I am a little hesitant to side with the argument that it is the PTI workers who are behind the protest against the Pakistani army. I compare the situation in Pakistan with the one we faced in Kashmir for a couple of decades. The majority of the people here had no love lost for the separatists and the separatist movement but because of the fear of persecution and intimidation, the poor people could not express themselves and remained mute to the situation for a long time. It was only when the separatists and their militant arms lost grip over their mind space that people started talking openly against them. This is precisely what is happening in Pakistan. The severest economic crisis finally made the Pakistani people realise that silence amounts to death of the society.

The arrest and subsequent release of Imran Khan only provided an opportunity to the people of Pakistan to vent their anger and frustration against the army. The simmering was there for quite some time and the arrest of Imran Khan led to a volcanic eruption.

It is a popular backlash against the Pakistani army and for the first time in the history of Pakistan, its army faces a direct challenge to its authority. Now, let us wait and watch if it finally leads to the transition of the Pakistani state.

Bashir Assad

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G-20 AND ITS PARTY POOPERS?

While the administration readies Srinagar for the crucial and upcoming G-20 summit, intelligence inputs point towards possibility of clandestine attacks and infiltration by terrorists.

by **Bashir Assad**

▼

A HEAD of the Srinagar G-20 summit, militants are desperately trying to create a noise in Kashmir, which could go against the narrative of peaceful Kashmir. However, there is a likelihood that the subversive elements may resort to isolated killings rather than striking in a big way.

The credible intelligence



inputs based on intercepts suggest, that the terrorist commanders across the Border are desperately trying to reactivate new or old over ground workers (OGWs), to execute some incidents - like the killing of members of the minority community, particularly the ones engaged under a special package, a policeman and similar soft targets. This, according to sources in the security establishment, may or may not be in consonance with the ISI plans. As the Srinagar summit has huge diplomatic and political ramifications, the terrorists are desperate to send a message across that could negate the claims of a peaceful Kashmir by the Indian state. As there is more focus on the Srinagar summit, and the entire State machinery is working hard to ensure an incident-free high-profile international event taking place

in Srinagar between May 22-24, the adversaries of India are determined to create some kind of noise which could overshadow the headlines on the summit internationally.

According to credible intelligence inputs, the strategy of the terrorists is to engage in isolated incidents rather than striking in a big way. The intention is to create a counter to the popular narrative of peaceful Kashmir. Grenade throwing at public places or on an isolated security vehicle, attacking a member of minority community, snatching weapons, are the time-tested events orchestrated by terrorists from time to time, to send a signal across. There are inputs that the OGWs have been given the task to put across posters and if possible, hoardings denouncing the Indian state and creating a sensation which could attract the newsmen across the globe.

The twin Rajouri attacks



have already created a noise around. The strategy of the terrorists now is to simply go for low-intensity attacks, just to keep the news flashing. The immature but highly





consequential statement by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Bilwal Bhutto, on the sidelines of the Shanghai Corporation Organisation (SCO) in Goa clearly indicates that Pakistan is frustrated with the G-20 presidency of India and the events unfolding as a result of the presidency. Pakistan initially was desperate to at least prevail upon its friendly states like China, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia to not be part of the summit in Srinagar. However, it has failed in getting a positive response from these countries as their priority definitely is to safeguard their national interests before speaking up for friends. Had Pakistan achieved something on the diplomatic front, it would have been a huge setback to the Indian presidency of G-20. But now,

the only option left with the Pakistani state and its terrorist arms is to create some kind of disturbance within the territorial jurisdiction of the Indian state, particularly in Jammu and Kashmir, to paint their narrative afresh.

The Pakistani army is also feeling some heat owing to the unprecedented economic crisis in that country. For the first time, Pakistan's civilian population is expressing its anger and frustration against its army for drenching the resources - which has severely affected life in Pakistan. In every likelihood, the Pakistani army too is into the machinations of diverting the attention of the 22 crore Pakistani population. Put together, there are many indicators substantiated by intercepts and inputs from the

intelligence agencies that point towards the fact that there are collective efforts from the Pakistani army, terrorist groups, and - going by the assertions of Bilwal Bhutto - the civilian government of Pakistan, to create disturbance in Jammu and Kashmir before and after the G-20 Srinagar summit, for multiple reasons. The aim is to have an impact on the mindspace of the visiting dignitaries and refute the claims of the Indian state on Kashmir. However, a misadventure of a high intensity attack - such as a Fidayeen attack or attacking an army party - is ruled out. Their intentions are to do something clandestinely rather than striking in a big way. They may not escalate it to a larger extent because that may go against them.

This year, the infiltration bids are likely to show a steep rise. It is anticipated that owing to the internal problems that country is facing, the Pakistan army would likely give a go-ahead to terrorists to attempt infiltration to this side. As the former army chief Qamar Jawed Bajwa has been accused of alleged sellout of Kashmir by the right wing thinkers of Pakistan, the incumbent army chief is likely to go for some adventurism.

The security experts fear escalation on the borders otherwise also. There is an opinion that the infiltration attempts will be more even after the culmination of the G-20 summit. The recent infiltration bid by the terrorists at Machil



sector in frontier Kupwara district is seen as the beginning in this direction. As mentioned earlier, the public resentment is brewing in Pakistan against the army; therefore, infiltration would be a tactic to divert the attention. The terrorists, on the other hand, too have intentions to create disturbances during this year.

Meanwhile senior officials from civil, security

and intelligence agencies are camping in Srinagar, monitoring the elaborative arrangements being put in place for the smooth conduct of the high-profile Srinagar summit. All eyes are on it. The civil administration in Srinagar has been geared up to go for the massive facelifting of the city ahead of the high-profile event. As reported in the last edition, the Dal Lake

has been restored to its glory and the city has been decorated like a bride with the tricolour theme. The security barriers at many junctions too have been decorated with hoarding of the G-20 summit, the walls are being painted and the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) is enthusiastically on to a cleaning mission. Despite incessant rains during the last many days, the work on the Smart City Project is going on in full swing. A deadline has been issued by Jammu and Kashmir Chief Secretary A K Mehta for completion of the project on or before May 15. The administration is looking forward to giving a final touch to the facelifting in the next seven days after May 15, and putting everything in place for the smooth conduct of the G-20 summit beginning May 22.



THE SYSTEM RESET

by **Bisma Nazir**

THE streamlining of the education department - known for its inherent lacunae - has been initiated, and massively. The government has come out with an elaborate and an exhaustive transfer policy after many brainstormings with the stakeholders. The policy has been meticulously framed in order to avoid any kind of misgiving and confusion.

Though policies were framed earlier too, but could not see the light of day because of compulsions and compromises at the administrative level. The current transfer policy seems to have addressed all the issues which itself speaks about the commitment and dedication behind its implementation. The policy, no doubt, has been framed on the basis of the inputs and feedback from all the stakeholders and that is precisely why the policy is comprehensive and



Mr. Alok Kumar, IRS Principal
Secretary Education
Department, Jammu and Kashmir

warrants compliance.

The transfer policy for employees of the school education department issued under government Order No 103-JK (Edu) of 2023, dated April 24, 2023 reads: “In order to address the concerns of employees of the School Education Department pertaining to personnel administration, while fulfilling the primary objective of the department i.e., to provide quality education to the students, transfer policy for effecting transfers in the department is hereby notified”.

While speaking to Kashmir Central, Alok Kumar (IRS), principal secretary, Department

of Education, said that the policy had been framed and notified thereof after careful and deep analysis. “It was imperative to first identify and fix the problems, lacunae and deficiencies in the education system. It took us time to holistically review the functioning of the department. Remedies are suggested after diagnosis. We fixed the problem first and then framed a comprehensive transfer policy,” said he. However, he added, that the transfer policy was purely an arrangement for efficient functioning of the education department. He said that it was a departmental exercise and should be implemented in

letter and spirit. “It is not an order which, in any manner, violates the fundamental rights. It is only about duties and responsibilities, about improving the work culture in schools and inculcating the culture of accountability among employees,” pointed Kumar, adding that the primary objective was to provide quality education to children.

This correspondent also spoke to Director, School Education, Kashmir, Dr Tasaduq Hussain Mir, KAS. Mir gave a detailed presentation on the transfer policy. He said that the government had created zones within districts, on the basis of which, transfers would be effected. He said: “We have created five zones in all, taking into account the geographical and topographical conditions and physical distances in each district. He said: “In the frontier districts of Kupwara, Bandipora and Baramulla, we have created five zones each. Zone 1 covers the educational institutions within the municipal limit of the district headquarter. Zone 2 falls outside the municipal limit up to 20 kms from the district headquarter; Zone 3 is beyond 20 to 40 kms from the district headquarter; Zone 4 is created beyond 40 kms and above from the district headquarter where change of residence is required. Those schools where there is no motorable road and the walking distance from the motorable road is 7 kms or more, one way. Zone 5 covers the inaccessible areas in the UT of J&K. Karna sector, Keran, Machil and



Dr. Tasaduq Hussain Mir KAS, DSEK

Trehgham in Kupwara district fall under Zone 5. Gurez in Bandipora district falls under Zone 5; likewise Aishmuquam and Uri fall under Zone 5 in district Anantnag and Baramulla respectively. The Education Director said that a complete e-database on transfer/postings of employees for effective implementation of transfer policy has to be maintained. He said that the transfer policy had made it mandatory that all transfers be made through online mode via online transfer portal for which the department shall issue notification every year at the end of the academic session and such process shall be completed before the commencement of a new academic session. However, on administrative exigencies, offline transfers could also be effected with the approval of the competent authority. Giving further details in regard to the policy, Tasaduq said that;

- I Zones I, II and III shall ordinarily be three (03) years, at a particular school.
- II Zones IV and V shall ordinarily be two (02) years and one (01) year respectively, at a particular school.

However, the mentioned tenure shall not be applicable to an employee who is willing to serve/continue in Zones III, IV and V.

Tasaduq said that the objective was to streamline the functioning of the education department, have a uniform



Managing Editor Kashmir Central Bisma Nazir with DSEK

teacher-pupil ratio in the schools across Jammu and Kashmir, improve the learning process, impart quality education to the students and last but not the least, eradicate nepotism, favoritism and corruption.

He said that the policy would be implemented in letter and spirit, leaving no scope for corrupt practices. Answering a question, Tasaduq said there were special provisions for special considerations for effecting transfers under extraordinary situations; such as both husband and wife are in government service, they may be /posted conveniently as far as practicable, the employees attaining the age of superannuation, employees in the age group of 58 years and above, single parents, divorcees,

widows and employees having specially-abled children, physically challenged employees.

Tasaduq said that for every single transfer, the candidate has to give online representation. Employees seeking transfer on medical grounds, marriage grounds, security grounds - all should apply online along with documentary proof as prescribed in transfer policy. He said that eligible employees not applying for transfer despite having mature stay shall be transferred by the department anywhere as per the requirement of the department.

READY TO BE SILVER- SCREENED!

by Mareaya Fayaz

**After 30 years of lying low,
the Valley is yet again ready to
revive its romance with cinema!**





THE stunning scenery of Jammu and Kashmir - dotted with meadows, valleys, high altitude passes, dense forests of pine and conifer, lakes, apple orchards, and snow-capped peaks of the Pir Panjal Ranges - makes it the ideal location for filming. It is, therefore, no surprise that it is in such high demand.

Film tourism in Jammu and Kashmir continues to be quite popular. Several films have been filmed in this beautiful Valley.

Not only does cinema stand to benefit from the locales in Kashmir; filming here also

increases the awareness about the Valley among tourists and travellers.

J&K always did and continues to draw filmmakers from all over India and the world.

ALWAYS A CINEMATIC DELIGHT

Filmmakers, producers, directors and actors have always been attracted to Kashmir. Broadly speaking, Bollywood's obsession with Kashmir began with Raj Kapoor's 1949 film 'Barsaat' which presented the Valley's beauty to a wide audience.

Thereafter, the Valley became the favoured spot for Bollywood producers.

In the 1960s, Jammu and Kashmir was the setting for a number of hit films including 'Himalaya Ki God Mein', 'Jab Jab Phool Khile', 'Kashmiri Ki Kali' and 'Jaanwar'. The pristine alpine setting not only significantly aided in these films' accomplishment, but also raised Kashmir's standing as a filming site.

Later, in the 1980s, came the film 'Betaab' where a brawny Sunny Deol courted Amrita Singh, the hapless heroine across the Valley. The spot where it was shot - once known as Hagan Valley - was renamed

Betaab Valley as a result of the success of the film and the setting.

Similarly, a hut was nicknamed 'Bobby Hut' after several moments from the 1973 film 'Bobby' - another well-known film - were filmed here.

The cinema of the 1970s and 1980s celebrated Jammu & Kashmir and also drew interest from both foreign filmmakers. The Kashmir Valley served as the backdrop for two worldwide films - The Razor's Edge (1983) and The Climb (1986).

Folklore claims that up until the 1980s, Kashmir was a popular location for filming, but there was a void after the insurgency began.

BOOM AFTER THE BREAK

With peace returning to the Valley in the recent months, hundreds of requests from producers to shoot their films here have returned. This kind of interest has come after a 30-year break with just a few exceptions. By making Jammu and Kashmir the most sought-after location for the entertainment industry and recovering the region's former glory as a cinematographer's paradise, the present film policy seeks to maximise the potential of talented locals and offer employment possibilities for people.

Bollywood began to actively return to Kashmir in 2022. For

his film 'Ground Zero', Emraan Hashmi shot at Humhama BSF camp, Pantha Chowk, and Laripora village in Pahalgam, south Kashmir. Last year, the Sam Bahadur star Vicky Kaushal shot in Kashmir.

And now, after receiving permission from the UT administration, the 'Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani' crew, led by director Karan Johar, has arrived at a renowned ski resort of Gulmarg to begin filming one of the movie's songs.

The return of megastar

Shah Rukh Khan and his crew to Kashmir to film Rajkumar Hirani's 'Dunki' has once again shown Kashmir's normalcy.

Fans and the local tourism business are excited. It's encouraging to see this again. The Valley has always been a paradise, and with the reopening of cinematic tourism, the future seems bright. Let us hope that this positive momentum continues and Kashmir becomes a beacon of hope and prosperity for its people.



G-20 AND TOURISM

▼
In Srinagar, the G-20 summit is hugely centred around tourism. This event will exhibit Jammu and Kashmir as a global tourism destination. Tourism is to be projected to help regional economic growth during the G-20 event. It may also boost investment in the area.

Amir Manzoor, a tourist agent says: “The G-20 summit and the advent of the film industry will benefit us in a

number of ways. Kashmir will see a new surge in tourists as Bollywood will obviously portray a bright image of the Valley. The economy of all the stakeholders associated with the industry will grow. And then, a tarnished image of Kashmir can be erased which will make our region a global hub for tourism in the coming years. Our hospitality is famous all over and we should take advantage of that to embrace the new boom in Bollywood tourism in Kashmir”.

Dr. Rafi, a research scholar studying tourism and travel management, says “Bollywood tourism was long overdue since the footfall in Kashmir was not up to the mark in the past years. Recent visits by top notch superstars and directors will open the floodgates of domestic tourism. It’s heartening to see Kashmir return to the Bollywood scape after a vicious three decade period of dullness and dread”.



DRUGGED INTO INDIFFERENCE?

16

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Terrorism might have begun to dwindle on our streets, but there is a writing on the wall we cannot turn our heads away from. It's called drug abuse and it's serious and rapidly eating into our youth, putting our society and security in peril. We, the society, need to sit up, shake off our indifference and do something.

by **Mian Tufail**



EVEN as terrorism has begun to vanish from the streets of Jammu and Kashmir, it's yet not time for any relaxation for the security forces.

Narcotic terrorism, if we may use the term, has thrown a new challenge for the security forces here. The youth of Kashmir are increasingly getting swept into the folds of drug addiction, thus posing a huge security threat. One of the biggest effects of drugs is visible in the horrendous and shameful incidents of killings by male members of families. The problem is

so intense that the Jammu and Kashmir police have declared war on drugs, in line with the war on terror to eradicate drug menace from the society.

RAMPANT INCIDENTS

In the holy month of Ramzan, an incident in the Bab Demb area of Srinagar sent shock waves throughout the Valley. While the Muslim majority state was observing the Ramzan fast, a youth in his 20s, was lying on the roadside at Bab Demb, Srinagar, adjacent to Khanyar. It was found that the young boy was under a heavy influence of drugs and was lying unconscious. This unfolded the reality of how the menace of drugs has penetrated deep into our society.

Jammu and Kashmir has a permeable border with neighbouring countries which makes the Union Territory prone to illicit drug trade. The growing instances of drug trafficking in India were highlighted in the 2018 annual report by the United Nations-backed International Narcotics Control Board (INCB). According to the report, India is one of the major hubs for illicit drug trade. India's strategic location places it amid two largest sources of illicit drugs in South Asia - Golden Crescent (Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iran) on the north-west and the infamous Golden Triangle (Myanmar, Thailand, and Laos) on the north-east.



Jammu and Kashmir is a vital point of Golden Crescent. Instability in Pakistan and Afghanistan region, from where drugs travel to the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, is a huge challenge to contain. The illicit drug trade helps terrorists to keep their operations intact and make the vulnerable section even more vulnerable to subversive activities.

SCARY NUMBERS

Pertinently, the Kashmir Valley topped the list of drug consumption in North India. A survey carried out by the National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre of AIIMS on the magnitude of substance use in India, placed J&K on the fifth spot and claimed that over six lakh people in the UT were affected by drug abuse in the year 2022.

During the winter session of the Parliament this year, Ministry of Home Affairs informed the Parliament that more than nine lakh people

in Jammu and Kashmir were addicted to drugs, showing a huge spike in the number of cases.

SOCIETY REMAINS MUTE

Last year, a college student, Waseem Ahmad of Sopore, died in the apple orchards. Doctors declared that the deceased had died due to a heavy load of heroin. At the funeral, his wailing mother, addressed the gathering of mourners thus: "Today it was my child and tomorrow it can be your near and dear one. The police is doing its job along with other duties, but drug menace can be eradicated only if the heads and younger generation of the society take a pledge to contain it in their respective areas; else it shall consume us all, irrespective of age and gender".

Clearly, the onus is indeed on the civil society, intellectuals and NGOs who can stop a further penetration of narcotics in the Valley. But sadly, despite



the large scale of substance abuse in the Valley, its people remain unmoved and aren't ready to cooperate with the security forces on a larger scale. Although, there are some NGOs working in this field but they depend on the government for funding. Meanwhile, the drug de-addiction centres have kept themselves confined to the yearly awareness functions only. Also, the curriculum in our educational institutions is low on drug abuse awareness and misses a chance at making students aware at an earlier stage of their lives.

TRIGGERING A CRIMINAL MIND



Another aspect of drug addiction is that abusers turn to theft and steal household items day in and day out. Reports suggest that there is a rampant spike of theft and burglary cases

in the Valley. To maintain the cash flow needed to buy drugs, these abusers rob their families and friends and this has reached unprecedented frequency of late. One such incident occurred in Anantnag district this winter when a young man - Aqib Ahmad Khan - attacked his mother Razia, and crushed her head after scuffle between them. The mother accused the son of stealing her money and gold with the help of his friends and all this was to buy drugs.

While speaking to KC, Dr Arif Magrabi Khan, who works for drug abuse awareness, has raised a number of alarming points: "The younger generation is deeply trapped in drug abuse since drugs are cheaply available in J&K due to huge trafficking from the India-Pakistan border. That's the reason that one gram of heroin is available for Rs 1200 - Rs 1500 in Kupwara, while in Srinagar, the peddlers charge Rs 2500 - Rs 3000 for the same".

"Many well-off families with a huge social status, are struggling because their children are trapped in this menace. Drug abuse has affected every household today and if it is not contained scientifically and soon, the day isn't far when Kashmir will be seen as its epicentre," he adds.

Need of the hour: It's crucial to ensure effective policing to arrest narcotic smuggling. Also, having drug de-addiction centres in every district to confront the emerging challenge of substance abuse, is a must. Awareness at school and college level matched by well-defined parenting to raise awareness, will subjugate the spike.

Yes, a number of challenges stand looking into the UT administration's face, but narcotic smuggling is a crucial problem, crying for attention and uprooting. It needs to be heeded to, lest it should destroy our present and future.

CHOOSE LIFE, NOT EXIT

The alarming rise in suicide cases in the Valley is something we need to be mindful of and need to deal with, collectively.

by **Mir Tanveer**

▼ **S**UICIDE can be a painful phenomenon to witness or even known about. Unfortunately in the Valley of Kashmir, the incidence of this horrible phenomenon seems to be rising.

Suicides were once unheard of in the Valley. It is deeply saddening that now they seem to be occurring with regular frequency. Scores of suicide cases have pained the Valley in recent times. Let it be reiterated, that besides being a spiritual sin, the act of suicide rattles a victim's family, his neighbourhood, his community and the fellow members of the society.

Without getting too much into the painful side effects of witnessing suicides, let us dive



Mr. Waseem Kakroo
Clinical psychologist

into understanding as to what could be driving individuals to taking such an extreme step here in the Valley.

As said earlier, years ago, the frequency of suicides in the Kashmir Valley was low as compared to the scenario now. Especially, the bridges and the areas around the Jehlum bund are turning out to be a major spot for such incidents. Recently, in multiple incidents, timely rescue operations have saved lives of quite a few persons attempting suicide. But our concern and focus should be on what is making our fellow Kashmiris so helpless and hopeless that they choose to end their lives?

Why choose the end?

In Kashmir, multiple factors could be responsible for such incidents - ranging from years of conflict and disturbance, a range of socio-economical factors, failure in romantic relationships - especially among the teenagers, or those with depressive and mental health conditions. As per a recent report released by Crime Gazette for 2021, Kashmir recorded 586 suicide cases in 2021 and 472 in 2020.



Dr. Arif Magribi
Mental health expert

The numbers say it all. As per the statistics of the National Crime Records Bureau, the suicide rate in Jammu and Kashmir has steadily increased over the past few years. In 2019, the state reported a suicide rate of 10.3 percent per 100,000 people which is higher than the national average of 10.2 percent.

In all these static reports, the suicides are on the rise in the Kashmir Valley and this attributes to multiple factors.

In a recently released report regarding unemployment in India, the Kashmir Valley is among the leading regions having thousands of unemployed youth struggling for secure jobs. In a report released by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, the unemployment rate in UT stood at 12 percent higher than the national average of 6.1 percent. In all conditions, the non-availability of job opportunities and placement is adding to the stress among the educated youth of the Valley, thus pushing them towards the menace of suicide. Besides these, a deep-rooted drug-addiction problem and depression are also responsible for rising suicidal incidents in the Kashmir Valley.

Expert-speak

During an interaction, a leading expert of mental health issues in the Kashmir Valley Dr Arif Mahribi said that effective suicide prevention is based on sound research. Programmes that work, take into account, the risk factors in a particular region and encourage interventions that are specific. In Kashmir,



depression, drug-addiction, failure in exams and domestic violence top the causes in suicide. All government or non-government organisations need to make intervention-based programmes to reduce suicide. Psychotherapy can effectively reduce risks. One of these is known as cognitive behavioural therapy. It can help people learn new ways of dealing with stressful experiences by training them to alternative action when thoughts of suicide arise. Another research from Media Studies says that newspapers or electronic media platforms should never prominently report suicides committed; but



thanks to their obsession with TRPs, they present all this unnecessary data and news. The result is that depressed minds open up to the idea of suicide.

Another leading clinical mental health expert and counsellor from the Valley Waseem Kakroo Sahib, says: “It is essential to understand that suicide is a complex phenomenon with multiple causes including biological, psychological and social factors. Individuals who experience trauma, stress and a sense of hopelessness and helplessness may be at a high risk of suicide. Additionally, the stigmatisation of mental illness and lack of mental health services may further enhance the problem in the Valley. In all these conditions, the need of the hour is to raise awareness of mental health issues in our society, and have multiple stakeholders in this collaboration.

A senior citizen points that the trend of Kashmiri youth getting inclined towards suicide, is a matter of grave concern. “Materialistic competition and stressful life experiences have made them vulnerable to psychiatric problems which ultimately prepare them for the extreme step,” he explains.

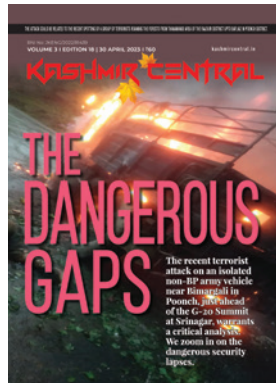
In all these conditions, timely counselling, support of the family and the society, will help bring the incidence down. This is a menace that is shaking up our very existence and we need to unite to fight this out.



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