

Rise of Insurgency in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir State: A Historical Appraisal

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Abstract

The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir State has acquired an important geo-strategic location in the Indian sub-continent. Just after partition in 1947, Pakistan's forceful occupation of 'Northern Areas' of Jammu and Kashmir state provided its tremendous strategic advantages in South Asia. Moreover, its territory is also locked between triangular nuclear weapons state of India, Pakistan and China. As a result, geo-political and strategic importance of Jammu and Kashmir has put India and Pakistan on formidable wars, hostility as well as low intensity conflicts.

Introduction

The state of Jammu and Kashmir has acquired a unique geo-strategic status in the Indian sub-continent. Its frontiers border with post-Soviet Central Asian states, Afghanistan, Pakistan and China. After partition in 1947, Pakistan's forceful occupation of 'Northern Areas' of Jammu and Kashmir state gave it tremendous strategic advantages in South Asia.¹ Moreover, its territory is also wedged between three triangular nuclear weapons state of India, Pakistan and China. As a result, geo-political and strategic importance of Jammu and Kashmir has put India and Pakistan on formidable wars, hostility as well as low intensity conflicts.

Maharaja Hari Singh, the ruler of princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, initially signed a Standstill Agreement with both India and Pakistan after the partition of the Indian sub-continent in August 1947. He delayed his final decision to join either of the two dominions, in accordance with the Partition Plan, which was the result of the Two Nation Theory propounded by Mohammad Ali Jinnah. It is note worthy that Hari Singh was the ruler of the state having Muslim majority. According to the population figures of the census of 1941, the state had an absolute Muslim majority and even in the province of Jammu, the Muslims out numbered the Hindus. The total population of the state was 40,21,616 and the community with population breakup of the state was : Muslims 77.11% , the Hindus 20.12% , the Sikhs 1.64% , the Buddhists 1.01% and others 1.2%.²

¹ . Pakistan's occupation of 'Northern Areas' of Jammu and Kashmir state in 1947 gave it tremendous strategic advantages in South Asia, as the region shares common boundaries with Xinjiang, Afghanistan and Central Asian states.

² . Census Report of 1941, Jammu and Kashmir State Repository and Archives, Jammu.

However, the attack of tribal raiders, who indeed belonged to the Pakistan army,³ compelled the ruler to ask for Indian military assistance. India could have sent its forces to counter the Pakistani aggression only in case of the jurisdiction over the state; therefore, the ruler signed the Instrument of Accession in favour of India on 26 October, 1947.⁴ The provisions of the Indian Independence Act of 1947 which laid down, “an Indian State shall be deemed to have acceded to the Dominion if the Governor General (then Lord Mountbatten) has signified the acceptance of an instrument of accession executed by the Ruler thereof.”⁵

The accession was legally and constitutionally valid and it provided that the state would be retaining all other powers except for three subjects--foreign affairs, communication and defence.⁶ The decision of the Maharaja over the most crucial issue of state's accession was even endorsed by the unquestioned and most popular leader of National Conference the largest political party in the state, Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, who said, “we could think of only way of saving the state from total annihilations; asking for help from a friendly neighbor ... the accession of the state was the desire of the people”.⁷

It would be interesting to note here that Indian Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru in a letter to the British Prime Minister Clement Atlee written on 25 October 1947, a day earlier to the signing of Instrument of Accession, had penned down :

Kashmir's northern boundary is in common with those of three countries-Afghanistan, the U.S.S.R. and China. Security of Kashmir is vital to the security of India, especially since part of the southern boundary of Kashmir and India is common. Helping Kashmir therefore, is an obligation of national interest to India.⁸

Consequently, the Indian forces landed in Kashmir on 27 October to get the valley rid of the raiders. On January 1, 1948 under Article 35 of the UN Charter, India took the Kashmir issue before the Security Council. The UN

³ . Owen Bennet Jones, *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm* (Yale University Press, 2002), p. 64.

⁴ . Mohd. Monir Alam, “Pakistan's Policy Towards 'AZAD' Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan” *ACROSS LOC*, Vol. 4, No. 4, October-December, 2010, p.1.

⁵ . Cited in D.D. Sakiani, *Kashmir Saga: A Bundle of Blunders* (New Delhi: Lancer Publishers, 1990), p. 46.

⁶ . Amitabh Mattoo, “The Quest for Self Governance”, in Shekhar Basu Roy (ed.), *New Approach Kashmir : Violence in Paradise* (Calcutta: Deep Prakashan, 1999), p.64.

⁷ . D.D. Sakiani, *Kashmir Saga: A Bundle of Blunders*, p.46.

⁸ . Ved Marwah, *Pathology of Terrorism in India* (New Delhi: Harper Collins Publishers, 1996), p. 78.

Security Council passed resolutions on 21 April 1948 and 13 August 1948 respectively stipulating three prong actions to resolve the Kashmir problem. These were: a cease-fire between India and Pakistan (which came into force on 1 January, 1949), Pakistan to vacate occupied territory and the future of the state to be decided after ascertaining the will of the people.⁹

The Proxy war

After just three months of partition in 1947, Pakistan supported a tribal invasion of Kashmir and then directly participated in the consequent war with India which lasted till December 1948. This military confrontation was the first example of Pakistan's willingness to go for the war to achieve its objectives in Kashmir. However, Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan insisted that formally Pakistan should not appear to have invaded Kashmir. He "thereby formulated a policy that has continued for fifty years: that Pakistan fights for Kashmir by proxy".¹⁰

During the course of time, Pakistan's options in Kashmir were running out. Diplomatic negotiations at the United Nations as well as at the bilateral level had withered away. Moreover, even after the UN resolutions on plebiscite, Kashmir was being steadily integrated into India. With all these developments, Pakistan was not reconciled. In the aftermath of the 1962 border war China, India had launched a long term strategic planning of reequipping and expanding its armed forces. This programme threatened to reduce the military advantages that Pakistan had gained through massive military aid and technologically superior weaponry provided by the United States since 1954. The option of seizing Kashmir militarily in the future seemed to become dim, and "a 'now or never' mentality gripped the decision makers in Rawalpindi", guided by the old strategy of resorting to unconventional warfare backed by Pakistan's conventional military might.¹¹

To achieve its goal, the Pakistan army developed a plan, code-named '**Operation Gibraltar**', to foment a rebellion in the Kashmir Valley. The initial phase involved infiltrating about 5,000 armed men into the area to capitalize on the disturbed conditions in the state and start a mass uprising against the Indian rule. In fact, Pakistan's objective was, first, to sabotage military targets and disrupt communications and, second, to distribute arms to the people of the Indian part of Kashmir, especially in the Valley, in a series of quick, decisive thrusts.

⁹. For a detailed analysis see Surendra Chopra, *UN Mediation in Kashmir: A Study in Power Politics* (Kurukshehra: Vishal, 1971).

¹⁰. Owen Bennet Jones, *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm* (Yale University Press, 2002), p. 64.

¹¹. Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, "Pakistan, India, and Kashmir: A Historical Review", in Raju G. C. Thomas (ed.), *Perspectives on Kashmir: The Roots of Conflict in South Asia*, p. 104. Also see, Navnita Chadha Behera, *Demystifying Kashmir* (New Delhi: Pearson Longman, 2007), p. 77.

These measures, it was hoped, would finally settle the Kashmir dispute on terms favorable to Pakistan. But all these assumptions resulted as a misleading force.

According to Pakistan's former UN ambassador, Iqbal Akhund, the 1965 war was:

Planned in confusions of aims... rooted in the belief that Kashmir, lost on the battlefield in 1948 could be won back by diplomatic means... The venture therefore fell between the two tools of Pakistan's Kashmir policy, the first being to mobilize diplomatic pressures for imposing the settlement laid down in UN resolutions; and the second, to seize important Indian territory and then exchange it for Kashmir.¹²

However, this assumption was totally flawed on the part of Pakistani government. Moreover, instead of revolting against India, Kashmiris turned in Pakistani infiltrators and developed considerable animosity against them. General Mohammad Musa Khan grudgingly admitted that "the Muslim population [in the valley], although by and large willing to help, were unable to cooperate fully".¹³

Later on, in the absence of a critical review, the mistakes of the war were repeated on an even bigger scale in 1971, when Yahya Khan got Pakistan into an 'un-winnable' war. Following Pakistan's defeat in the 1971 war and the Shimla Accord, which ruled out the use of force by either side to unilaterally alter the Line of Control, the Kashmir issue remained on the backburner until 1989, when Kashmiris rebelled against the Indian government. At that time, Islamabad was once again got ready to take advantage of the situation to fulfill its long-standing ambitions in Kashmir. To strengthen its incentives and strategy, Pakistan leadership, full of confidence and backed by the United States, got overwhelmed with a feeling that it had won a war in Afghanistan against the superpower, the Soviet Union.

With the "Afghan model" in mind, the Pakistani army launched a field military exercise called *Zarb-e-Momin*, in 1989 to test its new strategy of offensive - defensive. In fact, over the decades new weapon system and military

¹². Iqbal Akhund, *Memoirs of a Bystander: A Life in Diplomacy* (Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 104.

¹³. A Pakistani account given by Mohammad Musa Khan states that his objections against the infiltration strategy were overruled by Foreign Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, Defence Secretary Aziz Ahmad, and ultimately by President Ayub Khan. Musa Khan disclosed that the objectives of Operation Gibraltar included sabotage of military targets, disruptions of communications, and distributions of arms to the Kashmiris and initiations of a guerrilla movement to eventually start an uprising in the Valley. Mohammad Musa Khan, *My Version: India-Pakistan War 1965* (Lahore: Wajidalis, 1983), pp. 35-37.

hardware, including helicopter gunships, heavy artillery, heavy machine guns and other high technology items, many of them indigenously produced and sophisticated systems had been inducted into Pakistani defence system because of revolution in military affairs. Hence, the Pakistan Army decided to field-test them in manoeuvres named *Zarb-e-Momin*, involving almost three corps, two armoured brigades, two artillery divisions, one air defence division and the Pakistan Air Force. This was the largest field exercise ever carried out by Pakistan Army and the Pakistani Air Force. In fact, under this military exercise, fourteen new concepts and strategies of offensive-defensive were tested by Pakistan.

Moreover, the idea of this new strategy was to capitalize on India's political vulnerability in Punjab in the hope that Sikhs would join Pakistan in fighting the Indian army. Subsequently, with the marked escalation in militant violence in the Valley in 1989, Kashmir attracted for this strategy. The evolution of new mantra of Pakistan's national security was that India could only be contained through an offensive strategy that kept the Indian army embroiled within, notably in Jammu and Kashmir.¹⁴ For some Pakistani leaders, although, unconventional conflict could still be a viable strategy, but only after Pakistan acquired nuclear capability.

The specifics of the Kashmir strategy in this larger plan were not yet clear. The Kashmiri militants who had crossed the Line of Control for arms training during 1988 to 1990 were told that once the "uprising" began, Pakistan would attack to liberate Kashmir. This was the old formula: initiate a war with unconventional means backed by the army's conventional military might. But it was also the formula that had failed twice. Both campaigns in 1947 and 1965 had begun as guerrilla wars that grew into conventional wars in which India's superiority in numbers and armaments brought the conflict to a stalemate.¹⁵

After defeating Red Army in Afghanistan without resorting to conventional forces, the Pakistani establishment appeared to have decided in favour of "a purely guerrilla war strategy" and subsequently backed the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), which was at the forefront of the secessionist movement, had advocated *azadi* (independence) and merger of the two divided parts of Kashmir. Subsequently, insurgency became part of Pakistani proxy war against Indian control of Kashmir.¹⁶

As a result, JKLF leaders started seeking Pakistan's help in sustaining their activities in the Kashmir valley. Finally, Pakistan's Field Intelligence Units (FIU) and Inter- Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI) began to provide the JKLF

¹⁴. Ajay Darshan Behera, "On the Edge of Metamorphosis," in *Pakistan in a Changing Strategic Context*, edited by Ajay Darshan Behera and Mathew Joseph C. (New Delhi: Knowledge World, 2004), p. 7.

¹⁵. For details see Navnita Chadha Behera, *Demystifying Kashmir*, p.81.

¹⁶. V. G. Patankar "Insurgency, Proxy War, Terrorism in Kashmir" in Sumit Ganguly and David P. Fidler (ed.), *India and Counter Insurgency : Lessons Learned* (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 65-66.

with military and imparting training to the Kashmiri youth. Furthermore, it was also decided that the Pakistan army should take over the control of the private camps that had sprung up.

The JKLF's primary objective in launching insurgency and terrorism in Kashmir was to achieve independence for Kashmir, including the parts of Kashmir controlled and occupied by Pakistan. However, Pakistan desired to occupy Indian-controlled Kashmir along with the parts of Kashmir it controlled. Kashmiri independence was not a Pakistani strategic objective. With the passage of time, when Pakistan realized that JKLF only committed to pursue Kashmiri independence, Pakistan changed its strategies, and started strengthening its ties with other Kashmiri terrorist groups, particularly the *Hizb-ul-Mujahideen*, and pitted such groups against the JKLF in order to destroy it. Formed in 1989, *Hizb-ul-Mujahideen* sought through armed struggle to secure the secession of Kashmir from India and its merger with Pakistan. This objective of *Hizb-ul-Mujahideen* was very similar to Pakistan's strategic objectives vis-à-vis Kashmir policy. As a result, Pakistan became *Hizb-ul-Mujahideen*'s major sponsor.¹⁷

As already discussed, after partition Islamabad continuously aided and abetted the secessionist forces in Kashmir. Having failed to seize Kashmir from its direct confrontation with India in 1965 and 1971 wars, Pakistan came up with the policy to 'Slow Bleed' India and to turn the tables in its favour by launching operation "TOPAC" in 1988.

The Operation was approved in April 1988 during a top level conference of President Zia's Corps Commanders. It envisaged three overlapping phases being conducted under the umbrella of a well thought out psychological warfare. First, raising the level of anti-India feelings amongst Kashmiris. Second, creating militancy and projecting it as a home-grown Islamic uprising. Third, bringing about a state of collapse in urban as well as rural areas with Srinagar as the centre of gravity for political and religious mobilization. Srinagar is to be India's Saigon, India's Kabul. The breakdown is to be brought about by the strategy of "death by a thousand cuts" and keeping the "pot boiling". Such a low-cost, low-risk proxy war would bleed the Indian security forces, bleed the Indian economy to sustain Kashmir, and bleed the political and popular will of the country to hold on to the Valley. So that the Indians are not provoked into conventionalising the Kashmir conflict (as the scenario where India would benefit from its sheer size and quality of military power), the proxy war must not overboil under any circumstances, and the threshold level must therefore be maintained at all cost to prevent a conventional showdown.¹⁸ Having got defeated three times, Pakistan did not want to risk another war. So, it opted for a low cost proxy war against India, by

¹⁷. For details see Parveen Swami, *India, Pakistan and the Secret Jihad: The Covert War in Kashmir, 1947-2004* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 72-75.

¹⁸. Arjun Ray, *Kashmir Diary: Psychology of Militancy*, (New Delhi: Manas Publications, 1997), p.47.

sponsoring terrorism in Kashmir. This was also the period when the Afghan war had come to an end. The war in Afghanistan saw the US pumping in money and armaments into Pakistan and Afghanistan, and training the Afghan fighters against the Soviet Union. When the Afghan war ended, the money, weapons and masses of Islamic fighters from Pakistan resorted to what is commonly known as shadow or proxy war vis-à-vis India. The extent of Pakistani involvement is documented by the Task Force on Terrorism and Unconventional warfare of the House of Republican Research Committee, of the US House of Representatives. In its report, on 1 February, 1993, it states :

Sponsoring international terrorism and separatist subversion is not new to Pakistan. Since the 1970's, Islamabad has been training...Indian Separatist Movements as part of (Former Prime Minister) Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's strategy of "forward strategic depth" ..."having witnessed the initial impact of the Islamist message in Indian Kashmir, Islamabad began to broaden its horizons and set its sights on bigger goals. Thus, in 1986, with growing experience with training, organizing and running the Afghan Mujahideen and with military supplies available (through US, Saudi and other foreign assistance), Pakistan began expanding its operation to sponsor and promote separatism and terrorism primarily in Kashmir, as a strategic long term programme.¹⁹

Pakistan's Anti-India Propaganda

The propaganda and disinformation campaign of Pakistan against India was at various levels and through many different channels. *Sada-i-Hurriyat*, a clandestine radio, was set up by Pakistan in 1991 to telecast a doctored version of events in the valley. Pakistan also broadcast the distorted version of history of Pakistan. Some of the most frequently telecast programmes that continue till date as a weapon of Pakistan's media propaganda against India are as follows :

1. Vasal (A Devout Muslim)
2. Jal Raha Hai Kashmir (Kashmir is burning)
3. Kashmir Dastan (Story of Kashmir)
4. The killing fields of Kashmir (T.V. version based on juxtaposition of Indian footage)
5. Muquadama-e-Kashmir.²⁰

Friday congregations at various mosques were controlled by the militants who used this pious platform to seek support for their so - called *Jihad* against India.²¹ The militant organizations like *Dukhrane-Millat* distributed leaflets and

¹⁹. Cited in C.B. Muthamma, "Tackling the Terrorists", *Mainstream*, September 29, 2001, p.10.

²⁰. Arjun Ray, *Kashmir Diary: Psychology of Militancy*, pp. 70-71.

²¹. D.D. Sakiani, *Kashmir Saga: A Bundle of Blunders*, p. 100.

pasted posters at every nook and corner of Srinagar asking people to observe Islamic code of conduct in their day to day lives, including observing of *Purdah* by the women. The government banned eight organizations on April 16,1990 including Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) and Hizbul Muzahideen, declaring their activities as unlawful. Another important source of anti-India indoctrination among the people of the Valley, especially the youth, was the *Jamat-i-Islami* run schools and *madrasas*. A major agency called the *Falah-I-Aam* Trust, which runs around 157 schools in the Valley was also later banned by the government for anti India activities.²² Most of these school and *madrasas* are located in remote rural areas and often the children from poor families become victims of their indoctrination.

Failures of the Central and State Governments

The myopic policies of government of India towards Kashmir, especially the almost farcical way in which it maneuvered changes in the top leadership of the state, coupled with its failure to conduct a free and fair election in the Valley. The large scale rigging in the 1987 Assembly elections had created an atmosphere of mistrust and alienation among the Kashmiris. The democratic process in the valley which was aimed to empower the common man to be a part of the representative set up of governance, could never enjoy people's faith and confidence. These elections in the people's opinion were merely an eye wash with no credibility attached to them. One such reported casualty of the unfairness in the Indian electoral process was Mohammed Yosuf Shah who contested the 1987 election as a Muslim United Front candidate from Amirakadal constituency against GM Shah who was Cabinet Minister in the National Conference government. Having lost the election which was reportedly rigged, Yusuf Shah later crossed over to Pakistan and became the Supreme Commander of the pro-Pakistan terrorist group *Hizbul Mujahideen* and came to be commonly known by his alias Salauddin.²³

Corruption had become way of life and the money earmarked by the Centre and the successive state governments for the upliftment and infrastructural development of the state found its way to a few influential families.²⁴ Unemployment was high and with no alternatives of private sector, the unemployed youth were seen as soft recruits by Pakistan's Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) which was playing a pivotal role in the proxy war.

The youth in thousands crossed over to Pakistan to get military training in the camps set up by Pakistan across the line of control. The porous nature of the India-Pakistan border and the line of control acted as a facilitator in this cross process. After being militarily trained by the ISI masters in these camps, the

²². Jag Mohan Malhotra, *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir* (New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1991), p. 525.

²³. Salman Khurshid, *Beyond Terrorism* (New Delhi: UBS Publishers, 1994), p. 100.

²⁴. D.D. Sakiani, *Kashmir Saga: A Bundle of Blunders*, p. 87.

young men returned to the Valley to add fuel to the already volatile situation in Kashmir.²⁵ By the beginning of 1990's whole young generation of valley was affected by Pakistan sponsored proxy war turning many homes into silent structures when their loved one's didn't return. Scores of these indoctrinated Kashmiri youths were either killed in the battles with the security forces or were captured and imprisoned and many passed into oblivion. A much publicised incident of that period was the kidnapping of Rubia Sayeed, daughter of Mufti Mohd. Sayeed, the then Home Minister of India by the JKLF, on 8 December 1990. Rubia was later released on 13 December 1990 in exchange for five Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front militants.²⁶ This incident was taken as a big victory for the militants where as it completely demoralized the security forces.

The miseries of the Kashmiri people had increased many-fold, specially in a scenario of fear ushered in by the day to day encounters, which many times resulted in the death of innocent people who were trapped in the gun battle between the security forces and the militants. The frequent crack down search operations by the security forces, the identification parades in mohallas and colonies and the heavy presence of gun-totting security personnel at every nook and corner of the valley along with frequent defences had stirred the imagination of the people. The human rights of innocent people were often being violated by the militants as well as security forces. The democratically elected government of Farooq Abdullah was dismissed on 19 January 1990 due to its incapability to handle the menace of terrorism and the assembly was dissolved. The then Jammu and Kashmir Governor Jagmohan went even a step further and called the dismissed Farooq Abdullah Government as a "Catalogue of maladministration".²⁷ Noted constitution expert Durga Dass Basu observes in this regard:

Governor's rule is provided by the Jammu and Kashmir State Constitution. In exercise of the power the Governor has the power, with the concurrence of the President to assume to himself all of the functions of the government of the state, except those of the high court.²⁸

The representative set up of the state polity was in shambles and the people had a very few doors to knock. The government under the Governor's rule which was imposed in the State under the provision of Section 92 of the Jammu

²⁵. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

²⁶. Jag Mohan Malhotra, *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir*, p. 531.

²⁷. *Ibid.*, pp. 416-417.

²⁸. D.D. Basu, *Introduction to the Constitution of India* (New Delhi: Wadhawa Publisher), p.6.

and Kashmir constitution was being run by the Governor and his advisors.²⁹ Most of these advisors were non Kashmiri having little knowledge of the social and economic life and cultural ethos of Kashmiris and their day to day problems especially after the onslaught of terrorism.

Inter-Service Intelligence's (ISI) Game Plan

Former Pakistan Army Chief Mirza Aslam Beig confessed, in November 1991, to well known US Journalist and Carnegie scholar Selig Harison, that right from 1986 onwards thousands of ISI trained Kashmiris were being sent to Afghanistan for battle inoculation and subsequent return to fight in the valley.³⁰ 1988-89 was also a period of political instability in Pakistan. General Zia-ul-Haq, the architect of 'Operation TOPAC' died in an air crash on 17 August 1988. The successive political leadership in Pakistan found in Kashmir a magnet which diverted the attention of the people of Pakistan from its internal problems.

Pakistan has been aiding and abetting cross-border terrorism in Kashmir through a well planned strategy. It has managed to strike not only at defenders of the law of the land i.e. security forces but has also tried to create a socio-political imbalance in the region by touching upon the very pulse of Kashmir or what is popularly known as the Sufi culture of Kashmir. The first blow in this direction came with the large-scale exodus of the Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley.³¹ The Kashmiri Pandits had been the backbone of the Kashmiri administrative set up and intellectual circle since centuries and were an apparent example of Kashmiri secularism and brotherhood.

Pakistan was able to maneuver this unprecedented migration after militants in Kashmir aided by the Inter-Services Intelligence started gunning down the Pandit community and burning their houses and property in the midst of a total collapse in the administrative and police set up of the valley.³² To the Kashmiri Pandits, this migration meant not only possible loss of their homeland but a threat to their Kashmiri identity. Between December 1989 and May 1990, 134 innocent people were killed by the terrorists which included 71 Hindus. In 1989 alone, there were 1600 incidents of violence including 341 bomb blasts that had instilled a feeling of fear and insecurity in the common masses.³³

²⁹. *Ibid.*, p.11.

³⁰. Cited in Salman Khurshid, *Beyond Terrorism*, pp. 68-69.

³¹. C.E. Tandale Biscae, *Kashmir and its Inhabitants* (New Delhi: Shubhi Publishers, 1998), p.72.

³². Walter Laquer, *The New Terrorism* (London: Oxford Publishers, 1999), pp. 151-152.

³³. Jag Mohan Malhotra, *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir*, p. 342.

In a well thought out strategy, Inter-Services Intelligence backed by the militant organizations tried to cleanse Kashmir of all the symbols that integrated Kashmir with India. There were attacks on the Doordarshan and Radio Kashmir offices (both controlled by the Central Government and symbols of national integrity and sovereignty). The offices of Income Tax, Passport, located in the tourism reception centre were also targeted. The sole large-scale factory of Hindustan Machine Tools was forced to close after its Executive Director H.L. Khera was shot dead on 6 April 1989.³⁴ Similarly, the Regional Manager of Indian Oil Corporation, Dooraiswamy was kidnapped and released after long struggle.³⁵ It was local knowledge in Kashmir that vehicles of army and central police forces were much more vulnerable to militant attacks and ambushes in comparison to the local police. The period also saw the tragic elimination of many Kashmiri leaders and social figure who were looked upon by the terrorist as a hurdle in their objectives. Prominent among them being Mirwiaz Maulvi Farooq, a medical practitioner, Dr. A. A. Gur, Prof. Abdul Ahad and former session Judge Neel Kanth Ganjoo (who had sentenced JKLF founder Maqbool Bhat to death).

Though militancy in Kashmir was launched initially by Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) ostensibly to achieve *Azadi* (independence), however, within a few months a number of militant groups emerged advocating *Nizam-e-Mustafa* as the objective of their struggle. Now the term *Azadi* gave way to the concept of *Jihad*.³⁶ Religious slogans were being used to justify militancy. Various militant organizations like *Jamiat-I-Islami*, *Hizbul Mujaahideen*, *Dukhtaran-I-Millat* (a women wing) Alhah-Tigers, Al Badr, Zia Tiger, Al-Farhan etc. termed their struggle as *Jihad* against the Indian government who as per their propaganda had been oppressing their Muslim brethren in Kashmir and committing atrocities upon them.

The writ of these militant organizations had become so effective in the valley that a large section of people openly refused to support the Indian administration set up as it was being called during that period. Even the senior bureaucrats were frightened to take on these writs issued by the militant organizations or else they would end up being kidnapped or assassinated. Even Peer Gulam Hassan Shah, former Director General of Police refused to accept the coveted rank of Advisor to Governor with status of a Cabinet Minister, fearing his

³⁴ . *Ibid.*, p. 376.

³⁵ . *Ibid.*, p. 613.

³⁶ . K. Warikoo, "Religious Terrorism & Extremism in Kashmir", Paper Presented at International Seminar on, "International Terrorism and Religious Extremism: Challenges to Central and South Asia" New Delhi, 2002.(Unpublished).

life and that of his loved ones.³⁷ This was followed by the steep decline in the tourist traffic to the valley in the midst of fundamentalists putting a ban on modern symbols like cinema, foreign media, video centres, etc. *Al Badr* issued a ban on selling of cigarettes. The people League asked Kashmiri girls not to take part in any cultural programme outside the valley. The *Hizbul Mujahideen* imposed a ban on the circulation of national and Jammu based newspaper like the *Daily Excelsior* in the Valley. A militant organization *Wahadat-i-Islami* even banned the entry of Mark Tully, the BBC correspondent into the Valley, asking people to stop listening to BBC. Besides, several media persons connected with the government and information department were killed by the militants. Subhan Vakil, editor of *Al-safa* was gunned down.³⁸ A grenade was thrown at the office of BBC correspondent Jusut Jameel. The *Indian Express* reporter, George Joseph was ordered to leave Kashmir. The PTI correspondent Ali Mohd Sofi was warned to report on Kashmir situation. Unfortunately, two media personalities, the Director of the Kashmir Doordarshan Kendra Lasa Kaul and an innocent Information officer P.N. Handoo were gunned down on 13 February and 1 March 1990 respectively.³⁹

An effort was made to create fear psychosis in the media to prevent the reports on actual situation of killings, looting and arson. The University of Kashmir also became a centre for militant activities. Locating the secessionist groups and militant organizations especially after the killing of Prof. Mushir-ul-Haq, the Vice-Chancellor, in 1990, scores of students who had migrated to the valley from other parts of India and were studying in the professional engineering and medical colleges left the colleges and the University under the threat from various militant organizations. It would be pertinent to mention here that the new Vice-Chancellor Prof. Hamid Kashmiri succumbed under growing militant pressure particularly from *Jamat-i-Islami* and resigned in September 1993, lest he too may meet the same fate as met by his predecessor Prof. Mushir-ul-Haq.⁴⁰

To conclude, it would not be wrong to say that the initial phase of terrorism in Kashmir enjoyed large-scale support of the people. There was institutional breakdown; subversive and anti-national elements had infiltrated the administrative and police set-up. It would be pertinent to mention here that the then Governor Jag Mohan, in accordance with the powers vested in him under article-126 of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir, dismissed 121 public servants and 101 police officers from service who were found guilty of subversion

³⁷. Jag Mohan Malhotra, *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir*, p. 10.

³⁸. Salman Khurshid, *Beyond Terrorism*, pp. 68-69.

³⁹. Balraj Puri, *Kashmir Towards Insurgency : Tracts for the Times, Vol. 4* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1995), p.80.

⁴⁰. *The Tribune*, September 18, 1993.

and insubordination.⁴¹ The Valley was subsequently brought under the purview of **the Armed Forces Special Powers Act** in October 1990 and Kashmir (barring Ladakh) was declared as a disturbed area. Anti-India propaganda machinery of Pakistan was working overtime. The government's control over Kashmir was at its lowest ebb. The situation was quite unprecedented and threw up a great challenge to the policy makers in the state as well as the centre. It was at this stage of violence and terrorism and grim internal security situation that the role of armed forces became relevant to provide assistance to the government in restoring peace and order in the valley.

⁴¹. Jag Mohan Malhotra, *My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir*, p. 526.