



## New Echoes in J&K

26 Aug, 2015 [Brig SK Chatterji](#) [View829](#) [Comments 0](#)

The undercurrents in Kashmir Valley, the covert and overt actions of Pakistan across the International Border and Line of Control (LoC) v be analysed in depth if we are not to be reactive in our strategy to thwart separatist designs and Pak motives. A few new trends in the concern and require addressing before they snowball into another set of challenges. A lot of them are at the strategic level, requiring acti also, Delhi.

To start with, the most conspicuous change in J & K is the emergence of a new political alignment. Two political parties, always viewed t ends of the spectrum, have come together to provide a government. However, beyond the precincts of the legislative assembly and the forming a government, the union of opposites has not triggered a greater cohesion in the Kashmir Valley. In fact, a few trends streng view.

For decades, the percentage of local boys embracing terror as compared to foreign terrorists in J&K, has displayed a pronounced bias in They formed 60 percent of the rank and file with the top leadership of most groups being almost exclusively from across the LoC. Ther shift today. Recruitment has picked up on our side of the LoC. It's 60 percent local optees now. There is a reason to introspect!

The backbone of insurgency has been broken. Their capabilities have withered. But, all too recent, a different story has also been Pakistani terrorist, Mohammed Naved captured alive in Udhampur apparently managed to find hosts for 30 days in the valley. Has the Oxygen for terrorists, diminished or is it a case of the terrorist threat and writ being the law? Two of his companions remain untraceable has put their sketches in the public domain. Is it also a case of a substantial body of sympathisers having found their way into the gov and police forces? When viewed in the context of hard intelligence being crucial for undertaking anti-terror operations, the episode also about our intelligence capabilities in the valley.

While we talk of Pandits returning to valley, let's take a look at the effect of periodic targeting of the Sarpanchs and Panchs. Arou Sarpanchs resigned in Baramulla District after a Deputy Sarpanch was killed, according to a 12 September, 2012 report of Headlines Tc late 2014 may not have been so overwhelming, yet the panic was palpable. While we resonate that the valley is under control, do i adequate faith in the government machinery to protect them? Under the circumstances will the Pandits start the trek back home lured made by the political leadership? Targeted killings impact disproportionately. Statistics proving that numbers killed from the two pre-don in the past few years being almost equal, doesn't help.

Pakistan's dire conditions have negated whatever appeal the merger of the valley may have withheld for a segment of the populace. I done-in its objectives in the Valley. But, the growing appeal of Kashmiriyat seems to be filling up the space. However, does this Kas tolerance and liberalism that has been Kashmir's heritage; is it inclusive and unbiased without differentiating between communities?

For long it has been touted that saturating military deployment and Armed Forces Special Powers Act are the major causes of alienati hardly any campaigning against these issues. The current drift seems to be powered more by non-performing governments that have fail of massive central aid. It's led to aspirations of people especially the young, not being met. The contrarian view is J&K's GDP growth is a states in our country. Aspirations of young Indians are not being met in most parts of the country and isn't limited to J&K alone. There ar percentage of young people from the Kashmir Valley who have moved to the Indian hinterland and found gainful employment and ec Kashmir infact experiences the same brain-drain with its youth moving to the hinterland as India experiences with its educated youth ta West.

Taking stock of the people's attitude towards the current government is also an important imperative. Is Peoples Democratic Party (PDF base in the valley just as much as Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) experiences erosion in the Jammu region? Do locals in both the valley and that the party they brought to power has not delivered in proportion to the mandate they gave them.

There are reasons to take a fresh look at J&K and initiate a discourse to find new pathways. The start point is Kashmir being an ind country. It's the test of our democracy and its secular values. Notwithstanding the Agenda for Alliance that guides the J&K coalition g percentage of Kashmiris residing in and beyond the valley are sceptics today. A Punun Kashmir press brief of 13 March, 2015 takes int leaning towards self-rule and terms the formation of a joint-government as acceptance of soft-separatism. To quote the press releas

which has been unleashed on the nation during the making of the government in Jammu and Kashmir is that for the first time soft secured accorded credibility as a legitimate plank for the government formation in the State.”

As a nation we have made limited attempts to shape the perceptions of disillusioned Kashmiris. While separatist leaders have been given more than democratic nations practice, the *raison-d’être* to remain a part and parcel of the India has not been propagated forcefully by successive governments to the people of J&K. Political expediency has led to state governments not being vocal about Kashmir being integral to India and the populace accrues from it.

To start with there is a need to address the issue of Kashmir Valley and a few more districts being an independent entity. The people do not perceive the implications of such a status. The first and foremost fallout of independence, to whatever extent that be, will be the growth of terrorist camps from POK, headed towards the LoC and beyond. Over a period of time they will find addresses in the valley. The valley is a reflection of what the Swat valley in Pakistan - an unspoiled and idyllic tourist destination someday - a bloody mess where there are neither human dignity, today. Such basic truths have not been propagated by governments that have held the reigns in Kashmir. There is a perception management campaign by the PDP – BJP dispensation.

If there is dissatisfaction in the youth of Kashmir today, it will only be far lesser opportunities tomorrow if the state gets into the grip of terrorism. Kashmiri young people finding employment in the hinterland will also dwindle. They will be viewed with suspicion. The terrorists will do what politics will be unceremoniously buried. Independence, as the people in the valley understand and experience, will not be there. Islamists will enforce their interpretation of Sharia. It’s important to perceive that Kashmiri jihadist groups are no longer trying to liberate Kashmir from international jihad.

To meet the aspirations of the people, a prime requirement is to bring in honesty and accountability in governance. The Agenda for All India functioning of the J&K Government accepts this truth and states that the mission of the coalition government is to be the most ethical and transparent from the present day position of being the most corrupt state. The siphoning off of millions will need to be stopped. Corrupt officials will be removed and a transformation in the government’s image brought about. No amount of economic assistance to the state is of any consequence without bringing in integrity and accountability in governance.

The education system needs to be regulated. We cannot have another generation of Kashmiri youth coming under the influence of radical madrasahs. It’s the products of some madrasahs who are the available recruits for terrorist groups. If UAE and India can agree to oppose radicalism, Prime Minister Modi’s recent visit, surely its practice and enforcement in India is called for in Kashmir, too.

Our intelligence gathering machinery needs to be strengthened. Government servants sympathetic or actively colluding with extremists need to be identified and dealt with under the law. People providing shelter and support to terrorists will also need to be similarly handled. We cannot afford to miss with every element.

As far as the army and other central forces being thinned out and AFSPA is concerned, the process of handing over the valley to J&K is the primary objective. If the valley is rid of terrorists, AFSPA will not be required either. However, recently released figures indicate an approximate 1000 hardcore terrorists, mostly Lashkar – e – Taiba and Hizbul Mujahedeen. If 10 such terrorists were roaming free in London, Beijing or Washington, we would have possibly declared a national emergency.

The best or perhaps worst example of being soft is the raising of Pakistani flags on Independence Day. We let such issues pass. We also let the ISIS flag be raised. As a nation we have to draw a line. If we don’t stop that ISIS flag from being waived in the valley, will we respond if it is raised in Jammu? Or, shall we wait till it’s raised in Delhi. Even in Delhi, will we still remain inert till the venue attempted is our Parliament building, our responses cannot afford to give these radical elements greater conviction that they can do it, progressively.

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