

ROLE OF SECURITY FORCES IN TACKLING INSURGENCY IN KASHMIR VALLEY PRE AND POST 2000

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Abstract

The security forces have been deployed in large numbers to bring peace and development in the Kashmir valley. These security forces, ie Army, Para Military Forces, and Police forces operate amidst the civilian population and cause imbalance and turbulence in the society.

The security forces especially Army, which is deployed in large numbers find it difficult to operate as their basic training is to fight enemy on the border. They need orientation training to adapt and adjust to the new role of maintaining peace in public life and contribute towards development in the region. The security forces are empowered by extra legislations to facilitate operating in a difficult and alien environment.

The operations of security forces evolved and got refined during the tenure of their deployment in the Kashmir valley. The insurgency pre 2000 and post 2000 was different and security forces adapted well to bring changes to fight the insurgency. It led to the improved situation for sustainable peace and development of the region.

Keywords: security forces, insurgency, Kashmir valley.

INTRODUCTION

The most significant incident in the political history of Kashmir is the eruption of armed insurgency in early 1990s. It was due to the political failure of Indian State. The rigging of 1987 election proved the immediate cause. JKLF was the first militant organization to oppose with arms while advocating an independent, secular, democratic Jammu and Kashmir based on pre-1947 geography. However, later the armed movement was hijacked by other militant organizations like Hizbul Mujahudeen (HM), Muslim Janbaz Force (MJF) and Al-Umar (AU) etc. to further the cause of Pakistan by destabilizing Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir. Amid this armed struggle, various socio-political and religious organizations amalgamated under the banner of All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) in

1993 to channelize the armed movement and provide a political platform to it.

The terrorism is sponsored and supported by our adversary in neighbourhood ie. Pakistan. It is aimed at terrorizing and exterminating innocent and moderate Kashmiris to convert Kashmir into a radical Islamist region. This proxy war which employs the technique of terrorism rather than direct military action has completely changed the face of the Kashmir problem. It has converted the territorial dispute into a multifaceted social, economic, political, military and religious problem that must be resolved before Kashmir can ever experience peace and security.

Behind the scenes, the I.S.I. and the Pakistani army are supervising, controlling and supporting these terrorist organizations. The

broad periods of conflict in the Kashmir region can be classified as under:-

- The First Indian-Pakistani War, 1947 to 1949
- The Second Indian-Pakistani War, 1965
- East Pakistan and the Third War between Pakistan and India in 1971
- The 1980s: The Road to Insurgency
- 1990s: India's Counter Insurgency Operations
- 1999: Kargil War
- 2004 onwards : Incidents of violence and Possible Peace Initiatives

Review of literature

As per Telford, (2001) point of views, India has been experiencing a number of separatist movements from different religious minorities which have created serious toil in the country. For example, Sikhs residing in Punjab, Muslims inhabiting Kashmir and different tribal groups living in Assam has faced insurgencies which killed more than 20,000 people in Punjab during the year 1983 and 1993 and a high number of people in Kashmir since 1989.

Insurgency operations Pre 2000

As per Van Wagenen, (2004) point of views, the insurgency is referred to as the condition of war which exists between the groups or countries. In respect to this, the conflict between India and Pakistan over the possession of Jammu and Kashmir has been controversial since the partition that took place in 1948. According to Howenstein, (2008), the insurgency started in Kashmir since 1988 with the introduction of the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) movement in the state. The unit launched campaigns against the functioning of the Indian Government policies and established ties with Islamist groups like Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). Additionally, many other insurgent groups like Jamaat-e-

Islami (JI), Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM), Ahle Hadith Groups, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Deobandi Groups, Harkat-ul-Jihadi-Islami (HuJI), Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM) and other groups emerged in Kashmir to fight against the Indian Government. As per Van Wagenen, (2004) point of views, the terrorist's fighter from the foreign countries started invading the region from countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, and others. As a result, thousands of Hindus' living in Kashmir left the region to save themselves from ethnic violence. The Governing bodies realized that the local terrorism has increased and turned into insurgency which was mostly supported by Pakistani Intelligence Service. It further resulted in the formation of Kashmir Disturbed Act of 1990 which empowered the security forces to act heavily against the insurgents..

According to Van Wagenen, (2004) the counterinsurgency operations conducted in India since 1990 involved 300,000 soldiers who fought against the various insurgency groups in Kashmir valley. The insurgency in the valley destroyed the civil functioning of the entire region which resulted in a loss of control by Indian administrative machinery over many parts of Kashmir. In respect to this, the security forces practiced guerrilla operations since 1990 to reduce the terrorist attacks in the region. However, it resulted in a loss of support from the residents and boycotting of elections since 1996. The people have even started actively and passively supporting the military and political insurgent groups working in the valley. In addition to this, a major conflict took place in the year 1999, when Pakistan attacked the Line of control (LoC) in the Kargil region in India. As per Afsir Karim, (2007) due to failure in removing Indian positions from Saltoro ridge, Pakistan attacked India to disrupt Kargil-Leh highway. The main motive was also to disrupt the supplies that were received by the Indian Army's logistic and encourage other terrorist groups in the region. However, the Pakistan operation failed miserably and resulted in the emergence of many casualties on both sides. It also destroyed the image of Pakistan on the international front, humiliated the Pakistani military forces and isolated the

position of Pakistan in global platforms. As per Nasri (2018) due to the war, 1200 lives were lost on both the sides of the LoC; which hampered the relation and trust between India and Pakistan. According to Vinay Kaura, (2018), the counterinsurgency measures taken by the security forces resulted in the reduction of terrorists and militants, and simplify the complicated conditions prevailing in the valley. As per Radha Kumar & Ansari, (2012) point of views, the insurgency and militancy influences have reduced the effective functioning of the democratic institutions present in Kashmir, disturbed the normal life, degraded the functioning of government systems, adversely affected the supply of essential services and reduced the provisions of beneficiaries provided to the people of the valley. Due to the insurgency condition, the state development process reduced which impacted the quality of lives of people negatively.

Insurgency operations Post 2000

As per Van Wagenen, (2004) point of views, the insurgency initiated in Kashmir since 1989 and is still continuing despite massive Indian security forces. The condition of the valley has been the same since years and no significant improvements have been observed by the Kashmiri people. In respect to this, the Indian Federal Government has launched a counterinsurgency campaign by security forces so that the control over the local affairs in Kashmir will be established. However, due to continuous infiltration of Pakistan militants, provision of moral and material support terrorism still sustained. As a result, the Kashmir valley suffered, and the region experienced little or no peace. In spite of all these insurgencies, possible peace and The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SARRC) initiatives took place in the year 2004. It brought significant improvement in the Pakistan and India and consented to draw a map regarding the land portion in Kashmir so that conflict will be solved adequately. However, the peace work has been jeopardized and many more conflicts between India and Pakistan took place which degraded the situation in Kashmir.

As per Jack Guy, Katie Hunt, Nikhil Kumar, and Helen Regan, (2019) point of views, tensions prevailed in the region again with the militant's attack over the remote Indian Army base in India occupied Kashmir. The conflict was initiated by the militants from Pakistan occupied Kashmir and attacked over the Indian base crossing the Line of Control. As a result, 19 Indian soldiers were killed by the attack and the conflict was considered to be the most deadly attack over the Indian forces in the last few years. As per Vinay Kaura, (2018) the onset of terrorism, proxy warfare conditions, insurgency, and other uncivil unrest situations prevailed in the region and made it the most conflicted zone in the world. However, due to the incidence of security forces and Central paramilitary organizations, considerable control has been exercised over the militant activities. Hence, it can be said that the post-2000 phase the militant attacks have impacted the civil lives and security force strength. The attacks in this period were sparse but deadly. The security forces evolved a more humane and considerate approach towards tackling insurgency in the Kashmir valley.

Stone-throwing incidents

As per Malini Parthasarathy, (2010) point of views, stone pelting has become a common feature in Srinagar which is practiced by people to show their aggression or protest against the security forces in the region. The incident started with the killing of three youth in the fake encounter of Machhil. Due to the shelling of teargas, the accidental death of a school going boy happened which created unrest among the masses. As a result, the protesters flooded the streets in Srinagar and pelted stones on the security and armed forces confronting the curfew rules. When the security forces retorted against such stone pelting protestors and forcibly fire against the teenagers killing or hurting them, grief and pain spread in the valley. Furthermore, the separatist protesters termed the deceased as Shaheed or martyrs and forced fresh protest in the valley. As a result, tensions prevailed in Srinagar between the angry crowds consisting of stone pelting teenagers and security forces making the situation out of control. The angry protestors

mostly comprising teenage boys are hurling stones against the police and parliamentary personnel. The administration felt that the cycle of violence needs to be stopped and the law-breakers are to be punished. It will bring much-required peace and harmony in the state enabling the residents and the security forces working together against militants.

Objective

The objective of this paper is to compare the role and action of the security forces in counter insurgency prior and post 2000 for bringing peace and development in the Kashmir valley.

Conduct of Counter Insurgency Operations

Counter militancy operations are conducted in three phases. In the first phase, when secessionists' activities and militants' violence are at their peak ; as was faced in Kashmir Valley in 1990 and the law and order situation does not permit adequate governance, the affected area is declared a 'Disturbed Area' by the State and the Centre. This legality paves the way for security forces to conduct effective anti-militancy operations. In the second phase, military pressure on the violence perpetrators enables return of administration and resumption of constitutional processes. The third phase sees full-fledged functioning of governance and civil administration and return of the Army to the barracks.

. There are no clearly defined dividing lines in these phases due to frequent setbacks in counter militancy operations and the law and order situation. These phases, therefore, tend to merge into each other and require informed and perceptive decision making at strategic and operational levels. During transition, particularly between the second and third phases, it is not uncommon to see a hot politico-military debate on the employment of the security forces. During the insurgency phase, pressure is exerted on the populace by the insurgents to project the security forces in a bad light by highlighting fabricated allegations. Absence of effective governance and weak institutions do not allow the insurgent activities to be investigated. As the insurgency declines, the tendency of highlighting the perceived

excesses by security forces resurfaces among politicians, opinion makers and civil authorities to reclaim political space. The number of allegations and decibel levels increase exponentially with improvement of the situation without any reference to fact, to score points and exploit emotions. Whenever law and order situation improves in a 'disturbed area' and we have elected representatives governing the state, they find it difficult to justify the presence of security forces to the masses. However, the aim is to establish the civil and administrative machinery at the earliest so that security forces cease to operate..

Peace initiatives and Welfare Measures by Security forces

Keeping in view the alleged incidents of human rights (HR) violations by security forces, over the years, several preventive measures have been initiated by the security forces.. These include setting up of human rights cells to monitor, seek factual details and take follow up action on all HR related cases (received from any source) and to maintain records. These Cells, after investigations, prepare a 'Detailed Investigation Reports' (investigation is conducted jointly with civil authorities sometimes) for submission to higher headquarters and preparation of affidavits to the National Human Rights Commission.

There has also been a strong drive on continuous training and briefing of security forces employed in such operations to respect human rights and to avoid collateral damage. A 'Code of Conduct' (appreciated by the Supreme Court) is issued to every individual. The 'Rules of Engagement' have been modified. Wherever possible, operations are conducted jointly with the civil police and made accessible to the media. In the last few years, beside preventing infiltration and conducting only intelligence based joint operations, the Army in Kashmir Valley, has taken some extraordinary people-friendly initiatives. These include reducing visibility of personnel and convoys on roads during the day, 'Jee Janab' (cultural sensitivity) and 'Awam aur Jawan, Aman Hai Mukam' (the soldiers and populace want peace as their objective) and

the Kashmir Premier League matches to engage the youth. These initiatives have made substantial contribution in improving civil military relations and ensuring peace. It is believed that Pakistan Army has not given up its efforts to support militancy and terrorism in the State. The current run of peace is, at best, fragile. The secessionist elements in the State have not been adequately neutralised. They continue to provide logistics.

Operation Sadbhavana in Jammu and Kashmir is an Indian Army initiative which involves welfare measures such as infrastructure development, medical care, women and youth empowerment, educational tours and sports tournaments among other initiatives.

Welfare measures for locals in the form of Sadbhavana earned hearts and minds of locals. The government's 'healing touch' policy between 2002 and 2005 included freeing jailed militants, reducing operations by the security forces, increasing free movement of people by reducing police checks, all part of initiatives aimed at pushing forward a more "humane approach" by the administration, especially the security forces. The authorities tried to revive the "healing touch" policy during the period 2016–2018, with initiatives such as the withdrawal of FIRs against over 9,700 youth and cash compensations for pellet victims. The cases withdrawn were related to people involved in stone-pelting incidents in the region between 2008 and 2017.

Research Methodology

The study entailed data collection with the help of survey conducted on population residing in Kashmir valley. Data was collected by personally contacting the respondents and explaining in detail about the survey. There are around 70,00,000 people living in the Kashmir region. The study has been conducted on districts having more than 10% of state's total untowards incidents and more than 10% of state's death. The districts which fit in this criterion were Baramulla, Kupwara, Pulwama, Srinagar. stratified random sampling was performed making strata based on the district,

taking equal samples in all four districts. The study is based on primary data collection with a sample size of 289 respondents.

The questionnaire used for the sample survey was a structured and non-disguised. A five point Likert scale was used to capture the responses ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The different statements regarding opinion of were generated based on literature review as well as expert opinion in an iterative manner. It could be therefore said that the itemized scale in this case actually asks the respondents to respond to their opinions in a decreasing order of importance.

The descriptive profile of respondents is given in table below

Descriptive Profile of Respondents (n=289)

<u>. Age</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>of</u>
<u>respondents</u>		
40-45	47	
45-50	84	
50-55	93	
55-60	37	
>60		28

=Gender- Male -245 Female -44

Data analysis is done using techniques of research methodology. The statistical analysis methods employed were Factor Analysis and Percentages. Also, One sample wilcoxon signed rank test and one sample chi square test were performed to arrive at results. The brief findings and analysis of the study are enumerated below :-

Findings

The findings of the study based on the survey carried out reveals the following results:-

- Indian security forces have contributed immensely peace building in Kashmir valley.
- Performance of army and perception of people towards security forces is better in post 2000 era as compared to pre 2000 era.
- The security forces have carried out meaningful and effective Sadbhava projects

which need to be carried forward by civil administration.

- Reducing the visibility of army can bring positive changes in the perception of Kashmiris towards Indian administration.

Analysis and Recommendations

The analysis of the study reveals the following aspects:-

- Security forces have to continuously evolve their strategy to fight insurgency.
- The security forces must have an internal check and laid down drills and practices to control human rights violations.
- Security forces need to address the insurgency with a humane touch and win the “Hearts and Minds” of the masses.
- Security forces must be used sparingly and to good effect.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the political and civil machinery must be active and must exploit the gains and foothold given by the security forces. The youth need to participate in the democratic institutions. There need to be adequate efforts to build infrastructure and generate employment opportunities for the long term solution to the problem of insurgency.

Conclusion

The situation in Kashmir valley continues to cause alarm and concern. The insurgency transforms itself in new ways and its proponents come up with new sinister ideas and design. The security forces are faced with new challenges and adapt new philosophy and techniques to counter the insurgents. The patient and sincere efforts of all be it Politicians, Business houses, Village heads, and elders in society will ultimately bring peace and development in the region. The security forces in the post 2000 era have employed a humane, just and soft approach in tackling insurgency. Government and other

functionaries of administration must step up efforts to generate employment for the people in the region. Infrastructure improvement will ultimately bring sustainable peace and development in Kashmir valley.

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