

Militancy in Jammu and Kashmir

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The problem of militancy which has afflicted Jammu and Kashmir since the middle of 1988 has already taken a toll of over 40,000 lives. This is a huge loss by any standard and India is rightly perceived being engaged in a proxy war unleashed by Pakistan. In fact the roots of the present problem can be traced to the Pakistani misadventure of trying to take over the State by force in 1947-48. The situation that we face in J and K today is a continuum of the events that unfolded almost sixty years ago. Partition of India was an extension of the "Great Game" orchestrated by Great Britain since the later half of the 19th Century. Two recently published books, both by former foreign service officers, give graphic details of behind the scene activities and manipulations that led to the division of this country. First book was published in 2002 by C Dasgupta titled *The War and Diplomacy in Kashmir 1947-48*. The second account has been authored by Narendra Singh Sarila under the caption, "The Shadow of the Great Game-The Untold Story of India's Partition", in 2005. Both these well researched publications are based on declassified documents in UK and the USA, and unfold the roles played by Lord Mountbatten and the British service chiefs in India and Pakistan during the 1947-48 war.

The concept of Pakistan, a separate Muslim country in the north-west of India, was envisioned by the British imperial strategists as a friendly ally and a client state serving its strategic interests. In the scheme of things so planned the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir was to become part of Pakistan, of course to be managed with India's consent as rest of the partition was secured. However, a chain of events set in motion by Pakistan between August and October 1947 resulted in the state's accession with India leading to war with Pakistan during the next fourteen months. During this period the British top brass in the sub-continent worked in unison to ensure that the Indian Army did not cross the line Uri-Poonch-Naushera in the west, a position determined by the British commander-in-chief of Pakistan Army Lieutenant General Douglas Gracey as being vital to the very survival of the new nation.

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When due to unfavourable military situation on the ground and internal difficulties, Pakistan accepted the cease-fire on 01 January 1949, the entire Northern Area and the western slice of Muzafferabad-Kotli-Mirpur-Bhimber remained under its illegal occupation. Even though this position met the threshold of the British geo-strategic interests, the rulers of Pakistan wanted their control over the entire State, particularly the Kashmir Valley. They have continued to harbour those thoughts.

In statistical terms, Pakistan ended up occupying thirty seven per cent of the State's territory of 2,22,236 square kilometres. More importantly India lost possession of the strategically important Northern Areas, including Skardu, Gilgit and beyond. In so far as J and K is concerned, the loss of territory has not been limited to the details mentioned: out of the area under its control Pakistan further ceded 5180 square kilometres to China. In addition, China also illegally occupied seventeen per cent of the State territory measuring 37,555 square kilometres in the Aksaichin part of Ladakh region in the fifties. Thus, the land under effective Indian control is limited to 46 per cent of the geographical area of the State as on 15 August 1947. Also, in addition to getting control of a very large and strategically important landmass, Pakistan learnt some very significant lessons from its first confrontation with India. Some of the important ones are as follows:-

- (a) Belligerence pays.
- (b) A mix of covert and open aggression is cost effective and gainful.
- (c) High pitched propaganda, manipulations of the UN systems and influential friends is a very potent combination.
- (d) India would react to aggressive actions defensively and also localise areas of conflict.

Pakistan has over the last sixty years dealt with India keeping in mind these deductions and our response has been predictable. Right from 1947, through 1965 to Kargil operations in 1999 as also during the militancy of the last 16 years both parties have dealt with each other on the expected lines.

The current militancy in the state, which began in September 1988, was an improved version of the Pakistani attempts in 1947

and 1965, refined with the experience gained and lessons learnt by the ISI from its involvement in Afghanistan and Punjab. Since then militancy has passed through distinct five phases. The first phase covering initial two years can be termed as **Gathering Storm**. The seeds were sown when Rajiv Gandhi and Dr Farooq Abdullah made political alliance in November 1986. This effectively closed the hitherto available space for legitimate political dissent in the Valley. The ensuing Assembly elections in March next year, contested, by Congress and National Conference with electoral understanding came under cloud with allegations and charges of manipulations. This coincided with the growing influence of the Jamaat-E-Islami (JEI) and increased direct involvement of the ISI in the state, leading to unrest and disturbances. The traditional political leadership was unable to channelise the growing discontent, with the National Conference failing to rise to the occasion. A new breed of youth trained in Pakistan and steeped in the teachings of Jamaat-e-Islam (JEI) began to take advantage of the developing situation. Starting with strikes, *bandhs* and stray incidents of triggering explosive devices in the city of Srinagar, violence increased incrementally. The militancy had shown its hideous fangs unmistakably towards the end of 1989. The kidnapping of Rubiya Sayeed, daughter of the then union Home Minister Mufti Mohd Sayeed and her subsequent secured release in exchange of top detained militant leaders further added fuel to the militancy fire, planting it firmly on the soil of the State. It also needs to be mentioned that the initial Indian response to the developing crisis was tentative, hesitant and less than effective.

The next phase was **The Outbreak**, and it lasted almost three years from 1990 to 1992. This was the most trying and difficult period. From the beginning of 1990 the terrorist activities spread beyond Srinagar city in a big way. Amidst administrative collapse and destabilisation of political structure, the Government of India appointed Jagmohan as the new Governor on 18 January 1990. In protest Dr Farooq Abdullah and his cabinet resigned the same day creating a political vacuum. With this the Central Government became directly involved with the rising discontent and terrorism in the Valley. The proxy war unleashed by Pakistan entered its most destructive stage. Large scale targeted kidnappings and killings took place, wanton destruction of government institutions and buildings was resorted to, efforts made

to undermine Indian support structure, especially targeting J and K police and the Intelligence Bureau. All these activities were accompanied by a very effective and high profile media blitz. The ethnic cleansing initiated ruthlessly by the terrorists forced migration of almost entire Kashmiri Pandit community from the Valley. The terrorists further spread arc of their activities south of Pir Panchal Mountains into the districts of Pooch, Rajouri and Doda, including the hilly areas of Udhampur district. Also Governor Jagmohan was replaced by GC Saxena in June 1990 and with the latter resigning in March 1993, General KV Krishnarao (Retd) became the new Governor.

The **containment** phase lasted for the next two years ie 1993-94. During this period successful efforts were made to revive the whole state structure and restore various organisations, control systems and developmental activities. The intelligence setup, particularly of the IB and the state police, was painstakingly brought to an effective functional level and the flow of intelligence became continuous, credible, reliable and actionable. Alongwith, an increasingly effective counter-insurgency (CI) grid, comprising different forces, was placed on ground. In the month of May 1993 the institution of Unified Headquarters (UHQ) was established to more effectively coordinate the efforts of different forces and organisations as also ensure optimum utilisation of the resources available. Although the original intention of forming a Unified Command could not be realised, the creation of the UHQ was in itself a major step forward. On the administrative side, writ of the state administration was re-established and visible impetus given to the developmental activities. The All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC), a loose combine of twenty three separatist outfits, was launched on 3 September 1993. A month later the militants laid a siege on the famous Hazratbal Shrine. The ability of the State Government to get the siege lifted successfully was a major jolt to the terrorist groups, their over ground supporters and mentors across the border.

The next important phase in the militancy was that of **turnaround**, and it also lasted for almost a two-year period of 1995 and 1996. The security forces gained upper hand over the militants by relentlessly pursuing intelligence based targeted operations as also further strengthening the counter insurgency grid. The functioning of the UHQ was optimised by ensuring much

closer interface and more regular interaction between senior commanders as also important civil functionaries. It was during this period that for the first time local people were organised to undertake counter terrorist operations, which proved extremely rewarding. To further enhance people's participation against the militants and to bolster morale of the local population, Village Defence Groups were constituted. A small beginning was made with five hundred such units during July 1995 in Jammu Division. Over the years this number has crossed 4,000 spread all over the State. The revival of the State police, which started in a small measure during 1993 registered a remarkable progress in the next two years. This turn around is a great and lasting credit to the leaders and men of this force. For the first time the State police started taking a leading role in the CI operations, in addition to the normal policing. It was also during this period that the foreign terrorists were inducted from across the border in large numbers. In fact they took over effective control of the terrorist operations from the local cadres.

The fifth, and continuing, phase of militancy is **re-establishment of political process and restoration of normalcy**. Preparations for assembly elections were initiated also during 1995 but the electoral process could only be carried out in 1996. This endeavour began with the conduct of Parliamentary elections, alongwith the rest of the country in May-June, with 49.02 per cent voters turnout, and the Assembly elections during September in which the percentage of votes polled was an impressive figure of 53.92. These elections, particularly the Parliamentary elections, were a remarkable joint effort by the agencies of the central and state governments, as also a massive administrative and logistic exercise involving transportation of over five hundred companies of central para military forces as well as polling personnel from outside the state exceeding ten thousand; arranging their arrival in the state and moving them from one place to another under constant threat of terrorist attacks, without suffering even a single casualty for almost a month of their stay in the state. These elections also firmed up the ground for further consolidation of democratic process. Subsequent elections to the Parliament in 1998, 1999 and in 2004 were held without any serious difficulty. Yet another very credible electoral exercise was conducted in September 2002 during Assembly elections, when people wielded the power of the ballot

with confidence to usher in a change in the state government. The latest event in consolidation of political structure was the Local Bodies elections held in January 2005 after a gap of over 27 years.

The strengthening of political process and restoration of normalcy is a constant endeavour which the state government, with considerable support and understanding from the centre, has embarked upon. There has been appreciable all round improvement in the ground situation over the years and efforts continue to further consolidate the gains made so far.

Statistics

The statistical details regarding different parameters of militancy violence during the period of 1990-2005 is given in the table below. Only broad indicators have been used to provide an overall picture of the havoc that militancy has played with the people of the State.

TERRORISM PROFILE

Year	Incidents	Killings			Infiltration
		Civilians	SF/Police	Terrorists	
1990	4211	1000	155	550	1280
1991	3780	906	173	844	1400
1992	4842	1069	189	819	3045
1993	5273	1057	198	1310	3280
1994	5851	1069	200	1596	2625
1995	5946	1202	237	1332	3200
1996	5023	1424	189	1209	3230
1997	3437	1030	216	1075	3185
1998	2940	967	268	999	3720
1999	3073	937	407	1082	3050
2000	3091	942	482	1520	3455
2001	4536	1098	613	2020	3545
2002	4038	1050	539	1707	1729
2003	3401	836	384	1494	1313
2004	2565	733	330	976	516
2005	1990	556	244	917	231
Total	63997	15876	4824	19460	38804

There are few important aspects that should be kept in mind regarding the figure of casualties. Out of the total lives lost during the sixteen-year period, from a figure of 40,160, the combined sum

of civilians, security forces and terrorists toll, by any conservative estimate, more than 35,000 are the Indian casualties making it very clear as to why this effort is so much cost effective to Pakistan. The casualty figure of 4824 security personnel killed also needs some elaboration. This figure includes 803 lives lost by the rank and file of the J and K Police, making it amply clear that the role played by this magnificent band of troops is worthy of being mentioned as a frontline force. As no official figures have been released by the Ministry of Defence pertaining to the casualties suffered during the 1965 and 1971 Wars with Pakistan, a comparison can only be made with the casualty figures officially released in respect of 1947-48 operations in J and K. In this regular war between the two armies for a period of fourteen months, the casualties of the Indian Army were in the range of 1100 and those of the then J and K State Forces amounted to 1900. If we exclude about five to six hundred State Forces personnel killed by the treachery of their comrades, the casualties of the Indian troops would range somewhere in the vicinity of 2400. Thus, it becomes very clear that the Security Forces casualties during the militancy period has been twice the figure in the regular war fought between the two armies for well over a year in 1947-48.

Important Flag Posts Since 1996

Certain significant events have taken place since the restoration of popular government in 1996 which have a bearing on the course and intensity of militancy. Some of the important flag posts are being briefly mentioned. The first major event was the Lahore Bus Yatra undertaken by the then Prime Minister Vajpayee in the month of February 1999. In spite of pointed absence of the Pakistani Army Chief in the reception line of the Prime Minister, the deliberations and the joint declaration thereafter raised the hopes of improving ties between India and Pakistan. However, that was not to be so and all hopes in this regard were shattered by the Kargil conflict which raged during May to July the same year. At the end of the clash, Indian casualties were reportedly 407 soldiers killed, 584 injured and 6 missing, and in monetary terms an expenditure of over rupees 1100 crores. Pakistani losses were estimated to be 696 killed.¹ Kargil caused India a lot of anguish. It also stirred its soul and could have become a defining moment, a watershed and a turning point. The Kargil conflict gave India an opportunity that it was unprepared to turn to its advantage.

Another significant peace initiative came on 24 July 2000 in the form of ceasefire declaration by Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) initiated by Majeed Dar, its commander in the Valley. However, this was retracted later under intense pressure from Pakistan by the outfit's Muzaffarabad based head Syed Salah-ud-Din. The Prime Minister undertook yet another initiative to defuse the situation by announcing Ramzan ceasefire during November 2000, which continued even after the month of Ramzan was over and was converted into a process of non-initiation of combat operations (NICO), by the Security Forces. This unilateral ceasefire continued for a period of seven months till May 2001. The next event in this chronology was the ill fated Agra Summit in July 2001 with General and President Parvez Musharraf, the total outcome of which was only a public relations exercise, so efficiently managed by the Pakistani visitor.

In the shadow of the cataclysmic events of 11 September terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon in the USA, followed by the unleashing of American fury in Afghanistan; the terrorist attacks on the J and K Legislative Assembly on 01 October 2001 and on the Parliament on 13 December 2001 constituted acts of grave provocation against the Indian State. Particularly, the attack on Parliament pushed the Indian patience to the extreme and India reacted by mobilising and forward deployment of the Army under Op Parakram.

Op Parakram lasted from 18 December 2001 to 16 October, 2002. However, under intense pressure from the USA, the Indian Army was not allowed to take any action beyond mobilization and forward movement. In spite of another very provocative act of a terrorist attack on the Army family quarters at Kalu Chack near Jammu which resulted in the death of 29 men, women and children, not only did India not react aggressively to this dastardly provocation, but for some inexplicable reasons cleared the over flights of India by Pakistan airliners, thus, withdrawing a ban that was enforced in December, 2001. Apart from losing yet another opportunity to make Pakistan pay for its heinous acts, as also somewhat losing face in the international community, the entire exercise cost in the range of Rs 8000 crores in the troop movements and Rs 3000 crores in the form of various compensations.

As Op Parakram was being wound up, another event of immense significance was unfolding in the State in the form of the Assembly Elections, which had become due after the 1996 Assembly completed the mandatory period of six years. This election, widely hailed as the most fair and transparent electoral exercise undertaken in the State, resulted in the National Conference losing power. The new coalition government spearheaded by Congress-Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) combine, with Mufti Mohammad Sayeed as the Chief Minister took over the reins of the State Administration in the month of November 2002.

Prime Minister Vajpayee came to Srinagar on 18 April 2003 and addressed a very impressive public rally where he gave a call for improving relations with Pakistan, initiate a process of establishing peace and extended a hand of friendship to Pakistan. The response to this initiative was not disappointing and a ceasefire was declared along the Line of Control on 26 November 2003. To the credit of both countries and their armed forces, this ceasefire has, by and large, held strong; even though it has had no effect on cross border terrorism. However, the clashes between the two armies and exchange of heavy artillery fire which used to result in considerable loss and damage to army as well as civilian life and property came to a stop. Starting of bus service between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad on 7 April 2005 was another significant step taken by the two countries. However, the terrorists tried to disrupt the inaugural function of this historic event by the Prime Minister at Srinagar by launching a fidayeen operation not far away from the venue of the function.

In a major initiative taken by the central government to restore peace in the troubled State, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh convened a Round Table Conference of all important and major political elements of the State, in New Delhi, on 26 February 2006. As a sequel, the Second Round Table Conference was organised on 24 and 25 May 2006 at Srinagar. After two days deliberations it was decided to constitute five working groups to study and recommend different steps which would facilitate restoration of peace and return of normalcy in the State. The APHC and other overground separatists did not attend these meetings in spite of the invitation: particularly the APHC, whose leadership had indicated willingness to take part in the Second Round Table Conference.

CURRENT SITUATION

Security

The most significant impact on the security situation has been the erection of fence along the Line of Control. This has indeed been a great achievement of the Army, which was able to complete over 750 kms of this major wire obstacle, in an extremely difficult mountainous terrain, in a short period of little over one year, in 2003-04. As a result of fencing coupled with better border management the level of infiltration, as shown in the preceding table, has substantially come down during the last three years. A further analysis of the infiltration, shown in the table indicates that right from 1990 till 2002 the infiltration had been much more than the rate of attrition in the ranks of the militants which ranged between 550 and 2020 in any one year. This trend has been reversed since 2003 so much so that during 2004, 976 militants were killed against which anticipated infiltration was 515. The figures for the year 2005 are 917 and 231 respectively. Continuation of this process is likely to have a positive impact of critical proportions in the next couple of years.

As already indicated, role of the J and K Police has been progressively increasing in terms of involvement and efficacy in the CI Operations. The turnaround in this regard started in 1994 and this very fine force has made impressive progress during the last decade. However, on the flip side there are still some foot-draggers in its ranks that it has to take care of. Also commanders at different levels need to be given free hand in matters relating to operations as well as transfers and postings. Coordination between different agencies undertaking CI Operations is very effective and there is a close liaison between senior officers of different forces as well as important civil functionaries. However, the intelligence sharing and intelligence coordination requires further improvement. This aspect needs focused attention.

Even though the State Government and the law enforcement agencies have maintained certain amount of pressure on the over ground workers (OGWs) and sympathizers of the separatists and the militants, the effectiveness of the steps taken by the State against the OGWs have not seriously denied either the network or the capacity of these elements. This is a major area of State

failure. A well thought out plan and its determined execution is vital for achieving success against the militancy apparatus. Statistically speaking there may be increase in the militancy related activities and casualties thereof, but on the whole the general pattern does not indicate a change over the last two years and the trends noticed during 2004-05 are likely to continue in the current year also. The need is to make further debilitating strikes against militant organisations and ranks by continued intelligence backed operations and to increasingly reduce their number and capacity to foment trouble.

Developmental

In the sphere of developmental activity, the social services sector and infrastructure have been given tremendous boost in the last three-four years. Social service schemes have been revamped and access made easier. Over eight thousand new Anganwadi Centres have been opened in the State. The opening and upgradation of schools and colleges during the last three years exceeds the cumulative figures of the past three decades. On the infrastructural side, mobile phones were allowed to be operated in the State overcoming years of hesitation. Community Informatics Centres have been opened in all 119 Blocks ensuring IT connectivity across the State. Major boost has been given to industries in Jammu division and handicrafts and handlooms in the Valley. The efforts of the State Government to provide services to the people have been supplemented in no small measure by *Sadhbhavna* Projects of the Army, which have also brought the forces closer to the people in the respective localities.

J and K does not have even a single major hydro electric project in the State sector. Currently Baghlihar Hydel Project with an installed capacity of 450 MWs is in the advanced stage of completion. Simultaneously, the arrangements to start work on 600 MWs Sawalakote Hydel Project is almost in the final stages. Once these two projects get completed the power scenario in the State, one of the major causes of State's financial problem as well as disaffection amongst the people, is expected to be effectively taken care of.

Construction work on the Mughal Road connecting Poonch and Shopian districts over the Pir Panchal Range as also four-

laning of National Highway between Pathankote and Srinagar have been taken in hand and both projects are likely to be completed within next three to four years. However, by far the most significant infrastructural project in the State has been the extension of Railway line from Udhampur to Baramulla. Work on this section was started in 2003 and has picked up a very impressive momentum. According to the current level of activity the running of train services between Udhampur and Baramulla during 2010 is very likely. Apart from being a great engineering feat this single project will bring immense benefits to the people of the State, particularly of the Valley, as also pay huge dividends in terms of population satisfaction.

One can easily surmise that at present economic development has become a factor in peoples' perceptions and aspirations.

Political

At the political level, there is a marked absence of any substantive regional or sub-regional unrest. The diffidence and unhappiness of the people of Leh district regarding inadequate delegation of powers to the AHDC (Autonomous Hill Development Council) have been amicably resolved. Similarly, the people of Kargil district, after hesitation of about eight years, elected their own Autonomous Hill Development Council in July 2003 which is functioning effectively. The voices of regional discrimination from Jammu have also reduced considerably in tone and tenor. The State government undertook effective steps to strengthen the Panchayats, even though its efforts to conduct Panchayat elections afresh during 2005 got stalled because of some technical reasons. The Local Bodies elections were successfully conducted after a gap of over 27 years during January 2005, taking the Local Body's administration into the hands of elected representatives.

The coalition government headed by Mufti Sayeed, right from its inception in November 2002 embarked on a policy of healing touch, thus, giving psychological relief and respite to the general public. The government also laid considerable emphasis on the developmental activity and redressing the grievances of the people. In addition, the political parties in power decided to deal politically with the APHC, a stratagem which will pay long term dividends. The State Government has continued to follow this broad policy framework.

The peace process initiated by Prime Minister Vajpayee during April 2003 has been progressing incrementally. In spite of periodic road blocks and the continued transborder terrorist activities sponsored and supported by Pakistan, the progress in this regard has not been derailed. Of particular value is the initiation of people to people contact between two parts of the State as also the two countries. This has been increasing in numbers as well as in content. The future holds promise, at least at this moment.

During the trouble torn period of last 18 years the mainstreaming of the people of the State, particularly of the Valley, has been taking place progressively. For the first time after independence the traders from the Valley moved out to other parts of India and at present there is not a single tourist resort or a big town in the country where Kashmiri traders have not set up business establishments. Similarly, during this period a considerable number of Kashmiri students, both boys and girls, have spread out all over India for acquiring higher and technical education. These two phenomenon have significantly helped in forging improved linkages and bonds between the Valley population and rest of the country.

The Udhampur-Baramulla, 285 kilometres-Rs 8000 crores, railway project is a very important link in the efforts to mainstream people of Jammu and Kashmir. Work on this prestigious scheme was started in 2003 and the progress that has been achieved so far very well indicates that trains on this sector would start running somewhere around 2010. This is indeed a major effort by New Delhi to seriously address the issue of isolation of the people of the Valley which has been a historical fact right from the beginning. The advantages of this project are much more than what can be measured in mere economic terms. The psychological impact on the people to be benefited by getting train connectivity are immense and can easily be termed as a major national effort in mainstreaming the population of the State.

The effort to assimilate people of the State in the national mainstream would further receive a tremendous boost if the employment opportunities are created for the local youth outside the State in the government sector, the PSUs as also in the private enterprises. This may appear to be a difficult prospect on the face of it but is certainly achievable with imagination and creative thinking.

As it is the State's financial position is so weak that every job that is created by the State government is presently being paid for by the grants received from the Centre. Therefore, the suggestion to ensure outside employment opportunities for the youth of the State is not to make a plea for allocation of more resources by the Centre but is only a question of rearranging the priorities and thrust areas.

Thus, over the years, certain factors and developments, some of the important ones mentioned above, have helped in establishing stronger linkages between State and the rest of the country with the end result of increasingly mainstreaming the local population.

Peep into the Future

Taking an overall view of the existing scenario in the State one finds that the ground situation has shown overall improvement in almost all spheres of activity. However, it is almost certain that Pakistan would make all efforts to keep the pot boiling and hamper, frustrate and create road blocks in the State's endeavours to achieve conditions in which people can live, work and prosper peacefully. The violence and conditions of disturbance have all along been calibrated very carefully by Pakistan and the continuance of a broad band of terrorism seems to be preferred aim of the adversary. It has ensured, and would continue to do so, that terrorist activities do not cross the perceived threshold of India's tolerance, as also does not fall below a point from which it could be difficult to revive the militant activities in the State. This is a technique which was perfected by the ISI during the peak of its involvement in Afghanistan. Keeping this consideration in mind in conjunction with the decreased level of infiltration, the likely scenario which emerges is that Pakistan would strive at low scale and high value terrorist strikes. At the same time it is also likely to make strenuous efforts to train local militants in order to bolster decrease in the ranks and to give impression to the outside world that the so called freedom movement is turning home-grown.

As already mentioned, the reverse cycle of ratio between militants killed and infiltrated became significant in the year 2004 and 2005. Some security analysts feel that if the security forces are able to maintain this trend and intensify it for next three to four years, the level of militant activities should come under control. The border fencing is a very important input in this effort. There

are reports that adequate resources are not being allocated for proper upkeep and further strengthening of this important obstacle system. One also finds a disturbing number of inspired reports in the media denigrating the efficacy of the border fencing and giving false impression that the cost and effort expended in erecting the fence has not given the expected dividends. One can only hope that there is no skepticism amongst the higher ranks of the Army in this regard.

As the number of active militants in the State reduces further making it more difficult for Pakistan to keep the pot of militancy, "boiling at the right temperature", it would increasingly depend on the media manipulations. In this sphere Pakistan's media managers have 'a distinct edge over their counterparts. The State and the Central Governments would have to put their act together and jointly arrive at a strategy to effectively counter Pakistani expertise and efforts in this very important sphere.

Logical deductions, based on the current scenario and the likely course of events, leads one to deduce that certain convergence is likely to take place around the year 2010. By this time major infrastructure connectivity projects – train to the Valley, four laning of Jammu Srinagar National Highway and the Mughal Road — are expected to be completed. The 450 MWs Baghlihar Hydel Project would be on stream along with the benefits accrued from the ongoing power reforms. The Rs 1500 crores Asian Development Bank project for infrastrucual development in the State is likely to be completed. As already mentioned, based on the current trends, militancy is also expected to be brought down to manageable level. One can reasonably hope that the peace process, initiated by Shri Vajpayee, which has been progressing at a fairly satisfactory pace, would also be heading towards the point of deliverance. It is, therefore, reasonable to presume that in the next three to four years the State may be finally emerging out of the mist and shadow of despair and destruction.

While India should step up its diplomatic efforts to expose the Pakistani game amongst the international community, particularly keeping in view its abhorrence for terrorism, and try to exert pressure from other countries, the limitations of such outside influence should be clearly realised. The extent of the US pressure and willingness to push Pakistan in the context of American

interests in the region must be carefully studied. In addition to making all possible efforts to improve the existing internal situation, the country needs to take steps to make Pak involvement in India's affairs much more costly. This, of course, is a separate subject in itself. We must also learn from the past mistakes to do well on the negotiating table.

Two things stand out clearly. Mischief from Pakistan continues and is unlikely to abate. Also a broad overview of the situation prevailing in different parts of the country clearly establishes that Pakistan's designs are not limited to J and K only but target entire India. The annual report of the Ministry of Home Affairs for the year 2003-04, inter-alia, mentions at para 1.12 : "Pakistan has consistently used terrorism and covert actions as an instrument of State policy against India. It has recruited, trained, financed, armed and infiltrated terrorists in India and has provided sanctuary to anti-Indian elements. It has also sought to promote disaffection among the Indian people towards the State with a view to destabilise the country". This assessment continues to hold true.

India has had to deal with Pakistan as a difficult neighbour and a source of constant trouble, at times downrightly dangerous. Pak involvement in the affairs of India, particularly in J and K, have serious implications not only to the national security and territorial integrity of this country, it also hits at the very core of Indian nationhood, based on secularism, pluralism and liberal democratic values. The conflict is not just for an area or a section of population, it is much more fundamental; of cherished values and lofty ideals. India must garner all her national resources, much beyond the military prowess, to decisively defeat the Pakistani designs. This effort to turn the corner should begin in J and K, where the Pak mischief originally started way back in 1947.

End Note

1. Swapna Dasgupta in *India Today*, 26 July 1999, p. 32.

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