

## CULTURE OF VIOLENCE AND THE INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT: A STUDY OF KASHMIR CONFLICT

Inamul Haq & Sheeraz Ahmad Sofi  
Central University of Gujarat

Corresponding Email: [mantooainam72@gmail.com](mailto:mantooainam72@gmail.com)

### Abstract

The conflict of Jammu and Kashmir is one of the skirmishes that traces its roots in the British rule. After Partition of the sub-continent in 1947, the Kashmir conflict became visible in the south Asia. In this conflict, state repression, internal displacement, discrimination against minorities, religious and ethnic hatred, demands of freedom, rage of stone pelting have contributed to massive internal displacement of Hindus and Muslims. The Kashmir Valley since the 1990's has experienced militarization, repression, economic deprivation and indiscriminate violence. The valley is in a state of siege, where authority is vested in the military power and suspends fundamental rights for the maintenance of law and order. However, displacement and state repression remain the stark realities of the enduring conflict of Jammu and Kashmir. It is noteworthy that though the displacement is a black spot in the history of Kashmir, the international community is largely unaware about it. Without proper knowledge, a great deal of assumptions and accusations are made revolving Kashmiri Muslims as creating terror, exodus and hating the minorities in the Valley. There were a lot of identifiable group of people, who were forced to leave their native places due to internal or external dimensions of the conflict. The main objective /aim of this paper is to provide an insight on the nature of the Kashmir conflict, its discourse as well as to highlight the role of state towards the people of Kashmir. Additionally, the paper would highlight the reasons of internal displacement in the state of Jammu and Kashmir with reference to the strategies of state government.

**Keywords:** Kashmir Conflict, State Repression, Kashmiri Pundits, Internal Displacement and State of Liminality.

### 1. Historical Background

The state of Jammu and Kashmir lies in the heart of Asia. It is situated between 32.17 and 36.58 degree north latitude and 73.26 and 80.30 degree east longitude. In the west, the state is bounded by Pakistan, in north east by China, by Afghanistan in the North West and in south by India (Tabasum, 2012, p. 5). The area of the state is 85,806 square miles and total population stands for 1.25 crore [1, 2541302] (Census 2011). The conflict of Kashmir is deeply rooted in the colonial history of the sub-continent (Ganguly 1990, p. 57).

The dispute of Kashmir between India and Pakistan is as old as the two countries themselves, dating back to the Partition and independence from Britain in 1947 (Bose 2003). At present, parts of Kashmir, are not only occupied by India and Pakistan, but China also occupies some parts of it. The state of Jammu and Kashmir has a majority of Muslim population and had been ruled by various central and west originating Mughal-Afghan dynasties.

In the nineteenth century, the British took it from the Sikhs and sold it to a Hindu Dogra Maharaja Gulab Singh via the treaty of Amritsar for seventy five lakh rupees (Kaul 2010, p. 43). Thus, the valley of Kashmir witnessed the Dogra rule from 1846 to 1947. The people led a miserable life and were treated as slaves. The imposition of heavy taxes, capital punishment

and the constant terror were created by the Dogra's against Kashmiri Muslims (Ahmad 2010).

The core origin of the Kashmir conflict lies in the Sub-Continent's Partition in 1947 which created the independent states of India and Pakistan. With this hundreds of nominally independent princely states were absorbed into India and Pakistan. The Dogra ruler Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir wants to remain independent and refused to accede to either nation (Human rights watch 1993, p. 20).

In 1947, the Maharaja faced armed revolt by Muslims from Poonch. The revolt then spread to other parts of Jammu and Kashmir. In order to stabilize the situation, the Maharaja signed a still stand agreement with Pakistan. In August/September 1947, the situation deteriorated and Kashmiri Muslims revolted openly. The tribesmen from Pakistan's North West frontier province also joined in the armed insurrection. By the October 1947, the tribesmen captured several towns and massacred a large number of civilians and advanced to capture the capital of the valley (Husain 2009, p. 1008).

To crush the rebels from the state the Maharaja seemed the assistance of the then India's Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, who agreed to send troops only if Kashmir formally acceded to India. On October 27, 1947 the Maharaja agreed to sign the instrument of accession to India on the condition that Kashmir should be permitted to retain its own constitution (Human Rights Watch 1993, p. 20).

In the same year, both India and Pakistan fought their first war on Kashmir dispute and India took the matter before United Nations (UN). With the intervention of UN, a cease-fire agreement was signed on January 1, 1949 (Hussain 2009, p.1008). In 1965, once again both the countries went to war over Kashmir and divided the old line of control (LOC) of Jammu and Kashmir into four political units.

- Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh (Indian occupied Kashmir).
- Azad Kashmir (Pakistan occupied Kashmir).
- The northern area administered by Pakistan.
- Aksai- Chin, controlled by China (Hussain 2009, p. 1009).

In January 1966, Tashkent Agreement was signed between India and Pakistan and both countries decided to solve the Kashmir dispute through peaceful negotiations. In 1972, another agreement was signed after the war and both countries decided to end their conflict and resolved to settle their differences through bilateral negotiations and this agreement came to be known as Shimla Agreement (Singh, 2011, p. 12).

However, it was the 1975 Kashmir Accord, signed by Chief Minister Sheikh Abdullah and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi that reinforced India's control over legislation in Kashmir. In 1977, the State Congress Party drew its support from the Abdullah Government, led to the end of the National Conference-Congress alliance government of the time. In retaliation, two years after signing the Kashmir Accord and thus confirming Kashmir as an integral part of India, Abdullah began speaking about a plebiscite and even independence (Bhakaya and Bhatti, p. 205).

## **2. Insurgency and Aftermath**

By the late 1980s, common frustration between Kashmiri Muslims against some of their own leaders and the strategies tracked by New Delhi erupted into a developed separatist movement.

The rise of separatism in the valley can be endorsed to fundamental demographic, economic and political developments in the state. Due to the change in demography and the feast of modernization and communications over the past several decades, a relatively younger, educated, ambitious, and politically conscious generation had emerged in Kashmir by the 1980s (Ganguly, Rajat, 2001, p. 310).

An insurgency broke out in 1989 in the valley led by the Kashmiri comprising a majority of its educated youths. Armed rebellions came to appear to capture the political imagination of

Kashmiris immediately after the 1987 Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) state elections which people alleged as heavily rigged. The immediate cause of the insurgency was the 1987 state election was contested primarily between National Conference (NC)-Indian National Congress alliance against the Muslim United Front (MUF). The MUF contested the 1987 elections, but failed to win as many seats as it had expected because the elections were rigged by the NC-Congress combine. After the 1987 elections, many of the MUF members formed were totally disappointed with the Indian rigged policy in the election and they formed rebellion groups against the Delhi government as well as of the state administration (Hewitt, 1995).

The active rebellion groups were Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF); Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM) were two indigenous groups of the valley. JKLF was in favour of a separate and independent Kashmir while HM was in favour to merge with Pakistan. However, JKLF declared ceasefire in 1994 and after that it began operating as a political organisation and not a rebellion group (Chowdhary, 2014). There were also three major foreign Jihadi organizations supported by the other side of the border namely Harkat-ul Mujahedeen (HuM), Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM). These organisations were run and directed by the other side of the border. Due to the insurgency in the valley the coalition government of NC and INC formed after 1987 election was broken and the assembly was dissolved which paved way for Governor's rule in the valley. Now the state came under the direct control of the Central government of India.

During the governor's rule in the valley, the press was restricted as the foreign correspondents were not allowed to enter into the valley and the local correspondents were retrained from their mobility due to the imposition of curfews (Puri, 1993).

The Indian administration used the militarized strategy to control the insurgency in the valley. A large number of paramilitary forces were deployed in the valley with extraordinary power to curb the situation. The security forces were given the absolute authority in curbing the insurgency and a number of new laws were extended to the state of Jammu and Kashmir. These laws include Public Safety Act (PSA) 1978, Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) 1990 and Disturbed Area Act (DAA) 1990 were introduced (Chowdhary, 2014). With the military strategy Indian administration was able to control and to curb the insurgency.

### **3. Displacement: An Overview**

The term displacement means the forced movement of people from their environment and it is happening due to the factors of conflict, famine, natural disaster and so on. There are two types of displacement: one is internally displaced persons and the second one is refugees (UNESCO, 2017). According to the United nation's guiding principles on internal displacement "A persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border" (ICRC, 2010).

The Kashmiri Pundits have constituted a visible group of internally displaced persons in the region (Datta, 2016, p. 53). The state of Jammu and Kashmir that turned into armed conflict in the era of 1990's and due to this conflict, a portion of the minority were displaced from their homeland. The people, who are being forced into a conflict region are commonly known as internally displaced persons (IDPs). However, they are officially termed as 'migrants', which is the nomenclature employed by the Government of India and that of Jammu and Kashmir to refer to displaced persons in the state. They are from Brahmin community and historically associated with middle-class in Kashmir (Madan, 2002).

### **4. Displacement of Kashmiri Pundits: Different Narratives**

There are different narratives regarding the displacement of Kashmiri Pundits. According to the majority of the Kashmiri Pundits, the displacement of their community took place due to the atmosphere of fear created by Muslims, who were demanding the right to self-

determination. The slogans like Ae Kafiroom Ae Zalimoo, Kashmir Hamarachhod do (you infidels you tyrants, leave our Kashmir) and Asi Gache Pakistan, Batavrostibatnev san (We want Pakistan, inclusive of Pundit women and exclusive of pundit men) from loudspeakers disturbed us and compelled us to leave the place (Hassan, 2010, p. 06). Besides that, there were also warning of death from the militant outfit, which was carried in the local newspapers like Alsafa and Srinagar times (Akbar, 1991).

The displacement of pundits happened without any communal incident, burning, looting and misbehaviour of women. This was a set back to the harmony that Kashmir proved from ancient times. It was a tragedy for both Muslims as well as Hindus, one who was tagged as migrants and other were considered as terrorists. The exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the valley defamed the whole Muslim community. Manohar Nath Tickoo narrates 'that my Muslim neighbours did not allow me to leave Kashmir, but there was a fear created by unknown elements, which forced us to leave'. The fact is not a single Muslim forced us to leave (Emphasis added) (Quoted in Hassan, 2010, p. 07). It is also a fact that there are Kashmiri Pundit families that did not migrate from the valley. However, their narrative is different from those who are living in Jammu, Delhi and other parts of India. The association of Pundits, who stayed in Kashmir namely Kashmir Pandit Sangarish Samiti (KPSS) narrates that in early 1990's there were threats from the militant organization but a common Kashmiri Muslim was not against us.

The question arises, if Pundits were forced to leave Kashmir, why did some of them choose to stay or return; and who is solely responsible for this predicament, Kashmiri Muslim or state administration. According to Vijay Dhar, the Pakistan factor is the root cause of the exodus, owing to the reason that Pakistan was fully supporting the insurgents in the Valley. In early 1990, the pro-Pakistani organization like Jamaat-i-Islami and pro-Independence organization like Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) considered the Kashmiri Pundits as traitors and agents of India. Their furious speeches, pamphlets had impacted the literary community, who sought to act with violence and chanted the slogan Raliv, ChalivyaGhaliv (Mingle or leave, otherwise face the wrath of death) forced the other communities to leave (Bhat, 2012). B.G. Varghese, states that the displacement Kashmiri pundits was a political turmoil and is apart from religion (1991). The valley remained a ray of hope and there is no single evidence of communal riots.

### **5. State Machinery: A failure**

The rigid elections of 1987 not only prevented the Kashmiri people from electing their representatives through democratic means, but also created the notion of hatredness towards the majority section. The people lost their faith and their grievance was seen through the lens of anti-national. The frustration from decades automatically turned to radicalized political Islam. On the other hand, the Indian administration appointed governor Jagmohan (1984-89 and in 1990), who played an important role in the state (Kaul, 2011). According to Pankaj Mishra, the policies of Jagmohan were pro-Hindu in nature (Mishra, 2000). In other words, it can be said that the Governor of the state revised the 1927 policies of Hari Singh. The elected government was dismissed twice, recruitment of Muslims in the administration went down, and non-Muslims were encouraged. He sought to impose the Hindu-modernity on the state by allowing the use of alcohol but forbidden the slaughter of animals in the state (Kaul, 2011). According to Schofield, there was a wide spread feeling about Jagmohan of being anti-Muslim and played an important role in the migration of the Hindus, in order to crush the pro-Pakistani elements (Schofield, 2010). It is further supported by the argument of Patricia Gossman, who argues that the government of Jagmohan assisted the Pundits in leaving the Kashmir valley for camps in Jammu and New Delhi. However, after one week, the paramilitary troops opened indiscriminate fire on unarmed protestors (Gossman, 2002). The popular perception of displacement of Pundits stands against the state machinery. According to locals, Jagmohan represents the hate figure and was particularly sent to Kashmir to evacuate pundits and suppress the pro-Pakistani people in the Valley (Hassan, 2010, p. 09). After 19<sup>th</sup> January, there starts the bloodbaths of Muslims within no time. Below are details of



the massacres that occurred in the year 1990.

S. No	Date and year	Place	Number of Causalities
01	20 January 1990	GawKadal	53
02	22 January 1990	Alamgiri Bazar	10
03	25 January 1990	Handwara	26
04	01 March 1990	Zakura & Tengpora Bypass	33
05	21 May 1990	Islamia College	60

Source: JKCCS (2012) & Ahmad (2017).

### Conclusion

The entire paper deals with the culture of violence and attempts to elaborate the cycle of violence which framed in the Kashmir valley right from partition. After partition, the people of the valley were promised that whenever they wish, their basic right (right to self-determination) would be given to them. However, with the period of time, the state was dragged into conflict zone and rest of the country started politics on it. It should not be denied that the Kashmir movement was deeply rooted with the notion of Kashmiriyat in which minorities from other religion have supported in one way or the other way. But, after the breakout of insurgency in the valley, the minority section of Pandits (Hindu's) were forced to leave their motherland and forced them to take shelter in Jammu and other parts of the country. While as, their displacement was black dot on the history of Kashmir. Their exodus did not help the Muslims to construct their comfort zone, rather they had to face violations from the forces that India deployed in the Kashmir valley. Thus, the culture of violence increased after 1990's and changed the view point of the people in the rest country.

## References

- i. Akbar, M. J. 1991. *Kashmir: Behind the Vale*. New Delhi: Viking Penguin India.
- ii. Bakaya, P., & Bhatti, S., 2005. Kashmir conflict: A study of what led to the Insurgency in Kashmir valley & proposed future solutions. *Swords and Ploughshares*, vol. 16, pp. 1-4.
- iii. Bhat. G.R. 2012. The exodus of Kashmiri Pandits and its impact (1989-2002). *International Journal of Research in Social Science and Humanities*. Vol. 2, no. II, pp. 103-116.
- iv. Bose, Sumatra. 2003. "Roots of conflict, Path to peace" Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- v. Chowdhary, R., 2014. India's Response to the Kashmir Insurgency: A Holistic Perspective. *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in South Asia*, pp. 45-76.
- vi. Datta. A., 2016. Dealing with dislocation: migration, place and home among displaced Kashmiri Pandits in Jammu and Kashmir. *Indian Sociology*. Vol. 50, 1, pp. 52-79.
- vii. Dhar. V., 1997. *Tropid resolve on Kashmir*. India: The Hindustan Times.
- viii. Ganguly, R., 2001. India, Pakistan and the Kashmir insurgency: causes, dynamics and prospects for resolution, *Asian Studies Review*, vol. 25, no. 3.
- ix. Ganguly S., 1990. "Avoiding war in Kashmir" *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 65, no. 5, pp. 57- 73.
- x. Gonzalez M. B., 2000. Women and ethnic cleansing: a history of Partition in India and Pakistan. *Gender, technology and development*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 101-110.
- xi. Gossman. P., 2002. Kashmir and International Law: how war crimes fuel the conflict. *The Crimes of war Project*.
- xii. Hassan, K. W., 2010. *Migration of Kashmiri Pandits: Kashmiriyat challenged? Working Paper 237*. Bangalore: The Institute for Social and Economic Change.
- xiii. Hewitt, V., 1995. *Reclaiming the Past? The Search for Political and Cultural Unity in Contemporary Jammu and Kashmir*. London: Portland Books.
- xiv. Human Rights Watch, 1993. *The Human Rights Crisis in Kashmir*. Human Rights Watch.
- xv. ICRC, 2010. *Internally Displaced Persons and International Humanitarian Law*. [Online] Available at: <file:///C:/Users/inamul%20haq/Downloads/internally-displaced-persons-icrc-eng.pdf>
- xvi. JKCCS, 2012. *Kashmir Witnessed 30 Massacres*. [Online] Available at: <http://kashmirglobal.com/2012/10/15/kashmir-witnessed-30-massacres-jkccs.html>[Accessed 25 October 2012]
- xvii. Kaul, N., 2010. On loving and losing Kashmir. *India International center Quarterly*, Vol. 37, no. 3/4, pp. 42- 53.
- xviii. Kaul. N. 2011. Kashmir: A place of blood and memory. In Kak. S. ed. *Until my freedom comes the new intifada in Kashmir*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India.
- xix. Madan, T.N., 2002. *Family and kinship: a study of the Pandits of rural Kashmir*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- xx. Mishra. P., 2000. *The birth of a nation*. New York: The New York Review of Books.
- xxi. Puri, B., 1993. *Towards Insurgency*. Delhi: Orient Longman.
- xxii. Schofield, V. 2010., *Kashmir in the Crossfire*. London: IB Tauris Publishers
- xxiii. Tabasum, M.T., 2012. Political situation in Kashmir and role of united nations. *Studies of changing societies: comparative and interdisciplinary focus*, Vol. 1 no. 2, pp. 3- 28.
- xxiv. UNESCO, 2017. *Learning to live together*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/glossary/displaced-person-displacement/>