

ROLE OF MEDIA IN
COUNTER INSURGENCY OPERATIONS
IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

A Dissertation submitted to the Panjab University, Chandigarh in partial
fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Master of Philosophy in
Social Sciences

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CERTIFICATE

I have the pleasure to certify that Brig Praveen Bakshi has pursued his research work and prepared the present dissertation titled “**Role of Media in Counter Insurgency Operations in Jammu and Kashmir**” under my guidance and supervision. The dissertation is the result of his own research and to the best of my knowledge, no part of it has earlier comprised any other monograph, dissertation or book. This is being submitted to the Panjab University, Chandigarh for the degree of **Master of Philosophy in Social Sciences** based on curriculum of **Advance Professional Programme in Public Administration (APPPA)** of **Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA)**, New Delhi.

I recommend that the dissertation of **Brig Praveen Bakshi** is worthy of consideration for the award of **M.Phil degree of Panjab University, Chandigarh.**

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SELF-DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation titled “**Role of Media in Counter Insurgency Operations in Jammu and Kashmir**” for the award of Master of Philosophy Degree in Social Sciences of Panjab University, Chandigarh is original work and that this work or a part of has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma of either this or any other University.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The media's the most powerful entity on earth. They have the power to make the innocent guilty and to make the guilty innocent, and that's power. Because they control the minds of the masses.

-Malcolm X

1.1. Insurgency

Insurgency is a usually violent attempt to take control of a government, a rebellion or an uprising. Terrorism is defined as the use of violent acts to frighten the people in an area as a way of trying to achieve a political goal. It is the systematic use of terror especially as a means of coercion. The insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir is a conflict between various Kashmiri separatists and the Government of India. There are some groups that support the complete independence of Kashmir, while others seek Kashmir's accession to Pakistan. The conflict in Jammu and Kashmir has strong Islamist elements among the insurgents, with many of the "ultras" identifying with Jihadist movements and supported by such.

The roots of the conflict between the Kashmiri insurgents and the Indian government are tied to a dispute over local autonomy. In 1987, a disputed State election created a catalyst for the insurgency when it resulted in some of the state's legislative assembly members forming armed insurgent groups. In July 1988, a series of demonstrations, strikes and attacks on the Indian government began the **Kashmir insurgency**, which during the 1990s escalated into the most important internal security issue in India. Thousands of people have died during fighting between insurgents and the government as well as thousands of civilians who have died as a result of being targeted by the various armed groups. The present situation in Jammu and Kashmir has been **created by active support of Pakistan to terrorism**. This support to cross

border terrorism is not only an attempt to unilaterally alter the status quo on the ground but also strike at the secular fabric of India.

Terrorists' manipulation and exploitation of the media is shown to play a crucial part in their propaganda war. **Terrorists, governments and the media** see the function, roles and responsibilities of the media when covering terrorist events from differing and often competing perspectives. Such perspectives drive behaviour during terrorist incidents--often resulting in both tactical and strategic gains to the terrorist operation and the overall terrorist cause. The challenge to both the governmental and press communities is to understand the dynamics of terrorist enterprise and to develop policy options designed to serve the interests of government, the media, and the society.

1.2. What Terrorists Want from Media

Terrorists need publicity, usually free publicity that a group could normally not afford or buy. Any publicity surrounding a terrorist act alerts the world that a problem exists that cannot be ignored and must be addressed. They seek a **favorable understanding of their cause**, if not their act. Terrorist causes want the press to give **legitimacy** to what is often portrayed as ideological or personality feuds or divisions between armed groups and political wings. They also want the press to notice and give legitimacy to the findings and viewpoints of specially created non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and study centers that may serve as covers for terrorist fund raising, recruitment, and travel by terrorists into the target country.

1.3. What Government Wants from the Media

Governments seek understanding, cooperation, restraint and loyalty from the media in efforts to limit terrorist harm to society and in efforts to punish or apprehend those responsible for terrorist acts. They want coverage **to advance their agenda and not**

that of the terrorist. An important goal is to **separate the terrorist from the media-**to deny the terrorist a platform unless to do so is likely to contribute to his imminent defeat. Another goal is to **have the media present terrorists as criminals** and avoid glamorizing them; to foster the viewpoint that kidnapping a prominent person, blowing up a building, or hijacking an airplane is a criminal act regardless of the terrorists' cause. They seek publicity to help **diffuse the tension of a situation**, not contribute to it. Keeping the public reasonably calm is an important policy objective. They want the media **to be careful about disinformation** from terrorist allies, sympathizers, or others who gain from its broadcast and publication. They want the media **to boost the image of government agencies.**

1.4. What the Media Wants When Covering Terrorist Incidents or Issues

Journalists generally want the freedom to cover an issue without external restraint—whether it comes media owners, advertisers, editors, or from the government. Media want **to be the first with the story.** The scoop is golden, “old news is no news.” Pressure to transmit real time news instantly in today’s competitive hi-tech communication environment is at an all-time high. The media want **to make the story as timely and dramatic as possible.** Most media members want **to be professional and accurate** and not to give credence to disinformation, however newsworthy it may seem. They want **to protect their ability to operate as securely and freely as possible** in the society. They want **to protect society’s right to know**, and construe this liberally to include popular and dramatic coverage. Media members often have no objection **to playing a constructive role in solving specific terrorist situations** if this can be done without excessive cost in terms of story loss or compromise of values.

Since 9/11 much has been said about the role of technologies like the **Internet and global communication networks** in sustaining transnational terrorism, the spread of its ideology, and its recruiting activities. Many claims have also been made about the role of the media, particularly new communication technologies, in fostering the process of radicalization—the embracing of extremist views, which might manifest themselves in the form of terrorist violence. There is a widespread realization that communication is crucial to terrorism, to the point that “strategic communication” has become a buzzword in official circles, think tanks and academia.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

The media represents world that is more real than reality that we can experience. People lose the ability to distinguish between reality and fantasy. They also begin to engage with the fantasy without realizing what it really is. They seek happiness and fulfilment through the simulacra of reality, e.g. media and avoid the contact/interaction with the real world.

Jean Baudrillard

2.1. Statement of the Problem

Terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir has manifested itself for 30 Years and various counter terror measures have not been able to foster peace in the region despite bringing down of violence levels by the security forces from time to time.

Media has played a significant role in terror dynamics in the valley. Insurgency is fueled by misinformation and this has become easy in the present info age dominated by social media. Media is a powerful tool and needs to be exploited in counter insurgency/terrorist operations. Media in all its forms manifests itself to be used by terrorists and government agencies to further their cause.

The capacity for exploitation of media in counter insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir is under researched and poorly understood. This research would endeavor to help cover this gap.

2.2. Research Objectives

Counter insurgency operations are as important in the cognitive domain as they are in physical domain. **Perception management of affected local populace, support cadres, terrorists' mindsets, Pakistan Government and Army as sponsors of terror, own countrymen, as well as international community, is the fundamental**

of any successful counter insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir.

Considering the above, the main objectives of the research are:

- (a) To study the extant and role of media in counter insurgency operations.
- (b) To analyze the role of media in the terror dynamics in Jammu and Kashmir.
- (c) To suggest media exploitation policy for successful counter insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir.

2.3. Research Design

Media in all its forms print, electronic, social media, etc. play an all-important role in an insurgency affected area and is leveraged by all players – terrorists, support cadres, security forces and government. Cohesive and coordinated media campaigns executed with maturity and evolved sensibilities of all players is essential to tackle the complex issue. The study endeavors to provide insight into the level of cooperation and coordination required between the government, security forces, intelligence agencies and media to be effective and efficient in counter terror operations in Jammu and Kashmir. Therefore, in order to find solutions, the research design adopted will be Descriptive.

2.4. Rationale / Justification

War of perception to carry out proxy war in Jammu and Kashmir was reasonably successful to a great extent by Pakistan due to focused and integrated media themes and campaigns executed by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR). There has been a perceptible improvement in coordination between the Indian government agencies and media in the last few years. This was highly visible during the recent positive support India has been able to muster in International platform subsequent to abrogation of Article 370. However, much remains to be done to win hearts and

minds of locals and wean away the youth from radicalization and anti-India sentiment prevalent in the valley. Therein lies the challenge of coordinated, cohesive and dynamic media engagement and exploitation in counter insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir.

2.5. Research Questions

The pertinent research questions that arise are as under: -

- (a) What is the extant and role of media in terror dynamics and counter terror operations in Jammu and Kashmir?
- (b) What gaps exist in focused media efforts to address insurgency in the valley?
- (c) What are the suggested remedial measures / way forward to address a coordinated and synergized media engagement policy for counter insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir?

2.6. Scope / Limitations / Delimitations

Considering the sensitive aspects of dealing with operational issues in addressing counter insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir and the time constraints, the research has the limitation with regards to access to documentation and statistics of the Armed Forces in respect of media and social media campaigns being undertaken.

2.7. Literature Review

Consequently, there is a widespread literature available on this issue. It would be fruitful to acquaint the findings of the existing studies undertaken by researchers to analyze the Role of Media in Counter Insurgency Operations in Jammu and Kashmr.

Shlomo Shpiro (2002) argues that the events of 11 September 2001, and the subsequent 'war on terror', have highlighted the role of the media in both the coverage and conduct of modern conflict. 'Conflict Media Strategies' have been

pursued by belligerents and the development and refinement of such strategies over time, from the Second World War through to the conflict in Afghanistan have been analyzed. Using data from Vietnam, the Falklands, the Gulf, Kosovo and other conflicts, it is concluded that an effective conflict media strategy is an essential tool of warfare that is used by states and terrorist groups alike.

Cristina Archetti (2015) demonstrates that a greater understanding of communication in the 21st century is essential to more effective counterterrorism. In fact, while “strategic communication” and “narratives” are advocated by many analysts as essential weapons in countering extremism, few seem to truly understand the reality of the digital-age information environment where such tools need to be deployed. She outlines some problematic misunderstandings of the contemporary information environment, provides an alternative communication-based framework to explain radicalization, and draws some counterintuitive lessons for tackling terrorism.

Ayjaz Ahmad Wani (2018) examines the Kashmir conflict from the perspective of the young population who have grown up in tumultuous times in the Valley. It builds on findings of field surveys conducted by the author across the Kashmir Valley over the last two years, covering issues that remain unanswered three decades since the start of the insurgency. These topics include Kashmiriyat, the exodus of pandits, governance and administration, the post-2016 unrest and militancy, the role of the media, and Article 370.

Archana Kumari and Mr. Ashish Kohli (2017) explain the story of Kashmir unrest. There are two narratives within the regional media itself: One is from Kashmir and other is from the Jammu. Both the narratives are also the part of conflict within. Both the regions have their own colour and text ideology to report the same incident of the same day and same time to cater their respective audiences. The media narratives for

both the states are different; one to cater the non-Kashmiri audiences and other for the Kashmiri audience only. Since the newspapers are catering to the people of these two regions, so the tone and texture of news is kept according to them. They try to compare the narratives of prominent newspapers of Jammu region and Kashmir region during the Kashmir unrest in July 2016 during Burhan Wani encounter.

Wasim Khalid (2016) carries out first analysis of media coverage of Srinagar's floods, and asks whether the coverage by the New Delhi-based media was mere propaganda for the army, or objective reporting of the disaster. Also, how did reporting of the floods by the New Delhi-based media differ from reporting by international media?

Col AS Chonker and Kanchana Ramanujam (2018) have compiled Seminar Report Mapping of Perceptions in Jammu And Kashmir: The Way Ahead. The objective of the Seminar was to analyse the current situation in J&K by focussing on the varied perceptions, ideas, and thought processes of the people and devise pragmatic strategies for resolution of the conflict

2.8. Methods to be Applied and Data Sources

The Secondary Data available in the open domain will be primarily utilized. Several research papers are available on various facets of media and its dynamics in counter insurgency and counter terror operations as also in various conflict operations.

Existing policy or framework on media engagement in insurgency/terror scenarios in the country in general and Jammu and Kashmir will be critically examined.

CHAPTER 3: GENESIS OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR ISSUE

Kashmir is an integral part of India, and nobody can take it away from us.
Amit Shah

3.1. Introduction

From the post-independence period till this date Kashmir issue remains as an unsolved enigma. “Heaven on earth” that has been bestowed by the magical beauty is not quite the paradise due to years of militancy and disputes over it. Kashmir has a long story of great diversity and complexity of society and politics, beyond mere an interstate territorial dispute. The territory of Jammu and Kashmir is divided into Jammu and Kashmir, comprising the regions of the Kashmir valley, Jammu and Ladakh. During the India-Pakistan wars of the 1965 and 1971 the cease fire line of the 1949 altered into line of control (LOC). In 1999 Pakistan crossed the LOC and occupied India’s strategic areas however an agreement stopped the war after 2 months. In 1990 Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) started fighting to liberate J&K and reunion with Pakistan. Militants were getting support and training from Pakistani military agencies. A new group of militants “Hizbul-Mujahideen” came with the strong support of the Pakistan. This and aftermath incidents added an Islamist flavour into the problem. This made the dispute more complex and multidimensional. Between 40000 and 80000 people died in the various conflicts over it over 3000 were outsiders from Pakistan and Afghanistan.¹

3.2. Land and People

The erstwhile Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir has since 1949 been a divided territory, with India in control of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. The Muzaffarabad

¹Midlaj C.H, Why Jammu And Kashmir Issues:The Genesis of the Problem and Snarls,
<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322364487,Mar> 2017

area (PAK) and the Northern Areas are under de facto Pakistan administration. In addition, China controls the trans-Karakoram Shaksgam Valley and adjacent region, which Pakistan unilaterally ceded to it in 1963 as part of a boundary settlement, and also Aksaichin and a strip of Western Ladakh, into which it intruded and then militarily occupied in 1962.²

Kashmir, as much as Jammu, has been part of India's political and cultural domain and spiritual consciousness for some 3000 or more years going back to the Mahabharata legend. The Ganpatyar and Khir Bhavani Temples in the Valley, the Shankaracharya shrine dominating Srinagar and the giant Buddha statues in Gilgit speak of this connection. The Emperor Asoka brought Buddhism to Kashmir in the 3rd century B.C and it was here that Kanishka held the Third Buddhist Council. Lalitaditya's reign (697-738 A.D) marked a golden age. Islam was adopted by consent in the 14th century giving birth to a vibrant, syncretic sufi-rishi tradition of Kashmiriyat that has been deliberately undermined by today's jihadis.

J&K is a highly plural multi-ethnic and multi-lingual entity. The ethnic stock on the Indian side is principally made up of Dogras, Punjabis, Kashmiris, Gujars and Bakarwals, Ladakhis and Baltis while those living on the other side are of Punjabi, Pathan, Balti, Dardi, Shin, Yashkun, Mongol, Tadjik, Turkic and other Central Asian extraction. The LoC represents a fairly well defined ethno- cultural divide, notwithstanding some Punjabi, Balti and other overlap. No ethnic Kashmiris live in PAK.

3.3. History and Struggle

² B. G. Verghese, A J&K PRIMER From Myth to Reality, India Research Press B-4/22, Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi – 110029, 2007, p.6

While the subcontinent of Indian peninsula won the independence in 1947 Kashmir was one of the 562 princely states of the subcontinent. These self-governed units were under the British rule i.e. British circuitously ruled there. The ruling class of the Jammu and Kashmir were upper caste Hindus of Dogras. Gulab Singh who was the founder of the dynasty contracted a British- Dogra pact in Amritsar by which he got autonomous possession in Kashmir valley and the area of Gilgit to the north. In return Gulab Singh agreed to give military forces or money when needed with yearly presents of Kashmiri shawls and horses.

While the country was independent in 1947 the ruler was Raja Hari Singh, according to British survey of 1941 the subjects were 77 % Muslim, 20% Hindu and 3% others. Muslims were suffering under the poverty and coercion working for the landlords without adequate wage or compensation. Peasants were under enslavement to those landlords. Illiteracy and diseases made their life more challenging. Muslims were not allowed to become officers in Military or other government jobs and not given the basic primary education. Rulers tried to overwhelm the subjects by not permitting a space for public opinion and coming into the mainstream.

3.4. Political Organization

1930 was the starting of the popular politics in Kashmir. Kashmir émigrés of Punjab established All-India Kashmir Muslim Conference, based in Lahore. This new era was under the leadership of Sheikh Abdulla. Other similar group in the name of Young Men's Muslim Association also shaped in Jammu. In July 1931 the attempt to present a list of grievances to the Maharaja ended in a riot and 21 were killed in the firing.

This was the turning point to the political mobilization of the Kashmir. As a result, Maharaja agreed to the creation of a commission headed by B.J Glancy to study the

problems and strategies for reformation. In April 1932 the commission recommended reforms in administrative structure, education system, land tenure and taxation to give Muslim masses more prospect and space. They also proposed nominal freedom of press and public expression.

In October 1932 J&K's first political party All-Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference (MC) was founded. Sheikh Abdullah and Chaudari Ghulam Abbas were the leaders. In 1938 MC published a "National Demand" manifesto to bring an accountable government. Abdullah group decided to redefine its politics by ending the communalist base, including Pandits and Sikhs and other progressive thinkers in the party. Accordingly, in 1938 they renamed the party All-Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (NC). In 1940 Abdullah invited Jawaharlal Nehru and other congress leaders to visit Kashmir. This was the beginning of a strong association between them.

In 1944 Muhammad Ali Jinnah visited Kashmir but he selected to attend MC conference and certified it as the 99 Muslim represent party. This made Abdullah get closer to Congress and he invited Nehru and other leaders like Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Abul Kalam Azad to their conference in 1945. In 1946, NC's campaign against the autocracy repressed several times, Nehru entered Kashmir as solidarity with their protest.

In 1947 two dominions of India and Pakistan were born. The princely states were permitted to join to either dominions or to become independent states. Joining either states was looking into the norms of geographical embeddedness and desires of their population of subjects. In the case of J and K it was tricky because its geographical location is adjoining both. Its contiguity to two Pakistani provinces (western) Punjab

and the NWFP was far more pronounced than its territorial link to Indian eastern Punjab. The 77% of Muslim population also was in favour of Pakistan.

There were two specific points in the case of Kashmir firstly Kashmir was the predominance of NC in Kashmir valley and Kashmiri speaking Muslims in Jammu region. The 23% of non-Muslims were in favour of India. Muslim Conference was with Pakistan. NC's mass was indeterminate, but its leaders' philosophical kinships and personal relationships were to India. Secondly the ruler was Hindu who has the legal authority to decide the issue of accession.

The revolt in Poonch district against the local ruler and their strategy of oppression after the independence gave the rebels control over the district. The revolt was by ex-Imperial soldiers who were with pro-Pakistan mindset. By the success of the revolt they declared formation of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (Muzaffarabad, Poonch, Mirpur) in Rawalpindi, Pakistan on 3 October 1947. The Poonch episode made the situation worse. The violence and massacres in Punjab and NWFP by the partition warped the civil order. In September armed troops from Pakistan entered to J&K from west Punjab and Rawalpindi zone and directed looting and massacre. They were Pathun tribesmen with modern weapons and tactics, were aware of the terrain and could easily defeat the maharaja's troops. They headed towards Baramulla.

Maharaja requested military assistance from India. Mountbatten recommended legal permission from the maharaja to intervene. Maharaja signed the instrument of accession with India-Ceding to the federal government, which included as per normal practice, jurisdiction over defence, foreign affairs and communication. While Indian army landed in Srinagar Jinnah directed the generals to deploy the Pakistani army on the borders.

Indian army recaptured Rajouri and expanded its territory. Indian light tanks stopped Pakistan and also invaded Gilgit and Skardu to north. Ladakh, Dras and Kagil was under control of the Indian troops. Subsequently, both sides agreed on ceasefire, Ceasefire line (CFL) came into being which later converted into Line of Control (LOC) in 1972.

Maharaja appointed Sheikh Abdullah to head the interim administration and NC soon formed a de-facto government. Indian army pushed the raiders out of Srinagar, defended the airbase and then regained Baramulla and Uri in November.

3.5. Accession to India and Initial Decades

The accession of the state of Jammu and Kashmir to India by the Maharaja on 26 Oct 1947, was completely valid in terms of the Government of India Act (1935), Indian Independence Act (1947) and International Laws and was total and irrevocable. It was the same as the ones executed by the other 560 princely states in India. There has been no complication in any of the other cases. There would have been none in this case also, if Pakistan would have not sent in first the tribal invaders (Aug 1947) and later its own regular troops (May 1948). India made a reference to the United Nations on 01 Jan 1948 under Article 35 of the Charter, to prevent a war between the two newly independent countries.³

3.6. Proxy War by Pakistan

The origins of the insurgency are tied to a dispute over local autonomy. Democratic development was limited in Kashmir until the late 1970s and by 1988 many of the democratic reforms provided by the Indian government had been overturned and triggered a dramatic increase in support for insurgents sponsoring violent secession from India. The 1987 assembly elections were apparently rigged to bring NC-INC

³ Kashmir: The True Story, External Publicity Division Ministry of External Affairs Government of India, 19 Jan 2004, p.1

combine to power. Protests against the rigged election led to strikes, protests and violence. Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front, Hizb-ul-mujaheedin started insurgency by fanning the protests and linking them to the cause of independence of Kashmir. Young Kashmiris were sent across LoC and trained by militias and terrorist camps in PoK. In January 1990, Kashmiri Pandits faced large scale violence and ethnic cleansing by the extremists. They were threatened and forced to leave the valley (2.5-3 lakh pandits fled overnight). The militancy and violence led to the Govt of India applying the Armed Forces (special Powers) Act [AFSPA] in J&K in 1990. Throughout 1990s and early 2000s, heavy infiltration of terrorists and attacks occurred.

Pakistan claims to be giving its "moral and diplomatic" support to the separatist movement. The Inter-Services Intelligence of Pakistan has been accused by India and the international community of supporting, supplying arms and training mujahideen, to fight in Jammu and Kashmir. In 2015, former President of Pakistan Pervez Musharraf admitted that Pakistan had supported and trained insurgent groups in the 1990s. India has constantly called Pakistan to end its "cross-border terrorism" in Kashmir. Several new militant groups with radical Islamic views emerged and changed the ideological emphasis of the movement to Islamic. This had happened partly due to a large number of Islamic "Jihadi" fighters (mujahadeen) who had entered the Kashmir valley following the end of the Soviet–Afghan War in the 1980s.

3.7. Revocation of Special Status to J&K

On 5 August 2019, the Government of India revoked the special status, or limited autonomy, granted under Article 370 of the Indian Constitution to Jammu and Kashmir. The President of India issued an order under the power of Article 370, overriding the prevailing 1954 Presidential Order and nullifying all the provisions of

autonomy granted to the state. The Home Minister introduced a Reorganisation Bill in the Indian Parliament, seeking to divide the state into two union territories to be governed by a lieutenant governor and a unicameral legislature. The resolution seeking the revocation of the special status under Article 370 and the bill for the state's reorganisation was debated and passed by the Rajya Sabha – India's upper house of parliament – on 5 August 2019. On 6 August, the Lok Sabha – India's lower house of parliament – debated and passed the reorganisation bill along with the resolution recommending the revocation.

The abrogation of autonomy without the consensus of the Kashmiris has raised the threat perception among the people of the Valley. The 'autonomy' granted to J&K under Article 370 had symbolic and emotional significance for Kashmir's people. After 5 August, people are feeling a heightened sense of fear and distrust concerning their identity and cultural issues such as religion, customs and language.

Apprehension is that the issue of domicile rights may further limit the employment opportunities for the local youth and also lead to a demographic commotion in the Valley. It has been reported that the Centre is probing other options regarding the issues of opening up jobs, ownership of land, and seats in professional and college education to non-Kashmiris. These provisions are in line with those in other states like Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and other North-Eastern states, which are covered under Article 371 of the Constitution.

As the revocation of Article 370 makes laws of the Union of India automatically applicable in J&K, it also makes the erstwhile laws of state ultra-vires (or they no longer apply). The question is why draconian laws enacted by the erstwhile state assembly such as the Public Safety Act (PSA) are still operative; also, that hundreds of youth, civil society members and even former chief ministers are languishing in

jails. These inconsistencies have made the people feel that the abrogation of Article 370 under the excuse of “one constitution, one rule of law,” has only made them second-class citizens.

3.8. Conclusion

To understand the Kashmir issue, one needs to realise and admit its complexity. Depending on the side from where you view it, the conflict in Kashmir be a fight for identity or a fight against the state, as the leftovers of partition or a fight against political status quo, the outcome of religious assertion or long denied political promises or just as a result of India-Pakistan animosity. Moreover, Kashmir has often been described as the unfinished business of partition by the Pakistani leadership and the finished business of partition by the Indian leadership.⁴ The former tries to test the theory of two nations and the latter weighs it with the secular model. In between these two models are the helpless people of Kashmir who want to live their life with dignity.

⁴ Archana Kumari and Mr. Ashish Kohli, Media Narratives of Kashmir Unrest in July 2016: A Comparative Analysis of Regional Newspapers, Journal of Content, Community & Communication, Amity School of Communication, Vol. 6 Year 3, December - 2017 [ISSN: 2395-7514 (Print)] Amity University, Madhya Pradesh [ISSN: 2456-9011 (Online)]

CHAPTER 4: PERCEPTION DYNAMICS IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

I still believe that if your aim is to change the world, journalism is a more immediate short-term weapon.

Tom Stoppard

4.1. Perception Management

Former GOC-in-C, Northern Command, Lt Gen. K T Patnaik (Retd) said, “A perception management strategy is needed to curb the nefarious elements. “There are those in the Valley, who are spreading a negative perception about the Army. There are elements who are promoting radicalisation among the youth, spreading anti-army and anti-India feelings. We need to counter all that.” In a conflict situation, perception is always more important than facts. There is nothing sacred about facts as they can be both manipulated and obscured. Hence, it is important to take what the general public have faith in seriously, as against what the state thinks it should accept as true. While this should apply to the whole of India, it is particularly important in Jammu and Kashmir and the north-eastern states, which suffer from a sense of disconnect from the rest of India. Yet, for inexplicable reasons, the Indian government has never understood the importance of perception and carries on with its business of governance or non-governance without a care about how people perceive its actions or non-actions.⁵

In Kashmir, in the nearly two decades of violence, the prevalent perception among the people is that thousands of young men have disappeared over the years. Most of them were tortured and killed by security personnel. This is the perception of the people, which independent human rights bodies and anxious citizens try to sustain by example and incidents.

⁵ Ghazala Wahab, The importance of perception management, First Person | Fact and Fiction, Force, Friday, February 28, 2020.

4.2. Shaping the Information Environment in J&K

Perceptions can be shaped through an understanding of the viewpoint of all stakeholders involved. Today, the most interesting types of power do not come out of the barrel of a gun; much bigger payoffs can be achieved by ‘getting others to want what you want’. That is the crux of a positive perception management campaign.

In counter insurgency or counter terrorism operations, a key component of perception management is the requirement to reach out to the hearts and minds of those people who directly or indirectly back the terrorist or who are sympathetic to the cause. At the strategic level, this would involve addressing contributing factors through political, social and economic tools. At the operational level, activities which fuel divisions within a terrorist network, undermine the morale of its followers and drive a wedge between the network and its support base will pay dividends. While direct action (military, law enforcement, intelligence, political, economic activities) will assist in this effort in the short term, long-term success will fructify when such support is withheld willingly because the people providing it have been convinced that it is no longer in their best interests to do so.⁶

The condition in J&K has multiple complexities, especially when viewed in the context of identity, statehood and rights. Within J&K, sensitivities vary in each of the three divisions of the state, the administration, the security forces and the political parties. An understanding of each viewpoint is essential to form a coherent and effective perception management campaign.

⁶ Maj Gen Dhruv C Katoch, Shaping the Information Environment in J&K, Salute to the Indian Soldier,

While military force will remain an instrument to put pressure on the insurgent groups, the need to change mindsets is becoming increasingly pertinent for conflict resolution. The end objective of a perception management plan would have to be measured at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. At the strategic level, Perception Management operations would entail creating a belief in Indian democracy, promoting religious harmony and the idea of 'Kashmiriyat' and preventing the Islamisation of society. This would have to be dealt with by the Centre and the state government. Actions at the operational and tactical level would involve isolating the insurgents from the population support base, neutralising the support which social and other organisations give to the insurgents, educating the public on the need for laws such as AFSPA and creating a bond between the Indian Army and the local populace.

It is important at this stage to understand what perceptions currently exist in J&K and then look at measures to affect a change in the same. In the Valley, a small group of hard-line Kashmiri activists remain vocal in their dual demand of removing the Army from Kashmir and having a plebiscite to decide their future. Herein, they echo the propaganda by Pakistan but are silent on the status of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK). Many people in the Valley view the Army as being overly aggressive when moving around in public areas. It gives the impression that ground troops who come in contact with the civilian population apparently lack communication and interpersonal skills. There is also a common belief that cases of human rights abuses from 1990 till date have not been addressed by the Army or the government.

The military, however, is also perceived by many in the Valley as defending Kashmir from external powers and as being successful in reducing cross-border infiltration.

Opinions, however, vary from place to place and with different interest groups. Unlike in the early 1990s, the presence of the Army now receives support, mostly due to initiatives taken by its leadership over the last few years. Other factors include declining militancy, a yearning for peace, positive impact of Sadbhavana projects, abrogation of Article 370 and the Army's role in providing assistance in times of calamities. The people from Jammu and Ladakh Divisions have vast differences in perception compared to their brethren in Kashmir. Most are related to economic and development issues; the people here feel that the bulk of development funds go to the Kashmir region at their expense.

Certain sections believe that hard-line Muslim leaders in Kashmir are trying to 'Islamise' the state, and that Army's role is necessary to maintain stability and fight against religious extremism. They consider the problem in Kashmir as having nothing to do with 'Azadi' but being essentially a movement towards rapid Islamisation of the state, killing in the process every semblance of 'Kashmiriyat'.

The civil administration in the state has to be strengthened to have a civil administration which is accountable. This will result in reduction in the Army's role and ensure political and peace dividends. The shortcomings in the public delivery system is obvious and must be overcome. Lastly, the alienation dilemma must be solved. This could be done by creating and institutionalising the dialogue process with civil society.

Pakistan, through its proxies and modules, commenced obliteration of history and culture from collective memory of the people and society. Pakistan and its proxies targeted the very platform that bonded with other cultures, faith and societies by denouncing Sufism, Kashmir folk culture, music and Kashmiri poetry as un-Islamic

practice and Hindu conspiracy against the Muslims of Kashmir. Pakistan found that biggest impediment in creating a space to fight from within Kashmir were *Kashmiriyat*, Shrine and Sufism. Pakistan proxies found it easy to indoctrinate youth and difficult to alter the faith of the older generation from Kashmiriyat, Shrines and Sufism. Simultaneously, it blocked and disrupted the intellectual discourse among the people of different faith and community. In order to kill memory and collective wisdom they chose to kill the sense of judgment of the people and social order by calibrated violence and targeting the institutions that were custodian of societal conscience. Pakistan through their proxies destroyed everything that belonged to the people so that they could write new narrative to create disaffection with India. The stone pelting, intolerance among people and youth against the symbol of India is the outcome of this passive aggression of Pakistan that went uncontested for over three decades now.⁷

The Pakistani propaganda is generating very strong emotions, aggression, and has managed dramatic departure of society from the truth. The manufactured untruth and web of fabrication by Pakistan has been able to confuse and destroy the cultural heritage that had survived for more than 2500 years. Pakistan targeted cognitive domain of the Kashmiri Awam and the Indian state. Inter Services Public Relation (ISPR) has been effectively carrying out propaganda war against India on J&K.

Pakistan has been astute to identify and systematically pull apart the enlightened values of Kashmiriyat to change the course of the conflict. Radicals have been successful in converting the Education Institutions into radicalisation centres that denounce the Kashmiriyat and cultural heritage.

⁷ Brig Narender Kumar, Key to Conflict Management in Kashmir is People, Politics and Perception, Vivekananda International Foundation, 6 November 2017.

Focus of the Government of India and J&K should be to win the trust of the people. Rhetoric and media barbs need to be toned-down so that it does not give credence to an impression that state is fighting against its own people. The perception in valley is that India is against people of Kashmir. This perception needs to be altered through incessant interaction and reconciliatory dissertation. The space acceded to non-state actors or proxies can be recuperated by deliverance of governance and a continuous psychological and information war involving people of Kashmir.

Policy makers must consider that sometimes elimination of terrorists and insurgents unite their cadres in desperation. Undue prominence of the success achieved by security forces could be counter-productive and may lead to alienation of the population further. There is a need to show humane side after the terrorists and insurgents are eliminated.

CHAPTER 5: INSURGENCIES ACROSS AGES AND ROLE OF MEDIA

“Whoever controls the media, controls the mind”

— *Jim Morrison*

5.1. Evolution of Insurgencies

The British definition of insurgency⁸ emphasizes three essential characteristics:

- (a) Insurgency is a desperate expedient by activists who, at the outset of their campaign, are militarily weaker than the combination of governments and regular forces they seek to overthrow.
- (b) To win power, these activists must persuade the masses to support them, which feat they achieve through a mixture of subversion, propaganda, and military pressure.
- (c) The insurgents redress military weakness by exploiting their environment, which could be empty wilderness, a rebellious city, a disaffected community, or, in the prevailing era of mass communications, the virtual territories of the mind.

Terrorism is a significant part of the insurgents’ list of tactics, but it is a tool that accomplishes a long-term effect when used with subversion, agitation, and propaganda as part of a political strategy. During the 1970s and 1980s, politically secluded groups (e.g., Animal Rights, the Red Army Faction) used acts of terror to publicize their beliefs. Although these occurrences caused great commotion and involved sensational headlines, without widespread support, they were noteworthy but short-lived.

⁸ John Mackinlay and Alison Al-Baddawy, Rethinking Counterinsurgency, RAND Counterinsurgency Study--Volume 5, Chapter Title: Successful Insurgencies and Counterinsurgencies, RAND Corporation. (2008), p.5.

In preindustrial societies, insurgents exploited the remote wilderness where they could overstretch their adversaries and defeat larger, more powerful forces. In preindustrial societies, where the stranger was the exception and therefore easily identified, insurgents exploited populations that were almost impossible for the ethnically different colonial government forces to penetrate.⁹ Later, industrial developments created an urban society in which the stranger became the norm; prospects altered, and these more concentrated populations were penetrated by new ideologies. Insurgency also changed; activists relied less on military exploitation of terrain and more on the power of popular support. Cities expanded, joining together to become areas in which immigrant societies spread as individual families into lawless townships. During the 1970s, the techniques of insurgency continued to evolve; the “urban guerrilla” exploited this unstructured and ungovernable landscape together with changes in technology and weaponry.

In the 1990s, the social significance of the petrol engine was overtaken by the proliferation of electronic communications. Urban areas continued to advance and spread physically at a fast pace, but the social constructs and the lives of people within them transformed at a much faster rate. Satellite television and the Internet began to create groups out of like-minded people who were present across the world. For the post-industrial insurgents, the virtual dimension that was now mounting along with the proliferation of communications became a new milieu for subversion and covert organization. They swiftly adapted to the Internet’s characteristics and used it to harness the violent energy that arose from “global” societies that were composed by common grievances and ideologies.

5.2. Counter Insurgencies Across the Ages

⁹ Peter Hopkirk, *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia* (London: John Murray, 1998).

The Era of Brutality. The insurgencies that rose in Europe as a response to the Napoleonic invasions, and those in Africa and Asia to contest the Imperial expansion of European powers, were responded with brutal excesses, indiscriminate force and repressive methods.¹⁰ The counterinsurgents targeted not only the insurgents themselves, but frequently also their popular bases. The Napoleonic expansion through Europe motivated the emergence of the first insurgencies which constituted what Michael Broer calls 'Napoleon's other war'; real national insurgences where nations, not armies, raised in arms. The Spanish insurrection, probably the most significant of all, had a smaller precedent in the Italian region of Calabria from 1806 to 1807 when the Neapolitan dynasty was deposed. It was, however, unsuccessful as the rebels failed to gather support from the community and attract the attention of the Bourbons.¹¹

Terrorization of civilians was also the practice during the Franco-Prussian War during 1870-1 *franc-tireurs* were intended to fight the Prussians through guerrilla warfare. They were only seen as murderers and were not to be tolerated. Retaliatory measures such as burning down houses, or the imposition of forced contributions were imposed upon the civilian communities who harboured them. Bismarck himself urged that villages be burned to terrorize the French into rapid submission.¹²

British response to colonial insurgencies was also brutal. There was an order to burn down or blow up all the houses next to railways, bridges or telegraphic lines that were attacked. In the Boer war collective fines were decreed, and civilians were forced to ride the trains as human shields. Similar mechanisms of extermination were applied in

¹⁰ Oscar Palma Morales, THE EVOLUTION OF COUNTERINSURGENCY WARFARE: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW, rev.relac.int.estrateg.segur. vol.6 no.2 Bogotá July/Dec. 2011

¹¹ Finley M. (April 1976) Prelude to Spain: The Calabrian Insurrection, 1806-1807. Military Affairs 40 (2) pp. 84-87.

¹² Beckett, I. (2001) Modern Insurgencies and Counterinsurgencies. London: Routledge.

German COIN campaigns in South and East Africa (1904-1907); there, between 50 to 80 per cent of African tribes were eliminated.¹³

During imperial expansion, European powers tested with strategies aimed at breaking the bond between insurgents and their communities, but means employed, rather than being mild, were invasive and disruptive of community's lives. The segregation and re-concentration of civilians was executed. It consisted on moving entire communities from their original sites to areas where they could be controlled by the counterinsurgent, leaving rebels in spaces where it was possible to search and destroy them. The objective was to avoid rebels from supplying themselves.

During colonial expansion, Britain mastered the process using locals in Abyssinia, Malaya, Egypt and Sudan. The French included natives in North, West and Central Africa. Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Germany, Portugal and even the United States depended largely on native military and police forces. Both food denial and locally raised forces were to become central tenets of COIN practice for years to come and important instruments to break the bond between rebels and population.¹⁴

Brutality Meets Civic Action. The interwar period served as the setup for the emergence of a vision of COIN focused less on the direct eradication of insurgents and their base of support, and more on breaking the bond between insurgents and the population by winning people's hearts and minds. However, during the Second World War, totalitarian states exploited harsh and excessive methods of repression.

The problem of insurgencies began to be understood more generally as a political one, requiring solutions which included political elements beyond a simple response by force.¹⁵ As such, traditional strong actions of force began to coexist with methods

¹³ Merom, G, *How Democracies Lose Small Wars*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

¹⁴ *Ibid* 9.

¹⁵ Hugh Simson identifies the politicization of war in his *British Rule and Rebellion* published in 1937, observing the IRA in Ireland and the revolt in Palestine between 1936 and 1939.

that aimed at responding to the political dimension. The struggle between insurgent and counterinsurgent began to be understood as a dialectical match in which both parties needed to influence the population of why they were the best option; the psychological dimension thus began to be considered.

The Second World War became a scenario for considerable expansion of partisan and guerrilla warfare, mainly in the form of resistance to the German and Japanese occupations. Whereas some of the groups acted by themselves, others fought alongside conventional armies. The British used locals against the Italians in Ethiopia, and allied with the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army and the Karens in Burma. The US in the Far East (USAFFE) incorporated guerrilla groups to fight the Japanese in the Phillipines, and coupled with the Kachins in Burma.¹⁶

The Emergence of Maoism. Mao Tse Tung proposed a model for a conservative and parochial vast rural population, and a semi-feudal and semi-colonial society. He developed a theory for a small weaker actor to override a more powerful enemy by the means of will, time, space and propaganda, in the absence of initial fire power capacity. Maoism became the main paradigm of insurgency warfare throughout the developing world, and COIN would evolve to respond to such paradigm.

Vo Nguyen Giap, commander of the Viet Minh, restyled the three stages of this Popular Protracted Warfare theory. As demonstrated by the United States in Philippines and Britain in Malaya, COIN response to Maoism would be something radically opposed to what was experienced during the nineteenth century and the Second World War.¹⁷

These adaptations became the first examples of a 'comprehensive approach' to counterinsurgency: the idea that the responsibility to fight an insurgency is not

¹⁶ Ibid 9.

¹⁷ Pustay, J, Counterinsurgency Warfare New York: Free Press, 1965.

exclusive of security institutions, but of a wider range of state and even societal organizations; and where actions must be conducted in areas that go beyond the reach of security actors. These principles would later constitute a central tenet of modern COIN, as it has been experienced in Afghanistan, Iraq and Colombia.

Winning Hearts and Minds: The Comprehensive Approach. After Vietnam, insurgency and COIN were practically side-lined in the strategic international agenda, except for specific cases in which lasting insurgencies prevailed. The topic only re-emerged after the West intervened in Iraq and Afghanistan, and a model emerged bringing together elements proposed by theorists during the Cold War and learned during successful campaigns like the one in Malaya. Strategies to break the bond between insurgents and communities by winning the support of the population finally became the main practice, and a comprehensive approach was consolidated including the role of many institutions beyond the military.

5.3. Role of Media in Insurgencies

Media. Media is a generic term meaning all the methods or channels of information and entertainment. The mass media are taken to encompass newspapers, radio and television, but other important forms of communications include books, films, music, theatre and the visual arts. The late twentieth century has seen the globalisation of the mass media culture, but we should not overlook the fact that throughout history informal methods of communication such as the gossip of the taverns, streets and marketplaces have been the standard local media for spreading information, and these informal channels coexist with all the latest multimedia technology in current societies.¹⁸

¹⁸ Paul Wilkinson, *The Media and Terrorism: A Reassessment*, Terrorism and Political Violence, Vol.9, No.2, FRANK CASS, LONDON, (Summer 1997), pp.51-64.

Insurgents/ Terrorists and Media. The weapon of terror is used extensively by both sub-state and state actors in the international system, and has, since the 1980s, been increasingly used by groups with a religious drive and as a method of intimidating the authorities or rival gangs, by those involved in international organised crime, such as drug cartels and the Mafia.

In the process of attempting to spread terror among a wider target group some channel or medium of transmitting information, however informal and localised, will inevitably be involved. The Assassin Sect of Shia Islam, which attempted to sow terror in the Muslim world in the Middle Ages, relied upon word of mouth in the mosques and market places to relay news of their attacks; similar means of transmitting fear were used by the Russian and Balkan terrorists of the nineteenth century.¹⁹ These and many other historical examples provide abundant evidence to refute the theory that the development of modern mass media is the major underlying cause of terrorism. The political weapon of terror, it was believed, would serve their cause, not TV producers and journalists. It would be foolish to deny that many modern terrorists and certain sections of the mass media can appear to become locked in a relationship of considerable mutual benefit. The former wants to appear on prime-time TV to obtain not only massive, possibly world-wide, publicity but also the aura of legitimisation that such media attention gains for them in the eyes of their own followers and sympathisers. For the mass media organisations, the coverage of terrorism, especially prolonged incidents such as hijackings and hostage situations, provides an endless source of sensational and visually compelling news stories capable of boosting audience/readership figures.²⁰

¹⁹ Waiter Laqueur, *Terrorism*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977.

²⁰ Alex Schmid and Janny de Graaf, *Violence as Communication: Insurgent Terrorism and the Western News Media*, Beverly Hills, CA: Sage 1982.

It is because the terrorists seek to demonstrate the credibility of their threats by spectacular acts of destruction or atrocity that the media reporting of these acts is often held in some sense to have 'caused' the terrorism. In reality it is well beyond the powers even of the modern mass media to create a terrorist movement or a terrorist state. In order to understand how groups espousing terrorism originate one needs to examine their motivations, aims, ideologies or religious beliefs and strategies. However, once terrorist violence is under way the relationship between the terrorists and the mass media tends inevitably to become symbiotic. It would be foolish to deny that modern media technology, communications satellites and the rapid spread of television have had a marked effect in increasing the publicity potential of terrorism. A dramatic illustration was the seizure and massacre of Israeli athletes by Black September terrorists at the Munich Olympics. It is estimated that these events were relayed to a world-wide TV audience of over 500 million.²¹ For as long as the mass media exist, terrorists will hunger for what former British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, called 'the oxygen of publicity'. And for as long as terrorists commit acts of violence the mass media will continue to scramble to cover them in order to satisfy the desire of their audiences for dramatic stories in which there is inevitably huge public curiosity about both the victimisers and their victims.

In using TV, radio and the print media the insurgents/terrorists generally have four main objectives:

- (a) To convey the propaganda of the deed and to create extreme fear among their target group/s.

²¹ Schmid and de Graaf, *Violence as Communication* (note 5) pp.3.

- (b) To mobilise wider support for their cause among the general population, and international opinion by emphasising such themes as righteousness of their cause and the inevitability of their victory.
- (c) To frustrate and disrupt the response of the government and security forces, for example by suggesting that all their practical antiterrorist measures are inherently tyrannical and counterproductive.
- (d) To mobilise, incite and boost their constituency of actual and potential supporters and in so doing to increase recruitment, raise more funds and inspire further attacks.²²

Counter Insurgents and Media. It is important to emphasise that the objectives and concerns of the law enforcement agencies in terrorist circumstances are not only at variance with the aims of the media: they are inherently in conflict with them. The mass media aim to 'scoop' their rivals with news stories that will grip and sustain the public's deliberation and hence increase their ratings and revenue. The security forces, on the other hand, are first and foremost anxious with the protection of life, the administration of the law and arresting those guilty of committing crimes and bringing them to justice before courts of law. There have been many notorious examples where the efforts of the police have been directly threatened by the behaviour of sections of the media. For example, during the Iranian Embassy siege at Princes Gate, London, in 1980, the Metropolitan Police were particularly concerned to ensure total secrecy and surprise for the hostage rescue by the SAS. However, one ITN film crew defied police instructions and succeeded in filming the rescuers as they were coming down the walls of the Embassy. If those pictures had been shown live on TV, they could have jeopardised the entire hostage rescue.

²² Michel Wieviorka, *The Making of Terrorism*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988, p.43.

Another striking example of media irresponsibility occurred during the hijacking of a Kuwaiti airliner by Hizballah terrorists in 1988. While the airliner was on the ground at Larnaca, Cyprus, there might have been an opportunity to mount a hostage rescue operation by an elite commando group. A major obstacle to such an operation was the unrelenting intrusiveness of the international media surrounding the aircraft.

A great deal can be achieved by ensuring that expert press liaison and news management are an intrinsic part of the security forces response to any terrorist campaign, and the contingency planning and crisis management processes. Indeed, in a democratic society a sound and effective public information policy, harnessing the great power of the mass media in so far as this is possible, is a vital element in a successful strategy against insurgency/terrorism.

5.4. Mediation

It is a long-standing claim that society has become mediated. People today live in a world that more than before extends outside their immediate sphere of observation, and the media sphere thus becomes crucial for people to know even the most basic facts about their relevant surrounding. Societal involvement and the carrying out of basic functions increasingly require people to also interact via media – from e-mail to more advanced social networks that guide everyday life. This development has been called mediation.²³

Just as terrorism is not a new phenomenon, there is nothing new in the connection between actions that have been labelled – or label themselves – acts of terrorism, and the representation of these actions in the media.²⁴ In an obscure writing titled Advice

²³ Livingstone S, 2009, Presidential Address on the Mediation of Everything: ICA Presidential Address 2008. *Journal of Communication* 59(1), 1–18.

²⁴ Chaliand G and Blin A, *The History of Terrorism: From Antiquity to Al Qaeda*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.

for Terrorists, published in the journal Freiheit, September 13, 1884, the anarchist John Most wrote:

We have said a hundred times or more that when modern revolutionaries carry out action, what is important is not solely the actions themselves but also the propagandistic effect that they are able to achieve. Hence, we preach not only action in and of itself, but also action as propaganda.

With an increasingly mediated society, now boosted by the Internet, the expected dissemination through media of news on dramatic events is continually growing. With new techniques that have introduced real time television and prime time war the dissemination of news becomes more rapid than ever.²⁵ This progress puts journalism and the conduct of media under severe tension in finding a balance in its reporting of events that by some are considered acts aiming at freedom and by others as acts of terror.

What line of action can journalism take in the immoral relation between the different forms of political violence? It is clear that the media cannot not report on terrorism and ensuing counter measures. Whilst it would be against the basic ethos of news reporting, it would also be counterproductive in a world that is open to global rumours spread in real-time through the Internet and mobile phones.

5.5. The Mediatization Dilemma

How media interacts with society covers one important aspect, how the professionalism developed by journalists interacts with the political system. This has been called mediatization of political communication, signifying that journalists take a professional role in regard to other institutions in society. Journalists act according to a media logic. This logic is based on professional standards established in

²⁵ Greenberg B S, Communication and Terrorism: Public and Media Responses to 9/11, Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 2002.

education and workplace practice; growing out of an increasingly professionalized trade, and on legislation and ethical rules, standardized through international research and professional co-operation. In order to affect how the public opinion is informed, other actors in societal life are then acting in anticipation of the outcome of the media coverage, guided by professionalized journalists.²⁶

It is apparent that all types of actors that involve themselves with insurgency/terrorism are quite conscious of how media will reflect their actions; and in many cases are motivated by this aspect in shaping their actions. Looking at the *longue-durée* of terrorism, Wieviorka has pointed to the different relationships that political movements with a violent agenda have with media, from indifference or even adversarial attitudes to active usage of the anticipated actions of media as part of their strategy.²⁷ Wilkinson has discussed political movement's use of violence as a method of hijacking the media, warning journalists of the consequences of real time television-type reporting and calling for self-restrictive behaviour by journalists.²⁸ Experts have pointed to the emergence of the Internet as a part of publicity, highlighting the liberative potential in today's media society that prevents oppressive governments from censoring information – which would include also information covering insurgency/terrorism.

Noting the often-quoted sentence, that “one person's terrorist is another's freedom fighter”, the guidelines of BBC, Reuters, and Al Jazeera for reporting on incidents

²⁶ Strömbäck J, Selective Professionalization of Political Campaigning: A Test of the Party Centred Theory of Professionalized Campaigning in the Context of the 2006 Swedish Election. *Political Studies* 57(1), 95–116.

²⁷ Wieviorka M, *Sociétés et terrorisme*. Paris: Fayard, (English translation: *The Making of Terrorism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

²⁸ Wilkinson P, *The Media and Terrorism: A Reassessment*. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 1997, 9(2), 51–64.

recommends the use of more specific (attack, bombing, etc.) words.²⁹ Avoiding the word terrorism itself, however, does not solve the problems of how to cover the reporting of the events. The question is, then, what role the media take in reporting of the disputed publicity agendas presenting themselves each time. This raises the question of the logic of the involvement of media: is this logic guided by an awareness of the role of the media in the process? Are media merely mediating the incidents reported under the heading of terrorism as they evolve? Or are they, as in the mediatized coverage of other types of political events, challenging sources, looking at backgrounds, and in other ways bringing the critical stance and knowledge cultivated within professionalized journalism into play? Are journalists in their reporting acting with consideration of the outcome of their reporting?

These questions become highly ideological, as various reflections through different media of terrorism are by no means innocent. Whilst the journalists may not sympathize with terrorists – or the countermeasures taken by authorities, media logics may drive publicity towards blindly being a tool for “terrorist” action,³⁰ but also for “patriotic” counter action.

Media have developed new communication techniques that – at least apparently – bring the broad public to the scene in real time. Such techniques have dramatically changed the conditions for reporting news. Why is this important? Because, as politicians and news journalists intuitively know, and as also experimental research tells us, first impressions matter and bad impressions leave more trace than good.³¹

²⁹ Barnett B and Reynolds A, *Terrorism and the Press. An Uneasy Relationship*, 2009, New York: Peter Lang.

³⁰ Nacos B L, *Mass-Mediated Terrorism, The Central Role of the Media in Terrorism and Counterterrorism*, 2007, Second Edition, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

³¹ Engel C, Kube S and Kurschilgen M, *Can we manage first impressions in cooperation problems? An experimental study on “Broken (and Fixed) Windows”*, 2007, Preprint, Bonn: Max Planck Institute for Research on Collective Goods 2011/5.

Thus, when an incident occurs, massive and similar media coverage leave a mark on the audience that will later affect perception of further developments of the story.

With modern communication techniques, the pace of the newsbeat has dramatically increased. The attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941 were first reported in radio broadcasts on the US mainland only three hours later. The first pictures were published a week later. Diffusion studies show that today, within these same three hours, more than 90 percent of the audience will be informed, if the incident occurs on a time of day when people are awake.³² Furthermore, if the news is big enough, this speedy news diffusion is global.

Internet today has become a relevant medium in the diffusion of news on conflicts that by authorities are labelled terrorism. Already in the 9/11 incident two-thirds of the audience in USA mentioned Internet as an information source. Different to national news media, these media outlets are almost impossible to censor.³³ Thus, they present a challenge for authorities who may wish to affect the reporting of events.

The changing media environment has left more reflective news practitioners in a catch-22 situation: being left behind by the real-time broadcast of evolving events risks losing the audience, whilst it is required to carry out a more insightful and contextualized reporting.

As has been mentioned, the initiators of terrorism tend to seek public effect. Also, for the media much is at stake. The public is alerted; we know from the audience research referred to above that ratings grew sky-high after the 9/11 incident. Furthermore, the

³² Kanihan S F and Gale K L, Within 3 hours, 97 percent learn about 9/11 attack. *Newspaper Research Journal* (Winter 2003).

³³ Alves R C, *New Media in Latin America*, Presentation to the conference *New Media: The Press Freedom Dimension, Challenges and Opportunities of New Media for Press Freedom*, 15 & 16 February 2007, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris.

public reaction to the incident is also of direct interest to authorities. We know from studies in a Weberian tradition on the logics of administration that growth tends to be a value in itself for all organizations, including the legitimate violence- and counter-violence organizations of the state. From this we may infer that there are no innocent parties when the dramatic event of a “terrorist” act is reported.

It would be foolish to deny that many modern terrorists and certain sections of the mass media can appear to become locked in a relationship of considerable mutual benefit. The former wants to appear on prime-time TV to obtain not only massive, possibly worldwide, publicity but also the aura of legitimisation that such media attention gains for them in the eyes of their own followers and sympathisers. For the mass media organisations, the coverage of terrorism, especially prolonged incidents such as hijackings and hostage situations, provides an endless source of sensational and visually compelling news stories capable of boosting audience/readership figures.³⁴

The act of terrorism is a master key for unlocking the door that grants access to the mass media. This means that crisis managers and response specialists compete with the perpetrators of political violence in that each side wants to have the loudest and most persuasive voice and messages. In this competition, terrorists seem to start out with a significant advantage because their violent deeds are a powerful message that commends the mass media’s attention ... But response specialists, crisis managers (... ..) and political leaders (... ..) are nevertheless in excellent position to dominate the news because they are part of the cornerstones in the “Triangle of Political

³⁴ Wilkinson P, *The Media and Terrorism: A Reassessment*, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 1997, 9(2), 51–64.

Communication” with formal and informal links and relationships in place before emergencies arise.³⁵

Serious mass media that watch their credibility have an even more important role than before. The viewers must know where to turn for an unbiased and as truthful reporting as possible. This can only be ensured by sustained high standards of critical journalism, and avoiding the enticements of the speculative news beat of the first instants of reporting.

The style of involvement of the media is critical in the wake of dramatic and politically sensitive events including terrorism. The impulsive style of reporting leads to further polarization. Media has to contribute positively in the context of the ongoing information war around violence and counter-violence of today, and media will have to take responsibility. The importance of considerate, contextualizing and balanced journalism grows. The media must be ready to present the material with the same visibility and distinction as the spontaneous reporting rising out of the actions themselves.

³⁵ Nacos B L, *Mass-Mediated Terrorism, The Central Role of the Media in Terrorism and Counterterrorism*, 2007, Second Edition, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

CHAPTER 6: MEDIA IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

If people in the media cannot decide whether they are in the business of reporting news or manufacturing propaganda, it is all the more important that the public understand that difference and choose their news sources accordingly.

-Thomas Sowell

6.1. Kashmir Press: A Historical Perspective

Kashmir has been a target of journalistic apartheid. Even though brutal killings of people on 13th July 1931 attracted a lot of condemnation in Lahore press and British press against Maharaja's autocratic rule, the Jalandhar press and papers owned by Sikh Organization like "Akali", official organ of Akali Dal, reproached Muslim agitation and underpinned Maharaja. Papers like Inqalab, Zamindar and papers owned and edited by Kashmiris like Muhammad Din Fauq lambasted the ruler. Surprisingly, even Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah failed to become dearest to the Indian press. Initially, Abdullah had some supporters in the leftist press but later the aforementioned press also criticised him as a "American stooge".³⁶ Pointing out another important side of the history of press in Kashmir, Mohi Ud Din found a surge in the publication of the newspapers in the state over the period of time. He is of the opinion that this surge is proof to the fact that media is becoming vibrant in a place where vernacular dailies were the only viable form of media available to people. The masses expect from the fourth estate to communicate their grievances to the corridors of power. The fact that new local dailies are hitting the stands every now and then indicates there is more space for media to expand. He also concludes that right from the birth of the first newspaper Ranbir (Although different scholars have a contrary view on the issue of the first newspaper of the state, but most of the scholars consider

³⁶ Mohammad M. The Resignation of a Senior Journalist Raises Questions About The National Media's Coverage of Kashmir. The Caravan, 2016.

Ranbir the first newspaper of the State of Jammu & Kashmir) up to the birth of first regular daily English newspaper Greater Kashmir in 1989 and onwards, it has provided people with a sense of centre from the times when Kashmiris stood against the Dogra autocratic rule to the entire post 1947 political agitations.³⁷

Press in Kashmir has played an important role in educating people of the state. Discussing the growth of print media in the state, Bukhari writes that Srinagar had no daily newspaper until 1989. The writer asserts that “bringing out a newspaper from Srinagar is a very risky job.” The press in Kashmir has gone through incredible pressures in the years. Arrival of “armed rebellion” on the political turf of Kashmir made Srinagar virtually the centre for the news around the world. He asserts that Greater Kashmir, became an English daily, only after three years of the armed movement for “freedom”. Currently the largest English daily of the state, the newspaper was only a weekly till then. On the other side, according to him, Jammu and Kashmir State has, however, over 800 registered newspapers, and in Srinagar alone more than 10 English newspapers are published daily. The founder of English daily Rising Kashmir, Bukhari also writes that exploitation of journalists has been an old story in Kashmir. Journalists had to put up with meagre salaries and not so good working conditions in past. He further writes unfortunately; journalism has not been allowed to flourish as a full- fledged institution in Kashmir. Despite the existence of ample newspapers, journalism here has always been treated as a “part time” profession which can be pursued alongside a government job.³⁸

Quoting the writings of Muhammad Yusuf Saraf, Muhammad writes, to uplift the Muslims in the state, some members of the Kashmir Association in Lahore had started

³⁷ Mohi Ud Din K, Print Journalism in Kashmir: Evolution & Challenges, Department of Journalism, Islamic University of Science and Technology Awantipora, Unpublished M.A. Dissertation, 2012.

³⁸ Bukhari S, A success story amid all odds, The Hoot, 2012.

publication of newspapers. Sheikh Jan Muhammad started publishing a weekly newspaper Kashmir Gazette from Lahore. To highlight the Kashmir cause, Munshi Mohammad Din Fauq under the patronage of Allama Iqbal launched one after another newspaper and magazines. For launching first newspaper, Panja Foulad, followed by monthly Kashmiri Gazette in 1900, Fauq earned great admiration from Iqbal.³⁹ An article by Shamboo Nath Gurkha ‘My years in Journalism’ reprinted by Kashmir Sentinel on 20th August 2016 confirms that there was mushroom growth of Urdu newspaper in late 1960s. Papers like Daily Chinar (edited by Peer Giyasdin), Daily Aftab (edited by Khwaja Sonaullah), Srinagar Times (edited by Sofi Ghulam Mohd.), Naya Sansar (edited by Gh. Rasool Urfani), Navjivan were launched. Ahmad writes that except vernacular press, journalism in Kashmir remained a monopoly of Kashmiri pandits till 1990.⁴⁰

The Indian national and international media organisation had hardly any Muslim reporter in Srinagar. Before Yusuf Jameel joined the Telegraph, Calcutta in 1983, Mohammad Sayeed Malik, in early 1970s, was the first local Muslim correspondent of an Indian newspaper, the Patriot. He further writes that Kashmir’s experience with “partial journalism” is rooted in history. In 1904, Munshi Muhammad Din Fauq sought permission to start a newspaper from Srinagar. Maharaja Pratap Singh was not pleased. He asked his Prime Minister to frame rules that would disallow even consideration of such requests in future. For about three decades nobody made another attempt until 1932 when a Kashmiri Pandit, Prem Nath Bazaz was permitted to publish the first newspaper, Vitasta, from Kashmir. The valley had no newspapers to report the ground situation in 1931’s mass movement. On the basis of the owners’

³⁹ Muhammad ZG, Founding Father, Greater Kashmir, 2010. Retrieved from <http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/opinion/foundingfather/67049.html>.

⁴⁰ Ahmad KB, Kashmir’s Media experience continuum, Kashmir Reader, 2016.

faith and community affiliation, Lahore newspapers were then categorised into ‘Hindu Press’ and ‘Muslim Press’. Newspapers taking up the case of disempowered Kashmiris formed the ‘Muslim Press’. These newspapers included Zamindar, Inquilab, Siyasat, Alfaaz and Lahore Chronicle. At one point, these periodicals were banned from the territory of Jammu & Kashmir although some copies would reach Srinagar clandestinely. The newspapers supporting Maharaja, comprising ‘Hindu Press’ included Tribune, Pratap, Milap, Amar and Guru Ghantaal.

Ahmad further writes that GM Sadiq, was not the only Chief Minister to lament on ‘partial’ reporting by the Indian press, from Syed Mir Qasim, to Sheikh Abdullah, to Farooq Abdullah, all had to bear the brunt of this ‘partial’ reporting. Discussing at large about the coverage of Kashmir by the post-partition “hyper-nationalist” journalists, he concludes that “Indian press has inherited anti-Kashmir slant from its Lahore predecessor.” In an interview published by Kashmir Life, of one of the most senior journalists and founder of Kashmir Times newspaper, Ved Bhasin was quoted as saying that during Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah’s years of governance between 1947 and 1952, he crushed the freedom of press. He further was quoted as saying that press (Indian press) was totally supportive of the Government of India.⁴¹

In an interview published by Kashmir Life, of one of the most senior journalists and founder of Kashmir Times newspaper, Ved Bhasin was quoted as saying that during Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah’s years of power between 1947 and 1952, he crushed the independence of press. He further was quoted as saying that press (Indian press) was totally sympathetic of the Government of India. He calls Ranbir, founded in 1924 by Lala Mulk Raj Sahaf, the first newspaper in Jammu and Kashmir state. Bhasin also started his first newspaper, an Urdu weekly named Naya Samaj in 1952 in addition to

⁴¹ Ibid 27.

The Kashmir Times. This was the first political weekly in Jammu. Arshad states that despite a burgeoning market with over 400 dailies, there was not a single newspaper in Kashmiri language before the launch of Sangarmal in February 2006. Another Kashmiri newspaper, 'Kehwat', followed suit two days later. The newspapers were launched with a main aim to promote the mother tongue and keep it alive. Recounting the history of Kashmiri newspapers, the writer asserts that Ghulam Ahmed Mehjoor was the first to start a Kashmiri weekly Ghash (light) in 1940s. Two more language newspaper Wattan and Kashur Akhbar were launched in 1965 and 1973 respectively. Samut was started by a group of Kashmir university students in 1980 followed by Meeras in 1998. All the newspapers couldn't even sustain for a year except the Meeras which lasted for two years.⁴²

A “fierce propaganda campaign was initiated against the Maharajah’s rule from Lahore in 1931, in neighbouring Punjab, by the Muslim press.” “Leaflets and journals spoke of the deliberate suppression of the Muslims and instigated the people to rise against the Maharajah.” There was a growth of press and television coverage, freedom of speech in the valley was flourishing in 1980s.⁴³

6.2. Kashmir Press: Current Scenario

To study the scenario of newspapers and other periodicals in Jammu & Kashmir, Pandita on the basis of findings of his study states that there is no danger to the print media in Jammu & Kashmir as there has been a constant increase in the registration of new titles with Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI). He also concludes that among all the 22 districts, Jammu leads in publishing maximum number of newspapers followed by Srinagar. The study reveals that Dogri and Hindi periodicals

⁴² Arshad, The valley’s paper tigers, The Times of India, 2011.

⁴³ Bakaya P and Bhatti S, Kashmir Conflict: A study of what led to the insurgency in Kashmir valley & proposed future solutions, 2007.

remain confined to Jammu province while Kashmiri language periodicals to only Kashmir province respectively. Findings further conclude that with an exception of Kargil and Kulgam, the periodicals are published from each and every district of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Researcher reveals that out of the three official languages of the state, Urdu language enjoys more popularity among all. Periodicals are published in 10 different languages across the 22 districts of the state. The researcher found that with the advent of technology, most of the newspapers have adapted the hybrid publishing only to uphold the interest of their readers and not to lose their patronage.⁴⁴

Quoting Jammu and Kashmir government's information department, Motta writes in addition to 200 weekly newspapers and 150 fortnightly and monthly publications, around 150 newspapers in different languages hit the stands every morning in Srinagar and Jammu. He further writes that before the eruption of anti-India insurgency in the state in 1989, unlike two small newspapers in Jammu, there was not a single English newspaper in the valley. Crediting significant increase in the literacy rate across the state for the growth of newspapers, the writer states that out of a total of 500 publications, 325 stands approved for government advertisement. He further asserts that unlike the past, the scene is different today as around 30 big and small English dailies are published from Srinagar and Jammu cities. According to the media reports, Jammu and Kashmir's summer capital (Srinagar) could well have the largest of daily newspapers in India given its population of 1.4 million.⁴⁵

A report published on 28th April 2016 by The New Indian Express - IANS being the original source of news report - divulges that there were more than some 265

⁴⁴ Pandita R, Scenario of Print Media in Jammu & Kashmir (India): An Analytical Study, J Mass Communication Journalism, 2013.

⁴⁵ Motta SA, Growing literacy make Kashmir papers boom, One World South Asia, 2011.

newspapers published both in English and local language from Srinagar alone. In fact most of these newspapers don't even hit news-stands anywhere in the valley. Experts further mentioned in report believe that these newspapers are published only to get government advertisements. With no mention about the number of copies the newspaper should publish daily; state government norms till 2010 stipulated continuous publication of one year for a daily newspaper to become eligible for government advertisements. The news story further reads that majority of these newspapers have no offices and are published from unknown places. Specifying it a media 'malaria', the report concludes that some of the most fascinating publishing practices and their funniest names have helped many newspapers to endure in Kashmir, regardless of whether they have a readership or not.

Stating that 69 newspapers have almost negligible circulation, Hassan quoting Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in Kashmir in a news story published in Greater Kashmir, states that 69 valley-based newspapers have either no or little circulation and are 'supported by dubious funding from secret sources.' The report further reads that there are eight English newspapers in the list which have virtually no circulation, while 16 Urdu newspapers have no circulation. The list provided in the report also includes 45 English and Urdu newspapers which have circulation of up to 200 copies and between 200 and 500 copies. Quoting the MHA report, the article further reads that no national paper had started a local edition of their papers in the valley as "there is absence of a level-playing field in the local media industry coupled with all the uncertainties of operating in a conflict situation."⁴⁶

To examine the degree of social media technologies adoption by online newspapers of Kashmir, Gul and Islam found that only 21 (32.6%) newspapers of Kashmir are

⁴⁶ Manzoor-UI-Hassan, 69 valley newspapers have negligible circulation: Survey, Greater Kashmir, 2012.

available online. They further found that most of these newspapers have adopted social media technologies to some extent. Despite the fact that local language newspapers seem to be quite at the stages of infancy in implementing these technologies, newspapers of Kashmir have begun to embrace new social media concepts on their sites. They found that out of 10 English dailies, 9 (90 per cent) have adopted social media on their respective websites. On the other side, only 3 (2.27 per cent) Urdu newspapers have adopted social media while one Kashmiri newspaper (Kashur Akhbar) is yet to introduce social media tools.⁴⁷

6.3. Role of Kashmir Press

Mehmood-ur-Rashid emphasizes that Kashmir press has arisen as a powerful social institution. It has played an important role in setting the social trends, breaking some myths, establishing some others, and also opening up the mind of people to larger issues. The rich content ran through the newspapers into the social pool over a period of time has helped to profile the society as its best. He further writes that Kashmir press has been closely associated with the lives of people. This press has played an important role in all walks of life of our society. Apart from unsparingly bolstering sense of culture, and cultural territories, Kashmir press has played an unrivalled role for the introduction of changes, emergence of political, religious and social leadership in our society. He further discusses the role played by the newspapers like Hamdard and Zamindar for becoming the powerful voices of the Kashmiri society against the Dogra autocratic rule. The writer completes that Kashmir press has been as vibrant and has contributed as any other press in the history of journalism.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Gul S and Islam S, Adoption of Social Media by online Newspapers of Kashmir, *Annals of Library and Information Studies*, 2013; 60:56-63.

⁴⁸ Mehmood-ur-Rashid, *The Kashmir Press*, Greater Kashmir, 2012.

Bali conducted a survey to study the role of media in causing changes in the lifestyle of rural Kashmir. Through the conclusions of the study, he clinched that media has played a significant role in development of rural areas. Media was found to have brought change in the lifestyle of the villagers by providing them exposure. The study also found that newspapers and television are among the top sources used for education and information purposes. Apart from other uses, according to the results of his study, 70% respondents of rural Kashmir use media for religious, education and information purposes. The researcher found that unlike urban society, the rural Kashmir also embraced media. Literacy rate among rural population particularly women folk is spiralling due to the influence of media. People have started entering into various professions other than the family or traditional occupations and are also accomplishing global knowledge through media. It was also found that media has played an incredible role in the promotion of the Urdu language. Researcher concluded that with the advent of media in rural Kashmir, unlike earlier, Urdu became the most spoken language in the rural areas.⁴⁹

Interlocutors on Kashmir - Dileep Padgaonkar, Radha Kumar and M M Ansari - in their 176-page report submitted in October 2011 to the then Home Minister of India, P. Chidambaram have criticised the role of media and journalists in the state for “inventing events for political game”. Republishing a part of the report on media by Kashmir Watch, the report reads that the “local media, by contrast, have given far more attention to peace process developments but—as occurs routinely in conflict situations—there are some amongst them who are selective in what they report and biased in favour of one or another political position.” The report confirms that “barring a small handful of anchors and reporters, the national media have

⁴⁹ Bali PS, Media and Development in Rural Kashmir, J Mass Communication Journalism. 2015.

underreported conflict areas and tends to focus on moments of violence or recrimination.” Bali concludes that Kashmir print media portrays Indian Army as “despotic, tyrant, and human right violators.” Newspaper use highly “provocative” language. Even though the researcher has reached to an ambiguous conclusion by quoting an anonymous senior journalist in Srinagar, the study found that “social welfare activities” of the army in Kashmir have been accorded very less space by the local print media.⁵⁰

Rai states that being the opinion makers for the local public, “vernacular press in Srinagar is considered more important than all other media.” In contrary to the majority’s opinion noted down in the chapter, the researcher quoting Major General Rai states that Indian national media, excluding All Indian Radio and Doordarshan, has played a “mature and fairly responsible role in Kashmir.” Criticising local media, he states that Urdu journalists lack professionalism in the valley. He further states that “apart from becoming a militant in Kashmir, one of the easiest professions to pick up is to work for a local rag.” He concludes that western media lacks depth and fairness in reporting Kashmir. Defying the widespread feeling outside Kashmir that local press was on the side of the militants, Narayan Committee in its report concluded that this notion regarding the Kashmir press was “uncharitable.” The report concludes that quite a few papers did publish statements and advertisements of militant outfits, but they did it under duress.⁵¹

6.4. India's National Media and the Kashmir Issue

⁵⁰ Bali PS, Portrayal of Indian Army in Kashmir Media: An Analytical Study of Local Newspapers, International Journal of Media, Journalism and Mass Communications, 2015.

⁵¹ Rai AK, Conflict Situation and the media: A critical look, 2000.

In October 2015, Shekhar Gupta, a senior Indian journalist, said that India's media had never been truthful to Kashmir as the "truth was considered against the national interests".

Gupta had been editor-in-chief of The Indian Express newspaper for almost 19 years, and so his admission was widely covered by the local media in Kashmir. It was the first time a high-ranking journalist had made such an observation. "The biggest problem in Kashmir is the way the place has been covered in the main land Indian media....," Gupta said. "The problem has always been very closely linked to national security and military security; it has got inexplicably woven in that perspective.... The journalists were parachuted from outside. Mostly they were not Kashmiris and were not well versed with the language or ethos.... The media covered Kashmir purely as a security story...".

India's national media has generally followed the official line in relation to Kashmir. Instead of questioning militarisation, or examining separatist sentiments in the region, the media has usually repeated the government's security-centric line: that Kashmir is an integral part of India; the unrest in Kashmir is Pakistani-sponsored and that the military is fighting Pakistan-sponsored militants.

By describing the human rights violations and demand for a right to self-determination as "propaganda by Pakistan and militants," India's national press has always tried to justify the atrocities committed by its state forces. Journalists also called into question the damning reports on human rights, released by international media and human rights organisations, which often criticised government forces.⁵² India's national press, besides resorting to self-censorship to satisfy their patriotic

⁵² Teresa Joseph, *Contemporary South Asia: Kashmir, human rights and the Indian press*, 2000.

aspirations, have also censored news items critical of government forces. They have relied mostly on government press releases, rarely appearing to question the veracity of official versions of event. This report, published in *The Times of India* on January 1, 1992, and quoted by Teresa Joseph (Joseph 2000), makes the argument clear: “The persistent propaganda campaign launched by certain terrorist outfits about the atrocities being perpetrated by the security forces in the Valley was bound to have an effect on the morale of the personnel who were performing their duties under extremely trying conditions.”

Coverage of events in Kashmir during the years of armed insurgency compelled Arundhati Roy, a noted Indian novelist, writer and political activist, to state that the Indian media had completely “failed to highlight the plight of the ordinary Kashmiris who were being tormented and brutalised by security forces every day in the name of freedom and peace”.⁵³

In a conversation with the academic Chindu Sreedharan in March 2009, an unnamed editor of a national Indian daily said: “We are a main national newspaper. So we have to reflect the views of majority of Indians. That has to be. I am an Indian, my newspaper is Indian by nature...not originating from Kashmir or Pakistan. Pakistan may call that portion Indian occupied Kashmir, but for us it is Kashmir. Kashmir is part of Indian union. And it won’t be Azad Kashmir [for the portion of Kashmir in Pakistan] in our news pages, come what may. It will be Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, not anything else. That is very clear”.⁵⁴

6.5. Local Media and Kashmiri Aspirations

⁵³ Sandeep Joshi, *Withdraw Army from Kashmir, says Arundhati Roy*, *The Hindu*, Aug 31, 2005.

⁵⁴ Chindu Sreedharan, *REPORTING KASHMIR: An analysis of the conflict coverage in Indian and Pakistani newspapers*, March 2009, p. 103.

Kashmir's local media, covering mainly of print, received a boost after 1989 the year insurgency broke out. Before 1989 there were only 15 Urdu language newspapers and one major English daily, the Kashmir Times.

However, as soon the insurgency in Kashmir began and the state expanded its security apparatus to suppress the rebellion by using force, stories of survival and human rights were prominently featured in the newspapers. Local newspapers were full of reports of civilian killings, encounters between the insurgents and the army, rapes and arson.

Local journalists tread a fine line while covering Kashmir. The media is subject to pressures from multiple sides, as well as official blackmailing. In the absence of local private industry to buy advertising, newspapers in Kashmir are often dependent upon government advertising. However, the government often threatens to withdraw its advertising from newspapers that fail to toe the official line.

If military and government require their viewpoint to be represented in the media, so do the insurgent groups. The general public also regard the conflict in a political context, contrary to the state narrative. Thus, the majority of Kashmiris want local media to report their desire for independence. Caught between these divergent narratives, there are pressures from various parties, either by political arm twisting, or through violence and intimidation. At least 10 journalists have been killed in Kashmir in the past 25 years, while life threatening attacks have been carried out against scores of other journalists. These threats remain ongoing.⁵⁵

Regardless of working under hostile conditions, most of Kashmir's media continue to report on political issues, human rights and other problems facing the population.

⁵⁵ Kashmir News Board, 10 journalists killed in Kashmir insurgency, May 2008.

However, reporting on social topics such as the environment, administration, and health were not the newspapers' main concern. Their main focus continues to be human rights, politics and violence. Because of this, Kashmir's media is under constant pressure from diverse ideological groups, representing the different stakeholders in Kashmir's political landscape.

The New Delhi-based Economic Times newspaper reported that India's security agencies recommended stopping advertising to Kashmiri newspapers after it found that they were favouring "separatist ideology". In April, 2015 the paper reported: "An analysis carried out by security agencies has indicated that these papers, Urdu and English, have been taking an anti-India stand in the Valley. Their reports and opinion pieces allegedly incite violence. The editorials in these papers also were accused by the analysis of supporting separatist ideology. The Centre hopes that the state government would rein in the newspapers trying to create trouble."⁵⁶

Since 2013, there have been signs that pressure from the state has been having an effect. Editorial opinion pages seem to be more 'balanced'. They now offer two divergent political narratives, one which approves status quo - or pro-India - position, the other advocating the conflict and secessionist politics, representing the state and the Kashmiri people. Official statements and press releases also occupy considerable space on front pages.

6.6. Media Narratives of Kashmir Unrest

The world we are witnessing today; with various versions of truth created by media; is very difficult to understand in one dimension. There are many dimensions of reality created by media these days through narratives. It is also described by Fulton, "a

⁵⁶ Rahul Tripathi, Narendra Modi government may withhold ads to Jammu and Kashmir papers, Economic Times, April 24, 2015.

world dominated by print and electronic media, our sense of reality is increasingly structured by narrative". It seems to be difficult to understand what reality is and what is not from the prism of media. But the irony is that we must depend upon media for any small and big information. Media presents various versions of reality through texts, pictures, audio and visual packages in the form of stories. Continuous narration of such news stories creates the perception of people towards reality.⁵⁷ Beyond seeing film and television programs as transparent illustration of the world, we need to critically examine some of the ways in which media texts mediate the world to us, through the codes and conventions of narratives.

Narrative is the way; the different essentials in a story are planned to make a meaningful story. The word derives from the Latin verb *narrate*, "To tell". In the non-fictional narratives; media and journalism have also made their place and media narratives came into being. Now, media narratives or narratives in the media are terms for storytelling. Some of these elements can be fact as in a documentary or characters and action as in a drama. It can be said that in India, the print media has come a long way where journalism started with a mission but became profession in later days and it would not be wrong if we say today it is more like public relations and narrations with a motto to form sympathetic opinion. It is hard to conclude whether media is shaping public opinion or audiences' choices are shaping the media. Similar situation is being witnessed in Jammu & Kashmir too. There is a stark contrast in the ideologies of the people of Jammu region and Kashmir valley region, so the demand of treatment to the stories or narration of stories in newspapers is also in contrast to each other. There are more than 100 English newspapers in Jammu and Kashmir but The Daily Excelsior is highest circulated English daily of Jammu region with

⁵⁷ Fulton H, *The Power of Narrative*, in H. Fulton, R. Huisman, J. Murphet and A. Dunn *Narrative and Media*, 2005, Newyork: Cambridge University Press, 1-7.

circulation of nearly 2.3 lacs and The Greater Kashmir is highest circulated English daily of Kashmir valley. Narration of Kashmir unrest in July 2016 during the encounter of Burhan Wani; by these two newspapers and how they framed the same issue by using different narratives from the storytelling to the graphics and also to the colour ideology is totally divergent.

The mass uprising in 2016; which was triggered by the death of Burhan Wani (the Hizbul commander) continued for more than 100 days. The uprising had caused total shutdown throughout the Valley with massive protest marches. To prevent the marches and public meetings for “aazadi”, the government came down heavily on the marchers resulting in clashes all over the Valley. Pellet guns, teargas, paper gas and even bullets were used to prevent assemblies and marches. Continuous curfew was imposed throughout the Valley.

Daily Excelsior reported the news in most neutral and basic manner by giving only three column story with a picture; the Greater Kashmir flared it up by adding heroic introduction of the militant in lead like ‘the face of new age militancy’, ‘carried a bounty of Rs. 10, 00000’ and stressing on the widespread impact of his death. Also, the headline of Greater Kashmir did not identify Burhan Wani as Hizb commander and mentioned only his name in very big font size as if the audience knew him very well.



Picture 1- 9th July, 2016 (GK)

Picture 2 - 9th July 2016 (DE)

6.7. Media and Unrest Post 2016

The state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) has observed various phases of struggle since 1989, when massive violations of civil liberties, and a sense of both deprivation and being abandoned by New Delhi, gave birth to militancy in the Valley. Pakistan then grabbed the opportunity to wage a proxy war against India, which is still going on. The second phase of unrest was ignited in 2008 over the Amarnath Land row, and the third in 2010, by the Machil encounter and the killing by the police of Tufail Ashraf Mattoo, an innocent teenager. Following the killing in July 2016 of Burhan Wani - the widely popular commander of the Kashmiri militant group, Hizbul Mujahideen — the conflict entered in a new phase. Radicalisation has made deep inroads into society, eroding the communal and social harmony that for a long time characterised the Valley's Kashmiriyat (or 'identity').

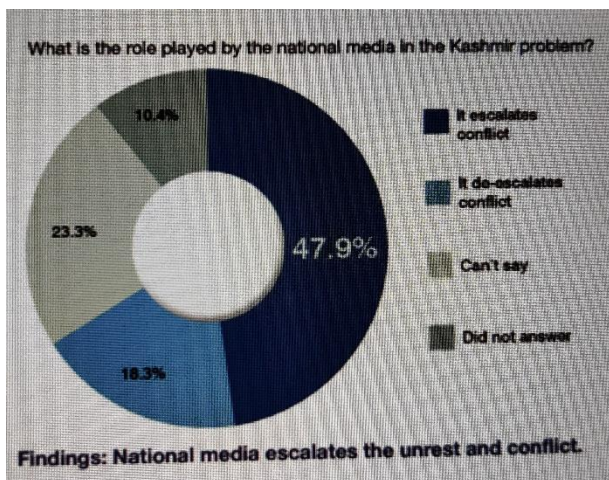
A comprehensive survey covering the most disturbed areas in the Valley was carried out by Ayjaz Ahmad Wani as part of ORF in 2017. The survey, carried out from September to November 2017, used snowball sampling in different colleges and universities of Kashmir (University of Kashmir, Islamic University of Science and Technology, Awantipora, and Central University, Nowgam) involving a cross-section of the students and the faculty. The respondents comprised both male and female and were between the ages of 16 and 30.⁵⁸

Nearly 2,300 responses were recorded. To obtain in-depth baseline data for the study, the questionnaire covered political, social, economic, cultural and religious dimensions of the core variables like Kashmiriyat and the exodus of pandits, Governance and administration, Post-2016 unrest and militancy, The role of media

⁵⁸ Ayjaz Ahmad Wani, The Kashmir Conflict: Managing Perceptions and Building Bridges to Peace, ORF Issue Brief No. 261, October 2018.

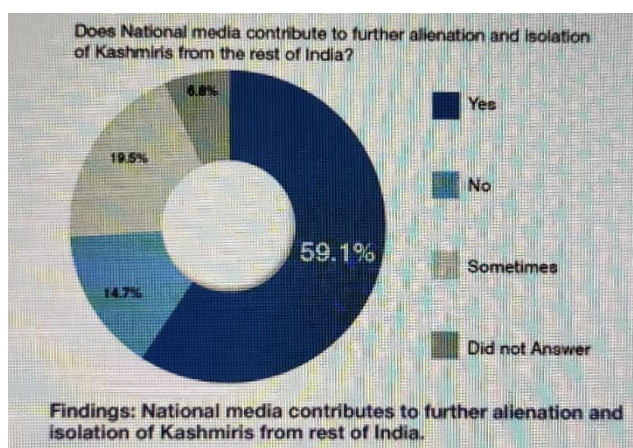
and Article 370. The responses to the questions were tabulated and analysed with great care.

The media, whether electronic, print or social—and at the national as well as local level—have played a critical role in managing the people’s perceptions both within the Valley and across the country. Endless high decibel media rhetoric and the spread of radicalisation through social media have further fuelled unrest in Kashmir. The national media has demonised Kashmiris by labelling them as “Pakistani agents” or “terrorists”. They have failed to effectively highlight issues such as the disproportionate use of force by the state forces. For TRPs, the media have expanded the rift between the Kashmiri youth and the rest of the Indian people, in the process inadvertently playing into the hands of Pakistan – the more anti-Kashmiri stories are published, the more pro-Pakistan sentiments are fuelled, and the stronger is the sense of alienation from the rest of India.



The mainstream media both at national and regional levels have failed to accord thoughtful consideration to the core issues involving the denial of basic rights to Kashmiris which have long been taken for granted by Indians in other parts of the country. Negligent 24x7 media coverage has created a gulf not only between New

Delhi and common Kashmiris, but also between the people of Kashmir and the masses of India. The perception created by the media has made young Kashmiris studying or working outside the Valley vulnerable to livid name-calling—“terrorists”, “Pakistanis”; in some occasions, they have fallen victim to violence.



6.8. Role of Media in J&K: Report of Interlocutors on Media and Media Scenario of Jammu & Kashmir

As per J&K Interlocutors report primarily based on the outcome of the Group’s interactions with more than 700 delegations held in all the twenty two districts of Jammu and Kashmir and the three round-table conferences (RTCs) since their appointment on 13 October, 2010, the role of the media has been analysed as being complex, combining positive peace support with mistruths that undermine peace initiatives. Barring a small handful of anchors and reporters, the national media have underreported conflict areas and tend to focus on moments of violence and/or recrimination. The local media, by contrast, have given far more attention to peace process developments, but – as occurs routinely in conflict situations – there are some amongst them who are selective in what they report and biased in favour of one or another political position. A few even go as far as inventing events and quotes for

stories. To these few, journalism appears to be a political game rather than the pursuit of fact. The negative fallout from this kind of journalism is that it acts as a brake on peacemakers who wish to move forward from stated positions, especially amongst the rebel groups.

6.9. Media: Recommendations by Group of Interlocutors

Recommendations of Group of Interlocutors on Media⁵⁹ as per Chapter 3: Cultural and Media Components of the New Compact are as under: -

- (a) Publishers have alleged that newspapers that do not toe the line are denied Government advertisements. On the other hand, the Government alleges that certain newspapers publish unsubstantiated stories and engage in a vilification campaign. Both these matters need to be investigated by a body like the Press Council of India or the Editors Guild of India.
- (b) Allegations have also been made to the effect that publishing houses inflate their circulation figures to engage in malpractices. The Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) plays no role in the State. Nor are Readership Surveys carried out. Both need to be introduced without delay.
- (c) The sources of funding of newspapers are also a matter of unhealthy speculation. A thorough investigation carried out by the Press Council of India can alone settle the issue.
- (d) Newspaper editors in the State should be encouraged to participate in the activities of the Editors Guild of India and other national and South Asian professional bodies.

⁵⁹ Dileep Padgoankar, Radha Kumar and MM Ansari, Group of Interlocutors for J&K, A New Compact with the People of Jammu and Kashmir, Final Report, 2012.

- (e) Local newspaper editors should be routinely included in the press parties that accompany the President and the Prime Minister during their trips abroad.
- (f) Journalists from the State should be provided short-term training in institutes of mass communication in order to improve their reporting and writing skills.
- (g) More national media houses should be encouraged to publish Jammu and Kashmir editions. Local television and radio channels too should be persuaded to enter into win-win collaborative agreements with national and regional channels in the rest of the country.
- (h) Curbs on Internet and mobile telephone usage need to be urgently reviewed.

6.10. Report of the Sub-Committee to Examine the Report of Interlocutors on Media and Media Scenario of Jammu & Kashmir Adopted on 09.10.2017⁶⁰

During the committee's interaction with various newspaper editors, owners and journalists, they all spoke about the discrimination they, particularly medium and small newspapers/periodicals, faced in the issue of government advertisements and the rates of the state which is one of the lowest in the country. The committee appreciates this problem as the State does not have much industrial or commercial advertisement support because of the problems it faced from decades. Since the survival of the media is vital in the interest of the nation and democracy, it has to be supported by the government. The State Government has also come out with a policy of empanelment and advertisement but it shall have to be implemented in full without discrimination.

⁶⁰ Report of The Sub-Committee to Examine the Report of Interlocutors on Media and Media Scenario of Jammu & Kashmir, adopted on 09.10.2017, Press Council of India New Delhi.

As for the issue of inflated circulation figures of newspapers/ periodicals, the committee is aware that it is a country-wide phenomenon. The State's Information directorate and the RNI must check the circulation figures through different modalities and act accordingly. The issue of the publication of newspapers and periodicals by retired information department or other government staff to corner government advertisements, too, is a reality and has to be put to an end by the Government only.

As for the issue of unhealthy sources of funding of some media organisations, we can understand that conclusive evidence of such funding is difficult to come. Even the government agency could not provide any evidence in this regard, though there is some talk about funding from across the border. They alleged that funding across the border was there some 25 years ago, but it cannot be verified or crosschecked now. There is no major complaint about such funding of newspapers now, but there are such suspicions because of "anti-Central/State government or anti-armed forces writings" by some newspapers and journalists. The Government and their agencies should file complaints in such cases with the Press Council of India, which could then consider these on merit and decide the issue. The committee was told by media representatives that government agencies should use all their resources to check and trace any dubious funding and take strong legal action if there is any credible evidence.

The issue of the accreditation of journalists concerns the grass-root journalists. The State's accreditation committee should consist of the representatives of all the recognized state and national level journalists' organization. It has come to the notice of the committee that at present only journalists working in Srinagar or Jammu get state accreditation. This facility of accreditation should be extended to journalists

working at the district level, too, and in certain special cases, to those working in border areas also.

The state of J&K is passing through a disturbing situation and it is tough to perform journalistic duty in such an environment without adequate safety precautions. News photographers, camerapersons and reporters, therefore, should be provided with safety kits, including bulletproof jackets and helmets, by their organizations or the Government as they, too, are performing public duty.

The non-availability of information from government agencies compels the journalists to find out news from unauthorised sources, which creates a wrong impression among the readers or viewers. The committee discussed this issue at length with security agencies and they, too, appreciated the problem. The committee suggested that a combined Information Centre should be formed in all three regions to provide all relevant official information without wasting time to the local media persons.

The issue of curfew passes to the journalists, too, was discussed by the committee. Delay in the issue of curfew passes to media places needless hurdles in their prime work and non-recognition of official curfew passes by security agencies. This creates bad blood between two important functionaries of democracy. Sometimes, the authorities' issue "no movement" orders without imposing curfew in the area and this, too, obstructs journalistic work. The government and armed forces must take care to honour the press accreditation cards and the identity cards issued by recognized media houses.

The committee is really concerned about the stoppage of internet and mobile services in the State. In this age, no media can work without these supports. The policy of curbs on internet and mobile services must be reviewed urgently. The committee was surprised to know that in the Ladakh region, internet of BSNL was down for four

months and even now, no internet or mobile data works in the area regularly. The low powered transmitting system of AIR and Doordarshan is a big handicap in the border area like Ladakh. The authorities need to take care of these issues on a priority basis.

The journalists of the State have been living without any welfare measures for a very long time. Even in cases of death or serious injuries, there is no one to take care of them and they or their families have to face the hardship all by themselves. It is good that the Government has now come out with a policy of creating a journalists' welfare fund. It should cover all journalists and be implemented without wasting any more time. The fund should be monitored by a committee of journalist organizations. The journalists who were injured in recent past should also be taken care of for their medical needs, as promised by the Hon'ble Chief Minister to the PCI committee.

More journalists and media professionals should be encouraged to visit Kashmir to give all aspects of coverage for the rest of the country. The state government should provide adequate support to Directorate of Information & PR to encourage pro-active role their side.

Some special scholarships and internship for young pass out of media institutions to go out of state to get the working experience in their field of journalism. The Jammu & Kashmir media institutions should get more visiting faculty (senior journalists of their field) from outside state to give a broader perspective to future journalists.

The journalists also raised the question of the non- implementation of Justice Majithia Wage Boards and poor payments for the newspaper staff. The committee is of the view that the Government must enforce the Majithia Wage Board award as directed by the Supreme Court of India.

6.11. Sub-Committee to Examine the Report of Interlocutors on Media and Media Scenario of Jammu & Kashmir

The Press Council of India, taking cognizance of the matter, constituted a five-member subcommittee to examine the Report of the Interlocutors on media and media scenario. The Sub-Committee consists of S/Shri S.N. Sinha, Convenor; G. Sudhakar Nair, Dr. Suman Gupta, Sondeep Shankar and Prakash Dubey. The committee later decided to co-opt Shri C.K. Nayak as its member. Report of the Sub-Committee to Examine the Report of Interlocutors on Media and Media Scenario of Jammu & Kashmir was adopted on 09.10.2017.

The committee visited Kashmir and met various groups of media persons and officials numbering about 300, of the J&K Correspondents Club, Kashmir Working Journalists Association, Working Journalists Association Kashmir, Kashmir Young Journalists Association, Kashmir Photojournalists Association, News Agencies Association, Kashmir Editors Guild, Jammu and Kashmir Joint Forum of Newspapers Editors, Jammu Newspaper Guild, Officials of Doordarshan, All India Radio and some senior Journalists. It also met government officials and political leaders, including the Hon'ble Governor Shri N.N. Vohra, Chief Minister Mahbooba Mufti Sayeed, Leader of Opposition Omar Abdullah, Finance Minister Haseeb Darbu, and Information & PR Minister Chowdhary Zulfikar Ali, besides senior MLA Yusuf Tarigami and Gulam Hassan Mir. The Committee also interacted with Director Information and officials of the State Information Department, the General Officer Commanding (GOC), 15 Corps, the IG and other officers of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and the Director General of the J&K Police. The Committee also went to Jammu and interacted there with members of the Press Club Jammu, the Jammu Newspapers Editors Guild, Jammu Newspapers Association, Jammu Kashmir Press Association, All Jammu Newspaper Editors Association (Regd.), J&K Print Media Welfare Association, Online Portals Delegation, Radio Kashmir Jammu, and senior

editors and journalists apart from Information Department officials. The committee also went to meet the journalists in Rajouri & Poonch and interacted with delegations of Print and Electronic Media under the banner of the Press club of Rajouri and Poonch. On the last leg of the interactions, the committee went to meet the Journalists of Leh in Ladakh region.

The turmoil in Kashmir has adversely impacted the business in general, which has suffered heavily. The media industry, however, saw a growth out it, but at the heavy cost of reported loss of lives of more than a dozen journalists/media persons. The media's growth has been high during the past two decades, which have seen a big increase in the number of newspapers and periodicals in the State. The number of government-approved newspapers/ periodicals in the State for the release of government advertisements has now increased to as high as 467. The Jammu division accounts for as many as 271 of these, while the Kashmir division has only 196 of these. Ladakh has two publications which are not empanelled. The total number of the State's newspapers/periodicals on the DAVP panel is only 146, of which 58 are from Kashmir and 88 are from Jammu. The total number of accredited journalists in the State is 265, of whom 130 are in the Jammu Division and 135 in Kashmir. There is no accredited journalist in Ladakh. The global satellite television boom has also impacted Jammu and Kashmir, which shows a big boom in the number of bureaus of news channels and the growth of local cable channels run by cable service operators. The media industry, thus, has become a huge job provider to young journalists. But since private business has been shrinking, there is little scope for private advertising, and this is making the media heavily dependent on government advertisements.

Going through the two narratives of the Kashmiri media and the media of the rest of India, the complexity of the situation throws up big challenges for the State's media.

They must make difficult decisions in different areas from field coverage to newsroom decisions to editorial policy because of different political and militaristic as also militants pull and pressures. The journalists working in Kashmir must manage the reality of walking on the tightrope amidst the threats of gun and political arm-twisting.

Interwoven in the media story of Jammu and Kashmir are the regional sub-nationalisms, turning it into Jammu versus Kashmir, as the two regions of the state pull in different directions. In the national media, the focus of the news mostly remains on politics, military and ceasefire violations. The State-centric approach to cover a state like Jammu and Kashmir has led to the alienation of its people. The people were sensitive about the way they were being reported in the national media particularly electronic media which is seen as deliberately misinterpreting facts and events. Each one in Kashmir, from the Governor to the Chief Minister to other political leaders to armed forces to journalists to common persons on the road echoed the sentiment expressed by the Chief Minister when she said: "I request the national media, the electronic media, not to show such discussion on television that develops hatred against the people of Jammu and Kashmir throughout the country. There are some who pelt stones, but not all the youth from Kashmir pelt stones." Jammu and Kashmir is the crown of India and people of the state have a right over every inch of the nation.

"It (Jammu and Kashmir) is the soul of this country. When there is Jammu and Kashmir, there is India. The people of Jammu and Kashmir have a right not only over Jammu and Kashmir, but over every part of the country and they should assert it," she said. According to her, the so-called national TV channels are doing great harm to both the nation and Kashmir in the name of patriotism by interpreting it wrongly.

Recommendations of the Sub-Committee to Examine the Report of Interlocutors on Media and Media Scenario of Jammu & Kashmir are as under: -

- (a) The allocation of Advertisement revenue and rate of advertisement in the State should be increased by the State Government. Further DAVP's policy be adopted for the distribution of advertisements.
- (b) The DAVP should also increase its quantum of advertisement in the state of J & K.
- (c) Small papers/periodicals should be given Centre/State advertisements in all regions of J&K, particularly in border areas.
- (d) The State's advertisements and empanelment policy should be implemented without any further delay.
- (e) The government should monitor the reportedly inflated circulation figures of newspapers/periodicals. For this, they can ask the RNI to check it regularly.
- (f) Journalists working in conflict situations should be provided with bulletproof jackets and helmets.
- (g) State governments should ensure the implementation of the Majithia wage board award as per the Supreme Court order.
- (h) The J&K Journalists Welfare Fund scheme should cover all working journalists and be implemented without any further delay.
- (i) The journalists already injured should be reimbursed all the medical expenses incurred by them.
- (j) The State should give accreditation at the district level too. In border areas, too, the journalists should be given accreditation to work in the area.

- (k) The government should ensure a system to provide news/ information without delay to local journalists.
- (l) The Army and Paramilitary forces should also work out a more liberal and transparent information system to give news as soon as possible to local journalists. The Public Relations Departments needs to play a more proactive role in providing information and facilitating coverage during any operations.
- (m) Journalists, too, are doing public service during any coverage and, therefore, their accreditation or Press Cards should be duly honoured during curfew or restrictions.
- (n) Since good relations with the media are seen to help control misinformation, there should be regular interaction between local journalists and armed forces, police and the government.
- (o) The media, journalists and their professional associations should play a more professional and ethical role at all levels. They must be concerned about their own black sheep within the fold who tarnish the image of media. The aim of the journalists/media should be to build a better society and for this they have right to question the authorities without any personal interest.
- (p) Any objectionable writing should be clearly defined and reported to the Press Council of India for final disposal. No writing should be branded objectionable and subjected to punitive action until the Press Council has considered the matter and given its views on it.
- (q) The All India Radio and Doordarshan must be strengthened in the State with full staff strength and latest high-powered transmitting equipment.

- (r) Private TV channels should be encouraged to prepare and show special programmes on J&K, to project a positive understanding of Kashmir in the world.
- (s) The gap between Jammu and Kashmir and the rest of the national media should be bridged. Inter- regional media exchange will promote a better understanding among Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh journalists. Similarly, J&K journalists should be encouraged to visit other parts of the nation and interact with their counterparts there. Journalist teams from other parts of the nation should similarly visit the State to interact with the State's journalists to understand J&K.
- (t) The Government should encourage professional journalist organizations/ associations to hold sessions and seminars in the State.

CHAPTER 7: WAY FORWARD

"मुझे बताइए, यहाँ का मीडिया इतना नकारात्मक क्यों है? भारत में हम अपनी अच्छाइयों, अपनी उपलब्धियों को दर्शाने में इतना शर्मिंदा क्यों होते हैं? हम एक महान राष्ट्र हैं। हमारे पास ढेरों सफलता की गाथाएँ हैं, लेकिन हम उन्हें नहीं स्वीकारते। क्यों?।

– अब्दुल कलाम

7.1. Acknowledged Problems

Media has a challenging role to perform, in present day scenario with the meteoric rise of social media, this has become even more trying. Society has become mediated. People today live in a world that is connected and extends outside their immediate sphere of observation, and the media domain thus becomes crucial for people to know about events. Insurgency/terror accentuates this dilemma. Bad news sells and media needs to survive and improve their ratings. It is therefore apparent that all stakeholders in insurgency/terrorism are conscious of how media will reflect their actions; and in many cases are motivated by this aspect in shaping their actions.

The role of the media in J&K is complex, combining positive peace support with mistruths that undermine peace initiatives. Except a few anchors and reporters, the national media have underreported conflict areas and tend to focus on moments of violence and/or recrimination. The local media, by contrast, have given far more attention to peace process developments, but – as occurs routinely in conflict situations – there are some amongst them who are selective in what they report and biased in favour of one or another political position. A few even go as far as inventing events and quotes for stories. Traditional media attaches to war and gives least coverage to peace overtures due to factors, including sensationalism and market forces. Media not only reflects a conflict through news, but also shapes a narrative pertaining to the conflict in the minds of its readers.

Report of Interlocutors on Media and Media Scenario of Jammu & Kashmir is exhaustive and highlights the major issues, however it is silent on the exploitation of media to resolve the conflict. It is more centred around the problems of Press and journalists in the valley, though this also needed addressing.

7.2. Recommendations

Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh are surrounded by hostile countries and the media working in such conditions needs special attention in terms of the enemy's propaganda war, people's faith and the country's safety. The power of the media has to be understood by the political leadership and officials in the State and the Centre as well as the armed forces operating throughout Jammu and Kashmir to provide authentic news from direct sources to the local media. Today news travels very fast and it will not wait for any information after a time. So, the correct news has to be shared by the authorities without wasting time. This will help curb the rumours that spread like a wildfire on social media.

To ensure harmonious and coordinated effort for media exploitation for Counter-Insurgency Operations, both sides must move forward and understand each other's problems and challenges. Certain recommendations for a coordinated media policy in J&K are as follows: -

- (a) System to provide news/ information without delay to local journalists needs to be put in place. The security forces should also work out a more liberal and transparent information system. The Public Relations Departments needs to play a more proactive role in providing information and facilitating coverage during any operations.
- (b) Security and welfare of press should be ensured. Journalists working in conflict situations should be provided with bulletproof jackets and helmets.

Journalists accreditation or Press Cards should be duly honoured during curfew or restrictions.

(c) There should be regular interaction between local journalists and armed forces, police and the government. A well planned coordinated and laid down interaction mechanism which instils trust should be followed.

(d) Perception themes with positive outcomes need to be propagated to keep the morale of the awam high. Simultaneously negative and false propaganda propagated by Pakistan and terrorists needs to be effectively countered. Information space domination needs to be carried out. Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) of Pakistan can be studied to appreciate the coordinated perception space dominance.

(e) The media, journalists and their professional associations should play a more professional and ethical role at all levels. The aim of the journalists/media should be to build a better society and for this they have right to question the authorities without any personal interest.

(f) The gap between Jammu and Kashmir and the rest of the national media should be bridged. Inter-regional media exchange will promote a better understanding among Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh journalists. J&K journalists should be motivated to visit other parts of the nation and interact with their equals. Journalist teams from other parts of the nation should likewise visit the State to interact with the State's journalists to understand J&K.

(g) Any objectionable writing should be clearly defined and reported to the Press Council of India for final disposal. No writing should be branded objectionable and subjected to punitive action until the Press Council has considered the matter and given its views on it.

- (h) The All India Radio and Doordarshan must be strengthened in the State with full staff strength and latest high-powered transmitting equipment.
- (i) Private TV channels should be encouraged to prepare and show special programmes on J&K, to project a positive understanding of Kashmir in the world.
- (j) The stoppage of internet and mobile services should be curbed. In this age, no media can work without these supports. The policy of curbs on internet and mobile services has to be reviewed regularly.
- (k) Embedded journalist teams to cover operations being conducted both along the LoC and hinterland should be experimented.
- (l) Joint Information Centres comprising of all stakeholders, government executives, security forces, media personnel, community representatives should be created to work in tandem for crisis management.
- (m) Social media should be exploited as a force multiplier both for rapid dissemination of information as also perception management.
- (n) Since people are the centre of gravity in any counter insurgency operations, themes and media campaigns should focus on people of J&K. Support base of insurgents needs to be marginalised and their atrocities against awam highlighted.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

***Gar Firdaus bar-rue zamin ast, hami asto, hamin asto, hamin ast.”
– A famous quote by Mughal Emperor Jehangir***

The state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) has witnessed various phases of conflict since 1989, when massive violations of civil liberties, and a sense of both deprivation and being abandoned by New Delhi, gave birth to militancy in the Valley. Pakistan then seized the opportunity to wage a proxy war against India, which is still going on. The second phase of unrest was ignited in 2008 over the Amarnath Land row, and the third in 2010, by the Machil encounter and the killing by the police of Tufail Ashraf Mattoo, an innocent teenager. It entered the fourth phase following the killing in July 2016 of Burhan Wani and finally a fifth after abrogation of Article 370 and splitting of the state and formation of Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

There are two distinct narratives of the Kashmiri media and the media of the rest of India. The situation is critical for State's media as they have to make tough choices in different areas from field coverage to newsroom conclusions to editorial policy because of political and militarist as also militants pull and pressures. The journalists in Kashmir have to manage walking on the tightrope amidst the threats of gun and political arm-twisting.

Also, the media story of Jammu and Kashmir includes the regional sub-nationalisms, turning it into Jammu versus Kashmir, as the two regions of the state pull in different directions. In the national media, the focus of the news mostly remains on politics, military and ceasefire violations and this State-centric approach to cover Jammu and Kashmir has led to the alienation of its people.

This paper has analysed the role of media in counter insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir from all angles of historical perspective, various phases of proxy war

sponsored by Pakistan, perception management, problems of media, variance between national and local media, media coverage in Jammu as different from Kashmir as also to arrive at a coordinated media policy. Social media domain and its exploitation in Jammu and Kashmir has deliberately been avoided in the present study as it is a separate research topic and can be studied independently.

The study has relied on secondary data due to constraints of time and space as also the prevalent situation wherein a detailed interaction with stakeholders was not feasible.

A well planned, coordinated and hands-on media policy involving media, government agencies and security forces is a must in counter insurgency operations in Jammu and Kashmir and will be largely instrumental in bringing lasting peace to this beautiful part of our country.

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