

# Historical Perspective of Violence in Kashmir Valley: Its Impact on Society and Economy

Roohullah Sadiq

Research Scholar, Madhya Pradesh Institute of social science research, Ujjain (M.P)

## Abstract

Conflict of any kind and any nature has always a long impact on societies and economies of world. The three geographical units of the state (Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh) with their distinct cultural patterns and social life were separate and distinct areas under different rulers from ancient times till 1947. Very few rulers cared for the people of Kashmir who lived in subjugation and poverty. India and Pakistan were partitioned in 1947, since then Kashmiri people have been at the root of constant tension between the world's most populous democracy, India, and its neighbor Pakistan. Violence and turmoil has resulted in all misdeeds like injustice, killings, corruption, economic backwardness, unemployment and disparity etc. Most activities like trade, transport connection and mobility of people are hampered for the last more than two decades. The states involved in the conflict and its geo-political position has always placed Kashmir in the forefront of discussion at regional, national and international levels. This study is an attempt to look at different aspects of violence, its impact on human rights and socio-economy of Kashmir Valley.

**Keywords:** Violence, Economy, Civil Society, Human Rights, Kashmir Valley

## 1. Introduction

Conflict of any kind and any nature has always a long impact on societies and economies of world. Slow development is attributed to violence in Jammu & Kashmir. Violence has affected the development scenario in the state of J&K, thereby not only discouraging private investment, but also creating obstacles in implementation of developmental policies initiated by public authorities (Khan, 2013).

The state of Jammu and Kashmir has primarily an agricultural economy. Industrially, Jammu and Kashmir is one of the backward states in the country. Though the state is very rich in natural and human resources, yet these have not been fully exploited for establishing an industrial base which could trigger economic spin off for the majority of people. This has turned to the demand of government jobs. The state has only a few medium scale industries in the capital cities of Srinagar and Jammu which manufacture cement, wool silk, and furniture, etc. (Nabi and Aima, 2012).

India and Pakistan were partitioned in 1947, since then Kashmiri people have been at the root of constant tension between the world's most populous democracy, India, and its neighbor Pakistan. Global and regional implications aside, the instability and lack of any conclusive resolution to the political dispute have left the population of Kashmir divided and uncertain about their future (Carter Centre Report, 2002). India and Pakistan both claim ownership of Kashmir and this dispute has resulted into three major wars as well as thousands of deaths, human rights violations, economic backwardness, unemployment and atrocious aggression. Suicide bombings, attack by militant groups and open fire by security forces are the main reasons for hostility. Civilians are killed almost every day (Islam, 2014).

## 2. Objectives

- To explore the historical perspective of violence in Kashmir Valley
- To explore the impact of violence on the socio-economic development of the state
- To suggest some constructive steps to public authorities for peace building and development of the region.

## 3. Methodology

The present study makes an attempt to provide a detailed historical perspective of violence in Kashmir and its impact on human rights and socio-economic development of the state. It is primarily a fact finding study based on the exploratory method. This study is based on secondary sources of data which includes books, reports, articles published in journals etc. hence this study is based on the Historical and Descriptive approach.

## 4. Formation of Jammu and Kashmir State: Historical Backdrop

Jammu and Kashmir was until the partition, the largest princely state. The three geographical units of the state with their distinct cultural patterns and social life were "separate and distinct areas under different rulers" (Khan, 2011). In 1819 Sikhs, came from their homeland in the adjacent Punjab, entered into Kashmir to oust the Afghan tyrants, they were welcomed by the population as liberators. But the unhappy Kashmiries soon discovered that the liberators were nothing more than a new type of oppressors (Malik, 2010).

In 1820 Maharaja Ranjit Singh (Sikh ruler), made over the territory of Jammu to Gulab Singh (an army General under Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Army). Ladakh was annexed by Maharaja Gulab Singh in 1830 (Raina, 2002). In 1846 British sold the Kashmir Valley to Gulab Singh, a Hindu ruler of Jammu through the treaty of Amritsar. Thus, the state of Jammu and Kashmir emerged as a political entity under Amritsar Treaty on 16<sup>th</sup> of March 1846 (ICG, 2002). Maharaja Gulab Singh was the founder of Dogra dynasty which ruled for 106 years by four hereditary rulers of Gulab Singh (1846-1857), Ranbir Singh (1857-1885), Pratab Singh (1885-1925), and Hari Singh (1925-1952) (Kalis and Shaheen, 2013).

## 5. Kashmir Unrest under Dogra Rule

From the very beginning of their rule the Dogra Maharajas had adopted a policy of keeping the Kashmiries out of the Government jobs and the administration was manned with personnel from outside the state- who used to be mostly Punjabis. On July 13, 1931 the Kashmiri Muslims started an organized political movement. As the movement got momentum, the Muslim leaders demanded a just and democratic type of government in place of the then existing autocratic rule of the Maharaja. The movement assumed serious turn when Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and his other colleagues were imprisoned on July 13, 1931. Maharaja Hari Singh let loose all kinds of oppressive measures to silence the people. But after his release, the Sheikh diverted his energies to the task of party organization. In order to erect a mass-based political organization in the state for the conduct of freedom struggle in a well disciplined and orderly manner, Sheikh, founded on October 16, 1932, the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference (Khan, 2011, op.cit., pp.2-6). On June 11, 1939, the "Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference" was converted into the "Jammu and Kashmir National Conference" to widespread the movement and acquire a secular, progressive and nationalist dimension. (Verma, 1994).

As the British began planning for the end of colonial rule over India in the mid 1940s, it was declared that the authority to decide whether princely states would adhere to India or Pakistan would be vested with the princes. This sparked intense political manoeuvring in Jammu and Kashmir and Sheikh Abdullah's National Conference launched a movement to oust Hari Singh (ICG, 2002, op. cit., pp. 2-3).

## 6. Instrument of Accession of J&K

In 1947, the Indian "Independence Act" divided India into two states of India and Pakistan. The "Independence Act" permitted the leaders of the 565 princely states including the state of Jammu and Kashmir to choose independence or accession to either India or Pakistan (Karen, 2003). Before Accession to India, Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir felt that his interests would be best served if he remained independent. The Maharaja had a standstill agreement with Pakistan but India was not ready for such an agreement (Hassan, 2009).

### 6.1. Tribal Invasion

On 22 October 1947, Pushtoon tribesmen from Pakistan invaded the State. Maharaja appealed for assistance to the Governor General Louis Mountbatten, who agreed on the condition that the ruler accedes to India. Maharaja Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession on 26 October 1947 in return for military aid and assistance, which was accepted by the Governor General the next day. While the Government of India accepted the accession, it added the provision of plebiscite according to which "only the people could decide where Kashmiris wanted to live." (Wikipedia, May, 2015) Initially India supported holding plebiscite but subsequently India dismissed the requirement due to the fact that the 1952 elected Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir voted in favour of accession to India (Chaudhary, 2013).

The Instrument of Accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India has been, from the very beginning, a subject of most contentious issue both at national and international levels. The version of government of Pakistan is that Accession was against the will of the people and is illegal. For Indians accession was legal and constitutional, perfect and unchallenged (Mir, 2014).

## 7. Interim Government in Jammu and Kashmir

Immediately after the accession of the State, the Indian leaders advised Hari Singh to associate the leaders of the National Conference with the Government of the State. On 30 October 1947, Hari Singh instituted an Emergency Administration in the State with Sheikh Abdullah as its Chief Emergency Administrator (Keng, 1990).

Sheikh Abdullah, who had been placed in power by the Maharaja, organised elections in 1951 for a Constituent Assembly, which had the task of drafting a new constitution. Constituent Assembly elections were announced on April 30, 1951 for 75 seats. In the Kashmir valley and Ladakh, 43 National Conference candidates were elected unopposed and thus, National Conference won the constituent assembly elections with absolute majority and formed the Constituent Assembly (Hassan, *op.cit.*, p. 5). The Constituent Assembly framed the Constitution which was approved and adopted on the 17<sup>th</sup> November, 1956 and came into force on 26<sup>th</sup> January, 1957 (Kaul, 2001).

## 8. Naya Kashmir Programme

The interim government was interested in the implementation of its 'Naya Kashmir' programme. In the Naya Kashmir proposals Abdullah made a powerful case for the conversion of Jammu and Kashmir into an independent state. He made several speeches in which he stressed the autonomous position of Kashmir (Hassan, 2009, *op.cit.*, p. 6). In 1953 Sheikh Abdullah revived the idea of an independent Kashmir, resulting in his dismissal, arrest, and replacement by Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad. During Bakshi's tenure, which lasted until 1963, measures were taken to integrate the state into India. In 1957, most of the provisions of the Indian constitution were extended to Kashmir (ICG, 2003).

Sheikh Abdullah continued to call for a plebiscite through the 'Plebiscite Front' founded by his close associate, Mirza Afzal Beg. In January 1958, Sheikh was released, but his outspoken support for a plebiscite led to his re-arrest in April. In 1974, Sheikh Abdullah and Mirza Afzal Beg entered into discussions with the Indian Government, which in February 1975 resulted in an agreement known as the Kashmir Accord. The Accord represented on the face of it a substantial surrender by Sheikh Abdullah. His aim of restoring the State to its constitutional position at the time of his removal in 1953 largely failed. Sheikh Abdullah's reward for accepting the Accord was his return to power (Goodhart, Dalmo et.al).

## 9. Genesis of violence

In late 1980s, the fight over Jammu and Kashmir took a turn for the worse. Popular groups accused the ruling party, the National Conference (NC), of widespread corruption (Karen, 2003, *op.cit.*, pp. 163-164). Thus, Sheikh Abdullah proved incapable of leading the struggle forward to realise the aspirations of the Kashmiri people. Before his death in 1982, Sheikh Abdullah appointed his son Farooq Abdullah on 21 August 1981, as the president of National Conference. Farooq Abdullah's first stint as Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir did not go smoothly (ICG, 2002, *op.*, *cit.*, p.7).

On 28 June 1984, Centre dismissed Farooq Abdullah Government, appointed Jagmohan as governor and the Congress agent G.M. Shah as the Chief Minister. But Shah was soon dismissed and the state was put under President's rule. Thus the Congress government never tolerated any state government demanding autonomy, and consistently dismissed Kashmiri leaders who did not agree with the Indian agenda. Farooq Abdullah who hobnobbed with the opposition parties plotting against congress for a brief period soon joined hands with Congress and a Congress-NC alliance fought the election in 1987 (AIRSF, 1990). Dr. Farooq Abdullah was elected leader of NC-Congress coalition. Allegations of foul practices in elections were hurled at NC (Goodhart, 1995, *op. cit.*, p.28-29). The simmering discontent over the policies of the Union Government and allegations of the rigging of votes in the 1987 assembly elections triggered off a violent uprising which was backed by Pakistan (Wikipedia, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2015).

## 10. Insurgency in the Kashmir Valley

Though Pakistan continued to support the anti-India and pro-secessionist forces in the state since 1947 but it took a violent turn into insurgency in the valley in the year 1989. The first rebel attack was the bomb explosion in Srinagar in July 1988. Since then the state witnessed a campaign of organised violence with Jamaat-e-Islami and Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) being the major players (Singh, 2011).

The early years of insurgency were marked by an explosion of militant groups, increasing violence, mass anti-India demonstrations and a prevalent belief that the end of Indian control in the valley was near. India responded with a heavy hand. Jagmohan Malhotra was reappointed as Governor of Jammu and Kashmir in January 1990. Jagmohan attempted to quell the uprising through force, and government troops went so far as to fire on unarmed demonstrators. Foreign media were soon banned from the valley (ICG, 2002, *op.cit.*, p. 8).

By 1990 violence had escalated, and of army in the valley was reinforced with the extension of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act and the introduction of the Disturbed Areas Act. These Acts along with the J and K Public Safety Act and Terrorist and Disruptive Activities [Prevention] Act, completely paralysed life in the state (Chandhoke, 2006).

### 10.1. Major incidents of insurgency

On 8 December 1989 Rubaiya Sayeed, daughter of Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, the first Muslim Indian Home Minister, was kidnapped by the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front marked the beginning of the *Tahrik*. This was soon followed by the kidnapping and killing of H. L. Khera, general manager of Hindustan Machine Tools and Musheerul- Haq, vice-chancellor of University of Kashmir. There was also a large scale exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Kashmir valley. According to official sources, around 55,000 Kashmiri Pandit families fled to take shelter in Jammu, Delhi and other places (Singh, 2011, *op.cit.*, pp. 13-14).

## 11. Impact of Violence on Civil society and Economy

The theory of development by Amritya Sen argues that development and peace are intimately related. Peace is

both constitutive of development and instrument to it. In this light it can be argued that economic underdevelopment amounts to lack of peace and prosperity. This is very much the case in Kashmir, where all conflicts and turmoils have not allowed economic developments to prevail (Khan, 2013, op. cit., p.19).

### **11.1. Impact of Violence on Civil Society**

The general consequences of armed conflict in Kashmir (which actually started in 1947) are military harassment, deaths, human rights violation, disrupted schooling, displacements etc. The conflict had resulted in loss of a significant number of people. According to conservative official estimates nearly 40,000 people have been killed since 1989; however unofficial estimates put the figure around 80,000. The death of a family member has posed a challenge to the family as a whole, socially as well as economically (Rather, 2013). The state human rights commission identified over 2,700 unmarked graves in North Kashmir and another 3,844 unidentified bodies in mass graves in Poonch and Rajouri. NGOs estimate that over 8,000 people have "disappeared" (Tabasum, 2012).

During the more than two decades of conflict, Kashmir has witnessed transformation of families and communities for survival, like children were employed, very often on exploitative basis and at hazardous occupations, potential of youth was not properly cultivated because a kind of psychological fear was set permanently in their minds, and the net result was therefore the wastage of human resources. Since 1989 Kashmiris have lost in both men and material, and forced to turn to their children as an economic resource instead of letting them for recreation and play and education (Rather, 2013, op. cit., p. 1).

### **11.2. Impact of Violence on State Economy**

Kashmir Valley has rich natural resources, but its economic development has been hobbled by misguided economic policies, political turmoil and lack of cooperation between India and Pakistan, and political turmoil. Damage to infrastructure, has resulted in the lag of annual economic growth as compared to national level. Tourism suffered tremendously. The forest resources have been damaged because of illegally occupied areas of forests by security forces due to which production has been damaged and declined. According to conservative estimates, the militants have raised about 650 schools to the ground. The violence in the state has led to sharp increase in unemployment (Bharti and Bilal, 2013).

#### **11.2.1. Tourism Sector**

Tourism plays a vital role in the economic development of a number of countries across the globe. In 1987, the last big season before the violence started, tourism accounted for approximately 10 per cent of the income of the state. During the next 23 years of unrest, tourism contributed virtually nothing to the economy of the state. In pre-militancy era, international tourists constituted a significant portion of those visiting Kashmir. They spent on high-end handicraft products besides investing in adventure spots like trekking, skiing and rafting (Shah, Ambreen et.al).

Tourism one of the main industries in the Kashmir valley has suffered tremendously due to violent activities. It has declined substantially since late 1980s when militancy gained momentum. The number of tourists visiting the state per year has gone down from seven million in pre-military days to few thousands in following years. It is estimated that state lost 29 million tourists from 1989-2002 leading to loss of tourism revenue of \$ 3.6 billion (Bharti and Bilal, 2013, op. cit., p. 240).

#### **11.2.2. Industrial sector**

Small scale industries have registered maximum growth during eighties but have registered a decrease to a great extent in nineties. The handicraft industry occupies an important position in the economy of J & K and provides employment to more than 3 lakh people. It is heavily dependent on tourism for its survival. Tourists often purchase the world famous Kashmiri carpets, shawls and crewel embroidery. However, in post-1989 era, the performance of this sector also deteriorated (Shah, 2013, op. cit., p.40).

After 1996, militant violence has reduced considerably and a peace process is underway. A significant development is that free and fair electoral processes have been established since 1996. But this did not mean that the political issue of separatism and the alienation of the people from the centre had ended. These are evident in the frequent agitations on the streets taking the form of stone pelting mobs of youth. The situation therefore continues to be volatile and the state has been rocked by massive protests on the streets in 2008 against the proposal to give land to a Hindu shrine, in 2009 it triggered off the alleged rape and murder of two women by security forces, and in 2010, it triggered by the deaths of three civilian men killed by the Army. These uprisings saw Kashmir valley locked in hartals (a form of political protest where shops are closed and work suspended) for 4-5 months. More than 100 youths were killed in police shooting (Sonpar, 2015).

However, situation was normalized for quite some years but in July 2016 massive protests started again after the killing of Hizbul Mujahideen commander, Burhan Wani. Lakhs of people came on streets raised anti-Indian slogans and demanded freedom for Kashmir. During this incident security forces used pellet guns and other armaments due to which hundreds of protesters died, thousands of people injured and hundreds lost their eyes. Under these circumstances, all sectors of society have suffered great losses. More than two decades of

political violence have damaged the social support structures that once sustained the community materially and psychologically and have created an emotional climate of insecurity and distrust.

## 12. Suggestions and Conclusion

Kashmir is a political issue; it needs to be resolved politically. Peace, security, stability, and elimination of terrorism, injustice and poverty is impossible without political resolution. Kashmir can become a place of peace and development when all parties involved in the process will work for peace through development of the region instead of waiting for conflict to be resolved fully.

Focus has to be on creating more employment and educational opportunities for Kashmiries and relieve them from day-to-day turmoil. The state having its own resource potential. Exploration of this natural resource material can be a step towards peace and prosperity. Agricultural economy coupled with tourist potential and forest resources can play a major role in the growth and development of the state in particular.

In nutshell it is an established fact that the parties involved in Kashmir dispute have lost thousands of precious lives and suffered human rights abuses mankind has ever known. The reports from Kashmir clearly depict that since the genesis of the conflict civilians are the worst sufferers of atrocities. The problem needs urgent consideration as it concerns human rights violations and also boosts economic backwardness, unemployment and developmental problems of the Kashmir Valley.

## References

- All India Revolutionary Studies Federation (August, 1990): Kashmir Rhetoric and Reality, P.8.
- Bharati, Kiyawat, Bilal, Ahmad Khan (2013): 'Inclusive Growth in Jammu and Kashmir: Problems and Prospects', International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR), volume 2, issue 5, P. 240.
- Carter Centre Report (19-21, November, 2002): The Kashmir Conflict: Historical and Prospective Intervention Analyses, p.2.
- Chandhoke, Neera (September 2006): *A State of One's Own: Secessionism and Federalism in India*. Houghton Street, London: Developing Countries Research Centre, p.20.
- Chaudhary, Shweta (2013): Extraordinary Military Powers and Right to Self Determination in Kashmir, University of Toronto, P.9.
- Goodhart, William, Dalmo, de Abreu Dalbiri, Md, Florence Butegwa, Vitit, Muntarhorn (1995): Human Rights in Kashmir, Geneva, Switzerland: International Commission of Jurists, pp.24-25.
- Hassan, Khalid Wasim (2009): History Revisited: Narratives on political and constitutional changes in Kashmir (1947-1990), Bangalore: The Institute for Social and Economic Change, pp. 2-3.
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jammu\\_and\\_Kashmir](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jammu_and_Kashmir) accessed on 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2015.
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jammu\\_and\\_Kashmir](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jammu_and_Kashmir), accessed on 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2015.
- International Crisis Group (2002): Kashmir: The view from Srinagar, Asia Report, P. 2.
- International Crisis Group (2003): Kashmir: The View From New Delhi, Asia Report, P. 5.
- Islam, Ajaz ul (2014): 'Impact of Armed Conflict on economy and tourism: A study of state of Jammu and Kashmir', IOSR Journal of Economics and Finance (IOSR-JEF), volume 4, issue 6, p.55.
- Kalis, Naseer Ahmad, Shaheen, Showket Dar, (2013): 'Geo-political significance of Kashmir: An overview of Indo-Pak Relations', IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science, vol.9, issue 2, P. 116.
- Karen, Heymann (2003): Earned Sovereignty for Kashmir: The Legal Methodology to Avoiding a Nuclear Holocaust, American University International Law Review, pp.158-159
- Kaul, S.S (2001): Dynamics of Kashmir Politics. New Delhi: Rajat Publications, P.137.
- Keng, Mohan Krishen (2009): Kashmir Article 370, New Delhi: Anmol Publications, P.25.
- Khan, B. A. (2013): 'Violences and Turmoils Adversely Effected Jammu and Kashmir Economy', International Journal of Educational Research and Technology, volume 4, p. 18.
- Khan, G. H. (2011): Government and Politics of Jammu and Kashmir. Residency Road Srinagar, Kashmir: Gulshan Books, p.1.
- Malik, M. A. (2010): The Role of National Conference in Politics of Jammu and Kashmir, Srinagar: Tanzeeb Publishers and Distributors, pp. 29-30.
- Mir, Mushtaq Ahmad (2014): 'India-Pakistan: The History of Unresolved Conflicts', IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science, volume 19, Issue 4, P. 105.
- Nabi Mubashir, Aima Ashok (2012): 'Availability and Awareness of Microfinance in Jammu and Kashmir State' International Journal of Research in Commerce, Economics & Management, Volume 2, Issue 2, p.40.
- Raina, A.N. (August, 2002): Geography of Jammu and Kashmir State, Jammu: Radha Krishan Anand & Co. p.2.
- Rather, Farooq Ahmad (2013): 'Armed conflict in J & K and its impact on society: A case study of Kashmir Valley', International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, volume 3, issue 2, P. 1.
- Shah, Farooq Ahmad, Ambreen Wani, Zuhaib Mustafa (2013): 'Impact of Armed Conflict on Kashmir

- Tourism and Socio-Economic Profile of the People of J&K’, Excel International Journal of Multidisciplinary Management Studies, vol.3 (7), P. 38.
- Singh, M Amarjeet (2011): Conflict in Jammu and Kashmir. Banglore, India: National Institute of Advanced Studies, pp.13.
  - Sonpar, Shobna (2015): Transforming Conflict, Changing Society: Psychosocial Programming in Indian Jammu and Kashmir. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, pp.36-37.
  - Tabassum, Mohammad Tahir (2012): ‘Political Situation in Kashmir and Role of United Nations’, Studies of Changing Societies: Comparative and Interdisciplinary Focus, vol. 1, P.10.
  - Verma, P.S. (1994): Jammu and Kashmir: At the Political Crossroads, New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, pp. 14-18