Reintegrating Vulnerable Youth in Jammu and Kashmir: A deradicalization process model by Maharashtra Police in India

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A B S T R A C T

Amidst the debate about India's population dividend and India's capability to harness it. The possible radicalization of youth in India can pose a significant challenge for India. The failure to achieve any durable peace in Jammu and Kashmir over three decades after the inception of the conflict has made it a multilayered complex issue. The unilateral action of the central government of removing Article 370 and bifurcating the former state of Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories will have long-term effects. Such development is juxtaposed with the surfacing trend of radicalization among youth in India and Jammu and Kashmir and joining ISIS. It becomes essential to suggest a more proactive rather than reactionary approach. The paper tries to draw on the insights from the Maharashtra Police Deradicalisation model and its utility for youth in Jammu and Kashmir.

Keywords: Radicalization, Youth, Jammu and Kashmir, Deradicalisation models.

INTRODUCTION

The Rising Rage in Kashmir (2007 to 2017)

The militancy in Jammu and Kashmir started declining around the year 1993-94. In the following decade, the Jammu and Kashmir issue have seen several ups and downs.[1] The lost window of opportunity to achieve the concrete output on 'Four-point Formula'[2] and the failure of round table conferences have any concrete result on the ground in Jammu and Kashmir set in question the willingness of the State to find the solution. The declining hope for the peace process has set a pessimistic tone among the people in Jammu and Kashmir. The tension between the region of Jammu and Kashmir has also started reflecting in state politics. On one side the rising discontent is shaped in June to August 2008 with the incidence like Amarnath Land transfer agitation[3] (Chaudhary, 2019: 254-258; Borah, 2007). On the other side, the bilateral relations between India and Pakistan were halted due to the 2008 terrorist attacks on Mumbai (Taj Hotel) (Dulat and Sinha 2016).

The people of Jammu and Kashmir inferred this as sealing their fate as 'contested land' rather than 'bridge' between the state of India and Pakistan. The 2009[4]-2010[5] summer protest along with the common demand of reducing

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[1] The major of these can be sighted as Kargil Conflict (1999), Lahore declaration (2001), attack on Jammu and Kashmir and India's parliament (October and December 2001 respectively) were some of the peaks of tension.

[2] The four-point formula proposed by General Musharraf: Identification of the region in Kashmir for settlement, demilitarisation, self-governance and a joint management or a consultative mechanism between India and Pakistan on the state.

[3] In June 2008, 800 kanals (unit of land measurement) forest land was allotted to Shri Amarnath Shrine Board.

The protest against this allotment started in Ganderbal, Kashmir Valley. Simultaneously the counter protests started in Jammu region in favor of allotment of land. The government requested Shrine Board to return the land but this triggered the violent agitation in Jammu region leading to calling for Bandh. During the period of 2 months several people have lost their lives. On August 31 the around 80 kanal (4-hector) land is given to SASB.

[4] The May-June 2009 protests over the alleged rape and murder of women in Shopian.

[5] The case of Machhil 'fake encounter' where the five

deployment of armed forces and corruption (Khan 2017:33-35). The 'stone pelters' becomes symbol of the wide protest and rage among the youth in the valley raising the slogan for 'azadi.'

Each summer the protest took the lives of more than 100 innocent people, injured many. One of the major features of these protests was stone pelting. As Sanjay Kak has pointed out that the disproportion of the protests and its sheer effrontery, has captured the imagination of a growing number of people of India (Kak 2011: 32). The act of facing such mighty force with stones which has resulted in deaths of many has much gravity. It has been discussed at many forums, through many articles; in simple terms it symbolised the anger of Kashmiri people. The present youth brought up in the period of turmoil is politically conscious (Mubarki 2010). Their act of defying the orders of curfew and to come ahead for protest against such mighty force shows their desire for freedom. It is this resistance which shows their conviction for freedom; where youth instead of guns are choosing stones to face security forces. As a result, Kak observes that the 'security grid' over Kashmir made up of security forces and civilian intelligence has started appearing clumsy and vulnerable (Kak 2011: 31).

During these three years of discontent (2008-2010) azadi had many meanings, as one can find it in reflections of Angana Chatterji (2011) who was present during one such summer in Kashmir. She conceives it as 'freedom'- i.e., 'a state of mind'. This freedom also means freedom from daily humiliation and suffering, uncertainty of life. This is demand for restoring faith and hope for life (Shukla A. 2013). This is demand for dignity of life of people living in Kashmir, local and soldiers both. It is demand for freedom to be 'themselves', to choose their national destiny. The wave of discontent and mass protest for three consecutive years from 2008-2010 in the region has initiated the discussion[6] in larger political sphere for recognizing the demand of local population. The opportunity was responded with void. The devastation caused by the September 2014 flood added to the problem of Kashmir valley. The failure of state administration to deliver, later center's financial aid declared in November 2015, but delayed delivery made it of no use to affected by flood to recover the loss. It added to the already existing dismay of local population. The subsequent state election had seen the unusual alliance between PDP and BJP working on 'agenda of alliance',[7] it raised the hope of people to get relief from misgovernance as it promised the Governance alliance - smart governance with detailed program of cooperation on political, economic, security issues. The alliance collapsed in June 2018 and the governor's rule is imposed on the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

The lack of government to engage the local aspiration in meaningful terms resulted in alienation these people. This void is filled by the religious fundamentalist ideologies. In subsequent period religious fundamentalism has become a major threat to security. Unlike the other threats this ideological threat affects both, conventional and non-conventional level. As they target both the state being highest political authority and society making it a soft target. Though Kashmir's discontent has been utilised by such groups to target India; till early decade of present century Kashmir could maintain the ideological distance from such religious fundamentalist groups. (Rai, 2011; Chatterji, 2011; Jaleel, 2011). But Jaleel also raised the concern that if India did not recognize the legitimate demand of Kashmir's political rights and continuous suppression of Kashmir's aspirations would make it difficult to keep the struggle on nonviolent path. Sanjay Kak also raised such concern of turning the present discontent returning to violent path, which will help the organization like Lashkar-e- Toiba to spread their ideology in India (Kak, 2011).

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people from different agencies and civilians were charged with murder of 3 civilians suspecting them as terrorists.

[6] During this period several public intellectual and later the interlocutors report argued that 'India needs to understand the demand of political rights of people in Kashmir and allow the normal politics take root in state. The Government of India should consider the demand for human rights violations investigation and reducing the deployment of armed forces from the region in phased manner.

[7] A state government report on the implementation of the Agenda of Alliance (AoA) shows that key agenda items which the local coalition partner PDP believed would go a long way in healing wounds of Kashmiris, such as the withdrawal of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), debt waivers, vacation of land 'occupied' by security forces, or transferring Central government stake in hydro power projects to the state, have seen slow progress in the two years till December-end (Naveed Iqbal 2018).

Around 2017, David Devadas observed that the rage among Kashmiri youth as a frustration among the educated youth was outcome of several factors including caged childhood and overpowering arbitrary authority of security forces. This generation was born and brought up during the conflict. It has witnessed violence in all forms and shapes. It was a generation living in detracted violence, disappearance of people in vicinity. It lived under extended counter- insurgency practices as fearsome 'crackdowns',[8] barricade checks and bunkers which become everyday phenomena in their lives. It took away the basic certainty and security about life available to children or teenagers at their age. The loneliness or void often collectively experienced by the youth in Jammu and Kashmir was unprecedented in rest of the country. In addition to these factors shaping their childhood, the institutional level limitations as the crippled education system, lack of socializing space has deep impact on the personalities of youth in Kashmir (Devadas, 2018). The unstable political atmosphere only has added to their confusion and struggle to cope up with their social and political reality. The constant turmoil due to narrow short-term politics of different political parties and both center and states resulted in the crisis of confidence in the political system. David Devadas noted that the approach of the government was short term- 'get through this summer' somehow- the generalist bureaucrats and politicians formulating government policies has short term approach as their tenure in particular decision-making position was ranging between 2 to 5 years (Devadas, 2018: 31). The apathy of a section within India to understand their struggle only increased their frustration. There was section within India who wanted to feel good about Kashmir by portraying normalcy in Kashmir often through electoral turnouts and number of tourists visiting the state. Such oversimplification of complex issues like Kashmir played crucial role in creating counter-narrative about both sides increasing the communication gap between them. The mainstream narrative regarding Kashmir issue has lost touch with youth and failed to understand their aspirations for peace and assured of certainties to rest of the country's youth. The brutalities faced by young people (stone-pelters) at the hands of police and the incompetence and cynicism of state government installed by center reflected in the then Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's constantly changing

stand about Shopian rape case (2009) and his impression that this stone pelting is nothing but anger of youth which will not lead to violence, underrating the anger and discontent among the Kashmiri population.

Among this turmoil the increased connectivity coupled with the rising global Islamic consciousness created a fertile ground for fundamentalist ideologies to take root and helping the youth to make sense of their everyday life as against the arbitrary humiliation and assault at the hands of security forces. David Devadas (2019) noted the emergence of three prominent orthodox Islamic schools in Jammu and Kashmir and other part of India. The Tabligh, Salafi schools which were primarily based on narrow vision of Islam and practicing exclusivist culture. The Jaish-e- Mohammed and Al Badr affiliated to Haqqani faction of Afghan Jihad. This along with the rising ultra nationalist ideas among rest of the India during post 2014 period has resulted in developing a mindset of pan-Islamist worldview among the youth in Jammu and Kashmir (Devadas, 2019: 414).

David Devadas has argued that the various institutions of state were blind towards the changes in Jammu and Kashmir. The insurgency started in 1988 has ended. The present generation in Jammu and Kashmir has changed generation. It has desire of peace and dignity. The generation showed fearlessness and insistence on dignity. The generational differences and the role of narrative in shaping collective memory were relatively less recognised factors of these summers' protests. The failure of local administration, especially law enforcement agencies like Police and CRPF paramilitary forces to recognise this has led to several young protestors turning to extremism and taking up arm. The public was furious at that stage over the killings of those who many Kashmir called 'innocent' that is those who has nothing to win militancy. The local population had demanded the rule of law and constitutional guaranteed right to life for those who had not defied the state (Devadas, 2018: 20). Though while handling 2008 till 2010 insurgency many security practices were wound down but the demand of local population for peace and dignity were unfulfilled.

RADICALISATION: GLOBAL AND INDIAN DISCOURSE

The phenomena of radicalisation recognised at global level as part of 'war on terror' strategy adopted by US and

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[8] Crackdown is local name given to the cardon-search

operations carried out by the military Forces.

many other European States. The global discourse on radicalisation is very diverse depending on the nature of subject concern in different regions of the world. There is consensus that radicalisation is not a necessary synonym for terrorism. There is a distinction between radicalism and extremism. While both these deviate from normal political thinking, the former is a more open- ended approach which may or may not be executed by a particular individual. The extremism is closed, or static mindset very often reflected in destructive actions.

Radicalisation is not product of single decision, but it is ending result of dialectical process that gradually pushes the individual towards committing violence. 'Radicalisation is a context-bound phenomenon par excellence. Global, sociological and political drivers matter as much as ideological and psychological ones' (Schmid, 2013; European Foundation for South Asian Studies, 2017).

The existing literature on radicalisation focuses more often on Islamist extremism and jihadist terrorism. According to scholars like Dr. Alex P. Schmid and Arun Kundnani the present counterterrorism strategies while understanding radicalisation primarily are focused on fear about Islam resulting in making radicalisation as an instrument in state's hand against a particular of community. 'The concept of radicalisation has led to the construction of Muslim populations as 'suspect communities', civil rights abuses and a damaging failure to understand the nature of the political conflicts governments are involved in' (Kundnani, 2012: 3). In the west especially in Europe the pattern of radicalisations observed is of 'lone wolf' where individual who are recruited through social media and online platform carry out terrorist act, with *ad hoc* logistics support. The features which were observed among the radicalised individuals were adaptation of legalist interpretation of Islam, selective trust on rigid ideologies, the belief that the west and Islam as irreconcilably opposed, manifested low-level tolerance for perceived religious deviance. They express radical political views. The factor of migration plays a very crucial role in Europe. Often tension arises due to failure to understand the cultural differences among different communities. The approach of law enforcement agencies towards radicalisation is managerial. The European Union, Britain, Saudi Arabia,

Malaysia and Canada are some of the countries which have developed their model of identifying radicalisation and deradicalization.

In South Asian context, the situation is different as many of the South Asian societies are multiethnic, multi-religious, multi-cultural. The issue of radicalisation for some of the people was still not relevant to South Asian context as the community level tension between different ethnic groups were inherent part of their politics. India is facing terrorism from much earlier than emergence of 'war on terror'. India since independence have experience the unsettled border posing threat from Pakistan and later Bangladesh. The strategy of Pakistan to 'divide India through thousand cuts'[9] could get the ground in India due to discontent among section in society. The ethnic nationalism emerging in certain sections in India during the decade of late 1980s. There are four sources of radicalisation in India Islamic, cross border terrorism (ideology-ethnic nationalism- Jammu and Kashmir), Majoritarian and Left-Wing Radicalism (Kaushik, 2019). The threat of 'jihad' in India got local support due to rising tension between Hindu majority and Muslim-religious minority. The major actor involved were SIMI (Student of Islamic Movement in India) and Indian Mujahidin (IM).

There are three schools of thought Deobandi, Jamat-e-Islami (Hind) both these schools have influence radical ideology but over a period of time they have evolved and overtly encouraged to liberal democratic values to achieve. The Salafi or Wahabi school of thought is the most recent and orthodox. It is not monolithic school has different sects. Hussain Haqqani explained the containment of radicalisation in India is possible due to liberal nature of democracy, pluralist notion of identity. The major reasons for Islamic radicalisation are socio-economic inequality among religious minorities i.e., Muslim. The Secretariat, C[10] (2006) observed that, "While Muslims need to prove on a daily basis that they are not 'anti-national' and 'terrorists', it is not recognised that the alleged 'appeasement' has not resulted in the desired level of socio-economic development of the community. In general, Muslims complained that they are constantly looked upon with a great degree of suspicion not only by certain sections of society but also by public institutions and governance structures. This has a depressing effect

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[9] It was strategy adopted by General Zia-ul-Haq after the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971.

[10] The report popularly known as Sachar Committee Report.

on their psyche." The Ministry of Minority Affairs[11] (2007) report noted that "Among Minorities, about one-third Muslims are living in Kutcha houses, which lack basic facilities like drinking water, toiler etc., and likewise they live in rented houses" and Amitabh Kundu Report (2015) described the low socio-economic development of Muslims in India. Inequality has the potential to translate into radicalisation. The other major factor playing a substantial role is identity crisis. The Muslim population due to history of partition faces the struggle to justify their loyalty towards nation and their community. The clash of values liberal versus conservative state philosophy, religious or ideological issues are some of the other reasons for radicalisation (Rasheed, 2016:45).

The majoritarian nationalism's rising trend of Hindu nationalism in the country which causes Muslim felt marginalised (Jaffrelot, 2012). In 2014 with rise of BJP at the center of political power the majoritarian trend emerges in India. There is rise of tension between Hindu and Muslim communities within India. The incidences of mob lynching due to beef eating. BJP as a political party has always made clear the stand about removing of article 370 and Jammu and Kashmir being integral part of India. 'One Nation-One Flag- One Constitution'. The rising communal tension between Hindu and Muslims communities, desire of retaliation against real or perceived discrimination, economic despair and social-political marginalization and religious polarization with the rise of new nationalism acted as push factors while the online spread of Islamic ideology giving rise to ideological sense of calling, romanticism of 'jihad' and glorious past and loyalty towards political leaders or community acted as pull factors.

NATURE OF RADICALISATION IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR:

The radicalisation in Jammu and Kashmir differed widely from the rest of the Indian Islamic radicalisation. The existing separatism leadership started getting irrelevant by 2016. During the period of 2007-2017, David Devadas interacted with around 7000 youth from various schools,

colleges and universities. The 2016 protest suggested the rejection of the entire system. The idea of being Kashmiri was reduced to Muslim rather than Kashmiri being a linguistic and ethnic identity. Among the Kashmiri youth there is relatively less awareness about the other communities likely is Kashmir state and sometimes the stereotypes are more powerful than awareness about surrounding.

The urban -rural difference in voting percent was high in rural areas while the infiltration and counterinsurgency was high in urban areas. The understanding of Islam among youth was superficial. Their response to the How many types of Jihads are there? Only 235 out of 961 responded 24.5 percent could precisely tell correct answer. There was less animosity about the sectarian divide between the Sunni and Shia community. Their perception about mainstream and separatism political leaders during 2011 and 2016 during rage and peace time varies as during peacetime (2011) their range of criticism of separatist and mainstream politicians was wide. In 2016, they reject mainstream politics and leaders. By 2017, almost 70 percent of the population of the valley was estimated to be below the age of thirty and twenty. The agitation of 2016 was different backing and celebrating militants. Many of these were fired by the idea of caliphate and Sharia law. While the old generation had given up on nation or nation-state system. This has given rise to trend that was less tolerant towards liberal democratic ideas (Devadas 2018: 59- 94). The incidences of snatching arms and weapons from police and paramilitary forces started from 2009-2012.[12] It was only in 2015 state woke up to the realisation of 'new militancy' in the valley. In June 2017 Zubair Bashir Turey's video on Youtube reflected the idea of ideal retreat from confusing, humiliation world order in which 'nobody' seemed to understand young people too many teachers did not satisfy quest for insights and parent's unfamiliarity with the unitary families struggled to cope with (Rashid, 2016: 28).

Overall, in July 2016[13], there were around 200 terrorists on ground in the state by the end of the year their number

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[11] The report popularly known as Rangnath Misra Commission.

[12] In September 2009 Amin Bhat surrendered militant resumed his activities by snatching AK rifle and ammunition from a Special Police Officer. In November 4, 2009, A 'Divisional Commander' of the HM, escaped

from police custody after snatching the service rifle of escorting police personnel and subsequently firing at them in the court complex at Pulwama.

[13] On 8 July 2016 Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist Burhan Wani killed in J&K encounter.

has increased around 300. Though such sudden rise is not new to the people monitoring Kashmir insurgency for decades but the ration of 60:40 as local: foreigner was new and cause of concern (Khan, 2017:50). David Devadas noted that the period of July 2016-2018 new militancy was at rise in Shopian of South Kashmir, Tral of East Kashmir and Baramullah of North Kashmir. The two trends of militant violence were very prominent, first targeting persons running telephone services or mobile telephone towers. The persons who were close to Kashmir established freedom movement under the suspicion that they were playing both sides (Devadas, 2018:22). Still the most worrisome aspect of this phase of 'new militancy' was the local mobilization in support of the militant through 'stone pelting'. As against 2011 when stone pelting was reflecting rage has turn into a strategy to support the militant very often local boys. Another trend was of mass attendance of funeral rites of local as well as Pakistan terrorist (Devadas, 2015 and 2018).

The study of Jammu and Kashmir police found that militant funerals were fertile grounds for new recruitments, around 50 percent recruitment of total happened within the 10 km radius of encounter sites and residence of the militants. It generally happens within the first 40 days of the encounters (Shah, 2020: 19) In the recent trend of radicalisation, the role of cyber activity is major contributor, many activities on cyber space or social media suggest orthodox inclination. The cyber space in many ways is one way platform without any scrutiny may content the spreading hate, morphed photograph, fake news or propaganda. The Islamic State of Jammu and Kashmir (ISJK) and 'Khilafah in Jammu and Kashmir' has first appeared on social media. As discussed earlier, the arbitrary rule of political authorities and lack of accountability lead in creating void acting as push factors for teenagers towards radicalisation. Their search for sense of meaning as well as the appeal to follow orthodox religion helps them to fulfil and gives the illusion of giving agency and authority over their lives. The establishment of Islamic State at global level gives the highest meaning act as pulling factor (Seminarist, 2017 and Schmid, 2013).

After the imposition of Governor's rule in June 2018. Jammu and Kashmir Civil Society noted that 2018 was deadliest year at least 586 people were killed in including 160 civilians, 267 suspected militants and 159 were member of armed forces or local police (JKCS Annual Report, 2018: 4). In this background, the abrogation of article 370 and bifurcation the state in two union territories in order to integrate Jammu and Kashmir with India is major defining moment. The BJP led central government justified this step will help to prevent terrorism and better economic growth, peaceful development in the former state. The amendment proposed (later adopted) by the present government in Article 370 (3), the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Bill, 2019, facilitate the application of the India's Constitution to the former state of Jammu and Kashmir. As a preventive measure all mainstream and separatist political leadership, other prominent figures as journalists and intellectuals were put under house arrest from August 2019. Despite the restrictions on people's movement protests were reported in some parts of the state. A large number of people were arrested under the Public Safety Act and several people need to give assurance to the government authorities for maintain public order. The rising trend of terrorist attack and skirmishes between security forces and militants in 2020[14] suggests the difficulty in achieving the government's proposed objective. The rise of urban militancy with the objective to establish Islamic state of Jammu and Kashmir is on rise who believes that dying for religion is better than dying for politics (Naqash, 2018).

This had shrunk the political space in the former state as the decision of government was considered unilateral, further government use harsh restriction to avoid any unforeseen challenge to public order. The youth which has lost the faith in the political system was further pushed to towards radicalisation due to macrolevel polarisation of public opinion, party politics focusing on short term interest rather than focusing on the value of human dignity and welfare of people beyond partisan politics. At the meso-level the local administration and supportive events as the failure of subsequent government to understand the 2008-10 unrest and

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[14] In 2020 alone, the Indian armed forces killed over 225 militants, including some 47 top commanders of various outfits. They also arrested over 251 militants, recovered 41improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and underwent 111 instances of gun violence with over37 grenade attacks. The year also witnessed over 167 young militant recruits (Shivmurthy 2021).

spread of religious fundamentalism in the state. The random arrests of young children as stone pelters followed by interrogation often lead to humiliation of the youth at the hands of authority was difficult to overcome for several of them. The subsequent procedure of either illegal exchange of money or undertaking for dutiful code of conduct with the signature of local politician often seating Member of Legislative Assembly were toll taking not just for individual but whole family. The rise of Hindu nationalism or ultra-nationalist prioritising security or use of force option over the political process resulted in intensifying the rigidity among the different religious groups. At the micro-level, the individual's level it was struggled to cope with constant extra-ordinary situation with uncertainty at many levels. There are diverse and abundant causes for radicalisation. These factors mostly acted as push factors for radicalising the youth while the rise of Islam at the global level in the form of ISIS posed as the promising possibility through online platforms. The recruiter often exploited the feeling of humiliation and agony among youth by asking them to snatch rifles or weapons of police or paramilitary forces and gave them task kill suggested target often police or informers of police. Once committing the crime of homicide, the reverse journey was difficult. During the lockdown and blanket internet ban the militant used Information Communication Technology (ICT) and social media to spread their message. Often extremist propaganda was circulated through encrypted messages as Telegram, Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp vis-à-vis VPN servers. Even smaller and lesser- known messaging platforms such as Nandbox came into use—to escape increasing state scrutiny (Shivmurthy 2021; Kaura, V. 2017)

DERADICALIZATION IN INDIA

The extremist violence is not new phenomenon to South Asia or India. The emergence of Islamic State or Caliphate at the world level has changed the nature of terrorism in the region and response of Indian state. Around 155 individuals from Kerala, Maharashtra, Hyderabad and other states had left India for joining the ISIS till 2021. It has revealed the vulnerability of Indian youth to radicalization. It is important to note that the deradicalization program of India was not started due to radicalisation in Jammu and Kashmir but other parts of India. Hence the Ministry of Home Affairs has decided to implement the programme in at state level. In 2014, the then Home Minister Rajnath Singh order to set up new

Counter-terrorism and Counter- Radicalisation Division as response to the rise of ISIS at global level. In general, the military follows the practice of community outreach which helps it to develop goodwill among the local community through welfare measures as health and education help in conflict zones. In order to develop the deradicalization program India has studied existing model of England, Saudi Arabia.

The Maharashtra model was executed by the Maharashtra Police through a multiprong approach. The specialist agency dealing with terrorism tries to reach out to the population of minority community especially with youth by engaging with minority community through self-development programme for youths as opening exercise center in minority areas (residential areas having Muslim concentration), making National Cadet Course (NCC) and Scout Guide mandatory for minority schools. Setting up an independent media to spread mainstream values and thoughts among the youths of the minority population. Community engagement, family interventions, counselling, and psychometric tests are used to engage the youths (Shah, 2020).

In order to deal with the present vulnerable population, the Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS), specialised organisation dealing with terrorism has adopted a softer approach towards deradicalization. The cyber cell puts under surveillance the site propagating extremist literature. Based on the people visiting site it monitors the social media and presence of such individual in virtual space. If they find such vulnerable individual, they contact the family and carries out counselling of such individuals with the help of counsellors or religious leaders. In all the process proper care is taken that individuals identity will not be revealed even within neighborhood. It has developed a questionnaire to test the success of deradicalization process. After the deradicalization process is successfully carried out and individual comes clean, he is reintegrated in mainstream society. If required the financial stability through skill development course, small loans for business. The officer in charge keeps an eye and takes follow up at regular intervals. Though out this process the individual is considered as a 'candidate' and not as a criminal or anti-social element. The organization has conducted a number of deradicalization programs, aimed at individuals and communities. The ATS had succeeded in reintegrating almost 114 men and six women who were radicalised through different reasons like loss of employment, socio-

psychological issues. It has counselled more than 200 individuals. Though the model is not without flaws. As the programme expected to engage with Muslim as religious minority it faces the challenge to engage a community that may already feel targeted due to polarised social environment. There is need to sensitize the police force so as to avoid any *ad hoc* approach (Ahmad 2016a, 2016b, 2016c, 2016d; Shah 2020; Kaushik 2019).

The state of Kerala launched its deradicalization programme in 2016, after reporting several pro-ISIS cases especially in the northern district. It is titled as 'Operation Pigeon.' The state of Kerala has a large number of populations working in gulf countries. The 'operation pigeon' aims to prevent youngster falling in the trap of Islamic State or Indian Mujahidden and Lashkar-e-Taiba. The states of Maharashtra and Kerala have a relatively peaceful atmosphere. Though Maharashtra have experienced several terrorists attacks its overall socio-political atmosphere is stable and much less polarised than Jammu and Kashmir. While Kerala has significant population living in Gulf countries bringing it in close contact with the Islamic culture, it has not experience political uncertainty as experience by Jammu and Kashmir. The state of Jammu and Kashmir is a conflict zone from last three decades. The politically charged atmosphere reduced the possibility of taking a moderate stand.

There is no declared or well-developed deradicalisation programme. The former chief of Combine Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat in January 2020[15] said that there are deradicalisation camps in India as well as Jammu and Kashmir. In 2022, the Director General of Police, Dalbir Singh said that the Jammu and Kashmir police are providing guidance to the misled youth and focusing their energies on productive directions. In a way Jammu and Kashmir Police have taken on the parental role in order to engage the youth in Jammu and Kashmir (Daily Excelsior, 2022).

Avoiding blanket use of harsh laws and engaging society to approach youth

The most daunting challenge is the rebuilding the confidence among the local population to have faith in Indian Nationalism and action of central government. The weak political process within the state is further marginalized due to central government's unilateral actions. Though there is no defined model of deradicalization for Jammu and Kashmir and the Military through its 'Winning Hearts and Minds' Programme practices engagement with the local community. The state and central government needs to review its policy of blanket use of harsh laws such as Public Safety Act and sensitise the local as well as central law enforcement agencies to engage local population in more cordial manner (Turrey, 2019). The 'Operation Maa'[16] which is initiative to involve mothers in the campaign to prevent young men from succumbing to the temptation of joining terrorist organizations. The program is based on the societal and family dynamics in Jammu and Kashmir where the close bond between mother and young boys was revealed through several counterinsurgency operations. The young boys were pursued to give up arms and return to their families with the help of family members, especially mothers (Dhillon, 2023: 254-257).

Restoring Statehood and Ensuring Governance:

There is a need to restore statehood in order to ensure the local politics take root. In order to develop the confidence of the local population in towards the political system and democratic values. Jammu and Kashmir is a society with strong political consciousness and rich history of political struggle hence marginalising opinion of local population will have long term negative effect. The major challenge is to bring down corruption and ensure accountability towards people rather than political authorities. The present centralised administration has a strong risk of too much centralisation. Further, India needs to initiate all party dialogue for establishing Truth and Reconciliation mission in order to ensure the cordial relation between Kashmiri Pandits and Muslim population and also Jammu and Kashmir region and cases of human rights violations. The development and maintenance of data and records in order to ensure transparency and increasing vigilance among society are crucial factors (Syed, 2016a and 2016b). The question of rehabilitating Kashmiri Pandits and other minorities getting complex due to targeted killings of minorities including Kashmiri Muslims by the

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[15] This statement was made during the Raisina dialogue on 16 January 2020.
[16] Operation Maa led by the army in Jammu and Kashmir

results around 50 local militants returning to the families.

militant organisations and failure of central and local authorities to engage them and restore the confidence in the process (Chaudhary, 2022)

SPREADING AWARENESS ABOUT ISLAM AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

As discussed before there is limited religious knowledge about all religion and diverse cultures among youth of Jammu and Kashmir. This ignorance is exploited by certain groups to serve their wrested interest. The sense of alienation is much widespread among the Kashmiri youth. It needs a comprehensive program to develop rational empathy towards society and local culture and fulfil their aspiration of fulfilment of basic aspiration of dignity and peace. There is need to develop awareness about the complex history of the past of Jammu and Kashmir (Bhat, 2019; Habib, 2020). It will help in the creation of effective and articulated counter narrative in religious, political, intellectual, cultural and social terms. The thrust has to be in 'engagement' with youth and revival of 'Kashmiriyat' (Seminarist, 2018). In March 2021, nearly 500 religious' leaders, 220 women and 200 youths from Kashmir came together to reject the 'flawed' interpretation of 'jihad' killing innocent people in the name of Islam and restoring the narrative of 'peaceful-coexistence'. The program was organised Jammu and Kashmir People's Nationalist Front in association with Art of Living foundation (TNN, 2021). Such increasing awareness about Islam will help to reduce the exploitation of local people in the name of vote banks politics. The program also expected women to play central role in the spreading the awareness about correct. interpretation of Islam.

Economic Development

There is a need to tackle economic and social inequalities effectively. The government needs to address the problem of unemployment along with the need to develop ecology for entrepreneurship as government jobs will not be able to provide livelihood for all population. Increasing transparency will help to reduce the concentration of too much authority in civil servants will help the robust partnership of private and public sphere in economy. There is need of boosting the

traditional Kashmiri industries horticulture, leather, woolen manufacturing along with the floriculture, joinery and fishery, animal husbandry (Seminarist, 2018).

Engaging the youth in nation building process

Parallel to the vulnerable youth of Jammu and Kashmir there are young minds in Jammu and Kashmir who have shown their desire for a peaceful and dignified future through various art forms including music, painting and photography and advocacy. These skills can be utilised for larger nation-building processes. There is need to build atmosphere of faith and empathy which can help the Kashmiri youth to give away their insecurities developed over three decades. The programs like 'Project Sadbhavana'[17] and coaching for professional programs like 'Super 30' and 'Super 50' can help the youth to get admission for professional courses. The program Jashn-e-Janoob is South Kashmir Sports Festival organized by Chinar Corps helped to tap the local talent and channelized the energy of youth in Jammu and Kashmir towards constructive contribution. In order to nurture youth and provide them with a platform for success in sports on a national and international level, the Jammu and Kashmir government established the youth services and sports department and Jammu and Kashmir State Sports Council (JKSSC) (Noor, 2023).

CONCLUSION

The abrogation of article 370 can be a very radical step but it alone does not have potential to take Kashmir is any direction positive or negative. Taking into consideration the complex and layered history of Jammu and Kashmir issue it is essential that it should be given sufficient time to gain a steady path. The subsequent steps of national and local political leadership will decide which course it will take. The immediate challenge is to prevent the vulnerable youth from getting trapped in militancy, radicalization, or any destructive agenda. In order to ensure that the central as well as local administration need to have a more open-ended approach and slow down the 'security' antennas by taking risks to allow politics of all kinds to flourish. Along with mass surveillance, mass awareness programs about common cultural values from different religions with their

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[17] The Project Sadbhavana Army goodwill schools-twenty-eight army goodwill schools run all over the Kashmir valley giving education to around 10,000

students at a time with the help of 500 teaching and 200 non-teaching staff helps to gain quality education (Dhillon, 2023: 262)

existence on the ground shall be promoted. There has to be an encouragement for community-level programs like 'Operation Maa', 'Super 30'; 'Super 50' 'Project Sadbhavana', and 'Jashn-e-Janoob' to reach out to youth who has joined radicalisation, appealing to them to take their constructive share through comprehensive surrender and rehabilitation policy in building their own society and nation rather than causing harm to it.

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