CHAPTER - 3

MILITANCY IN KASHMIR: TRENDS & RESPONSE

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Militancy in Kashmir:

In 1980s, Pakistan had received massive arms and financial aid from America (channeled through the Central Intelligence Agency) and few Muslim countries for training Afghan youth (designated as Taliban-students) as guerillas. Besides military training, the Mujahideen were motivated to wage a Holy War (Jihad) against the Soviets. Often led by serving and retired soldiers of Pakistan Army and guided by Inter Services Intelligence agency, they inflicted heavy casualties on the Soviet Forces, forcing them to withdraw from Afghanistan in 1989. The large cache of Central Intelligence Agency supplied arms and those left by the Soviets became available to Pakistan, who now decided to use them against India, in Kashmir. At this juncture, West Asia was experiencing a wave of Islamic fundamentalist movement leading to militancy and terrorism, in which Afghanistan and Pakistan became key partners.

Taking advantage of the internal political turmoil in Kashmir of late 1980s and early 1990s, Pakistan misguided and encouraged the unemployed Muslim youth of the Valley, to cross over into Pakistan occupied Kashmir. There, training camps were established by Pakistan Army and after indoctrination and training in handling arms and explosives, these boys were infiltrated back into the Valley, for undertaking sabotage and subversion activities. Being locals, initially the militants did receive sympathy and support from the people of the Valley, but soon they started adopting coercive methods against their own kith and kin. As the War in Afghanistan had been given the religious connotation of Jihad and thus received support from Islamic countries, Pakistan in Kashmir adopted similar policy. Thus, with the aim of bleeding and de-stabilizing India and to take revenge of her defeat in Bangladesh, Pakistan launched an undeclared low-cost but full-fledged Proxy War against India in Kashmir.
Pakistan's Aggression: 1984-1998:

India has always remained a prime focus of the ISI’s activities and with regard to Jammu and Kashmir, the ISI has been pivotal in organising operations of mercenary outfits like the Harkat-ul-Ansar, declared and subsequently banned, as a Pakistan-based terrorist outfit by the United States of America. Jane’s Intelligence Review in its October 1997 issue carried an article on the Harkat-ul-Ansar that detailed the organisation’s operations and said "the complicity of the ISI is more than merely passive. The Harkat-ul-Ansar owes its considerable arsenal in large measure to the generosity of the Pakistani Government, or, more specifically, its intelligence service."

Instructors in the camps run for the Harkat-ul-Ansar, some of which were bombed by the United States of America after the attacks on the American Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, train not only extremist Pakistanis and Kashmiris, but also cadres for operations in Tajikistan, Bosnia, Myanmar and even the Uighers of Xinjiang Province of the People’s Republic of China. Alumni of these training camps have also been identified with terrorist activities in the USA, France, the Philippines, Egypt, Algeria and elsewhere.

The present ongoing phase of Pakistan’s aggression was initiated in 1984, exploiting the vulnerability of a public bereaved by the passing away of their great leader Sheikh Abdullah and subsequent political uncertainty brought on by leadership squabbles in the ruling National Conference. As the situation deteriorated, civil grievances which are normal in any society but which are open to resolution, were exploited to breed disaffection, with some sections then being brain-washed, armed, financed and instigated into violence. This brutal exploitation of a peaceful people has been marked by over 20,000 killings, the disruption of society and the calculated destruction of basic health, education and economic infrastructure. The blackest mark on this period will remain the mass exodus of Kashmiri Pandits and many Muslims driven by an enveloping fear through use of terror, which was deliberately fanned by those who would see an end to the age old tolerance of the Kashmiri psyche.
A selective killing of prominent persons Hindu, Muslim and Sikh, to spread fear and suffocate differences of opinion, and to paralyse the economy, press, judiciary and administration, since 1989 has been the strategy of the terrorists. Those killed included Mirwaiz Maulvi Farooq, the revered Muslim clerics and Imam of its Jama Masjid or Cathedral mosque, Maulana Maudoodi, a 90 year old scholar, veteran of the freedom movement, former lieutenant of Sheikh Abdullah and among the most respected of the leaders of the Gujar community, Qazi Nissar Ahmed, the Mirwaiz of South Kashmir, Mir Mustafa, a legislator, Lassa Kaul, Director of Doordarshan, Srinagar, H.L. Khera, General Manager Hindustan Machine Tools, Professor Musheer-ul-Haq, Vice Chancellor Kashmir University, Nazir Ahmed Wani, Member of Kashmir’s Legislative Council and countless other officials and defence personnel. Any person who represented the State’s authority, considered unfriendly to the militant’s cause, or held in esteem by the local people and thus able to influence their thinking towards peaceful resolution of conflict and opposed to militancy and Pakistan’s machinations, became a target.

Despite well documented evidence to the contrary, Pakistan persists in claiming that it is only providing "moral, political and diplomatic support" to what it calls an indigenous Kashmiri uprising in Jammu and Kashmir. But the truth behind the latest phase of Pakistani sponsored violence has been spelt out in the book ‘Fateh’ the biography of the former Chief of Pakistan’s Inter Services Intelligence, General Akhtar Abdul Rehman, his biographer Brigadier Haroon Rashid states". The plan which General Akhtar Abdul Rehman had made for Kashmiris movement for independence was to come into effect in 1991. It appears that this plan was made with the struggle for the liberation of Afghanistan in mind, which it was thought would be achieved by spring 1989. However the Kashmir plan was inaugurated in 1984. The Kashmiris were provided with some arms which were not suitable for the Afghan Mujahideen.
The year 1984, mentioned by Haroon Rashid, is significant as it was in 1984 that an Indian diplomat, Ravindra Mhatre, was murdered in Birmingham (UK) by the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front. Amanullah Khan, Chairman of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), sought refuge in Pakistan and still lives there and conducts his anti-India activities openly. Hashim Qureshi, an associate of Amanullah Khan, now resident in the Netherlands, has in his book "Kashmir: Unveiling the Truth", laid bare the plotting of the murder and the horrors that were to follow in Kashmir. Terrorism escalated in the Kashmir Valley starting in 1989. Pakistan first used the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, with its pro independence ideology, to mobilise a mass movement. The period 1989-90 was marked by the targeted killing of Government officials, media personnel, members of the judiciary, and members of the minority Kashmiri Pandit (Hindu) community and Kashmiri Muslims who dared question the terror tactics and excesses of the terrorists. One immediate effect, between January and April 1990 was the resignation of the duly elected State government; the massive exodus of nearly 2,50,000 Kashmiri Pandits and over 50,000 Kashmiri Muslims from the valley with the Pandits settling in refugee camps in Jammu, Delhi and other cities in India. The objective of creating terror and mayhem, paralysing the State administration had met therefore with what would have seemed quick success. This in turn led Pakistan to distance itself from those seeking independence, who it had earlier sought to cultivate to instigate disaffection in the State, and increasingly seek to encourage those that favoured joining Pakistan.

A tactic used to telling effect by the militants was to attack the security forces from the cover of crowded market places and civic facilities, so as to have a human shelter or embroil civilians into crossfire. The State’s response inevitably led to clashes with both militant and civilian casualties. The deaths of civilians then became the substance of campaigns orchestrated by Pakistan and the militant groups alleging oppression of the Kashmiris and violation of their human rights by the government. Because in each case of such
allegation, government would immediately seek to investigate the truth through its own administrative infrastructure, it was established that while in some cases there might have been overreaction by the security forces working under enormous threat and pressure, other cases were wildly exaggerated. In each case of established excess, legal action against personnel implicated, was initiated by government.

Cordon and search operations to flush out the militants provided militants and their supporters the ground to accuse the security forces of mass rapes. Such was the case in March 1991 in Kunan Poshpora Village of Kupwara District, in which a mass rape of 23 women was alleged. The allegation was enquired into by a team of senior civilian and military officers, on the site of the supposed occurrence with interviews with alleged victims. The allegations were found to be groundless.

A sustained propaganda campaign to highlight alleged human rights' abuse was used by Pakistan as an instrument to internationalise the Jammu and Kashmir question. The context in which incidents occurred and the environment of violence created by the terrorists was conveniently glossed over. Exaggerated, and often fabricated, instances of human rights' violations were used as a tool of psychological warfare and were accepted at face value by gullible observers with little or no perspective on the ground situation. In response, and to deal with specific cases of excess, the Government of India strengthened supervision and set up a National Human Rights Commission in 1993, whose functioning has been lauded by all human rights groups with which it has interacted. This is an autonomous commission, free from the dictates of government and staffed by retired judges and eminent persons. After restoration of a democratic government in the State in 1996, the State has set up a similar Commission at the State level under the Chairmanship of a highly respected Kashmiri judge.

On its part the Government and the security forces investigated all allegations of human rights abuses and, where substantiated, punishment
was meted out to the erring personnel. It is, however, ironic that the security forces, whom the militants accused of human rights violations, continue till today to be deployed to provide security to the leaders of the secessionist and militant groups, whose lives have been threatened because of their resolve to abjure violence in seeking their political ends.

Since the ideology favouring independence of Jammu and Kashmir could not be countenanced by Pakistan, the period starting 1990 witnessed the creation of groups determined to install an extremist Islamic regime in Jammu and Kashmir, and to ensure its accession to Pakistan. The major responsibility to execute this strategy was given by Pakistan’s Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) to the Hezbul Mujahideen, whose present Supreme Commander, Syed Salahuddin, continues to reside in Pakistan. Other groups that proliferated, primarily to blunt the hold of Pakistan’s opponents in the militancy, included Hezbollah, Allah Tigers, Al Barq, etc. This period witnessed increasing internecine warfare with extremist groups seeking to suppress the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front. The thrust of their campaign was to invoke religion to seize legitimacy. As a result they sought to impose a blinkered version of Islamic tenets at the point of the gun, resulting in the destruction of schools, cinemas, restaurants, and a ban on all forms of entertainment. Women were particularly affected since some extremist groups, defying the very grain of Kashmir’s culture, tried forcibly to confine them to indoors and the veil, akin to what the Taliban have done in Afghanistan, but without success. To teach a lesson some Muslim girls were in fact attacked and injured. This in fact generally alienated womenfolk from the movement, although many had earlier been supportive of the secessionists through organisations like the Dukhtar-i-Millat.

This period witnessed the media in the Valley constantly attacked by the militants, even though these same elements had been initially supportive of militancy, and demanded that anti-terrorist articles not be carried; government announcements be boycotted; the "martyrdom" of the militants
be eulogised, as also the campaign posing as "liberation". Attacks on newspaper offices and printing presses and the killing of eminent journalists and editors became frequent. Among other incidents the 'Srinagar Times' was attacked; the 'Aftab' was bombed; the editor of Al-Safa, Mohammed Shaban Vakil, a respected journalist and leading critic of government, was shot dead in his office. Some journalists from the national publications, who wrote against militancy, had their papers banned from entering the Valley at various times. In short, a determined effort was made to strangle freedom of the press, surely a basic tenet of liberty. Only the BBC was spared somehow.

The effort of Pakistan's surrogates to establish their ascendancy in the movement reached its peak in October 1993, with the siege of the shrine at Hazratbal, considered the holiest in Kashmir by its people, the administration of which had provided the launching pad for the career of Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, whose sermons there were the bedrock of his movement for freedom. This was an effort to provoke a confrontation between the JKL militants and the military by feeding provocative and misleading information to each, so that the shrine would become a battleground, thus simultaneously shaking the foundations of the Sufi tradition of Kashmir, not palatable to the narrow minded, who consider the religious practices therein heretical, decimating the pro-independence JKL, and bringing the Indian army into disrepute. Simultaneously, the All Party Hurriyat Conference emerged, partly as a defensive mechanism to control internecine conflict, and partly to give political voice to what had degenerated into a violent terrorist campaign with few remaining pretensions of liberty.

The Hurriyat leaders like to refer to themselves as the "true representatives of the people of Jammu and Kashmir". They have sought legitimacy not by public acclaim through the acknowledged process of elections, but through fear as many of their leaders are affiliated with one or the other militant group. The irrelevance of the Hurriyat to the people of Jammu and Kashmir and the situation in the state became visibly apparent
during the elections held in 1996. The Hurriyat leaders conducted a house to
house campaign calling on people to boycott the elections. Despite their
threats and pleas the people turned out in large numbers to vote in most parts
of the state except in some pockets which were known to be in thrall of the
militants.

The failures of the Hurriyat internationally and in the Valley led
Pakistan's ISI to create the Shoora-i-Jehad in 1996 as the coordinating
authority to undertake both militant and political activities. The move was
aimed at ensuring continuing ISI control. The growing disenchantment of the
Kashmiri people with violence as a form of grievance redressal, this move
also met with little success, and added to mutual distrust and exacerbated
misgivings.

The extremist ideology of groups like the Hezb-ul-Mujahideen and
their open insistence on Kashmir's accession to Pakistan, finally made
Kashmiri's realise that Pakistan had neither their freedom nor their interests
at heart, but had been cynically manipulating them to fulfill its own territorial
ambitions. The increasing criminalisation of the militant groups contributed
further to Kashmiri disenchantment and fear. The philosophy of tolerance
and co-existence, embodied in the culture of Kashmiriat, had become the
prime target of the extremist groups, and was seen to be in danger of being
submerged in a frenzy of fanaticism.

By the end of 1993, however, it became clearer that, after nearly five
years of violence, the Kashmiris were thoroughly disillusioned. With the
decline in numbers of Kashmiri youth willing to be indoctrinated and trained
as terrorists, Pakistan took recourse to sending in battle-hardened mercenaries
from Afghanistan, Pakistan and other countries, including many veterans of
the Afghan war. They came under the banner of the Harkat-ul-Ansar and
Lashkar-e-Tayyaba to bolster the fighting ability of the pro-Pakistani militant
groups. Their disregard for the Kashmiri psyche, and their depredations in
the Valley, further strengthened the resolve of Kashmiris against violence and
against the Hurriyat and its constituents who had willingly invited these foreigners into what the people had been led to believe was a Kashmiri movement to right political wrongs. With facts coming through more and more through propaganda, and peaceful resolution of the siege at Hazratbal, with the civil and military authorities working closely together to ameliorate the difficulties of the people contributed, with other developments to a perceptible change in mood, with increasing numbers of people returning to work with government and security agencies in restoring order.

In 1994 the Mirwaiz of South Kashmir, Qazi Nisar Ahmed, was killed in Anantnag. His widow and the local people blamed the Hezb-ul-Mujahideen, and processions and demonstrations condemning the militant group and Pakistan took place in the town. In the same year the Harkat-ul-Ansar kidnapped Kim Housego and David Mackie, two British tourists. The action was widely condemned by the people of Jammu & Kashmir leading to the militants capitulating and their release.

In 1995 mercenaries of the Harkat-ul-Ansar and the Hezb-ul-Mujahideen led by a Pakistani national Mast Gul, seized another revered shrine in Charar-e-Sharief resulting in the mindless destruction of both the shrine and the surrounding township. Mast Gul was given a hero’s welcome in Pakistan and paraded through the streets by the Jama’at-e-Islami the mentor of the Hezb-ul-Mujahideen. The Harkat-ul-Ansar issued press releases stating that its cadres had been in the shrine which further aggravated the divide between the centuries old Kashmiri ethos of harmonious co-existence and the extremist orthodoxy being sought to be imposed by the pro-Pakistani groups.

Also in 1995 the Al-Faran, a front for the Harkat-ul-Ansar, kidnapped five foreign tourists and beheaded one of them, a Norwegian named Hans Christian Ostro. In light of widespread public disapprobation, the Hurriyat was constrained to condemn this act of wanton killing. The hostages remain untraced till today. Surprisingly, the hue and cry in countries abroad was
muted. One American made a daring escape from his terrorist captors and was rescued by a vigilant team on a government helicopter. His adventure was largely ignored by foreign media. John Donald Chiles does not appear to have been interviewed in print or on the electronic media.

The period 1993-96 thus witnessed a changing mood in the Kashmir Valley against militancy and towards seeking some solution to the crisis. The media became more vocal in its criticism of the activities of the militant groups and the "guest militants" as the mercenaries were called by the Kashmiri militant groups. The release through judicial process of prominent jailed suspected militant leaders like Shabir Shah and Yasin Malik, the formation of political fronts by former militants disillusioned with Pakistan and militancy, and the revival of political activity by known and established parties in the face of threats from Pakistan, the Hurriyat and the mercenaries, bolstered the mood in Kashmir. The restoration of the democratic process was seen as a way out after years of violence. Pakistan made desperate attempts to prevent these developments but to little avail.

Responding to the changed public mood, the Government of India organised Parliamentary and Assembly elections in 1996 in Jammu and Kashmir. The large participation of the people in the elections despite calls for boycott by the Hurriyat and Pakistan, despite threats from the militants and mercenaries and the continued targeted killing of political activists and the Kashmiri Muslims holding different views, was a clear manifestation of the desire of the Kashmiris for peace. The Kashmiris voted back to power with a two-third majority, their own old party, the National Conference, with Dr Farooq Abdullah at its head. Some sections of the foreign media gave undue weight to the presence of security forces needed to maintain order in the face of terrorist threats to disrupt the Parliament elections. This criticism was, however, more subdued with the Assembly elections following Parliament elections, with an even bigger voter turnout.
Since the installation of the elected Government in October 1996, there has been significant change in the situation in Jammu and Kashmir. Life has, more or less, returned to normal in the capital Srinagar. Markets are open, festivals and marriages are celebrated in the age old manner with song, music and dance, tourists are coming back to the Valley, trade is beginning to flourish again, the houseboats are no longer idle, winter sports and cultural programmes have been held and the process of reconstruction of the infrastructure has begun. Leaders formerly aligned with the Hurriyat like Shabir Shah have formed new political parties and have begun to talk in terms of participation in the elections, though with reservations. Umar Farooq revived his slain father’s Awami Action Committee. Differences have cropped up between him and the Hurriyat, and he organised separate meetings, without consulting the Hurriyat, to commemorate the tragic day of his father’s assassination by the militants. His meeting drew large crowds and the Hurriyat was compelled to go along with him.

Parliamentary elections were held again in February/March, 1998. There was overwhelming participation in the Valley despite calls for a boycott by the Hurriyat and by Pakistan, and dire threats from militant groups against voters, candidates and electoral officers. The period had been preceded by targeted attacks against political workers. In the elections, the local Jammu and Kashmir government staff manned polling booths, and officials did not require to be called in from outside the State; there was overwhelming participation despite inclement weather. One significant if little noticed aspect was the participation, as candidates, of people like Muzzafar Beg, a Supreme Court lawyer, who had always represented the Hurriyat, and the widespread participation of youth in campaign rallies and the election process. Elements from within Hurriyat affiliated groups are believed to have quietly supported the candidates even as the Hurriyat officially boycotted the election. A close aide of Shabir Shah, Naeem Khan, who had broken with Shah, spoke in favour of the democratic electoral process. Such sentiments were also expressed to the media by ordinary
people in Jammu and Kashmir who crave a return to normalcy. The Hurriyat call for strikes failed. There were no reports of coercion and almost no untoward incidents, save a few stray cases of violence.

Internecine squabbles continue within the Hurriyat. Syed Ali Shah Geelani of the Jama'at-e-Islami was made the Chairman of the Hurriyat in place of Umar Farooq, a development that drew an adverse response both from Umar Farooq and many other constituents of the Hurriyat because of Syed Ali Shah’s known predilections on Kashmir’s accession to Pakistan. Separately, G.M. Bhat the leader of the Jamaat-e-Islami claimed that the Jama’at did not believe in violence and that the Hezbul Mujahideen was not the armed wing of the Hurriyat-a-claim disputed by Syed Salahuddin the Pakistan based ‘supreme commander’ of the Hezbul who claimed that the Hezbul was the armed wing of the Jama’at-e-Islami. Bhat’s attempts to move the Jama’at-e-Islami away from violence earned him the ire of Geelani’s supporters.

On the militant front, there is growing evidence that Kashmiri involvement in the militancy has ceased. Violence does recur sporadically, but is now largely the work of mercenary groups comprises Pakistanis, Afghans and others operating in the Valley under the Lashkar-e-Taïyaba and the Harkat-ul-Ansar. This has given a new dimension to the nature of militancy. Pakistan’s role in sponsoring terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir is well documented by the international media, independent observers and even the US State Department. The latter has identified the Harkat-ul-Ansar as a terrorist outfit operating from Pakistan. Some functionaries in Pakistan have shed all pretence and senior Ministers of the Government and a State Governor have openly visiting the training camps of outfits like the Lashkar-e-Taïyaba endorsing their calls to ‘Jehad’ against India. Virtually discomfited in the Kashmir Valley, the ISI has sought to move terrorist operations to Poonch, Rajouri, Doda and Udhampur sectors, with the objective of targeting Hindus in the hope of inflaming communal passions and inciting communal conflict. No such backlash has occurred.
The Government of Pakistan has now shed the fig leaf of denials of supporting the terrorists. In November 1997 the Lashkar-e-Tayyaba held an open congregation at its headquarters at Muridke near Lahore in which it called for a continuing jihad against ‘Hindu India’, cynically forgetting the secular nature of India with 140 million Muslim citizens, and extolled the activities of its ‘fighters’ in Jammu and Kashmir. Shortly afterwards on January 25, 1998, the eve of India’s Republic Day, terrorists massacred over 29 Kashmiri Pandits, men, women and children, at village Wandhama, only a few miles from Srinagar. Then, in April 1998 Pakistan’s Minister for Information, Mushahid Hussain, along with the Governor of Punjab, visited the Muridke Camp of the Lashkar and, in the presence of the media, blatantly commended their activities. This is what Pakistan calls moral support. The next day twenty three Hindu civilians were killed in Prankote Village in Jammu division, by militants from the Lashkar-e-Tayyaba and Hezbul Mujahideen. Another massacre took place in June 1998 at Champanari village in Doda district when 25 Hindus, all civilians, were murdered.

Pakistan’s Anti-India Propaganda -

The same media and human rights organisations that once appeared to be captive to the Pakistan point of view have begun to report not only on conditions within Pakistan but also produced evidence of Pakistan’s support to terrorism.

Pakistan’s claim to Jammu and Kashmir based on the two nation theory has been debunked by history itself. The eastern wing of Pakistan, predominantly Muslim and carved out on the basis of the two nation theory, is today the independent nation of Bangladesh, liberated after a war of independence from West Pakistan. Even today India has a larger Muslim population than Pakistan, a clear indication that religion is not the sole basis for a separate nationhood.

The plight of the minorities in the Valley, who were specifically targeted for extermination by the extremist groups, has now been well-
documented internationally. The increasing criminality of many of the terrorist groups owing allegiance to Pakistan has resulted in repression of the Muslims in the Valley and expressions of outrage which have taken the form of demonstrations against the extremist militant groups as well as Pakistan. The Srinagar press is increasingly reporting intra-group clashes, rape, extortion and murder by different militant groups and statements from some of the groups highlighting the abuses by other groups.

Pakistan's denial of the third option of independence to the Kashmiris and the repeated references to the "unfinished business of partition" with its territorial connotations has caused concern to people in the Valley who, by and large, sided with groups espousing an independent Jammu and Kashmir. It has also exposed the fact that Pakistan has cynically exploited Western sensibilities and used human rights as a ploy to further its territorial ambitions.

Pakistan's role in providing sanctuary and training to mercenaries who are involved in violence in France, Egypt, Tunisia and even the USA; their links with the extremist terrorist groups in Kashmir and the increasing fear of the spread of Islamic extremism in the West with which Pakistan is being associated has caused many countries to look askance at Pakistan's protestations of innocence with regard to terrorism in Kashmir and its sole concern for the human rights of the Kashmiris.

There has been increasing activity on the part of people of POK and the Northern Areas as well as the Mohajirs and the Sindhis who are highlighting in the media and at international fora the repression that they have been suffering at the hands of Pakistan Government. For the first time since Pakistan began its propaganda war against India on the Kashmir issue, it is being made answerable for its own repression of its citizens.

At international fora also terrorism and human rights are getting increasingly linked. The UN has passed resolutions recognising terrorism as a major threat to human rights. Even Islamic countries have identified Islamic
extremism and terrorism as a major threat. The links with Pakistan of persons and groups accused of crimes like the World Trade Centre bomb blast; the bombings of the American Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania; incidents in France, Egypt, and the Philippines, has made many foreign interlocutors wary of buying the Pakistani line on Kashmir.

The focus on the terrorist groups operating out of Pakistan and Afghanistan has sharpened after the United States bombing of terrorist camps in Afghanistan following the attacks on US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. The American missile attacks on the camps proved that groups like the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, the Harkat-ul-Jehad-Islami and the Jamiat-ul-Mujahideen, which are active in Jammu and Kashmir, were also training cadres for groups which had targeted the United States and considered the West a legitimate target for their "jehad" or holy war. In the wake of the destruction of the camps, leaders of these groups in Pakistan have openly called for revenge attacks against the United States.

The target of Pakistan's propaganda has indeed been India and the Indian people. Its victims are increasingly the people of Pakistan, fed on falsehoods and rendered vulnerable to the voices of extremism.

**Pakistan's Continue at LOC:**

Sound of roaring continuous gunfire, huge deafening sound of blasts, hundreds of tense and shivering locals living in the border villages, sneaking through mountainous dark passes- shifting to their relatives in make shift camps in safer zones are the regular scene at border towns of Kashmir since India and Pakistan went nuclear in May 1998. Several hundred locals from northern Kashmir's border and Kargil villages fled to safety, whenever artillery and mortar duet between Indian and Pakistani troops takes place in Kashmir.

People living in border villages are mute witnesses to all this happenings and feel that "war has broken out on the borders." "It is after
several years that we have seen soldiers firing heavy artillery from the town," said Akbar Ahmed, who, along with his family, shifted to Srinagar.

It is for the first time, after India and Pakistan conducted nuclear tests that exchange of heavy artillery of this intensity was witnessed at several frontier areas. Border skirmishes are common on the nearly 1100 km long line of control, but tension this time is more on the borders as Pakistani troops are firing at the inhabitant towns. At Siachin glacier, where the temperature remains below freezing round the year, causalities of army personnel on both sides has become a routine. Supply drops by helicopter have despoiled the once pristine environment. One the Indian army official on anonymity said, "the ingredients of war always remain on the borders."

Locals say that stepped up activities are visible and no civilian movement is allowed after dusk. It is literally curfew on the border villages. Witnesses and local inhabitants in other areas say: "intermittent deafening sounds of bombs are heard since June, who shook our houses forcing us to go to safer places."

Defence spokesman and in-charge of operations, Brigadier Arun Kumar Chopra said, "In the continuous exchange of fire fight, atleast 25 to 30 Pakistani soldiers were killed and more than 100 Bunker out Posts (BOP'S) were destroyed in retaliation to unprovoked Pakistan's firing on civilian population."

"While on our side four civilians were killed and equal number of Indian soldiers died. Our 25 BOP's were either destroyed or partially damaged."

Brigadier Chopra alleged that Pakistani troops opened heavy unprovoked artillery fire in Kargil, Kupwara and Uri towns intentionally, ahead of winter months, to infiltrate the militants in our area."
In the last two months, at least seventeen militants including half-a-dozen foreign Islamic militants were killed by army, at village Nawgam in frontier Kupwara, when they tried to sneak into this side of Kashmir.

Also a large cache of arms and ammunition, including universal machine guns, assault AK rifles, grenades, land mines, expensive wireless communication system and explosive materials were recovered from the dead. Last April, some eight civilians were killed and hundreds of structures including houses, shops, hospitals and mosques were damaged in unprovoked Pakistani shelling at Kargit town, some 250 Km south of Srinagar.

1990 to 1999 the total loss of the militants and Army are as under -

**Militants Neutralized by the Army**

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<th>Surrender</th>
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<td>Total</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANTI AIRCRAFT MACHINE GUN
TYPE-77
विमान विरोधी मार्शील गन टाइप - 77

1. ORIGIN: CHINA
2. CALIBRE: 12.7 MM
3. RANGE: 1600 M

RIFLE AK-47
शालफल ए के - 47

CALIBRE: 7.62 MM
RANGE: 300 M

Pneumatic boat for 3 persons
for use in lakes and marshes
नूतनिक नाव तीन आदमी के लिए
Electronic Triggers including the simple but deadly octopus circuit capable of exploding 8 bombs simultaneously.
Spanish Pistol

Pakistan-made 7.63 M M Rifle

BREN MG

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>1500 M</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calibre</td>
<td>1500 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>7.62 MM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>UK</td>
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Mouser Pistol
माउसर पिस्टल

GENERAL PURPOSE MACHINE GUN
सामान्य उद्देश्य मशीन गन

CALIBRE 7.62 MM
क्लार 7.62 एम एम
RANGE 1500 M
मार्क शाखा 1500 मीटर

LUGER SUB MACHINE GUN
लुगर उप मशीन गन

1 ORIGIN GERMANY
2 CALIBRE 9 MM
3 RANGE 75 M
4 फार्म 9 एम एम
5 मार्क शाखा 75 मीटर
RIFLE AK 56

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CALIBRE</th>
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<tr>
<td>كتلة</td>
<td>7.62 إم إم</td>
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<tr>
<td>RANGE</td>
<td>300 م</td>
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<td>مسافة</td>
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RPG - 7V

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>RANGE</td>
<td>500 م</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مسافة</td>
<td>500 متر</td>
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SNIPER RIFLE (DRAGUNOV)

<table>
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<th>CALIBRE</th>
<th>7.62 MM</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>كتلة</td>
<td>7.62 إم إم</td>
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<tr>
<td>RANGE</td>
<td>1200 م</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>مسافة</td>
<td>1200 متر</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Chinese 9 M M Pistol found with all terrorists

चीनी 9 मिली मीटर पिस्तॉल

वे सब आतंकवादियों के पास होती हैं

German Pistol

जर्मनी की पिस्तॉल

Pakistan-made 10 Chamber Revolver

पाकिस्तानी-10 चेम्बर वाली रिवाल्वर
German-made advanced Steiner binoculars with built-in compass and night-reading capability.

German-made advanced Steiner binoculars with built-in compass and night-reading capability.

German-made advanced Steiner binoculars with built-in compass and night-reading capability.

GERMAN GRENADE LAUNCHER

1. ORIGIN: Germany
2. CALIBRE: 40 MM
3. RANGE: 420 M
4. STANDARDS: 420 METER

ROCKET LAUNCHER

1. ORIGIN: China
2. CALIBRE: 107 MM
3. RANGE: 4000 M
4. STANDARDS: 4000 METER
Army Casualty in Jammu & Kashmir

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Killed</th>
<th>Wounded</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>161</td>
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<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1184</td>
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Poonch and Rajouri-Militant's New Hub:

Poonch and Rajouri, twin towns of Jammu province, bordering Pakistan occupied Kashmir are new hubs of militancy. Troops patrolling the area would stop your vehicle at a make shift bridge. The upper forest area is infested with foreign militants. The warning sends shiver down the spine as one hears the roaring of gun fire punctuated with deafening sounds of blasts. The local guide accompanying us reminds that hundreds of army personnel have gone up.

Inside the Surankote forests, a picturesque mountainous are rich in majestic blue pine trees divided by torrent rocky water stream, to flush-out foreign militants. The armed rebels use these dense forests as their hide outs.

In the morning we are told that half a dozen of foreign militants belonging to banned Harkat-ul-Ansar, were killed in an encounter between the hiding militants and the Indian troops. Amy troops drove down the dead
bodies in the town. They are kept in a row in the local police station. Locals throng to identify them. A group of social workers are called by the authorities, who bury them in a local graveyard after performing religious formalities.

Frontier hilly towns of Poonch and Rajouri in Jammu, bordering Pakistan occupied Kashmir, has become the favourite hub for guerrillas in Jammu and Kashmir. Since last year, there have been several militant related incidents and killing of innocents. Police says hundreds of foreign militants, including Afghans and Pakistanis are hiding in the hills. Several drop gates and security bunkers have come up with the increased militancy. Security troops patrol the streets day and night.

Army spokesperson said the assault on the guerrillas was part of a renewed offensive against non-kashmiri Muslim guerrillas in Poonch, some 250 kilometers from the city of Jammu. The latest military assault took to 100 the number of guerrillas in Poonch so far since May 1998, he said as he identified nearly 50 of them as "foreign mercenaries." He said one of the six Harkat men killed was an "area commander" who was based in Pakistani controlled Kashmir. Hundreds of foreign Islamic militants are helping kashmiri guerrillas in fighting against security troops. Militancy has shifted to the other side of Pir-Panchal Himalayan ranges, which divides Kashmir valley from Jammu. Earlier, militancy was confined to Kashmir valley and war was more of urban and local phenomena.

The army and paramilitary troops, which waged a relentless battle to crush militancy, also says that they have been able to drain the morale of the depleted number of separatists in Kashmir but what is the need of the hour is the political initiative to take care of the needs of the locals. It is now up to the state government to establish rule of law and give the healing touch, added a military spokesman. But political analysts feel that recent nuclear blasts have once again boosted the morale of militant.
Syed Ali Shah Geelani, Chairman of the all party Hurriyat (Freedom) Conference, an amalgam of opposition political parties fighting for self rule in Kashmir said, the nuclear tests have marked the beginning of nuclear race. Kashmiri people are living in a war like environment and international community must intervene to solve 61 year old issue pending in United Nations."

Clergy leader Umer Farooq, also called as Mirwaiz of Kashmir" said, we had always apprehension of nuclear arms race because of Kashmir, but some quarters had accused us exaggeration." The escalation of militant related incidents has sparked of scattered migration from the village of Doda district the villages of Poonch and Rajouri near line of control after massacre of Hindu community members by suspected rebels.

Militants massacred 25 Hindu wedding guests in an ambush in the Doda district of Kashmir on June 19 and injured seven others. The victims, including two bridegrooms, had been traveling to different weddings by two buses when the guerrillas struck. Kashmir Chief Minister, Farooq Adbullah, blamed Pakistan and said the killings were "a barbaric act."

"It is yet another barbaric act of Pakistan sponsored militants in Kashmir. I am shocked to learn about this tragedy. My heart is out to the families of that Killed. This is the heavy price they are paying for the proxy war by Pakistan." In recent months, militants have targeted the minority Hindu community in the state. These killings are the fourth such attack against the Hindus this year. On January 25, the militants gunned down 29 Hindus and on April 18. 26 Hindus, including two women and four children, were killed when guerrillas opened fire on villagers in Udhampur in the south of the state. The attack sparked an exodus of hundreds of Hindus from the district. On May 6, gunmen killed five Hindus and seriously injured two others in the border district of Poonch. In another massacre in Poonch 17 Muslims were killed by unidentified gunmen and government has ordered a
probe for the same. More than 250,000 Hindus have fired Kashmir since 1989, either moving to the Jammu region or further south to New Delhi. Kashmir's Governor, Garish Chander Saxena, said "the killings were an act of ethnic cleansing. It is highly condemnable that they are hitting soft targets. But we are confident of ending terrorism in the state." Reports suggest that heavily armed militants, mostly foreigners have erected bunkers and pill boxes in the higher reaches of these two districts. Militants taking advantage of the dense forest and rough mountainous terrain, come down in the night- strike in the town or on security positions, and again vanish in the jungles. There have been several cases of civilians killed by militants creating fear among the villagers, who migrate to safer places leaving behind their homes and hearths, which are now being used as "safe hideouts, by the militants in the upper hilly remote villages."

Last month, militants triggered off a land mine explosive near Suronkote, that left 16 army soldiers injured. Two of them, including a Junior Commissioned Officer, latter succumbed to their wounds. Firing of rockets in the Suronkote town of Poonch has become a routine.

Hundreds of re-enforced security troop's personnel have fanned out in the border areas to flush out militant s. and increases vigil on the Line of Control to check infiltration.

**Roadblocks to a Solution:**

For all of its effort from elections to strict vigil at the line of control to check the infiltration of the armed guerrillas, the government has been unable to put an end to the uprising in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. At the same time armed gunmen have failed to score a kind of victory attracting world attention to their "cause." In Hindu dominated Jammu and in Buddhist dominated Ladakh, the rebel movement is nearly invisible. The inhabitants of these areas want to continue to live under the Indian rule. Only in the Kashmir valley and parts of Doda, "Poonch Rajouri, where about 65 percent of the total population lives, does unrest continues."
Certainly the question of Kashmiri independence weighs heavily on Pakistan. It would be naive to think that Pakistan would supply weapons and money to create a new, independent state on its northern border.

The continuation of a low proxy war guarantees to both Pakistan and India that the question of Kashmiri independence will be kept on the back burner.

Pakistan's continued support of insurgents creates an ongoing thorn in the side of India, while potentially swaying Kashmiris to the possibility of some day joining Pakistan. India has its own domestic compulsions, relenting on the question of Kashmiri independence would invite dissent from other Indian states, who are watching developments in Kashmir.

Hanging over the prospects for a peaceful solution in Kashmir, are a series of "ifs." If India is willing to negotiate with the separatists, if Muslim militants would accept something less than complete independence and if Pakistan would stop funding the insurgents, peace would be possible. I believe these conditions could be met, if only one of the parties would make the first move.

The vital step would be for the three parties—India, Pakistan and Kashmir—to freeze the issue of Kashmiri autonomy for five years. An immediate cease fire could be observed by all the forces operating in Kashmir, and efforts should be made to de-militarise the line of control. Once the situation at the borders questioned, the line of control could be opened so that Kashmiris could cross without fear of ambush or harassment. India has a precedent for this kind of demilitarization. A long running territorial dispute with China was defused by a similar strategy. The beginning should at least start with de militarizing Siachen Glacier.

Separatist political parties will have to become actively involved in the political process. The unified political party will have to clarify their demands and prove that they could mobilise mass support without resorting to violence. Asking for self determination is a vague request. Former Union
Home Minister and present Congress leader of the state, Mufti Mohammad Syed is demanding talks between New Delhi and the separatist leaders.

During the cooling off period, New Delhi and separatist leaders could enter into negotiation, aimed at creating stable conditions in which serious economic development, education, business and tourism could proceed and the present ongoing bloodshed and alleged custodial killings and blasting of the houses of die hard separatists could end.

A five year timetable would allow the two parties to slowly build trust and confidence between them and alleviate any pressure to devise an immediate solution. Confidence building measures are very important as in the last sixty one years the word "trust and faith" has always been for a six.

At the same time the talks between India and Pakistan about the solution of Kashmir and other issues should continue. They should first of all build a pact for not firing in the line of control so that people living in the border villages should have some relief. Once the two estranged brothers, Indian and Pakistan, began to meet, they could ask for the participation by the genuine representatives (from all the three regions, Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir). It is at this time that expanded autonomy (with India maintaining control of defense, foreign affairs and telecommunications) could be discussed and election, overseen by international monitors, could be planned.

For caveats, first fundamentalist influences, either Hindutava or Islamic, must be jointly discouraged from clouding negotiations on Kashmir's future.

Secondly, the task should not be left only to politicians, but should draw upon a cross section of Kashmiris, including academics and business people.

Thirdly, there should be a prerequisite to ensure good governance in the cooling off period with strong and stable economic infrastructure and accountable streamlined and people sensitive administration.
Political Turmoil in Pakistan:

After the Washington Statement, the relations between Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and General Musharraf had become strained, with both blaming each other for the "Kargil Debacle." While Musharraf was returning from Sri Lanka, on October 12, 1999, Mr Nawaz Sharif replaced him as the Army Chief with Lieutenant General Aziz, Director General of the Inter Services Intelligence agency. This resulted in a "coup" by pro-Musharraf officers, who put the Prime Minister under arrest. General Musharraf took over as the Chief Executive Officer of Pakistan and once again, Pakistan Army came back to power, for the fourth time. Mr Nawaz Sharif was tried on corruption and other charges. Though, all political activity was curbed, while in jail Sharif again stated that "Pakistan Army had kept him in dark on Kargil developments." His followers also questioned the legality of the Army Chief as the executive officer, in court. To avoid further embarrassment, a compromise was reached and Mr Sharif along with his immediate family members was permitted to seek asylum in Saudi Arabia.

While outwardly General Musharraf showed keenness to improve relations with India and stated that he was willing to talk to Mr Vajpayee "Any Where-Any Time," he could not shed his stance of "Support to the Freedom Struggle in Kashmir." Though he soon subdued political parties and initiated measures against corruption, General Musharraf could not stand the pressures of the pro-militant Jihadi Groups.

In India, General Musharraf was viewed with suspicion and caution as the "Architect of Kargil Intrusion" and as a Commando, who could take bold steps but without an in-depth analysis.

High-jacking of Flight IC 814 from Kathmandu to Kandhar:

On December 24, 1999, the above flight carrying 155 persons from Kathmandu to New Delhi was high-jacked by Kashmiri Militants, while flying over Lucknow, who after a brief surprised halts at Amritsar, took it to
Lahore. Though by now Pakistani authorities had been alerted and had adequate reaction time to organize rescue of the passengers, the flight was refueled and allowed to fly to Kandhar, in Afghanistan. India was disappointed when Pakistan did not use its influence with Taliban and the Militants to release the plane and the passengers.

India started direct negotiations with the high-jackers, who demanded release of three of their militant colleagues from Indian jails. Though initially New Delhi took a firm stand and refused to yield, it relented after one young innocent passenger was stabbed to death in the plane, in front of his wife. The Indian media also highlighting the plight of the relatives, which built pressure on the Government to accept the demands of the high-jackers, thus, just before the dead line of January 1, 2000, Mr Jaswant Singh, Foreign Minister, flew to Kandhar with three dreaded terrorists released from Indian jails and exchanged them for the release of the passengers and the crew of Flight IC 814. Soon, the high-jackers along with their three released colleagues went over to Pakistan, where they floated new Militant organizations and vowed to continue their armed struggle for liberation of Indian Kashmir.

In this episode, the Indian Government buckled under the threat of high-jackers, as it had in 1987 when the daughter of Mufti Mahmud, the Home Minister had been kidnapped in Srinagar. On the other hand, Pakistan and General Musharraf also let go an opportunity of improving relations with India, as their assistance would have shown a genuine and sincere desire to improve relations with India. Later, New Delhi asked Pakistan to arrest and hand over the high-jackers for trial, which till now has been declined by Pakistan.

Visit by President Clinton to India and Pakistan:

Before relinquishing office, President Clinton paid a warm and historic four-day visit to India from March 22, 2000 to March 25, 2000, the first US President to do so after 22 years. As the Chitti Singhpura massacre of 34 innocent Sikhs in Jammu and Kashmir took place on the eve of his visit, the
grim militancy situation was not lost on him. Thus, he strongly endorsed India's stand against Trans-Border Terrorism and re-emphasized the need to resolve all issues between India and Pakistan bilaterally, on the basis of Shimla Agreement and Lahore declaration. In India he received a very warm welcome at every place, met a large cross section of people and addressed both houses of the parliament.

On his way back home, he made an eight-hour stop in Pakistan. While addressing the people of Pakistan on TV; he suggested that Pakistan should "correct its course on both domestic and foreign policy front. We cannot and will not mediate or resolve the dispute in Kashmir. Only you and India can do it, through dialogue" and stressed the need to end "terrorism." His speech annoyed the people of Pakistan, who did not appreciate his "sermons through television." The Jihadi Groups blamed him for extracting an unbalanced "Statement" from Mr Nawaz Sharif on Kargil, and restated their resolve to continue "Jihad in Kashmir."

While President Clinton's visit once again brought South Asia on the world's center stage, it also highlighted that the modem world does not encourage or endorse "Trans-Border militancy and terrorism." The messages for Pakistan were clear-restrain the militants and terrorism, and resolve disputes with India, bilaterally.

The Agra Summit—July 14, 2001 and July 15, 2001:

May 22, 2001 was an important day in Indian Government's calendar. Whether by design or co-incidence, while Mr Vajpayee announced his decision to "Invite General Musharraf to India," the same day he also appointed Mr KC Pant as his Chief Negotiator on Kashmir. The Government also announced "re-commencement of anti-Militancy Operations in Jammu and Kashmir," and made public the recommendations of the Group of Ministers on the Kargil Review Committee.

By mid-May 2001, General Musharraf had been in chair for nearly eighteen months. Thus on May 22, 2001, Mr Vajpayee sent him an invitation
to visit India. Without mentioning Kargil, Mr Vajpayee recalled his Lahore Yatra and the "desire to take the peace process forward." While no agenda was fixed for the talks, India informed Pakistan of her desire to proceed on the eight points composite dialogue enumerated in Shimla Accord and Lahore Declaration. Briefly, these were:

- Terrorism and Drug Trafficking,
- Economic and Commercial co-operation,
- Promotion of Friendly Exchanges in various fields.

On acceptance of the invitation, India announced unilateral Confidence Building Measures between the two countries, and was even willing to send the Director General of Military Operations to Islamabad to finalize Nuclear Confidence Building Measures, but Pakistan declined the offer.

The media in both countries went into top gear and built up an unexpected "hype" and "hope" on the talks, this being the first contact at the Prime Minister's level after the Kargil Conflict. The international community was also hopeful about "improvement in relations" and that an end to "militancy" may emerge from the Agra Summit. Both sides went into detailed preparations and sought views and opinions from a wide cross section of experts. While India was willing to discuss all issues including Kashmir, Pakistan from the very beginning had stated that they would only discuss "Kashmir," as it was the "core issue." Islamabad's stance was that if "Kashmir Dispute" was resolved, all other issues would be solved.

Just before coming to India, General Musharraf dismissed President Tarar, and besides being the Army Chief and the Chief Executive Officer, took over as President of Pakistan. Thus, he became the first all-powerful Pakistani leader to visit India since General Zia in 1987, which further raised hopes of a settlement.
General Musharraf and his entourage were given a warm and ceremonial welcome at Delhi, and he held a cordial unofficial meeting with Mr. Vajpayee. In the hope for good relations, even Pakistan's indiscretion of inviting Hurriyat Leaders against the advice of Indian Government for the Tea Party of the High Commissioner, and their closed door meeting with General Musharraf was overlooked.

All eyes were set on Agra, where the formal talks commenced on 14th July, but the talks were soon bogged down. While the General was not willing to shift from his single point agenda of recognition of "Kashmir as the Core Dispute," India indicated that it wanted a composite dialogue on all issues like Trans-Border Terrorism in Kashmir, Sir Creek, Iran-Pakistan-India Gas Pipeline, Wullar Barrage, Visa, and Trade. The atmosphere further worsened when on 15th July General Musharraf held a breakfast press conference for Indian journalists, though the official level talks were still on, and articulated his stance on Kashmir. Ternling "Militancy in Kashmir as an indigenous Freedom Struggle," he denied any hand of Pakistan in the movement.

The draft joint statement underwent a number of changes, but was held up when Pakistan wanted "Kashmir to be referred as the Core Dispute" and would not agree to include any reference to stopping Trans-Border Terrorism in Kashmir. India stood firm that "Trans-Border Terrorism in Kashmir was an important issue, among other outstanding issues" and without accepting these realities, no talks could go further. Thus, once again Pakistan lost an opportunity to improve relations with India.

**Impact of 11th September on Indo-Pak Relations:**

The attacks by the Al-Qaeda terrorists on the World Trade Center in New York, the Pentagon in Washington and the attempt on the White House brought the true and potent danger of the new menace to the fore. India and other like-minded countries joined the USA in condemning the attacks and widely fully supported her fight against the Al-Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden's hosts, the Pakistani created Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Though initially
Pakistan was reluctant to support the US led alliance against the Taliban, due to poor economic conditions and world pressure, Islamabad changed its policy, jettisoned Taliban and bowed to international pressure against terrorism. While few Jihadi Groups did hold protest rallies against the Government, Pakistan once again became the "frontline state" for the US operations in Afghanistan. Besides receiving praise, Islamabad also received massive economic aid and grants from the USA, other countries and aid organizations, like Japan, Australia, IMF, the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank. Though outwardly Pakistan denounced international terrorism and supported the US led operations against the menace, she did not reign-in the anti-India activities being carried out by Pakistan based Jihadi groups, infiltrating into Jammu and Kashmir.

**Escalation of Militancy in Jammu and Kashmir:**

Soon after returning from Washington, Nawaz Sharif made offers to meet Vajpayee "Any Where, Any Time" to resolve the Kashmir and other issues. However, as Pakistan continued to support trans-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, India declined the offer and asked Pakistan to create "conducive and congenial atmosphere" before the talks.

Stung by her humiliating defeat in Kargil, in July 1999 Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence agency again became active, and directed the Jihadi Groups to step-up militant activities in the Valley. Though the vacuum created by the move of 8 Mountain Division from the Valley to Kargil had somewhat been filled by other troops, it had disturbed the operational effectiveness of the "Counter Intelligence Grid," which include intelligence, knowledge of the area and confidence of the local population.

There was an influx of heavily armed and well-trained Foreign Militants into the Valley who changed their tactics from "laying ambushes" to "attacking posts and camps of security forces." Besides killing innocent civilians (mostly of minority community) of far off and isolated villages in the Valley and Doda, Poonch and Rajouri regions, they started using
sophisticated rocket launchers and machine guns. Few militants also launched "suicide attacks (Fidayeen)" on security posts and started taking shelter in mosques. They also started engaging army convoys and patrols in market places thus endangering the lives of innocent civilians, who were invariably caught in the cross-fire.

The Indian Security Forces responded with restrain and determination, and by April 2000 had inflicted heavy casualties on the militants, especially of Hizbul Mujahideen group, which consisting mostly of locals from the Valley. Simultaneously, New Delhi had opened dialogue with the militants, which resulted in the Hizbul Mujahideen announcing a three month cease-fire on May 24, 2000, both from Srinagar and Pakistan. The move was widely welcomed by the people of Jammu and Kashmir, the Indian Government and the world. However, the euphoria was short lived as other militant groups and the Government of Pakistan felt left out. Thus, it was suspended by the United Jihad Council, a collective agency of fourteen Jihadi parties operating in Pakistan, who termed it as a "Sell Out" by the Hizbul Mujahideen to India. This resulted in a spurt of militant activities and killings (15 in Doda on July 15, 1999, of 58 pilgrims going for Amarnath Yatra on 1st August, and of 27 Sikhs at Chitti Singhpora on March 20, 2000 during President Clinton's visit to Delhi).

Despite these incidents and appreciating that the majority of Kashmir is people wanted "Aman" (peace), on November 19, 2000, Shri Vajpayee announced that "during the coming holy month of Ramzan, the Security Forces will not initiate military operations in the Valley." Though this unilateral decision of stopping combat operations by the Security Forces was welcomed by the people of Jammu and Kashmir, the Jihadi Groups termed it as a "Trap." Instead of taking advantage of this opportunity for a dialogue, on advice from their Pakistani mentors they continued their violent activities. Though the Indian Government knew that the Militants could utilize the "lull" for strengthening their positions, the period of unilateral cease-fire was
extended twice, to a total of five months. Initially, Pakistan also responded by refraining from firing artillery across the Line of Control and announced pull-out of her troops, but she continued to provide support to militant groups.

As the unilateral Non-Initiation of Combat Operations was not reciprocated by the Militants and did not lead to any appreciable improvement in the situation, and on the contrary resulted in an enhanced threat to the Indian Security Forces, the operations were recommenced after a period of six months, from May 23, 2001.

While the War in Afghanistan commenced in October 2001 and ended with the fall of Taliban in December same year, terrorism continued to loom large as the threat of the 21st century, in which India continued to be a victim. The two incidents which gained prominence were the attack of 1st October on the constituent assembly of Jammu and Kashmir in Srinagar, and on the Parliament in New Delhi on December 13, 2001, which could not be tolerated by the Indian authorities. Compelled by the continued support by Pakistan to Trans-Border infiltration and terrorism, New Delhi identified the terrorists being sheltered by Pakistan and asked Islamabad to hand them over; or face serious consequences. On Pakistan's failure to comply, India was forced to order her armed forces to the border, but showed utmost restrain in their deployment. Unfortunately, till August 2002 Pakistan had not stopped exporting Trans-Border Terrorism into Jammu and Kashmir, which also saw gruesome militant attacks on innocent civilians at Kaluchuk on 14th May, in Jammu on 13th July and on the Yatris going on pilgrimage to Amarnath, in August. Though the tension between the two countries went high after Pakistan also moved her forces to the border, responding to world opinion India has shown great restrain.

Pakistan's Stance on Relations with India:

Despite occasionally professing to live in peace and harmony with India, responsible Pakistani leaders have often stated that even if Kashmir issue was resolved, Pakistan would not be able to live in peace with India.
Zulfikar Ali Bhutto said this in 1976, while General Musharraf repeated it in April 1999 (when unknown to India, the intrusion in Kargil Sector was already in full swing). At times even their media depicts Kashmir as a symptom rather than the disease which poisons relations between the two countries. Often, Pakistan has made India and Kashmir Issue into a "Whipping Boy", to divert attention of her innocent people from internal economic deprivations and sectarian problems.

Few people of Pakistan wrongly perceive that after Bangladesh, the "Big Hindu India is out to further dismember Pakistan, undo Partition and integrate Pakistan into India." Unfortunately, Pakistan is not willing to learn from her own faults leading to creation of Bangladesh, nor is she willing to allow democracy and secularism to prosper. Whipping anti-India propaganda on religious basis, Pakistan over looks the fact that the Muslim population of India is larger than that of Pakistan, that Muslims in India have enjoyed social status and equal opportunities in all fields, and live in peace and harmony in a secular India.