

Kashmir: The Inside Story of Its Youth

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Abstract - This is the age of youth. In India youth and their aspirations have engaged the attention of the policy makers as their role is increasing the overall nation- building process. The role of youth in the socio-economic development and overall nation -building is well recognized. In Jammu and Kashmir State, for known reasons, youth related matters have assumed central importance today. It is an established fact that militancy in Kashmir is led and is fed by its youth. Violence has seriously dented the resilient Kashmir identity. The social institutions have collapsed and society has become harsh, punitive, withdrawn, fearful and distrustful as well. There is need for a new social contract to reintegrate its youth in the mainstream of social, economic and political life. The political parties and civil society institutions have a crucial role to play in the integration process.

Keywords - Youth of Kashmir, Economic, Education System, Women and children, demilitarization, economic and civil space.

I. INTRODUCTION

There is a growing concern in the country about the future of youth of Kashmir. Numerous efforts are being made to get the Kashmiri youth back into the national mainstream. There is a growing perception that the youth is angry and disillusioned due to the false and broken promises made over a period of time by selfish leaders of different hues and shades, propounding different ideologies and political leanings but with one common aim of self-aggrandizement. The present day youth of Kashmir is different from its ilk of the past. He is a product of the era of era. He is living in a very monolithic society. He has been noted on the stories of fanfare of the native militants instead of actuality history of geographic area. He has been fed with the narratives of exclusivity instead of inclusivity. He has not witnessed the Kashmiri composite culture nor has been exposed a lot to Sufism, which is the nectar of this geographic area. He has been indoctrinated with stories of the alleged excesses of the Indian Army instead of the sacrifices made by the Indian Army troopers to safeguard this geographic area. His mind has been poisoned with anti-India narrative. The narrative is columned on Protestantism, azadi, excesses of security forces, selfish person native leadership and indifferent approach by centre to their aspirations.

Over the years, dispute over this geographic area, has taken third-dimensional form with its manifold intricacies. The roots of geographic area conflict may be looked back to the time of independence. When, Bharat was divided in 1947 forming 2 freelance dominions – India and Islamic Republic of Pakistan. This arrangement of partition, gave solely

seventy two days for the transition of independence. A wave of immeasurable refugees that entered Islamic Republic of Pakistan created awe-inspiring burden of rehabilitation on the fresh born state that not like other Asian country didn't inherit any adequate infrastructure. It was absolutely believed that with the withdrawal of the British Power from the Indian sub-continent, the mud of pre-independence era would relax through which Asian country and Islamic Republic of Pakistan would be ready to return nearer, establish harmonious relations with one another. The communal malady that originated before partition and before subside with the creation of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, it got reworked into Indo-Pak group action and conflict.

II. ECONOMIC REFORMS AND ITS CONSEQUENCES: KASHMIR

Economic reforms in India were undertaken in the year 1991. The reforms necessarily laid its impact on every state of the country and its every economic sector. The impact of Asian nation's economic reforms on economic performance has been the topic of abundant tutorial study and oral presentation in India, however the main focus has been mostly on the performance of the economy as an entire or of individual sectors. The performance of individual states within the post-reform amount has not received comparable attention thus there are a unit of superb reasons as to why such associate degree analysis ought to be of interest group. More balanced regional development has perpetually remained on high of the agenda within the national policy of Asian nation and it's relevant to rise whether or not economic reforms have promoted this objective. Jammu and Kashmir economy has not knowledgeable about identical rate of economic development as was knowledgeable about by the complete Indian economy and alternative neighbour states. Therefore, a legitimate question arises why J&K economy couldn't develop at a rate that has knowledgeable about by the Indian economy within the post-reform amount. This study is an effort during this regard wherever man of science desires to judge the impact of economic reforms on the state domestic product of the state of Jammu compared to the economy to judge its performance and pattern. The study additionally brings to light-weight the sectoral contribution of various sectors of economy within the post-reform amount and therefore the role contend by every sector within the overall economic development of the state.

The mastermind behind this LPG reform policy was the then Finance Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh. And while introducing the Budget of 1991, which was a trademark to the changing fortunes of the Indian Economy, which at that

time was almost near bankruptcy. With the onset of these reform moments to liberalise the economic sectors, privatising the different sectors and opening the Indian economy globally in July 1991, a new episode of evolution had dawned for India. And hence he is called as the "Father of Indian Reforms". Apart from the economic transition in the country concerning the economic development of almost all the major sectors of the economy, there has also been a remarkable drift in the Indian mind-set. This was possible because it deviates from the traditional values such as self-reliance and socialistic policies of the economic development.

All the Indian states flourished in its way and in its own time. There had been positive increase in the GDP growth rate by 7.26 in 2015 according to the IMF. Indian economy established itself as a lucrative foreign investment destination during the 90's surpassing US and China. Rate of unemployment reduced gradually due to installation of the global companies resulting in the increase of per capita income. But all these developments were not seen in the state of Jammu and Kashmir which lagged behind in these reforms.

III. ROLE OF EDUCATION SPECIFICALLY AMONG WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Educated women in Jammu and Kashmir can play a pivotal role in all-round development of the state. Women's education is considered as a powerful tool that changes the position of both society as well as nation. The literacy rate and education of the women of Jammu and Kashmir is far lower than national level. Poverty, ignorance of parents and lack of basic infrastructural facilities seem to be major obstacles in the attainment of gender equity in education. The present study is an attempt to study about the various women educational programmes, introduced in Jammu and Kashmir and further examines the perception of people towards schemes, satisfaction and awareness level of beneficiaries about these programmes. Moreover the present study also attempts to explore the barriers in women's education. The data used in this study were collected from 120 respondents on simple random sampling from both rural and urban areas of district Anantnag of Jammu and Kashmir. The educational schemes and developmental programmes seems have not helped to improve the condition of females. There is an essential need to make serious efforts by government, not-for-profit organizations and other local bodies to augment the pace of development in education of the women of Jammu and Kashmir

In general, women and men are the two sides of the same coin, so they should work hand in hand in life. There should be equality in treating each other and in every step of life. Education is the only aspect which engraves responsibility of both men and women. In rural areas of Jammu and Kashmir, women are confined to the household work alone and are solely depended upon men. But in the urban areas of the state, women work in various government as well as

private organizations and earn their living. But still, the status of the education among them is very poor.

Women and children are the weaker section in the family and the society in the state. In all the spheres of their life including health, education, income and political participation, where women are accorded with low status. In regard to the school education, the low enrolment ratio and high dropout rates among girls show very poor utilization of the educational opportunities opened up for the girls in the state. Due to the very limited scope of knowledge, skills and resources used at their disposal, women are engaged in quite informal and unorganized sectors where the wages provided for them are very low. As a result, the generation of income to them is very low resulting in degradation of their quality of life and lowering their standards of living. Women and girl child there tend to get marginalized due to their low visibility and due to the very fact their health issues tend to be confined within their domestic sphere alone.

IV. THE NEW GENERATION

The youth depicts regeneration and future; it represents hope and happiness balanced with the overall surrounding. This is the very reason that not just the parents but also the society wants them to indulge into overlooking the silly transgressions happening in their day-to-day life. But, this is not the scenario in Kashmir. The Kashmiri youth irrespective of the number of years, are already in their middle ages having faces lined by cynicism and hopelessness. Their life's passion is largely spent on the streets, where a large number of them hang around doing menial and temporary jobs for their livelihood, watching the world go by. For them, doublespeak is not at all a survival instinct rather; it is a way of life. This attitude which has not only been accepted, but actually is being encouraged by the society that has lost the sense of proportion and the very importance of enquiry among themselves. In addition to this, an exaggerated sense of victimhood is not only a talking point amongst them, but a conviction too, even if it is not always deeply rooted in their facts.

Of the many things that the people of Kashmir have lost in the past 25-year-long violent conflict, the most profound loss has been the sense of youth — carefree thinking, innate rebellion, pleasure-seeking and the spirit of experimentation among them. After all, in a state where life of a youth is uncertain, even a mention of such frivolities smacks of not only insensitivity but also display of complete lack of understanding, it is indeed a harsh statement to make but is the truth.

The life of the youth living in Kashmir is a reflection of the majority of people living in Downtown Srinagar, where their ancestral family properties and businesses are now being shared by over a dozen inheritors, thereby putting serious strain on both space and income of the individual. Politically talking, these people with the passage of time have chosen to disenfranchise themselves by neither participating in the electoral process nor partaking of its fruits.

V. CONFLICT OF KASHMIR

Sovereignty over the state is claimed by both India and Pakistan with reasons suiting to their ideologies. Pakistan assumed the role of guardianship of Indian Muslims; distribution of river waters remained a cause of conflict. That immediately after the partition, the political status of the princely states of Junagarh, Hyderabad and Kashmir, among all the issues remained so vital that India and Pakistan could not see eye to eye. Kashmir has always been special. It came to India in 1947 guaranteed under Article 370 of the Indian Constitution. And for Pakistan, it symbolises the unfairness of a division based on Islam; precluding that all Muslim majority areas of undivided India should have form part of Pakistan.

The state itself is not the issue but just a tool, a means for two countries to test their ideologies. The war in Kashmir is not territorial but ideological. Pakistan wants to prove its two nation theory and for this it must ensure that India's secularism fails there. Peace challenges the very percept of the 1947 partition. So Pakistan is encouraging conflict by sponsoring armed militancy groups in the state. For India, it is a testing ground of its secular theory which though battered, still lies at the heart of the country because India has always held that politics and religion should be separate. Caught between these two ideologies of two countries are the people of Kashmir.

VI. THE INSURGENCY

Pakistan's role in supporting insurgency in the valley is indisputable. The twist and turn was based on the whims and strategy of the leaders. 'Self-determination' has been the core issue all through the history of Kashmir, which took the separation from India as the only objective denouncing all claims, legal and political. Insensitivity of the political leaders inside Kashmir and cosmetic treatment of Kashmir issue by the central leadership proved disastrous in the nineties. Political game play of the leaders created the geographical area issue still additional sophisticated. Besides, maladministration and rampant corruption that took roots within the system of governance touched the purpose wherever the sensation of deprivation, poorness and state couldn't be assuaged despite Brobdingnagian Central help to geographical area since Independence. The plenty lost religion within the Indian Democracy and also the youth particularly took the trail of insurgency. By 1990, matters became thus minatory that democracy became Associate in Nursing anathema within the context of vale.

There were two sets of militant's outfits operating in Kashmir, pro-independence organisations and pro-Pakistan organisations. Both these sets had a priority, to take Kashmir out of Indian Union. Islam was the common factor in both the sets of militants. The J&K liberation alliance of eleven parties formed in 19898 in Azad Kashmir boosted the morale of separatists. Pan Islamism united anti-Indian forces and in this regard Jamaat-e-Islami of J&K in collaboration with Jamaat-e-Islami of Pakistan and Jamaat-e-Islami of PoK played a vital role in recruiting the youth of

valley through madaris for training in the militancy. Islami Jamhuri Ijtihad (IJI) in Jan'1990 set up a cell of its own to instigate Jihad in the valley, the peoples part of Ms Bhutto also did the same and played the Kashmir card frequently. Intervention in Kashmir became the sole agenda of Pakistan. At one stage efforts were made by the ISI to unify the various militancy outfits under one banner by Tehrik-e-Huriyat-e-Kashmir (Movement for liberation of Kashmir). January 19, 1990 was the darkest night in the history of Kashmir when virtually a war was declared against India in Kashmir valley. The loudspeakers, invariably from every mosque blared with "Allaho Akbar, Musalmano Jago, Kafiro Bhago, Jihad aa Raha hai" (Allah O Akbar, Arise and awaken Muslims, buzz off infidels, Jihad is approaching). The fundamentalist brigade wanted to tear off age-old Hindu-Muslim amity, making Hindus and pro-India elements inside the valley as targets. In the middle of January, massive demonstrations were taken calling for Azadi from India in Srinagar and other cities. Those who suffered the most in the situation of militancy were the Kashmiri Pandits, who lived in isolated reotes of Kashmiri villages and some areas of Srinagar and other towns. An educated community, the Pandits have ever since their arrival in Kashmir long ago, been engaged in enlightening and educating the Kashmiris. This community became the prime targets of the terrorist's attacks. So long as Hindu life and civilization continue to exist in Kashmir, the ISI backed militants believed that the state will remain with India. The blood thirsty vengeance of the Kashmir terrorists and the atrocities perpetrated on them made this most peace loving community flee from their hearth and homes.

VII. RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY

There was almost a decade since March 1987 that the status of J&K was deprived of democratic government. The state was perpetually under the regime of the advisors under President Rule. Insurgency and proxy war has been going on for several years. Counter insurgency operations have always resulted in the killing of innocents all over the world. Kashmir was not an exception to this. Prolonged Insurgency was alienating the common man from the Indian rule. Politicians were out of job. They were restless. The fear of gun was keeping them out of business. They were watching with acute helplessness the way the governor and his advisors were reveling in power. A high dialogue of frustration and desperation were creeping the political class. The political workers were dying in dozens very month. The people of J&K were fed up with the insurgency. They wanted peace and tranquillity to prevail. They desired education for their children and wanted to pursue their activities which provided them a livelihood. They did not want their sons to be sent to the militancy training. The government of India was keen to solve the political tangle inside Kashmir. During this time, India was improving its relations with the U.S. and Musharraf thought that India might steal a march over Pakistan in winning the friendship of the super power if he would not cooperate with the

American war against Taliban. This changed scenario had its impact on the Kashmir politics, particularly on the Hurriyat Conference, which depended solely on Pakistan for its strategy in dealing with India.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Peace in Kashmir and the resolution of conflict between India and Pakistan solely depended on the introspection on the part of India and Pakistan. Their respective stands viz., Kashmir as an integral part of India and Kashmir as unfinished agenda of partition have perpetuated militancy and violence in J&K. The indigenous discontentment turned into insurgency inside Kashmir has divided people on ethno-religious line much against the age old composite culture of 'Kashmiriyat'. Kashmir is perceived as disputed territory by the outside world, particularly America. This is the perspective of Kashmir problem, as of now.

There are few situations in resolving this issue. One, Kashmir should go to India. Two, Kashmir should go to Pakistan. Third, it should be independent and the last, is to device a sort of Indo-Pak Condominium (C-Confederation). We need to keep in view the less considered yet more vital element in the process of building peace between India and Pakistan, and that is people to people contact.

IX. REFERENCES

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