

LESSONS FROM INDIA'S COUNTERINSURGENCY CAMPAIGN IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

A Monograph

by

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ABSTRACT

LESSONS FROM INDIA'S COUNTERINSURGENCY CAMPAIGN IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR, by MAJ Daniel G. Hodermarsky, United States Army, 49 pages.

With the majority of U.S. Army operations over the past decade focused on counterinsurgency (COIN) operations, there is value in the study of other contemporary campaigns to increase the Army's depth of understanding. India has conducted a COIN campaign in Jammu and Kashmir, also referred to as Kashmir, since 1989. A conflict that began as a nationalist movement to create an autonomous Kashmiri state has evolved into a conflict now focused on extremist Muslim groups. Operating in the context of fighting an insurgency on land disputed between two nuclear powers, India has adapted its operational approach over the conflict's long history. The long-term commitment to the campaign in Jammu and Kashmir offers the U.S. Army a relevant, contemporary case study on COIN operations. The historical principles for COIN offered in Field Manual 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* serve as a lens for examining India's campaign.

The U.S. Army can draw four lessons from India's evolving operational approach. First, India's actions demonstrate that legitimacy cannot be assumed by the COIN force, but is determined by the populace in question. Second, the campaign demonstrates that the military's goal should be to work itself into the background, and allow the political factors to retain their primacy. Third, Kashmir also shows that security under the rule of law requires that security forces are held accountable for their actions, and that this process is as transparent as practical. Finally, the COIN efforts in Kashmir serve as another reminder of the long term commitment required in order to be successful. These lessons from Kashmir provide a contextual basis for continuing to identify and pursue sound principles for COIN operations in the future.

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ACRONYMS

CARL	Combined Arms Research Library
CGSC	U.S. Army Command and General Staff College
COIN	Counterinsurgency
DSCO	Doctrine for Sub-Conventional Operations
SAMS	School of Advanced Military Studies
MMAS	Master of Military Art and Science

INTRODUCTION

India has conducted a counterinsurgency campaign in Jammu and Kashmir, also referred to as Kashmir, since 1989. A conflict that began as a nationalist movement to create an autonomous Kashmiri state has evolved into an ongoing conflict that now centers on extremist Muslim groups sponsored by Pakistan. Operating in the context of fighting an insurgency on land disputed between two nuclear powers, India has adapted its operational approach over the conflict's long history. The long-term commitment to the campaign in Jammu and Kashmir offers the U.S. Army a relevant, contemporary case study on approaches to sustained counterinsurgency (COIN) operations. The historical principles for COIN offered in Field Manual 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* provide a lens for examining India's campaign, and identifying lessons for the U.S. Army.

India's strategy in Jammu and Kashmir demonstrates how short-term mistakes can have long-term impacts on a counterinsurgency campaign. The campaign also demonstrates that adhering to sound principles of COIN like those offered by FM 3-24, can eventually lead to greater effectiveness. With the prolonged nature of COIN warfare, commanders and planners cannot expect to find a "quick fix" approach. Leaders must instead focus on what caused members of a population to take up arms against their government in the first place. While the U.S. Army's Field Manual 3-24 is meant to guide American forces assisting a friendly nation conducting such operations, India's actions within its own geographic borders offer deeper insight into the principles of U.S. doctrine.

The U.S. Army published Field Manual 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* (FM 3-24) in 2006. America was simultaneously conducting two COIN campaigns as the Army developed and wrote and disseminated the manual. The United States entered Afghanistan in 2001 and toppled the Taliban regime, but was unable to gain stability under Hamid Karzai's government in Kabul. Although no longer in power, remnants of the Taliban regime proved capable of sustained

fighting against the United States and the new Afghan government. The United States invaded Iraq in 2003 and ousted Saddam Hussein quickly, but the resulting power vacuum created an insurgency that kept getting worse. Insurgent attacks risked plunging Iraq into a civil war between its Sunni and Shia Muslim populations. FM 3-24 established guidelines for how the Army would alter its approach to regain the initiative in each theater.

FM 3-24 provides a set of historical principles for COIN. These are meant to serve as guideposts for counterinsurgent planners as they develop their campaign. These principles for counterinsurgency are: legitimacy is the main objective, unity of effort is essential, political factors are primary, counterinsurgents must understand the environment, intelligence drives operations, insurgents must be isolated from their cause and support, security under the rule of law is essential, and that counterinsurgents should prepare for long-term commitment.¹ By keeping to these principles in planning and execution, a counterinsurgent force increases the likelihood of success.

With FM 3-24 serving as the primary lens for analysis, current Indian COIN doctrine will augment this analysis of the Indian campaign in Kashmir. In 2006, the Indian Army also published its doctrine for COIN operations. This document, the *Doctrine for Sub Conventional Operations* (DSCO) captures lessons from India's long history of fighting insurgencies inside its own borders. The manual outlines central concepts and operational approaches for the Indian Army. The Indian Army defines sub conventional warfare as "all armed conflicts that are above the level of peaceful coexistence amongst states and below the threshold of war."²

¹Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-24 Counterinsurgency* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 2006), 1-20 to 1-24.

²Integrated Headquarters of the Ministry of Defense (Army), *Doctrine for Sub Conventional Operations* (Shimia, India: Headquarters, Army Training Command, 2006), 1.

Counterinsurgency operations fall clearly inside this definition and constitute the primary focus of the document. The Indian Doctrine from 2006 demonstrates which lessons that the Indian Army has chosen to institutionalize. The DSCO adds depth to the analysis offered by the FM 3-24 lens.

To provide context for the case of Kashmir, a review of India's history of COIN operations focuses on two other campaigns, Nagaland in the 1950's and Punjab in the 1990's. These examples demonstrate the nation's approach to COIN outside the campaign in Kashmir. The history of Kashmir, focused on events leading to the beginning of a violent insurgency in 1989, provides understanding of the root causes of the conflict. A chronological review of the campaign itself describes the events of the counterinsurgency effort.

The historical principles for COIN from FM 3-24 will be applied to evaluate the Indian campaign in Kashmir. Specifically, the insurgency itself will be characterized by FM 3-24's framework for identifying the type of insurgency, its approach, and its vulnerabilities. The approach of the Indian government, as the counterinsurgent force, will be evaluated by their adherence to the historical principles of COIN. This evaluation draws out lessons from the Kashmir campaign to inform future application of U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine.

INDIAN HISTORY OF COUNTERINSURGENCY

Examining the history of India's approach to counterinsurgency sheds light on their approach to fighting the militants in Kashmir.³ Since the end of British rule and establishment of the Indian Union in 1947, India has conducted at least four major counterinsurgency campaigns.⁴ India evolved its approach to counterinsurgency as the nation countered separatist movements in

³This monograph uses the terms *insurgent* and *militant* interchangeably, FM 3-24 refers to anti-government forces as *insurgents* and Indian doctrine uses the term *terrorists*.

⁴The major counterinsurgency campaigns conducted by India occurred in Nagaland (Eastern frontier), Punjab (Western Frontier), Sri Lanka (southern island), and in Jammu and Kashmir (Western frontier).

vastly different geographic areas, among a variety of ethnic populations. The Naga rebellion in northeastern India beginning in the 1950s, and the Punjab insurgency in northwestern India during the 1990s serve as two demonstrative cases of India's approach to counterinsurgency.

Naga Rebellion, 1950's

India's experience with counterinsurgency began in the early 1950's in the northeastern portion of the country. The government in New Delhi fought separatists from the ethnic Naga population. Unhappy with the borders created by the end of British rule in 1947, the Naga tribes hoped to form an autonomous state separate from the Indian Union. New Delhi refused to grant the region autonomy and a violent uprising began. The Naga rebellion created elements of counterinsurgency doctrine for the Indian army, a doctrine largely unchanged until the 1980s.⁵ The Indian Army developed their approach by studying Mao Zedong's theory of insurgent warfare, and the British theory of counterinsurgency drawn from the experience in Malaya. The Indian Army took the primacy of isolating the insurgents and maintaining control of the population as the most valuable lesson from the British.⁶

The Naga's hit-and-run guerilla attacks caused the Indian Army to utilize large-unit operations. Since quick fights with insurgents did not allow support to reach a unit in contact, the Indian Army began only sending units on patrol durable enough to sustain a fight with guerillas on their own. This led to the practice of keeping most operations at company-level units or larger.⁷ This practice, however, made it harder for the larger Indian units to keep up with the small groups of Naga fighters in the jungles of northeastern India.

⁵Rajesh Rajagopalan, *Fighting Like a Guerilla: The Indian Army and Counterinsurgency* (New Delhi: Routledge, 2008), 135.

⁶Ibid., 149-150.

⁷Ibid., 154.

The Indian Army also learned lessons about the political aspects of counterinsurgency while fighting the Naga rebels. The Army revised its perception of the insurgents, no longer viewing guerillas as enemies to be found and killed, but as fellow countryman. This placed a higher value on the political aspects of counterinsurgency, and on convincing the insurgent fighters to support the government. The army's new perception meant that military force should be used only when absolutely required. The operational effect was that the army began to minimize the use of heavy weapons, such as artillery and close air support. The Indian Army also renounced older traditions from the British colonial rule, like punitive expeditions. Even in the 1950's the Indian Army Chief of Staff vocalized the population-centric approach with guidance to troops deploying to Naga regions:

You must remember that all of the people in the area in which you are operating are fellow Indians. They may have different religions, may pursue a different way of life, but they are Indians and that very fact, that they are different and yet part of India is a reflection of India's greatness. Some of these people are misguided and have taken to arms against their own people, and are disrupting the peace of this area. You are to protect the mass of people from these disruptive elements. You are not there to fight the people in the area, but to protect them. You are fighting only those who threaten the people and who are a danger to the lives and properties of the people. You must do therefore everything possible to win their confidence and respect and to help them feel they belong to India.⁸

The lessons of the Naga rebellion stuck with the Indian Army, leading it to pursue an operational approach similar to positional warfare when fighting insurgents. Large units deployed to cover as much of an area as possible, which at first can seem too dependent on military manpower to be effective at addressing the political aspects of counterinsurgency.⁹ This blanketing system, often referred to as a "COIN Grid" by the Indian Army, has remained a key aspect of their operational approach to counterinsurgency despite such concerns.

⁸Ibid., 145-147.

⁹Simon Jones, "India, Pakistan, and Counterinsurgency Operations in Jammu and Kashmir," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 19, no. 1 (2008):12.

While the Indian Army quickly gained counterinsurgency experience in its northeastern areas, it still maintained a primary focus on fighting large-scale conventional conflicts. Like any national army, the primary responsibility was national defense, requiring the Indian Army to maintain the proficiency and resources required to fight conventional battles effectively. The Indian Army, however, did not entirely neglect counterinsurgency, establishing the Counterinsurgency and Jungle Warfare School in 1970. The school adopted an unconventional focus, reflected by its motto “Fight a Guerilla, Like a Guerilla.” This school developed manuals and training publications on counterinsurgency for the army, such as the counterinsurgency journal *Pratividrohi*, offering practical guidelines and case studies of India’s COIN operations. The Counterinsurgency and Jungle Warfare School, however, did not train the majority of Indian soldiers, but only those about to be deployed to areas to conduct COIN operations. Most of the Indian Army remained focused on combined arms warfare, considering insurgencies secondary to more conventional threats to India. By emphasizing big wars, the Indian Army assumed risk in its readiness to wage counterinsurgency warfare. This led to the army being ill-prepared for insurgencies it encountered in Punjab and Kashmir in the 1980’s.¹⁰

Insurgency in Punjab

The Indian counterinsurgency campaign in Punjab demonstrates an operational approach of the Indian Army in the contemporary period of the Kashmiri insurgency. India simultaneously adopted three military and three political approaches to counter efforts by militant Sikh’s seeking independence from the Indian Union. The political approaches employed a “long-fuse” strategy that did not accept the insurgents’ demands of independence, formed a non-sectarian government to deal with the insurgency, and reintegrated the non-violent Sikh leaders into the political

¹⁰Dipankar Banerjee, “The Indian Army's Counterinsurgency Doctrine,” in *India and Counterinsurgency: Lessons Learned*, ed. Sumit Ganguly and David P. Fidler (New York: Routledge, 2009), 190-191.

process. The “long-fuse” approach accepted a lengthy campaign and, by allowing the insurgency to continue, offered no prospect of accepting the creation of an independent Sikh “Khalistan.” The Indian government allowed time for the insurgent movement to start to crack, becoming more undisciplined and criminal. The insurgents began to fight more against themselves than the Indian security forces.¹¹ Infighting reduced the political influence of the insurgents, and local leaders were able to re-enter the political process slowly. This coincided with the reestablishment of local government structures. Ethnic leaders began to realize that their only hope for addressing their grievances was through legitimate state channels. Otherwise, Sikh leaders risked being left on the sidelines as others reentered the arena and gained power in the new government.¹² This three-pronged approach allowed India to outlast the initial fervor for the insurgent’s cause, to build more legitimate local political mechanisms, and eventually win many insurgent leaders back to the government.

India’s military strategy in Punjab also utilized multiple efforts to counter the insurgents. They implemented a “COIN Grid” and saturated areas that lacked properly trained local forces with regular army troops. The army and police restructured their intelligence service to target militant leaders more precisely, and improved the organization of security forces to include local and unconventional units. The use of regular army troops helped shift support from the insurgency toward the government, thanks to the perception that the army’s soldiers were more disciplined and fair towards the populace than the insurgents.¹³ This approach demonstrated that

¹¹Jugdep Chima, “Controlling the Sunni Insurgency in Iraq: ‘political’ and ‘military’ Strategies from Successful Counterinsurgency in Punjab – India,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 18, no. 4 (7 December 2007): 619-620.

¹²Ibid., 624.

¹³Ibid., 625-626.

the Indian Army, or at least parts of it, inherently understood that gaining legitimacy in the eyes of the Punjabi population was critical.

The Punjab police augmented their intelligence apparatus with the Concealed Apprehension Tactics or 'CAT' system. This system used former militants to identify, and if needed, eliminate Sikh militants. The CAT system also infiltrated undercover police officers into armed Sikh groups for the same purpose. The Punjab police used officers disguised as insurgents to carry out actions meant to discredit insurgent groups, and also targeted the insurgents in areas they thought were safe.¹⁴ This lesson from Punjab was applied later in Kashmir, and captured in India's *Doctrine for Sub-conventional Operations* (DSCO).

The Punjab police also increased the size of their own forces to counter the Sikh militants. They formed a 15,000-member force called the Punjab Home Guards and mobilized approximately 10,000 men as members of local forces termed a Village Defense Scheme. By the early 1990's, the Punjab Police Commandos also formed. These police officers received intensive training from the Indian Army in counterinsurgency operations. These commandos wore their beards neatly groomed, and the traditional Sikh headgear often worn by the insurgents. This attention to their physical appearance helped minimize the popular feeling that India's mainly Hindu government dominated the local security forces, while also closing the perceived gap between the government's security forces and the populace that the insurgents were trying to exploit.¹⁵ By improving the relationship between the people and their police forces, and more effectively targeting the militants, the Indian counterinsurgent campaign was able to seize the initiative and deny the insurgents real progress.

¹⁴Ibid., 628.

¹⁵Ibid., 630.

The ability of the Indian government to attack the Punjab insurgency simultaneously on the political and military fronts demonstrated a sound approach. These lessons were not all applied equally or as effectively in Kashmir, but the case of Punjab shows that elements of the Indian government and Army possessed a good understanding of how to counter insurgencies effectively.

JAMMU AND KASHMIR

The state of Jammu and Kashmir, or simply Kashmir, currently a member of the Republic of India, has experienced internal unrest since before the end of British colonial rule in 1947. As the largest princely state under the British system, Kashmir held strategic importance for both Pakistan and India. Kashmir's borders with the Soviet Union, China, and Afghanistan made it critical terrain for establishing defensible national borders.¹⁶ Internally, the borders of Kashmir surround people of different ethnicities and religions. Sunni Muslims constituted the majority in the Valley of Kashmir, Sikhs and Hindus primarily occupied the western section of Jammu, while Shia Muslims and Hindus populated the eastern area of Ladakh.¹⁷ Since the nineteenth century, the rulers of Kashmir have not been representative of the population. A Hindu group known as the Dogras assumed control of Kashmir under the Treaty of Amristar in 1846, creating a dynamic where a Hindu minority ruled a Muslim majority. The Dogra maharajahs discriminated against the local Kashmiri's, particularly the Muslim population. The Dogras denied Kashmiris access to education, taxed them heavily, refused locals the right to keep weapons, and excluded Muslims from state services. Dogra practices quickly alienated the Muslims of Kashmir.¹⁸

¹⁶Navnita Chadha Behera, *Demystifying Kashmir* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute Press, 2006), 21.

¹⁷Jones, "India, Pakistan, and Counterinsurgency Operations," 4.

¹⁸Behera, *Demystifying Kashmir*, 14-15.

Early in the 20th century, the Muslim population of Kashmir began to organize politically, forming the All-Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference in 1932. The Conference worked to gain more opportunities for Kashmiri Muslims. The All-Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference sought to only improve the lives of Kashmiri Muslims, not independence from India. Muslims later began forming separatist groups seeking Kashmiri independence in the 1940's. The organization *Azad Kashmir* (Free Kashmir) published its manifesto in 1945. *Azad Kashmir* committed Muslims to a struggle for a separate homeland by becoming part of Pakistan.¹⁹

At the time of the 1947 partition following the end of British rule, the state of Jammu and Kashmir was being courted heavily by both Pakistan and India. The Indian National Congress (INC) sought to bring all the princely states into the Indian Union, consolidating India's frontiers. The leader of the INC, Jawaharlal Nehru, believed that leaving the princely states independent would lead to future conflict in the region. On April 18, 1947, Nehru stated publicly to the All-India States Peoples Conference "any state which did not come to the Constituent Assembly would be treated by the country as a hostile state."²⁰

Against Nehru's wishes, Maharaja Hari Singh, the ruler of Kashmir in 1947, chose to remain independent. This decision, however, led to a violent uprising by Muslims wanting to join with Pakistan, in support of which irregular fighters from Pakistan crossed the border. Desperate to keep power, Maharaja Singh requested Indian military intervention; India offered support on the condition that Jammu and Kashmir joined the Indian Union. Maharaja Singh therefore agreed to a temporary accession to the Indian Union, on his condition that a popular vote be held to determine Kashmir's permanent status. The resulting conflict between Indian and Pakistani forces created the current separation of Jammu and Kashmir, with India controlling two-thirds of the

¹⁹Ibid., 16-20.

²⁰Ibid., 6-8.

state, and Pakistan controlling one-third of the state known as *Azad Kashmir* (Free Kashmir).²¹ This split is the reason India still refuses to allow the Kashmiris to hold a plebiscite, claiming that until Azad Kashmir comes back under Indian control, the vote cannot legitimately occur.

An important element of Kashmir's accession to the Indian Union was the special status that Maharaja Singh retained for the state. Article 370 of the Indian Constitution restricts the central government's powers in Kashmir to foreign affairs, external defense, and communications, while the state government retains full legislative powers in all other areas.²² Kashmir is the only state of the Indian Union that retains this special status.

Pakistan, however, does not recognize the legitimacy of Kashmir's accession into the Indian Union. Since 1947, Pakistan has launched multiple offensives to gain complete control of Kashmir. In 1965, Pakistan launched two military offensives, Operations Gibraltar and Grand Slam. During the former, Pakistan sent irregular fighters to incite an armed rebellion against India by Kashmir's Muslims, who were expected to welcome Pakistani intervention. The Pakistanis launched another prong to their attack with Operation Grand Slam, which sent armored units across the border near Jammu, intending to cut land communication between Kashmir and the rest of India. The strategic goal of Operations Gibraltar and Grand Slam was to isolate Jammu and Kashmir from external assistance, while provoking an internal rebellion against India among the Muslim population. This was meant to leave Kashmir with no choice but to surrender to Pakistan. Pakistan, however, made serious strategic miscalculations. The Indian Army did not stand by idly, but instead opened another front in the divided province of Punjab. Also, the Muslims of Kashmir did not rise up in rebellion, but rather demonstrated loyalty to India by

²¹Jones, "India, Pakistan, and Counterinsurgency Operations," 4.

²²Reeta Chowdhari Tremblay, "Kashmir's Secessionist Movement Resurfaces: Ethnic Identity, Competition, and the State," *Asian Survey* 49, no. 6 (November/December 2009), 929.

turning in captured Pakistani fighters to Indian authorities.²³ Ultimately, none of the 1965 operations resulted in any Pakistani gains.²⁴ What the Pakistani operations achieved was the greater Indian military presence along the de-facto international border running through Kashmir known as the Line of Control (LOC). Friction in Kashmir continues with India and Pakistan still occasionally fighting conventional battles for the disputed territory.

Violence was not a factor in Kashmiri independence movements until the 1980s when Kashmiri nationalism experienced a popular rise. Contributing to the rise of nationalism in Kashmir was an expanded education system that increased literacy rates and public awareness of politics and citizens' rights. Also, Islamic schools, or *madrassas*, flamed discontent among young Muslims in Kashmir. During the 1980's, the leader of Kashmir, Farooq Abdullah built stronger ties to the Indian National Conference in New Delhi, causing many locals to become concerned about Kashmir's future autonomy.²⁵

Due to the revived sense of Kashmiri nationalism, new political entities began to form. In 1986, a group of these parties formed the Muslim United Front (MUF). Despite the organization's name, its leader Sheikh Abdullah worked to maintain a secular identity focused on Kashmir's autonomy. This balance proved difficult as the population continued to see the Kashmiri government demonstrate a pro-Hindu bias, making the MUF more attractive for those hoping to expand Muslim influence.²⁶

²³Raju G.C Thomas, *Perspectives On Kashmir: The Roots of Conflict in South Asia* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992), 26

²⁴V.G. Patankar, "Insurgency, Proxy War, and Terrorism," in *India and Counterinsurgency Lessons Learned*, ed. Sumit Ganguly and David P. Fidler (New York: Routledge, 2009), 66.

²⁵Jones, "India, Pakistan, and Counterinsurgency Operations," 5-6.

²⁶Victoria Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict: India, Pakistan, and the Unending War* (New York: I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd, 2003), 136.

The Kashmiri State Legislative Assembly elections of 1987 proved to be a key event. The MUF did not win as many seats as it had expected, and quickly began to support allegations that the elections had been rigged. Oddly, most of the allegations came from the Indian National Congress, which some believe were started due to a political rift between the incumbent Chief Minister of Kashmir, Farooq Abdullah, and the Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Regardless of the actual source of the allegations, the belief that the 1987 elections were rigged increased resentment among the young Muslim population in Kashmir, and directly led to the rise of violent resistance.²⁷

The first major act of violence occurred in May 1987 when Farooq Abdullah's motorcade was attacked. For the rest of the year, sniper attacks against government officials became more common and, as resentment over the elections took hold, the population began to arm itself increasingly.²⁸ The Kashmiri state government misread these events as signs of civil unrest and did not see them as indicators of a serious threat to the government itself.

One early indication that violence had evolved from civil unrest into an insurgency came in 1988 when the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) kidnapped the daughter of the Indian Minister of Home Affairs, Dr. Rubaiya Sayeed. This resulted in several imprisoned members of the JKLF being released as ransom.²⁹ The JKLF formed in 1964 as the Jammu and Kashmir National Liberation Front, adopting its current title in 1971. In 1984, the JKLF requested, and began to receive military assistance from Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence

²⁷Ibid., 131-137.

²⁸Ibid., 139.

²⁹Jones, "India, Pakistan, and Counterinsurgency Operations," 10.

Directorate (ISI).³⁰ One of the first spectacular attacks of the insurgency was the July 31, 1988 bombing of the Central Telegraph Office and Srinagar Club in the state capital of Srinagar.³¹

In 1989, while most of the world focused on the collapse of the Soviet Union, the insurgency in Kashmir began to take shape and quickly gained a foothold. Pakistan began to provide training and assistance for militants inside Pakistani controlled Kashmir. Anti-Indian protestors held demonstrations daily. These protests often resulted in violent attacks against supporters of the government. Coordinated strikes accounted for one third of the working days in 1989 being lost. The strike on January 26, 1989, India's Republic Day, resulted in violent riots. Mob violence continued and the local police were unable to gain control.³² These demonstrations and attacks almost completely paralyzed the state government.³³

The insurgents hoped to intimidate supporters of the Indian National Conference (INC) to distance themselves from the political process. On August 21, 1989, insurgents murdered Mohammed Yusuf Halwai, a leader of the INC in Kashmir, near his home in the state capital of Srinagar. The JKLF placed a placard on his body to claim responsibility for his murder.³⁴ The inability of local police to provide security from violence indicated that the initiative clearly belonged to the insurgents in 1989.

The increasing levels of violence indicated that Kashmiris had largely turned against the Indian government by the early 1990's. Locals who had been on the fence politically began

³⁰Although officially denied by the Pakistani government, many believe that ISI has sponsored militant Islamic groups to fight in Kashmir against India since at least the 1980s. Reasons for this belief, as well as Pakistan's official stance, are detailed by Iffat Malik in *Kashmir: Ethnic Conflict, International Dispute* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK, 2002).

³¹Sreedhar and Manish, *Jihadis in Jammu and Kashmir*, 23.

³²Victoria Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, 143.

³³Tremblay, "Secessionist Movement in Kashmir Resurfaces," 935.

³⁴Victoria Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, 144.

actively supporting the militants. The popular shift against the Indian Union became even more dramatic when Shri Jagmohan, a career diplomat and close ally of the Gandhi family and Indian National Congress party, received the appointment as governor of Kashmir. Jagmohan previously had served as governor of Kashmir from April 1984 to July 1989, but was replaced briefly by General Krishna Rao. Prime Minister Gandhi put Jagmohan was put back into Kashmir in January 1990 because she felt his experience in Kashmir would allow him to stem the rising levels of violence.³⁵ Jagmohan favored coercive tactics, like collective punishments to counter the insurgents, and was quoted as saying that “the bullet is the only solution for Kashmiris.”³⁶ This draconian approach, however, only aided the insurgents by pushing the Kashmiri population to the cause for independence from India.

By 1990, the insurgency had taken root. The pursuit of a coercive strategy against the general population, led by Jagmohan, seemed counterproductive in reducing the overall violence in Kashmir. Figures compiled from data kept by the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs by Indian journalist Praveen Swami indicate that violence in 1989 was limited with fifteen security force personnel and seventy-nine civilian fatalities. In 1990, fatalities increased to 552 militants killed, with 862 civilian deaths, and 132 security force members killed.³⁷

THE COUNTERINSURGENCY CAMPAIGN IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

India’s constitution places counterinsurgency in the hands of the state government.³⁸ While each state can request military assistance from New Delhi, this contributed to the Kashmiri

³⁵Iffat Malik, *Kashmir: Ethnic Conflict, International Dispute* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2002), 287.

³⁶Behera, *Demystifying Kashmir*, 48-49.

³⁷Praveen Swami, “Failed Threats and Flawed Fences: India's Military Responses to Pakistan's Proxy War,” *India Review* 3, no. 2 (April 2004), 161.

³⁸Durga Madhab Mitra, *Understanding Indian Insurgencies: Implications for*

insurgency's ability to take root strongly in its first years. The insurgents outmatched the state government, and by the time Indian military assistance arrived, the initiative rested with the militants, leaving a long road ahead for India's security forces.

Primary Insurgent Groups

While over one hundred and thirty militant groups have existed in Jammu and Kashmir, the state and Indian governments initially faced four insurgent groups, two being indigenous and two international. The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) was the first indigenous group, wanting autonomy from both India and Pakistan. Insurgent groups receiving international support quickly worked to marginalize the JKLF, since it was more localized and only took actions that could be defended in a public forum. Although marginalized, the JKLF remained active and has entered into quiet negotiations with the Indian government. The other indigenous group, the Hizb ul-Mujahideen (HM) desired a union with Pakistan. The HM initially received support from Pakistan, but has maintained its Kashmiri character. Not being comfortable as a Pakistani proxy caused the HM to distance itself from Pakistan while also engaging the Indian government to maintain some influence in its own areas.³⁹

The Harkat ul-Mujahideen (HuM) is the first international group, which seeks to unite Kashmir with Pakistan. The HuM became the dominant militant force of the mid 1990's, primarily using fighters from Pakistan, Azad Kashmir, and Afghanistan. The HuM is one of the more violent insurgent groups. Since most of its fighters are not Kashmiri, and its bases are in Pakistan, the HuM never gained much favor with the Kashmiri population. The second international group, and the most violent of the four facing India, is the Lashkar-e Toiba (LeT).

Counterinsurgency Operations in the Third World (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Strategic Studies Institute, 2007), ix.

³⁹Jones, "India, Pakistan, and Counterinsurgency Operations," 9.

This group draws funding primarily from Pakistan's Inter Service Intelligence Directorate (ISI). Fighters from all over the world are found in LeT, and it stands apart from the others due to its willingness to attack civilians. The LeT's goals reach beyond Kashmir; it hopes to unite all Muslim countries in South Asia to establish an Islamic regime.⁴⁰ The foreign character of the international insurgent groups presented India with a key insurgent vulnerability. The Kashmiris themselves proved unwilling to support foreign militants carrying out violence on Pakistan's behalf.

The Campaign

India's early response to the insurgency was ineffective. The Kashmiri government treated the JKLf attacks in the late 1980's as a police issue of maintaining law and order. Police continued to treat violent acts as isolated criminal behavior while New Delhi remained unconcerned. Neglecting the threat of a popular uprising resulted in the security forces responding to incidents on a case-by-case basis, without realizing a violent insurgency was beginning. Eventually, the state government realized it could not cope with the violence, and requested that the Indian government send national forces to Kashmir.

As the violent insurgency in Kashmir began in 1988 with the bombing of the telegraph office in Srinagar, the Indian Army was stretched thin by other duties. It was already conducting COIN operations in Punjab, and continued to occupy Nagaland. The forces it could initially send to Kashmir were from the paramilitary police and army artillery units, which proved to be poorly trained for counterinsurgency operations.⁴¹

Once the state government requested national assistance, the first national units sent to Kashmir were paramilitary police units. Units from the Border Security Forces (BSF) and Central

⁴⁰Ibid., 9-10.

⁴¹Ibid., 10-11.

Reserve Police Force (CRPF) were committed, probably because they were the most readily available. Neither force had experience or training in COIN, and possessed no knowledge of the local dialects or customs. The BSF and CRPF were very lightly armed, and proved to be ineffective against the aggressive insurgent fighters early in the Kashmir campaign.⁴² The police units primarily manned bunkers near villages and along roads. They also favored using large-unit cordon and search operations whenever they left their static positions, but these operations were usually ineffective. Instead of discovering the location of insurgent supplies and support, the large cordon and search operations interfered with daily life and generated more hostility from the Kashmiri populace.⁴³ By sending ill-prepared forces into Kashmir, India assumed great initial risk to the legitimacy of their campaign.

Indian legislation supporting COIN efforts has received sharp criticism from international human rights organizations. One of the laws already in place as the situation in Kashmir escalated was the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act of 1987, which allowed for the arrest of anyone suspected of conducting “disruptive acts.” This vague legislation went against most internationally accepted views of individual rights and police powers, but was relied on heavily by security forces in Kashmir. This law reduced the ability of the Kashmiri populace to address grievances politically, through their former methods of strikes and protests. The Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act also denied suspects the right to know what charges the police were bringing against them if arrested.⁴⁴

⁴²Sumit Ganguly, “Slow Learning from India's Counterinsurgency Operations in Kashmir,” in *India and Counterinsurgency Lessons Learned*, ed. Sumit Ganguly and David P. Fidler (New York: Routledge, 2009), 80.

⁴³Jones, “India, Pakistan, and Counterinsurgency Operations,” 12-13.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 11.

These national police forces achieved little success and, in 1990, the Indian Army was deployed into Kashmir to conduct counterinsurgency operations. The Army was already present in large numbers along the Line of Control, but their focus was on defending this de-facto border against Pakistani aggression. There was a significant time lapse before the Indian Army shifted from conventional warfare to counterinsurgency operations, to include working with civil authorities to synchronize effectively political and military efforts.⁴⁵

The appointment of Shri Jagmohan as governor of Kashmir on 19 January 1990 marked a critical mistake in India's counterinsurgency campaign. Although he only spent five months in office before New Delhi recalled him, incidents that had negative effects lasting years occurred on his watch. Jagmohan publically stated that he wanted to do away with Kashmir's special status under Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, and completely merge the state with the Indian Union. This did not win him any popularity with the local Kashmiris. Jagmohan did not attempt to end the insurgency with any means beyond repressive tactics aimed at the Kashmiri population.⁴⁶ Jagmohan's policy of collective punishments, on what he saw as a disloyal population, resulted in making Kashmiris more supportive of the insurgents and angrier towards the Indian government.⁴⁷

During Jagmohan's tenure, Kashmir experienced some of the most negative events in India's COIN campaign. On January 20, 1990 a civilian crowd was crossing a bridge over the Jhelum River in the Valley of Kashmir when Indian security forces opened fire under questionable circumstances, killing over one hundred Kashmiris. This incident is considered one

⁴⁵V.G. Patankar, "Insurgency, proxy war, and terrorism," in *India and Counterinsurgency Lessons Learned*, ed. Sumit Ganguly and David P. Fidler (New York: Routledge, 2009), 70-71.

⁴⁶Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, 147.

⁴⁷Navnita Chadha Behera, *Demystifying Kashmir* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute Press, 2006), 49.

of the worst massacres in Kashmir's history. In February 1990, Jagmohan dissolved the state legislative assembly. He hoped to militarize the state under martial law and had the support of the Indian government in New Delhi.⁴⁸ The final incident centered around the death of a respected Muslim elder, Mirwaiz Farooq, who was shot and killed in May 1990. As his funeral procession passed the barracks of the 69th Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) battalion, shots rang out. The government claimed the violent action of the CRPF was in reaction to an attack by members of the funeral procession, acknowledging twenty-seven civilian deaths.⁴⁹ Unofficial estimates claim that up to one hundred civilians, however, were killed by the CRPF. For many Kashmiris, this incident was the last straw and their outrage with Jagmohan risked all-out civil war. Jagmohan achieved an almost total alienation of the civilian populace against India. In May 1990, Girish Chandra Saxena replaced Shri Jagmohan as governor of Kashmir and adopted a more nuanced approach to the counterinsurgency campaign.⁵⁰

Governor Saxena was central to adapting the government's operational approach in Kashmir. Appointed by Indian government in 1990, he was a veteran Police Service Officer, as well as the former head of India's counterintelligence service, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW). Saxena adopted an approach closer to the ones used in Nagaland and Punjab, keeping with Nehru's concept that the militants were "our own people gone astray." Saxena focused on ensuring simultaneous pressure on the insurgents as well as the creating the option for political agreements.⁵¹ Realizing that the excessive use of force would only gain more support for the

⁴⁸Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, 148-150.

⁴⁹The 1990 fatality figures compiled by Praveen Swami (*India Review*, April 2004) from the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs do not specify if the one hundred killed on January 20, 1990 were counted as "militant" or "civilian" fatalities.

⁵⁰Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, 153-154.

⁵¹Sumit Ganguly, *The Crisis in Kashmir: Portents of War, Hopes of Peace* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 81.

insurgency, Saxena publicly directed the security forces to use restraint. Saxena, however, was unable to bring the tactical actions of the military and police forces under his control, and reports of misdeeds continued. For example, a Human Rights Watch report from 1993 claim that paramilitary units were implicated in the deaths of twenty-five civilians on October 12, 1990 in the town of Handwara, and in the deaths of thirty-three civilians in Srinagar on June 12, 1991. The report states that the Indian government never publically released the findings of the investigations on these incidents.⁵²

Governor Saxena expanded on legislation shortly after his appointment with the Disturbed Areas Act of 1990. This act gave the security forces even more authority in conducting violent actions against civilians. Low ranking military and police officers could use violence without getting approval from their superiors.⁵³ This created a paradox where Governor Saxena was simultaneously calling for restraint by the security forces while passing legislation that made it easier for them to utilize violent force. The Disturbed Areas Act likely made it harder for him to bring the security forces under central control. Victoria Schofield described the Disturbed Areas Act as an excuse for the security forces to begin a cycle of burning local shops and homes in retaliation for recent ambushes by insurgents, clearly not reflecting Saxena's publicized calls for restraint.⁵⁴

New Delhi also continued to support the security forces with new legislation. The Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act of 1990 provided the legal authority for the Indian military to conduct operations against Kashmiri insurgents. The act granted the Indian

⁵²Human Rights Watch, *The Human Rights Crisis in Kashmir: A Pattern of Impunity* (New York: Human Rights Watch and Physicians for Human Rights Watch, June 1993), 6.

⁵³Jones, "India, Pakistan, and Counterinsurgency Operations," 11.

⁵⁴Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, 156.

military authority to conduct searches and seizures, make arrests, and use violent force, while providing members of the armed forces with immunity from criminal prosecution and civil law suits for actions taken while exercising powers given by the law.⁵⁵ While the Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act was constitutionally necessary for national police and military units to operate inside Kashmir, it also resulted in further alienating the Kashmiri population.

Initially, the Indian security forces operated with virtually no intelligence. Since the insurgency utilized splits along religious lines, the mainly Hindu Intelligence Bureau (IB) was unable to build an effective network inside Kashmir early in the campaign.⁵⁶ This inability to gather intelligence removed India's ability to conduct intelligence-driven operations, creating the vicious cycle described in FM 3-24 where bad intelligence resulted in ineffective operations.

Governor Saxena, however, made efforts to improve the security forces' ability to collect good intelligence. As part of the Concealed Apprehension Tactics or "CAT" program, security forces recruited militants who could not stand up under interrogation as informers.⁵⁷ By 1997, however, the behavior of these turned insurgents became largely counterproductive to the program, with informants using the overhead provided by the security forces to pursue personal vendettas or profit. This caused many of CATS informers to be diverted to jobs within the security forces, like the CPRF and BSF as a new form of rehabilitation.⁵⁸

Paramilitary forces like the BSF and CRPF remained focused on large-scale cordon and search operations, paying little attention to the cultural contexts of the insurgency. The army and

⁵⁵Patankar, "Insurgency, Proxy War, and Terrorism in Kashmir," 73

⁵⁶Jones, "India, Pakistan, and Counterinsurgency Operations," 13.

⁵⁷Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, 158.

⁵⁸Ibid., 199-200.

security forces initially seemed to focus on a campaign of attrition, measuring success by the number of insurgents killed or captured relative to the number of security force casualties.⁵⁹ Namrata Goswami, a research fellow at New Delhi's Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis, describes the Indian approach to COIN as burdened with poor initiative, bad intelligence, and poorly motivated soldiers lacking the correct training. Goswami cites these issues as a direct cause for the insurgency's early success at establishing insurgent networks and shadow governments, further separating the local populace from the Indian government.⁶⁰ While Goswami points out that after 2001, the Indian Army's reputation was much better among Kashmiris there remained space for improvement, since the Indian Army seemed to reward conventional warfighting expertise over COIN. Her most critical point regarding the Indian campaign is that it remained focused on simply containing the insurgency, that is to prevent the violence from spreading outside Jammu and Kashmir, as opposed to really addressing the root causes of the insurgency.⁶¹ To go beyond containment, the Indian government will have to address the Kashmiri desire for an opportunity to determine the states own status of either autonomy or permanent membership in the Republic of India.

A major shift in the insurgency took place in the 1990's. Pakistan, still interested in acquiring the entirety of Kashmir, provided support to the militant groups in the 1980's. As the JKLF continued to maintain a secular-nationalist identity, Pakistan increased support for the Muslim group Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM), who shared Pakistan's goal of bringing Kashmir under the control of Islamabad. This prioritization of Kashmiri groups by Pakistan marked the beginning of the Pakistani proxy war against India. This shift, however, resulted in less support

⁵⁹Namrata Goswami, "India's Counterinsurgency Experience: The 'Trust and Nurture' Strategy," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 20, no. 1 (March 2009), 67.

⁶⁰Ibid., 68.

⁶¹Ibid., 80.

for the insurgency among the population, who quickly grew weary of violence in pursuit of autonomy, and the increased activity by non-Kashmiri fighters. Many insurgent groups became almost entirely dependent on international support during the 1990's. The recorded number of foreign fighters killed in Kashmir, as recorded by Indian security forces, grew from 0.2 percent in 1991 to 82.5 percent in 2004.⁶² Many of the groups fighting in Kashmir, such as the LeT and HuM, received almost all of their support from Pakistan and were de-facto arms of the ISI. While Pakistan merely hoped to bleed India slowly, many of the more radical groups backed by Pakistan were out for the greater goal of the disintegration of India.⁶³

Indian Reforms

India made significant reforms in the early 1990's to better combat insurgencies. The government improved the structure, composition, and operational approach of its security forces. In March 1993, General Krishna Rao replaced Girish Saxena as governor of Jammu and Kashmir, leading many key reforms. Krishna Rao, a former Chief of Staff of the Indian Army, had served briefly in Jammu and Kashmir in 1989 before being replaced by Jagmohan. His military advisor, Lieutenant General M.A. Zaki was another key figure.⁶⁴ In 1993, coordination between the forces of the central government and those of the state police forces was improved by creating a joint organizational command structure. With Zaki as head of the new Unified Command, this structure linked the police, army, and paramilitary forces.⁶⁵

⁶²Patankar, "Insurgency, Proxy War, and Terrorism in Kashmir," 68-69.

⁶³Behera, *Demystifying Kashmir*, 58.

⁶⁴Sumit Ganguly, *The Crisis in Kashmir: Portents of War, Hopes of Peace* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 117.

⁶⁵Jugdep Chima, "Controlling the Sunni Insurgency in Iraq: 'political' and 'military' Strategies from Successful Counterinsurgency in Punjab – India," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 18, no. 4 (7 Dec 2007), 629.

In the 1990's, the Indian government deployed more than a half-million personnel to Kashmir, primarily in the Valley of Kashmir. During this period, accusations against security forces of rape, torture, and the arbitrary detention of civilians were common. India was aware of the negative effect these accusations had on the legitimacy of their efforts and took steps to better monitor the actions of its security forces. In the mid 1990's, the Indian government began allowing international civil society organizations such as the Red Cross and Amnesty International to enter Kashmir and review the human rights situation.⁶⁶ In 1994, the government created the National Human Rights Commission to provide oversight on accusations of human rights abuses.⁶⁷

Governor Rao and General Zaki eventually came to grips with the fact that a campaign of repression in Kashmir could not achieve victory. This realization led the Indian security forces to adopt a more flexible approach. Indian leadership began convincing insurgents to become informers on their colleagues. The Indian military grouped these informers into "pseudo-teams" that would be utilized on both sides of the Line of Control, giving Indian intelligence agencies the chance to collect on information in both Indian controlled Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistani controlled Azad Kashmir. The pseudo-teams were highly effective at combating cross-border insurgent movements. By the mid 1990's they almost entirely stopped insurgent activity in the areas where Indian security forces put the pseudo-teams.⁶⁸

The Indian government also began to push for more psychological operations against insurgent groups, meant to counteract the insurgency's information operations. A large part of

⁶⁶Reeta Chowdhari Tremblay, "Kashmir's Secessionist Movement Resurfaces: Ethnic Identity, Competition, and the State," *Asian Survey* 49, no. 6 (November/December 2009), 936.

⁶⁷Sumit Ganguly, *The Crisis in Kashmir: Portents of War, Hopes of Peace* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 128.

⁶⁸Jones, "India, Pakistan, and Counterinsurgency Operations," 14.

this aimed to improve the image of the Indian security forces. The Army did this by giving locals free medical aid, free movie showings, and greater efforts at transparency in dealing with reported human rights abuses.⁶⁹

Operationally, the Indian Army utilized the COIN Grid, already used in Punjab, and divided Jammu and Kashmir into forty-nine sectors. A military unit occupied each sector and set out to establish dominance over the insurgents there, each sector established platoon-sized Quick Reaction Teams (QRT) that remained on-call for the local commanders. Road-opening parties also operated in each sector. These parties were route clearance patrols that operated around dawn, clearing major roads and keep civilians informed of the status of each road in their sector.⁷⁰ The COIN grid system and road-opening parties, supported by QRT's, were largely successful in preventing significant insurgent actions and helped to convince the local population that the government could provide them with adequate security. This ability to buy time was one of the military's largest contributions to the campaign in Kashmir. The Indian government estimated that the average life expectancy of an insurgent fighter was two years. After this period, the Indian Army assumed that the militant would have been captured, killed, or would have grown tired of fighting and quit. The security forces continued to offer insurgents a peaceful solution, those who surrendered willingly attended rudimentary rehabilitation programs, and some fighters even received new identities, before being set free.⁷¹

Another of the key reforms made by the Indian Army in the 1990s was the creation of a new, counterinsurgency-focused unit, the Rashtriya (National) Rifles. The Indian Army recognized the campaign would require units built and trained specifically for COIN operations in

⁶⁹Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, 198-199.

⁷⁰Sumit Ganguly, "Slow Learning from India's Counterinsurgency Operations in Kashmir," 83.

⁷¹Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, 173.

Kashmir. Army leaders assumed that locally recruited soldiers would be more accepted by Kashmiris than those coming from other parts of India. The Army created the Rashtriya Rifles to fill this requirement. Soldiers in the Rashtriya Rifle came from local areas and received COIN-specific training. The Indian military also began to utilize Special Operations Forces more effectively against the militants in Kashmir, achieving much better success in intelligence collection by 1995.⁷²

The insurgents did not sit idly by as the Indian security forces adopted a more effective approach. LeT and HuM changed tactics and began targeting security forces in their base areas. This created a “bunker mentality” in some Indian units where soldiers became more reluctant to patrol. Resource shortfalls inside Indian units exacerbated the reluctance to actively patrol. The Army usually operated with less than half its allotted officers, and similar shortages in the enlisted ranks of units deployed to Kashmir.⁷³

The insurgents provided opportunities for India with the violent tendencies of the *jihadi* groups. Both homegrown and Pakistani-based extremists saw their aggressive attacks backfire. The negative effects on the population’s daily lives provided a chance for the Indian government to draw on this frustration and begin to distance the populace from the violent *jihadi* groups. India continued a strategy that aggressively targeted extremist militants on the one hand, but simultaneously engaged moderate insurgent groups for negotiations with the other.⁷⁴ While the Hizb-ul Mujahideen (HuM), thanks to Pakistani support, surpassed the JKLF militarily by 1993, the homegrown JKLF maintained an estimated eighty-five percent of public support, showing

⁷²Jones, “India, Pakistan, and Counterinsurgency Operations, 15.

⁷³Ibid., 18.

⁷⁴Tremblay, “Kashmir’s Secessionist Movement Resurfaces,” 937.

that the people of Kashmir were more willing to support militant groups of Kashmiris fighting for their own autonomy, than foreign *jihadis* doing the bidding of others.⁷⁵

Insurgent groups also launched greater efforts along the political front. In February 1993, over thirty political parties formed the umbrella group called the All Parties Hurriyat (Freedom) Conference (APHC). The parties of the APHC did not all agree whether the final objective should be unification with Pakistan or outright Kashmiri independence. Their common objective, however, was that the Kashmiri populace had the right to choose.⁷⁶ Part of the difficulty with reaching a political solution to the insurgency, however, is the sheer number of insurgent groups, each with different objectives. Even the APHC lacked enough authority to negotiate on behalf of the majority of insurgent groups.⁷⁷ This almost completely hindered the ability of New Delhi to achieve a common framework for conflict resolution.

By 1993, the Indian security forces believed they had gained the initiative from the insurgents inside Kashmir's major cities. Violence in and around the capitol of Srinagar had greatly decreased, but there was still a large insurgent presence in the rural areas where militants were still able to launch effective attacks. The Indian government realized that they had adopted a largely flawed approach, and that the people of Kashmir had to be more involved in the process to achieve a real solution. New Delhi began to refer to a political process more frequently, and in 1994, moved to hold elections for the state legislative assembly that Jagmohan dissolved in 1990. On India's Independence Day, August 15, 1994, Indian Prime Minister Narashima Rao formally

⁷⁵Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, 174.

⁷⁶Ibid., 160.

⁷⁷Ganguly, *The Crisis in Kashmir*, 138.

announced the initialization of a political process in Kashmir to find a permanent solution to the insurgency.⁷⁸

While New Delhi opened up options for the insurgents on the political front, the Indian Army supported its efforts in Jammu and Kashmir by opening a Counterinsurgency and Jungle Warfare School in Krew, outside the state capitol of Srinagar, in 1994. This school was based on the model of the original school opened in the 1970's in India's Northeast. The COIN school possessed weapons ranges, an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) detection and training center, and a complete mock-up Kashmiri villages. Any army unit deployed to Kashmir first reported to the COIN school in Krew for training. The training covered how to identify and defuse IEDs, conduct mountain operations, cordon and search operations, as well as training on the cultural norms of Kashmir.⁷⁹ Soldiers also received instruction on human rights considerations and received specific guidelines for proper conduct.⁸⁰

As security forces became more effective, they provided the Indian government more space to pursue political efforts in support of the campaign in Kashmir. One of the most important political efforts taken during the COIN campaign was the holding of state elections. State elections directly addressed a root cause of the insurgency and supported the perception that locals had a voice in their region's future, even if the question of autonomy was not addressed in the short-term.⁸¹

The state elections in 1996 were a significant political victory for India in Kashmir, marking the end of martial law and the return of a popularly elected civilian government. The

⁷⁸Sumit Ganguly, *The Crisis in Kashmir*, 163-166.

⁷⁹The full curriculum of the Counterinsurgency and Jungle Warfare School is still classified by the Indian Army.

⁸⁰Ganguly, "Slow Learning from India's Counterinsurgency Operations in Kashmir," 85.

⁸¹Patankar, "Insurgency, Proxy War, and Terrorism in Kashmir," 73.

former Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah was re-elected, although the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) reported that its supporters were harassed at polling sites.⁸² A sign of the success on the political front was the voter turnout. Turnout was still low at forty percent in 1996, but this is a marked increase from two percent for the 1989 elections.⁸³

While the government pursued political initiatives in the late 1990s, the Indian Army adopted what the U.S. Army would term civic actions to garner support among the population. This came from the Indian Army's doctrinal principles of minimizing the use of force, and keeping in mind that the people are the center of gravity. A good example of such civic actions was Operation Sadhbhavana (Goodwill), which began in 1998.⁸⁴ This operation was the result of both organizational learning over the course of the conflict in Kashmir as well as organizational innovation on the part of the Indian military.⁸⁵

Operation Sadhbhavana had two objectives, to take the initiative away from the insurgents and reintegrate the populace into the national mainstream. The operation focused on the concept that individual security led to national security, and that this required human and infrastructure development. Operation Sadhbhavana followed a clear set of general principles, such as projects being based on popular demand to ensure a high impact, that planning was centralized while execution was decentralized, that project initiations were local and occurred in the villages, that projects were aimed at self-empowerment, that projects were sustainable, and that projects were integrated with the civic activities of the state and local governments as well as their community development plans. The Ministry of Defense provided funding for projects.

⁸²Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, 193.

⁸³Ganguly, *The Crisis in Kashmir: Portents of War, Hopes of Peace*, 152.

⁸⁴Arpita Anant, *Counterinsurgency and "Op Sadhbhavana" in Jammu and Kashmir* (New Delhi: Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, October 2011), 6.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 11-13.

Local military commanders were authorized to approve projects with or without the concurrence of their Integrated Financial Advisor, an officer assigned by the Indian Defense Accounts Service.⁸⁶

Operation Sadhbhavana provided buses for children and teachers throughout most of Kashmir. These schools focused on preparing students for the all-India entrance examinations required for higher education. While students paid nominal fees to attend these schools, the army covered most of the cost. The Indian Army also established its own hostels attached to its schools to provide for students and teachers unable to travel each day, while helping supplement hostels run by Kashmir's state government.⁸⁷ Under Operation Sadhbhavana the army also set up numerous medical camps, which were very popular. In conjunction with private health care companies, the army was able to provide free medical services, to include providing artificial limbs to victims of explosions.⁸⁸

While Operation Sadhbhavana seemed to be a very clear example of the Indian Army improving its COIN approach, it experienced problems. Most of the projects focused on the very young or the older sections of the population. Kashmiris between 18-21 years of age made up most of the population, were of fighting age, and grew up without knowing lasting peace. Operation Sadhbhavana lacked many projects that directly benefited this age group. Also, the programs were set up so that the army handed over infrastructure projects to the state government once complete. This resulted in a lack of maintenance and deterioration of many projects built with army funds. Some locals believed that Operation Sadhbhavana was merely an intelligence gathering operation, meant to solicit more information on insurgent activities from the populace.

⁸⁶Ibid., 14-17.

⁸⁷Ibid., 21-23.

⁸⁸Ibid., 27.

Another criticism was that the army threw away money, since locals could happily receive the benefits of the projects, but not change their attitude toward India or its security forces.⁸⁹

The operation did produce some positive results; insurgent groups began to seek a non-violent end to the conflict in July 2000, when the leadership of HM contacted the government offering a cease-fire to begin negotiations.⁹⁰ While other insurgent groups refused to respect this cease-fire, the move represented a huge step in getting one of the largest, longest-fighting groups to seek a negotiated settlement.⁹¹ It is unclear if HM extended an olive branch to India due to the effectiveness of Indian security forces, or if HM had simply grown tired of fighting.

Following the second successful state elections in 2002, the Indian National Congress (INC) and People's Democratic Party (PDP) held most of the seats in the state assembly. The resulting INC-PDP coalition in Kashmir began an aggressive campaign to address the issues politically in Jammu and Kashmir. This was called the 31-Point Common Minimum Program. Of the thirty-one points, three were significant to the COIN effort. The state released insurgents from prison, created three new political districts in Jammu, and disbanded the controversial Special Operations Group (SOG) of the Jammu and Kashmir Police Force, which had been frequently accused of committing human rights abuses. These political reforms helped contain the insurgency and showed that the state legislature was willing to take political action to address the root causes of the insurgency. Ultimately, the reforms were unable to achieve a final settlement.⁹² Although it took almost thirteen years, the security situation improved enough for

⁸⁹Ibid., 30-32.

⁹⁰Jones, "India, Pakistan, and Counterinsurgency Operations," 18.

⁹¹Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, 228-230.

⁹²Ganguly, "Slow Learning from India's Counterinsurgency Operations in Kashmir," 82.

the focus to shift from the military's stability operations to achieving conflict resolution through political means.

Although India has evolved its approach to counterinsurgency in Kashmir effectively, the insurgency has proven to have great staying power. This is primarily due to Pakistan's support for the militant groups. Pakistani groups, primarily the ISI, continue to provide arms, training, and sanctuary to the Kashmiri insurgents, which has proven essential to their ability to carry on the fight against India.⁹³

ANALYSIS

India's approach to the insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir provides examples of both effective and ineffective COIN practices. While the Indian security forces have demonstrated both staying power and the ability to adapt their operational approach, the inability of commanders to prevent human rights abuses greatly diminishes the overall legitimacy of the campaign.

The long-term use of a COIN Grid allowed the security forces to reduce eventually the level of violence enough that the Indian government was able to prioritize political efforts at achieving conflict resolution. This follows the approach offered in FM 3-24 where the first priority is to establish a secure environment for the populace. As security achieves results, the focus can shift to political reforms and reconstruction. Eventually, the counterinsurgent will gain more and more of the support of the people as they begin to lose faith in the insurgent's cause.⁹⁴ Contemporary Indian doctrine reflects this as well. The *Doctrine for Sub-conventional Operations* (DSCO) states the military's function is to facilitate conflict resolution by reducing

⁹³Ibid., 87.

⁹⁴FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 1-3.

the level of violence to the point where the political process can begin.⁹⁵ The campaign in Kashmir serves as a case where the Indian Army fulfilled its doctrinal role. India's security forces have been able to provide enough security for the political process to begin in Kashmir, although it took years for the tables to turn in their favor.

Key reforms made during the campaign demonstrate India's ability to change its approach and achieve better effectiveness. The opening of Counterinsurgency and Jungle Warfare Schools in Kashmir demonstrates that the Indian Army possessed an appreciation for the relationship between the institutional and operational forces. By creating an institution with the mission of preparing units for the campaign in Kashmir, the Indian Army took a long-term approach and ensured that its operational forces received the correct training and certifications before entering the fight. The COIN School gave India's military the ability to capture its experience, and then pass on lessons to the rest of the force. Organizationally, the formation of the Rashtriya Rifles is example of positive change. The formation of a standing "COIN force" shows the Indian Army's long-term commitment to the campaign in Kashmir.

The primary failing of India throughout the campaign has been the inability to control tactical units and prevent human rights abuses. Allegations of rape, torture, and murder have colored much of India's campaign in Kashmir. The paramilitary police forces seem to be the largest offenders, even after the creation of the Unified Command structure in 1993. Amnesty International reports from the mid 1990's indicate that torture was a common practice. A January 1995 report from Amnesty claims that 705 people died in the custody of Indian security forces between 1990 and 1995.⁹⁶ While the Indian government claims that these numbers are greatly

⁹⁵*Doctrine for Sub Conventional Operations*, 16-17.

⁹⁶Amnesty International, *India: Torture and Deaths in Custody in Jammu and Kashmir* (Amnesty International, 1995), accessed August 3, 2013, <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA20/001/1995/en>.

exaggerated, the perceived lack of accountability and transparency greatly harms the legitimacy of their overall efforts in Kashmir.

Pakistan has actually witnessed its efforts backfire and has created more opportunities for India in Kashmir. Pakistan's ISI is believed to maintain unofficial support to the insurgent groups in Kashmir, prioritizing groups whose goal is to join all of Kashmir with Pakistan. Islamabad has failed to grasp, however, that its jihadi groups have alienated the Kashmiri population, and now can only carry out violence for the sake of hurting India. The lack of popular support for foreign fighters shows that Pakistan does not understand that the Kashmiri concept of independence, or *azadi*, which refers to an autonomous state of their own, not one under the influence of Pakistan.⁹⁷ The proxy war against India has become a continuous threat of terrorism that does more to build up India's legitimacy in the eyes of many war-weary Kashmiris.

Political factors remain an issue preventing resolution of the conflict. While most of the fighting in Kashmir centers on Muslim areas in the Valley of Kashmir and near the Line of Control, there are parts of the population that both the sides often neglect. The Buddhists in Ladakh, and the Hindus in Jammu have different objectives than the Kashmiri Muslims. As minority groups in the state, the Buddhist and Hindu populations hope to maintain their own political autonomy in the state legislature.⁹⁸ The common thread among Kashmiris remains the desire to determine their own future, whether it be as part of India, or independently.

Although far more effective at COIN operations than in the early years of the campaign, the Indian Army is again beginning to struggle. Although their doctrine is greatly improved, and the officers and soldiers are more attuned to executing COIN operations, the personnel shortages and aging equipment have had a negative effect on the morale of the security forces. While the

⁹⁷Behera, *Demystifying Kashmir*, 84.

⁹⁸Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, 184.

Indian military accepted the primacy of the political aspects of COIN, and the government has accepted that a military-centric, coercive approach could not achieve victory, there remains the chance of things getting worse if Indian neglects to continue evolving its approach.⁹⁹

CONCLUSIONS

Evaluation of the Insurgency

Understanding the approach of the insurgent is critical to developing a sound counterinsurgency campaign. One of the most common approaches for modern insurgencies, and one closely tied to the conflict in Kashmir, is the identity-focused approach. This method gains support by appealing to a common identity or religious affiliation, clan/tribe, or ethnicity. This is often combined with a military-focused approach, as seen in the Taliban's formation of Islamic fighters against the Soviets in Afghanistan.¹⁰⁰

Using Field Manual 3-24 *Counterinsurgency* (FM 3-24) to frame the type of insurgency in Kashmir helps to provide a contextual understanding for the enemy faced by India. According to FM 3-24, the Kashmiri insurgency is best classified as a resistance movement, or liberation insurgency.¹⁰¹ The insurgency is better understood by identifying the root causes, the extent of internal, external support for the insurgency, and the insurgent's desired approach.¹⁰²

The root cause of the insurgency is the status of Kashmir as a state in the Republic of India. After India's intervention on behalf of Maharaja Singh against Pakistani aggression in 1948, the New Delhi has used the Pakistani-controlled area of Azad Kashmir as an excuse to deny Kashmiris the promised plebiscite to determine Kashmir's permanent status. Without this

⁹⁹Jones, "India, Pakistan, and Counterinsurgency Operations," 19.

¹⁰⁰FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 1-5 to 1-8.

¹⁰¹*Ibid.*, 3-14.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*, 1-5.

popular determination, a large portion of Kashmiris will feel that they remain under the rule of a foreign power, keeping the root cause of the insurgency alive.¹⁰³

Internally, the insurgency has historically enjoyed a large amount of support. The inability of Indian security forces to gather intelligence quickly inside Jammu and Kashmir, and the longevity of the insurgency indicates substantial support from the local population. While this support may be largely passive, it helps to keep the insurgency hidden from the eyes of India's security apparatus. Externally, the insurgency enjoys a great deal of support from Pakistan's ISI. While nationalist-secular groups like the JKLF no longer receive much external assistance, the *jihadi* groups enjoy sanctuary in Azad Kashmir and Pakistan, as well as a steady flow of arms and personnel. This continued external support poses a great hurdle for India in reaching a final conflict resolution.¹⁰⁴

Like many contemporary insurgencies, the insurgency in Kashmir demonstrates a mix of the military-focused and identity-focused insurgent approaches. The formation of young, male guerilla bands that live, train, and operate together as small, irregular units constitutes the military-focused element of the insurgency. This presents FM 3-24's indicator of a military-focused approach that there is a presence of leaders and fighters, but little mass base.¹⁰⁵ Insurgents mainly target Indian security forces, generally declining to target the civilian population. The insurgency mobilizes support in accordance with FM 3-24's criteria for the identity-focused approach.¹⁰⁶ The insurgency relies primarily on grievances held by the Muslim Kashmiri population. Presenting indicators from FM 3-24 of an identity-focused approach, the

¹⁰³Anant, *Counterinsurgency and Op Sadhbhavana*,” 33.

¹⁰⁴Behera, *Demystifying Kashmir*, 245-246.

¹⁰⁵FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 3-22.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*, 1-8.

“us versus them” gap has always existed between Kashmiris, especially Muslims, and their rulers, either the Dogras or the Indian Union in New Delhi. The insurgent groups of Kashmir have been able to exploit this historical gap between the populace and the state. While the “cause” of the militant groups remains autonomy, those groups that field fighting forces recruit almost exclusively from the Muslim population. This tendency toward the Muslims in Kashmir has caused the insurgency to evolve from a secular-nationalist movement seeking the plebiscite once promised by India, into a mostly religious insurgency with many groups seeking independence from India only to form an Islamic regime, independently or as part of Pakistan.

The insurgents in Kashmir have demonstrated resilience, but also vulnerabilities as outlined in FM 3-24. The variety of insurgent groups creates inconsistencies with the mobilization message, a reliance on external support, and creates divisions within the insurgency.¹⁰⁷ While the mobilization message revolves around Kashmiri autonomy, Muslims do most of the fighting. This begs the question of whether the objective is autonomy for all of Kashmir, where Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus are able to each voice their respective opinions or if it is merely autonomy from India for Kashmir to join with Pakistan, and place the Buddhists and Hindus under an Islamic regime.

The insurgency relies almost exclusively on the external support. Without the arms and foreign fighters provided by Pakistan in support of its proxy war against India, many insurgent groups could no longer operate inside Kashmir.¹⁰⁸ While this continued support is a thorn in India’s side, it also is a critical vulnerability of many insurgent groups. Should Pakistan decide to cease giving support, the life cycle of many groups would drastically decline, creating opportunity for India’s security forces to push a final resolution. There is also vulnerability in the

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 1-17.

¹⁰⁸Pantakar, “Insurgency, Proxy War, and Terrorism in Kashmir,” 69.

splits between insurgent groups. With so many groups involved in Kashmir, there are many differences their reasons for fighting. These splits have prevented the insurgency from mobilizing beyond a collection of independent groups conducting their own campaigns.

Evaluation of the COIN Campaign

FM 3-24's historical principles for COIN provide a framework to evaluate India's counterinsurgency efforts in Kashmir. These eight principles provide a template for understanding where India achieved effectiveness and where its approach was lacking.

The first historical principle, that legitimacy is the main objective, shows an initial lack of effectiveness. This improved over time for India's COIN efforts in Kashmir. From the beginning, the Indian government assumed it possessed legitimacy. After all, it had interceded on Maharaja Singh's behalf and prevented Pakistan from taking control of all Kashmir by force. Also, Article 370 of the Indian Constitution limited New Delhi's powers in Kashmir more than in any other Indian state.¹⁰⁹ This assumption, however, was flawed. The Kashmiri population did not see India's government as their legitimate rulers, since New Delhi never provided the plebiscite meant to allow the Kashmiris to determine if they would seek outright independence or remain part of India. Without this popular determination, many Kashmiris felt they were again being ruled by a foreign regime.

Operating under its assumed legitimacy, India passed the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act of 1987 and the Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act of 1990. These acts gave Indian security forces the legal authority to conduct counterinsurgency operations inside Kashmir, but also alienated large segments of the local population who saw such laws as mechanisms to cover abuses by New Delhi's paramilitary and army units.¹¹⁰ This is a fine line

¹⁰⁹Tremblay, "Kashmir's Secessionist Movement Resurfaces," 928.

¹¹⁰Ganguly, *The Crisis in Kashmir*, 112.

for any government to walk. New Delhi rightfully ensured there was legislation in place to justify committing its forces to an internal security mission, but failed to correctly pursue an information campaign that eased the populations apprehensions about federal forces receiving more authorities to arrest and use force against civilians.

The second principle, that unity of effort is essential, is an area where India achieved efficiency, but not always effectiveness. The state governor's office controlled state and local police as well as most political functions during the campaign. This proved catastrophic early on as Jagmohan's months as governor in 1990 set the counterinsurgency effort back years. Governor Saxena greatly improved effectiveness with his approach, but was unable to bring the security forces completely under his control. This prevented unity of effort throughout as New Delhi and local army commanders were in charge of federal paramilitary and army operations. The establishment of the Unified Command in 1993 was a critical move toward achieving unity of effort.¹¹¹ India's 2006 *Doctrine for Sub Conventional Operations* (DSCO) reflects this lesson on by stating that what differentiates such conflicts from major combat operations is that the application of combat power is meant to support civil control.¹¹² The armed forces work to strengthen the civil authorities. The DSCO states that the resolution of such conflicts requires a multi-faceted approach where all elements of national power work to addresses the root causes of the insurgency.¹¹³

That political factors are primary is the third historical principle for COIN according to FM 3-24.¹¹⁴ The Indian government did not adhere to this principle effectively until later in their

¹¹¹Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, 198.

¹¹²*Doctrine for Sub Conventional Operations*, i.

¹¹³*Ibid.*, 3.

¹¹⁴FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 1-22.

campaign. Governors Jagmohan and Saxena focused on security force efforts meant to overwhelm insurgent groups. In 1994, New Delhi began to push for greater attention to political efforts, five years after the insurgency began in earnest.¹¹⁵ The first successful state elections were held in 1996, reinstating the Kashmir Legislative Assembly after six years of martial law. The success of these efforts became apparent after 2000 when multiple insurgent groups, like the JKLF and HM, began to seek out negotiations in order to set better conditions for themselves in the future.

The fourth principle is that counterinsurgents must understand the environment. Early in the campaign, the Indian government did not understand the environment. This relates to their faulty assumption of popular legitimacy inside Kashmir. This lack of understanding about the root causes of the insurgency led to repressive tactics against the population that further isolated Kashmiris from India. Later in the campaign, India demonstrated a far greater understanding of the environment. Reforms like the formation of the Rashtriya Rifles and the establishment of Counterinsurgency and Jungle Warfare Schools in Kashmir demonstrate that the Indian Army gained a better understanding of the environment and took action to improve their approach.

The fifth principle is that intelligence drives operations. According to FM 3-24, operations and intelligence share a symbiotic relationship. There is a cycle that can be either reinforcing or vicious. Solid intelligence enables operations to be more effective, and those operations produce more solid intelligence. Likewise, bad intelligence causes operations to be less effective and makes it harder to produce good intelligence in the future.¹¹⁶ The intelligence vacuum in which the security forces initially operated was a great hindrance early in the campaign. Without good intelligence networks inside Kashmir, the Indian security forces were

¹¹⁵Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, 166.

¹¹⁶FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 3-1.

forced to undertake operations to try and flush out information. Such blind operations likely aided the insurgents by aggravating the population.

Governor Saxena was able to leverage his experience in the intelligence services and turn things around for the security forces. The use of captured insurgents as part of the CATS program greatly increased the amount of good intelligence available to Indian security forces. These turned insurgents also opened up intelligence networks across the Line of Control, giving India better awareness of insurgent activities in Pakistani controlled Azad Kashmir.¹¹⁷ These improvements allowed India to get out of the vicious cycle of bad intelligence creating ineffective operations, and into the proper reinforcing cycle where good intelligence drives effective operations, which create more good intelligence. This is evident by the increased effectiveness of the Indian security forces in the mid 1990's continuing through 2001 where multiple Kashmiri insurgent groups began to seek negotiated conflict termination with New Delhi.

The Indian doctrine from 2006 also addresses the primacy of intelligence in counterinsurgent operations, reflecting some of the lessons drawn from Kashmir. For more precise operations, the focus of intelligence should not be on collection but on generation.¹¹⁸ By focusing on intelligence generation, the DSCO leads the counterinsurgent to a more proactive stance relative to his adversary. This means that the COIN forces if focused on making the insurgents react to them, thereby generating insurgent actions and the intelligence that goes with them.

The DSCO also addresses the value of intelligence on maintaining a good relationship with the population. The doctrine calls for all operations to be based on hard intelligence and not be conducted simply on a “prophylactic basis,” the implication being that operations conducted

¹¹⁷Jones, “India, Pakistan, and Counterinsurgency Operations,” 14.

¹¹⁸*Doctrine for Sub Conventional Operations*, 30.

simply to keep security forces busy, or on the belief that patrols, will keep the population and security forces safer, is counterproductive.¹¹⁹ All operations should be conducted for a specific purpose and based on the best intelligence available at the time. This will increase the likelihood of successful operations and help the counterinsurgent maintain a position of advantage over the insurgent.

Insurgents must be isolated from their cause and support is the sixth principle. FM 3-24 offers three approaches. The approach most similar to India's campaign in Jammu and Kashmir is that of "Clear-Hold-Build." A clear-hold-build operation is undertaken in a specific, high-priority area where insurgents are known to operate. The objectives are to create a secure environment, establish government control of the people and the terrain, and to gain popular support in the area.¹²⁰ Separation of the insurgents from the population was achieved by India with their utilization of the COIN Grid, a system that closely resembles FM 3-24's clear-hold-build approach. By saturating areas with security forces, and gradually working to establish security and overwhelm insurgents in each area, the security forces were able to isolate insurgent groups throughout Kashmir. The simultaneous use of Road Opening Teams further showed India's commitment to the security of civilians, while disrupting insurgent attacks on major roads. The civic action programs under Operation Sadhbhavana helped to further isolate the insurgents from popular support by demonstrating that the government would commit resources and time to improve the lives of Kashmiris. These practices eventually caused many insurgent groups to have to rely on foreign recruits and terror tactics. This has removed most of the local support for the insurgents in Kashmir, bringing many to hope for a peaceful resolution through the political process.

¹¹⁹Ibid., 32.

¹²⁰FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 5-18.

Security under rule of law is essential is FM 3-24's seventh historical principle for COIN.¹²¹ India achieved this, albeit under many criticisms of human rights abuses during their campaign. It cannot be ignored that early in the counterinsurgency campaign many security force units committed human rights abuses, to include illegitimate arrests, killings, and torture. These practices did more to hurt India's efforts than anything the insurgents accomplished, likely adding years to the campaign in Kashmir. New Delhi, however, learned their lesson and eventually took actions to increase their efforts at holding members of the security forces accountable and increasing the transparency of their operations by beginning to allow international groups like Amnesty International into Kashmir.¹²² It should also be noted that India's security efforts were generally aligned with India's laws and constitution throughout the campaign. This shows that although lacking in attention to human rights abuses, the Indian government did work to establish security in Jammu and Kashmir under the rule of law.

Human rights violations are a frequent concern for nations conducting counterinsurgency operations. Insurgents will often spread false rumors about police and military forces committing atrocities to help bring civilians farther from their government and closer to the insurgent cause. In India's case, its security forces have frequently been accused of committing human rights abuses. The DSCO demonstrate the Indian Army's efforts to prevent such behavior among its soldiers. India's manual states that human rights are of higher importance in sub conventional conflicts, making more restrictive rules of engagement necessary.¹²³

¹²¹Ibid., 1-23.

¹²²Tremblay, "Kashmir's Secessionist Movement Resurfaces," 936.

¹²³*Doctrine for Sub Conventional Operations*, 53.

The eighth and final principle from FM 3-24 is that counterinsurgents must prepare for long-term commitment.¹²⁴ India demonstrated its total commitment to outlast the insurgents in Jammu and Kashmir. India has fought with Pakistan and China for control of Jammu and Kashmir since its independence from colonial rule in 1947, and has waged its current campaign in Kashmir since 1989. Like the “long-fuse” approach in Punjab, India has not shown signs of giving in to any insurgent demands. India seems to be trying to wear down the insurgents over the long term. There remains the question if New Delhi will allow the political process to bring Kashmiris closer to the plebiscite for which they still hope.

Lessons for the U.S Army

Examining the counterinsurgency campaign in Jammu and Kashmir through the lens of FM 3-24’s Historical Principles for COIN offers four key lessons for the U.S. Army. The first principle demonstrates that legitimacy often depends on perspective. When entering a counterinsurgency campaign, legislation cannot be the only tool used to establish legitimacy. The history and views of the population involved in the conflict must be taken into account. Without convincing the population caught between the insurgency and the state of the government’s legitimacy, the efforts cannot succeed.

The second lesson is related to the third historical principle, that political factors are primary. This suggests working the military into a supporting role. The fact that the most effective actions taken by India were the reinstatement of state elections in 1996 demonstrates this lesson. These elections resulted in great gains toward establishing legitimacy for India’s efforts, even causing two of the major insurgent groups, the JKLF and HM, to enter into negotiations with India. Political efforts can bring an insurgency closer to an end than anything else.

¹²⁴FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 1-24.

The third key lesson relates to the seventh principle, that security under the rule of law is essential. The lesson is that legal repercussions must extend to the security forces as well as the population. In Kashmir, the perception that security forces were not being held accountable for their actions hurt the overall campaign. The population will not likely support a government that establishes security without regard for the rights of its people. If it is not clear to the population that illegal actions by members of the COIN force will not be tolerated, than the insurgent narrative is reinforced by the government's actions. This ties directly to the first principle for COIN, where maintaining legitimacy is the main objective. The U.S. Army must bear in mind the importance of transparency when conducting COIN operations.

The fourth and final key lesson comes from the eighth principle that counterinsurgents should prepare for long-term commitment. The Indian government has committed its blood and treasure to Kashmir since 1989. Many of the early problems in the campaign can be blamed on India; however, the campaign serves as a good example of how long counterinsurgency efforts can take to achieve positive effects. The first six years of the campaign seemed to favor the insurgency in Kashmir, and since has favored the Indian government. It took until 2000, eleven years for the primary insurgent groups to be willing to enter negotiations. This should serve to show the U.S. Army that entering a counterinsurgency effort will never be less than a commitment measured in years or decades, not months.

India's campaign in Jammu and Kashmir serves as a relevant case study in modern counterinsurgency. The U.S. Army can draw valuable lessons from India's evolving operational approach, as well as the institutional and organizational changes made during the campaign. The historical principles for COIN in FM 3-24 provide a valuable lens for analyzing modern COIN operations. The campaign in Kashmir validates FM 3-24's historical principles for COIN by demonstrating that they remain abstract enough to be applied across a variety of situations. While Indian actions in Kashmir did not always coincide with their current doctrine, most of the

ineffective practices align with instances where India's COIN principles were not followed. India's actions demonstrate that legitimacy cannot be assumed by the COIN force, but instead is determined by the populace in question. The campaign reminds practitioners that the military's goal should be to work itself into the background and allow the political factors at play to retain their primacy. Kashmir also shows that security under the rule of law requires that security forces are held accountable for their actions, and that this process is as transparent as practical. Finally, the COIN efforts in Kashmir serve as another reminder of the long term commitment required in order to be successful. These lessons from Kashmir provide a contextual basis for continuing to identify and pursue sound principles for COIN operations in the future.

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