

Press Release

India & Pakistan: Attack on security convoy in Pulwama Kashmir

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‘How many Deaths will it take till we know That too many people have died?’

PIPFDP is shocked and saddened by the loss of lives of 44 CRPF personnel in a militant attack in Lethapora, Pulwama, Jammu & Kashmir. The gruesome manner in which an explosives laden vehicle, driven by a suicide bomber, rammed into a CRPF convoy and the scale of the operation is horrifying. Loss of precious lives is tragic and painful. While investigations are underway, it is alleged that Jaish-e-Muhammed (JeM) orchestrated this dastardly attack.

All civilized societies must prevent bloodshed and condemn, mourn killings. It is equally important to understand the genesis of the attack and find ways to ensure that such incidents do not happen in future. It is also important to make sure that violence and war are not irresponsibly perpetuated in the name of avenging the blood of the deceased.

The incident raises several pertinent questions that must be addressed. According to some reports intelligence inputs about an impending attack were available with the security agencies. Also, the entire highway where the attack took place, is heavily sanitized. The militant who carried out the attack released his video talking about a fidayeen strike before the attack. All these reports suggest a possible security lapse that must be probed along with questions of how such a huge quantity of explosives was piled up and stored. It must also be investigated as to why such a large convoy of military personnel was moving together, in a conflict zone like Kashmir.

PIPFDP unequivocally condemns this and all acts of terror—whether perpetrated by state or non-state actors. While India and Pakistan must conduct investigations into this attack, the attack is a clear outcome of flawed Kashmir-centric policies of the Indian government and the misplaced claims of wiping out militancy from Kashmir. The rigid muscular policy pursued by the Government of India, without any attempts for a political outreach, have created conditions that are conducive for militancy. Excessive repression in the Kashmir valley, particularly since 2016, with men, women and children being killed and maimed with bullets and pellets, highly disproportionate scale of crackdowns and arrests and increasing graph of human rights violations often pushes young men to pick up the gun against the state. It is not out of place to mention that militancy is an off-shoot of a deeper malaise including an unaddressed political dispute, subversion of democracy and democratic rights of people and neglect of human rights violations.

PIPFDP, among many other organisations and people, have raised these issues consistently. Two reports (‘Blood Censored’ & ‘Why are People Protesting in Kashmir’), authored by members of PIPFPD in 2017 and 2018 respectively, had gone on to warn about the worsening situation and the failure of state policies. Sadly, except for further war mongering, these killings are never used by the two governments to brainstorm towards conflict transformation.

PIPFDP calls for major steps to ensure end to violence in Kashmir and the sub-continent.

We recommend:

1. Apart from fighting militants militarily, Indian government must open channels of negotiation with the people of Kashmir and introduce genuine confidence building measures to pave way for a more structured dialogue.
2. New Delhi and Islamabad must resume composite and unconditional dialogue between India and Pakistan and make people of Jammu and Kashmir an inclusive part of the dialogue.

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Tapan Bose, Syeda Hameed & Vijayan MJ
On Behalf of Pakistan India People's Forum for Peace & Democracy

P.S.

- SACW, 16 Feb 2019:
<http://www.sacw.net/article14020.html>