

# THE KASHMIR CONNECT

**Terror Attack To  
Huge Tiranga Rallies**  
How Pulwama  
Traversed The Journey

VOLUME 2 EDITION 9

26 JANUARY, 2023

## Flare-Up In Chenab Valley



**MORE THAN A  
THREAT**

**Urgent Need To Initiate Damage Control Exercise**



THE **KASHMIR**  
**CONNECT**

FROM THE DESK OF THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

# Happy Republic Day!



The tricolour is flying high. There is a sense of happiness and belonging as the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir celebrates the 74th Republic Day.

There has been a tectonic shift from the days when Pakistan would call for a 'Black Day' and the local militants would enforce it. Today, there is zest and zeal as people voluntarily come out to take part in the celebrations.

There is pride in the tricolour and people have willingly

accepted it without any coercion. This shift in mindset has its bearings in the way the government has come out with people-centric policies and development plans.

The government has tried to bridge the trust deficit with the people. There have been outreach programmes that have touched a chord with the people and have percolated down to the last strata of society.

When full dress rehearsals took place before the Republic Day across all the districts, there was enthusiasm and participation.

The streets have been lit with tricolour for at least a week and this joy and happiness is shared by everyone.

In cities and towns across Kashmir, shopkeepers decorated the markets with the colours of the national flag.

There is hope and expectations of progress and prosperity, peace and development. With zest and joy, Kashmiris are keeping the Indian tricolour flying high.

Happy Republic Day!

**GAYATRI MOHAN**

THE **KASHMIR**  
**CONNECT**

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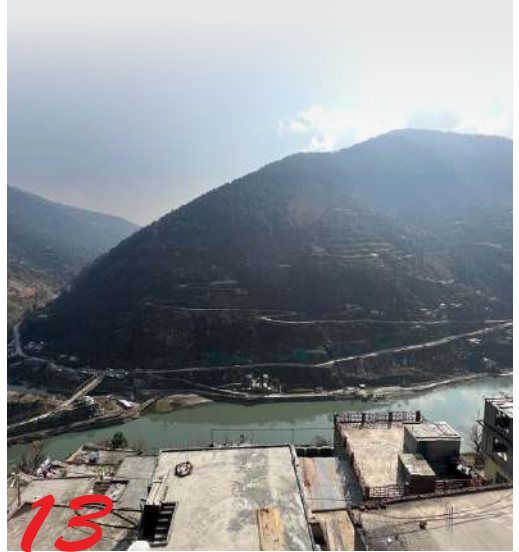
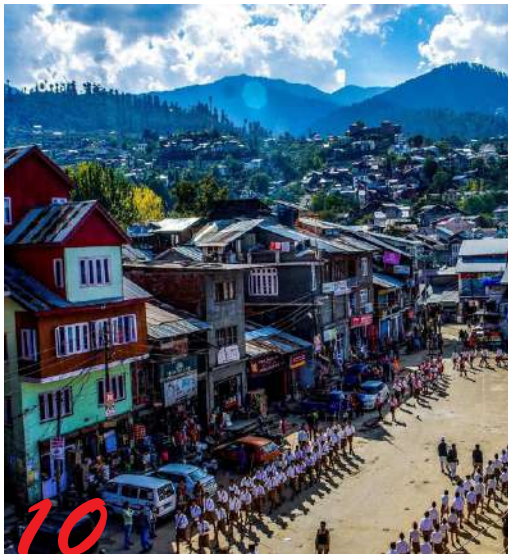
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# THE KASHMIR CONNECT



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FROM THE DESK OF THE DEPUTY EDITOR

ABIDA WAR



## The Happy Widow

# FORCED TO LIVE FOR 34 YEARS WITH THE MAN WHO BRUTALISED HER

## Kashmir Has Many Such Stories That We Choose to Forget

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CHASWEEDA ASLAM

DR SUMI SAIDULLAH

MISBA YOUSUF

(Deputy Editor Ms Abida War has an honorary position with The Kashmir Connect)

Circa 1990, Kashmir was in the throes of insurgency and militancy was high. But a girl named Zoona (name withheld to protect privacy) was blissfully ignorant of it all. She was happy in her own world, as all teenagers would be. She led a simple life with her parents and siblings, and her world was joyful. The blood and gore had not touched her yet. Not yet. But all that would change one night.



## Tortured Till She Broke

Local militants swooped on Zoonas house in North Kashmir and carried her away. Over the next few days, Zoonas was subjected to torture till she mentally broke down and agreed to marry against her wishes, a man named Hameed (not his real name). Marriages are made in heaven, so goes the saying. But for Zoonas, it was not even made in hell. It was worse than that.

For the next 34 years, ravaged by time and tied in a life not of her choosing, Zoonas lived a life of hell. She never enjoyed the happy emotions of a bride or a young wife.

## Marriages That Scarred Women

Married but without wedding ceremony may sound awkward. But the land of Kashmir witnessed such marriage knots.

**These Zoonas of Kashmir carry within them deep scars of violence and cruelty, torture and abuse. These hundreds of Zoonas were brutalised by the heroes of militancy**

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# The global media has been a mute witness to the travails that the Zoonas of Kashmir suffered. These simple women suffered the scars of terrorism

These knots put scars over the hearts of thousands of Kashmiri women. The women still remember, they are still traumatised by the cruelty and the emotionless episodes of over two decades or more ago.

Zoona is in her 50s now. Recently, her husband Hameed died. After three and a half decades, Zoona is finally looking at life afresh. A life free of the shackles of stress and anxiety, pain and suffering. She did not shed a drop of tear, there was no sorrow on her face. Zoona buried her past with Hameed - a past of torment and cruelty that snuffed out her dreams.

## Foreign Media Never Talks Of The Zoonas Of Kashmir

So many times, we read reports in the foreign media where they glorify militancy in Kashmir. They romanticise militancy through their writings and photographs. But they never talk of the Zoonas of Kashmir.

The story of Zoona and many others like her are quietly spoken of in the Valley. These Zoonas of Kashmir carry within them deep scars of violence and cruelty, torture and abuse. These hundreds of Zoonas

were brutalised by the heroes of militancy.

Their dreams were shattered. Many like Zoona continued to suffer silently. Forget love, they never knew the joy of being married, never knew what togetherness means. There was nothing normal in their life, there was no happiness.

## Global Media Blind To Pain Of These Women

The global media has been a mute witness to the travails that the Zoonas of Kashmir suffered. These simple women suffered the scars of terrorism. They continued to live life for the sake of their children and grandchildren.

The dark age of militancy saw thousands of women and children lose their happiness and peace. The society was ruined by terrorism and the writ of the militants ran large. They picked the girls that they wanted and exploited them. In the name of jihad, countless women and girls were forced into physical relationships.

Can a society that suffers such abuse survive? The wounds of victimization never heal even if one tries the best medicine of time.



## WOMEN OF KASHMIR SHALL BE AMBASSADORS OF PEACE

The women and girls of Kashmir only have to turn the pages of history to know the pain that we suffered in the years of militancy. We women of Kashmir shall be ambassadors of peace to the world. We shall be the change makers to build a happy, peaceful and harmonious Kashmir.



**DODA, KISHTWAR,  
BHADERWAH,  
RAMBAN...**

# The Threat Is Building Up

*by* **Gayatri Mohan and  
Syed Azhar Jawad Hashmi**

**K**ashmir is a high-intensity region. Every terror movement is closely tracked here, and swift action is taken.

The response of JK Police and the security forces is moderate in Jammu. Outside these two major centers – Jammu and Kashmir – one does not witness the same seriousness and swiftness in response to activities that may lead to terror, or build a conducive atmosphere for terror.

On January 1, Pakistan rapidly shifted its terror focus from Kashmir Valley to south of Pir Panjal



## **SUB-SURFACE DYNAMICS GAINING STRENGTH**

Security forces must initiate swift and strict counter action against any terror-related activity in any part of the union territory. These sub-surface dynamics are gaining strength in the Chenab Valley region. The state cannot afford to ignore radicalization and the under-currents of damage in any part of the erstwhile state of J&K.

## **EROSION OF SECULAR ETHOS IN CHENAB VALLEY**

The Hindu-Muslim population has an almost equal ratio in the Chenab valley region. Massacres have happened here from time to time. Communal fault-lines have also caused flare-ups. All through this, responsible citizens of Doda, Kishtwar, Bhandarwah and adjoining towns and villages have tried hard to maintain the calm. Over the last few years, a deliberate mechanism is in place to erode this tradition of peaceful co-existence.

# **Rajouri Was The Bugle. If This Bugle Sounds In The Chenab Region, Damage Control Can Be A Challenge**

region. ISI executed the attack through quasi-local terror groups. Hindus were singled out and killed. The presence of terrorists was known in the region since 2021. But terror attacks often enjoy the privilege of surprise.

If ISI has the capability to shift the terror focus at will in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the Chenab valley region should equally worry the security apparatus in terms of a terror attack. Ladakh and Kargil, which were parts of the erstwhile state, are vulnerable too. For ISI, all gains against India are good – whether big or small.

# **POSTER BOYS** OF **THE CHENAB VALLEY**

**Some NGOs Claiming  
To Be Welfare Bodies  
Are Deepening  
Islamist Supremacy**

**MISUSING  
DEMOCRATIC  
SPACE**



Some select socio-political organizations in the regions of Doda, Kishtwar and Bhandarwah have undertaken deliberate and sustained efforts for establishing the notion of Islamist supremacy in Chenab valley region. This has been happening over the last few years.

On the surface, these NGOs claim to be welfare bodies. They help the Muslim community and also the Hindu community as part of their welfare initiatives. Local observers say that in this way, they are able to maintain the façade of being secular.

But those who have analyzed the security situation in the Chenab valley closely say that these NGOs are actually playing a very sinister role. The leaders of these NGOs are overtly and covertly deepening the notions of Islamist supremacy in Chenab valley regions. The leaders of these NGOs are expanding their reach in the Jammu region too.

Poster boys of these NGOs and socio-political bodies here are playing a very clever game. They are traversing in grey zones of indoctrination while carefully staying within the legal space. They are actively using social media or public spaces to say, write or do things that make crowds of people excited or angry with communal overtones.



This is being done systematically and intentionally, so that when the command is given, the crowds may act in a particular way. Close observers warn that this has the potential to lead to a difficult upsurge of youth in Kishtwar, Doda, Bhandarwah, Ramban-Banihal.

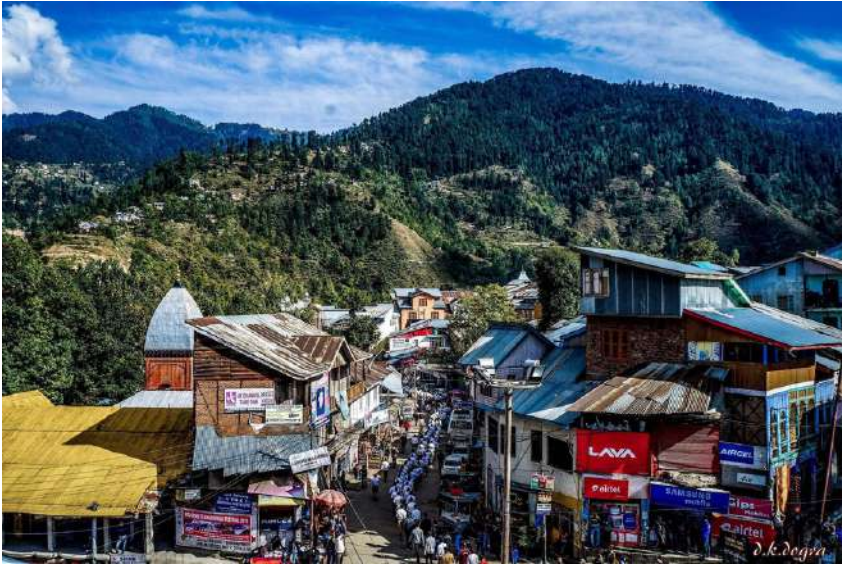
Anybody who thinks that this is an over-statement needs to study the Chenab valley region closely.

## Sustained Counter Action Not Taken

### Situation Being Allowed To Drift

Leaders of these NGOs are misusing the democratic space to indoctrinate the youth into Islamist supremacy. Over the last few years, these leaders have built a massive physical and online following.

The following of these leaders has people of all ages. They have also attracted a sizable section of the local



youth. In the huge physical or online crowds that some leaders of these NGOs gather, one may see many 30 to 50 year olds.

But the threat to internal and external security will not come from those who are aged 30-50 or more. People of a mature age have learnt to discern between right and wrong.

The cause of concern is that these NGOs are deepening the indoctrination of a section of the youth. The ones to get influenced will be the teenagers. Those in the age-group of 14-25 years are impacted. Through continuous indoctrination, these youths are shaped as ready raw material. If they are inflamed, then they only wait for time and ammunition. When the time comes, they are ready to undertake violent action.

Government intervention is needed urgently for damage control initiatives.

The area has been quiet recently, but that does not mean that the threat is not lurking. A close observer of the area says it is possible that hybrid militants

are being prepared. It is equally possible that hybrid militants may already be part of sleeper cells here, and may strike at will.

## **Rabble-Rousing Local Leaders Have Been Booked Earlier**

Leaders of some of these NGOs who are engaging in divisive action are in the radar of the security forces. Some of them have also been booked for their anti-state actions.

The unfortunate part is that the situation is being allowed to drift. There is no sustained action against these leaders. At ground level, it seems that the state is allowing a free run to the divisive forces.

An observer in Doda gave the example of the heads of some religious organizations in Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat and other states. These organizations were allowed to have an unbridled growth, and their followers ran into thousands or lakhs.

When allegations of serious misconduct were raised against the leaders of some of these organizations, the government tried to take legal action against them. By that time, these organizations had become so big that it became a mammoth task for the state to rein in their misuse of power.

A similar situation seems to be developing in the Chenab valley region, and it is unchecked.



BY ROVING EDITOR SYED AZHAR JAWAD HASHMI

No Counter Action By State

Divisive  
Leaders

YOUTH  
HAVE NO  
ALTERNATIVE

Building

Huge

Following

**D**eliberate polarization is happening systematically, and in a sustained manner.

Chenab valley region has been home to under-currents of radicalization since the beginning of terrorism in Kashmir. These may have gone down by about 20 per cent in the last few years. But they were too high earlier. Even 80 per cent is too huge. It normalizes

radicalization.

Anti-national people make use of such radicalized youth, who fall easily to brain-washing. Some NGOs are evidently acting upon a deliberate design. Somebody has applied the mind to strengthen radical trends here.

We cannot be sure that the problem of hybrid militancy is limited to Kashmir. It may have spread its tentacles to Chenab valley region.

Over the last few decades, Chenab Valley region has bred a large number of terrorists. Many of them are absconding and are in POK. They and other terror operators continue their efforts to influence the youth here. There is need to be highly cautious of the under-currents that these anti-state players are activating.

Since the early years of terrorism in Kashmir, radicalization has deep roots in the Chenab valley region. Undercurrents of radicalization and indoctrination have been strong since militancy started in Kashmir. While terrorism was at its peak, a number of terrorists hailed from Doda, Kishtwar, Bhandarwah, Ramban and the adjoining areas of Chenab valley.

## **We cannot be sure that the problem of hybrid militancy is limited to Kashmir. It may have spread its tentacles to Chenab valley region**

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**If I am a youth of Chenab valley, you have to see things from my perspective. As of now, I do not have any alternatives. The region does not offer any major recreational opportunities. There is no strong NGO working in a positive space with influential and popular leaders**

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## **Region Needs Strong Productive NGOs with influential leaders**

If I am a youth of Chenab valley, you have to see things from my perspective. As of now, I do not have any alternatives. The region does not offer any major recreational opportunities. There is no strong NGO working in a positive space with influential and popular leaders.

Other civil society members who may be considered influential are of an elderly generation. The youth cannot

connect with them. Society needs someone young, dynamic and influential who is on the right lines. The youth need an alternate leader, and that should be provided by the civil community. Then the negative forces will lose their sheen. But this counter space has nobody. It's a vacuum.

## **Threshold Of Both Communities Has Gone Down**

In the past, whenever there were communal flare-ups or massacres, responsible locals

from both communities acted in a mature manner to control the fires. It seems that on both sides now, the threshold has gone down.

If there is any communal flare-up, the reaction of the Hindu community is likely to be more firm, more aggressive.

## **No Mechanism To Monitor The Local Madrasas**

There is no mechanism from the government to monitor who is teaching what in the local madrasas. There is no teacher qualification. One can see minimal efforts of the district administration to take any remedial proactive action in this space.

We have observed that there are very few of us from the same community who are ready to talk about these dangerous undercurrents. We see a worrisome situation building up. Anybody can fuel it. We have seen that happen earlier. It may happen even now.

Radicalized NGOs are taking the centerstage for religious matters. In private conversations, senior leaders admit that this damage is happening. They are able to foresee that if any communal flare-up happens, it will be due to the work of the leaders of some NGOs who are working on radical lines.

These NGO leaders are radicalizing youth. Thereafter, the youth can be approached by terror organizations. These youth can be indoctrinated by Pakistan's terror operators. Their vulnerability is high.

# **Muslim and Hindu Communities Do Not Support Radicalization**

**MASJID AND  
MANDIR  
COMMITTEES CAN  
BE IDENTIFIED,  
EMPOWERED AS  
STRONG CIVIL  
SOCIETY PLATFORM**



It is important to note that by and large, the Muslim community or the Hindu community of Chenab valley does not support radicalization or polarization. They want old traditions of harmonious co-existence to continue. But the traditions of harmony and peace are being deliberately damaged by some new local leaders.

The problem is that no counter-work is being done to negate it. If eminent members of the civil society are recognizing the threat and vulnerability that is building up, they are quiet about it.

The more worrying part is that the district administration is also not filling the space. The divisive forces are conveniently playing upon the space provided by democracy. The security apparatus is aware of these divisive forces. But appropriate action has not been initiated.

## **Greater Govt Focus On Employment Opportunities Is Vital**

In Doda and Kishtwar, a very high percentage of the local population comprises the labour



class. Most of these men go to Himachal Pradesh or to Ladakh to earn a livelihood. The youth have no major employment opportunities locally. There is also a lack of a strong work culture. The will to work is low.

In large parts of the Chenab valley region, Pakistani propaganda is believed to be true.

The matter of concern is that indoctrination promotes militancy and terrorism. The negative ideologues are active. If ISI flares up communal violence, the youth may themselves pick up guns.

The region cannot afford to suffer more such communal flare-ups.

The kind of targeted attack that Rajouri witnessed recently – if that happens here, it will pose a challenge for the state.

## **Low Local Engagement, Youth Believe In Pakistani Propaganda**

Parts of the Chenab valley region are still difficult to access,

like Desa etc. In those far-flung villages too, the youth have no local employment opportunities.

The state has not reached out to these youth or engaged them in meaningful activities. The result is that the youth believe Pakistan's propaganda.

The leaders of some NGOs here are using this vacuum to plant ideologies and influence the youth. The polarization is being carried out unbridled, in the name of political activism. Local observers know that the whole exercise is agenda-driven.

The Chenab valley region is marked by high altitudes and mountain terrain. The state must stay mindful of the consequences if the youth are influenced negatively. Strategies must be formulated and executed at ground level accordingly.

Perhaps the state can examine the possibility of empowering local youth groups that can counter the negative trends.

# NOTES FROM THE VALLEY



FROM THE CONSULTING EDITOR'S DESK

SHEIKH MUDASIR HUSSAIN



# UT Admn Can Counter ISI Strategy Through Sustained, Committed Action

ISI plays on thought. It plays on the thinking of the youth. Since the beginning, ISI has adopted this strategy in Kashmir. It is employing the same tactic in



Chenab valley region.

Countering this strategy is not difficult for the state. It only needs planning and committed action.

One, the government needs to engage the youth in a sustained manner. Youth engagement cannot be left to schools and colleges alone.

Our policy planners know that the state shall spend far less on youth engagement. The state spends far more on deploying security forces and counter-terror mechanisms. These positive strategies must be put into action with greater force and determination.

The UT Administration has Mission Youth initiatives. In one activity or the other, the youth have to be engaged. There are many options. Sports. Skill development can be provided

to the youth in areas where they can look for self-employment later.

Youth can be trained in the management of tourism and adventure activities. All across Kashmir, the Chenab valley, Jammu region – there is endless scope for generating revenue and self-employment through tourism and adventure.

There is a ready market globally for the valued Kashmiri arts and crafts. The government can provide organized training in these areas.

A section of the youth is interested in higher studies. The State can initiate multiple programs like Super 30 for them.

The youth who are interested in the digital space can be given training in Communication And Information Technology, camera management, video editing and

many other options. Training in different areas of agriculture and livestock management, vocal and instrumental music. The possibilities are endless.

In some districts of Kashmir, the DCs have taken up exemplary initiatives for youth engagement. This needs to be replicated across all of Kashmir, Chenab valley region, Jammu, Ladakh and Kargil.

ISI's ideologues are active in Kashmir. They are also active in the Chenab region.

We have consistently seen this pattern. ISI influences the thought, and the youth pick up guns. It is time for the state to influence the thought and shape the narrative through continuous positive interventions.



# MAJOR POINTS AT A GLANCE

- Deliberate polarization is happening in a sustained manner and systematically in the Chenab region
- Poster Boys of Chenab Valley – growth and influence needs to be watched
- There are deliberate efforts for establishing the notion of Islamic supremacy in Chenab region
- There is no sustained government mechanism to counter it. All focus is on Kashmir.
- There is no strong civil society for a pushback against these negative forces.
- Secular people in masjid committees and mandir committees have to be identified and empowered as a strong civil society platform
- The region is desperately in need of development, good governance
- Counter groups with positive and constructive thought processes must be empowered to engage the youth meaningfully.

BY ROVING EDITOR MUDASIR DAR

2019 – Major Terror Attack

2022 Onwards – Huge Tiranga Rallies

# HOW THE TRANSFORMATION IN PULWAMA HAPPENED



# 14 February, 2019: Pulwama burst into national headlines with the deadly suicide attack on the CRPF convoy

## 2022 And Continuing: Pulwama hosts huge Tiranga Rallies

### The story of how committed district administration can change the dynamics

As Kashmir is entering an era of development, peace has prevailed at what used to be one of the epicentres of militancy in the valley – Pulwama district. The challenges that Pulwama faced have been dealt with effectively by the dedicated officers in the district administration and the police by taking Pulwama on the road to progress. Once a haven for militancy and drugs, this district is learning the joys of peace and the positive ramifications for all sections of society.

Only three years ago, Pulwama had become the bastion for all illegal activities. Continuous shutdowns and anti-national conspiracies ruled the district. At that time, we had thought that peace was an impossible dream for us.

All of that has changed. The district now has zero tolerance for the people involved in any unlawful activity.



### Ripple Effect Of Positivity In Pulwama

The prevailing peace has set off a chain of positive developments. Pulwama is emerging as the launch pad for budding entrepreneurs and businessmen. Tourism inflow was low here as compared to other popular destinations in Kashmir. Now the number of tourists has increased significantly.

The district administration has ensured transparency in the



functioning of all departments. Working together with great synergy, DC Mr Baseer ul Haq Chaudhary and SSP Mr Ghulam Jeelani Wani have ensured that the functioning of all the departments is people-friendly.

The result is that all the state-run institutions have become corruption-free. This has built a solid faith of the locals in the government offices. In this way, the local administration and the police have succeeded in gaining the trust of the local populace.

The policies adopted by the district civil administration and the police have attracted people to open up about their demands and grievances. There is easy and comfortable access to public offices including the DC and SSP offices. The civil administration and the police have played a vital role in restoring the connection of the government with the locals. The result is that people have direct access to the office of the DC and the SSP, without the need for any intermediary.

Till three years ago, parents in Pulwama district were anxious about the future of their children. They used to worry that their children may turn to anti-state violence or to drugs. Now, parents are hopeful that growing up in a healthy environment, their children shall be able to build a happy, constructive life.

# Before - Hubs of Militancy Now - Hubs Of Peace And Progress

Lelhar And  
Karimabad  
Large Villages  
In Pulwama

by Mudasir Dar

Anybody who was familiar with Lelhar village in Pulwama three years ago knows about the sea change that has happened here. The area was a hotbed of terrorism. No bureaucrat of





## These fiery villages have settled into a life of peace. Normalcy has returned to the district after rigorous measures taken by the civil administration and the police. Strict action has been taken against the wrong elements while the law-abiding citizenry has been protected

the civil administration or police officer dared to visit this village. They knew that the village would respond with heavy stone pelting.

The accompanying photographs are from the same area. For the first time in 2022, Lelhar welcomed the DC and SSP Pulwama with warmth and hope. It was remarkable that hundreds of people of the village welcomed the two distinguished guests.

### Payer Village In Tral Tehsil

The story is similar for other villages of Pulwama. Those

places which used to welcome officers with stones and clashes are welcoming them with garlands now. Testimony to this was when the residents of Payer village in Tral tehsil welcomed the officers with flowers for a block divas program organised by the district administration. It shows how much we have gained over the last few years. This has happened because of pro-active action and a visionary approach by the officers.

These fiery villages have settled into a life of peace. Normalcy has returned to the district after rigorous measures taken by the civil administration

and the police. Strict action has been taken against the wrong elements while the law-abiding citizenry has been protected.

The village of Karimabad offers the same example. Like Lelhar, officers would be terrified to enter Karimabad. Because of the violence here, these villages could not get the benefit of the government schemes. A senior Army officer had made a huge statement to define the volatility of Karimabad. He had stated that anti-insurgency operations across Kashmir will get hampered if people follow the example of Karimabad village of Pulwama.

### Police Took The Challenge Head-On

There is a popular saying. When the going gets tough, the tough get going. We watched how the current leadership of Pulwama Police refused to meekly accept the situation in Karimabad. They refused to cave in to the militant or separatist elements here.

The DC and the SSP set an example by holding a District Development Council (DDC) meet in Karimabad after a gap of 25 years. Such actions bridge the gap between the state and the people. With honest and committed action, bonds are strengthened.

This bold initiative set the ground for the youth to take interest in the democratic process and take forward the development of the village. Pulwama police consistently counselled the misguided youth of all the villages in the district in an effort to bring them into the mainstream.



# Owais Yaqoob Of Pulwama

## From Ring Leader Of Stone Pelters To International Sportsman

The example of Owais Yaqoob is illustrative. Owais was celebrated as a ring-leader of stone-pelters in his area. Today, Owais is a changed man who believes in the Idea of India. He is a celebrated sportsman from the area who has represented his nation at international level, and is highly proud of his achievements for his country.

Owais was brought up in a space where gun culture was romanticized. The story of Owais revolves around growing up among false notions and awakening to reality. Leaving his ill-famed past behind, Owais

has chosen new role models to achieve heights in his life and realize his dreams.

The amazing transformation was made possible by the SSP Pulwama Mr Jeelani Wani, who counselled Owais. The change in Owais is startling, and he is called an 'ultra-nationalist' now.

### **Confidence And Trust Of People In District Admn**

Pulwama is battling the problem of drug addiction among the youth. The district urgently needs a drug de-addiction centre and a counselling centre, where the afflicted youth can be

provided guidance and can be treated.

In many areas where Pulwama was falling behind on the development indicators, the courageous efforts of the DC and the SPP have registered success. In 2022, the largest Tiranga rally was held in Pulwama. This indicates how much confidence and trust people have in the civil and police administration. It sends a strong message that there is no gap between the people and the administration. It signifies how peaceful we are and how much we love to live in a peaceful environment.

# PULWAMA ON A NEW ROAD

## Tricolour Zest For I Day, R Day Celebrations



Earlier during I-Day celebrations, Pulwama used to remain shut. Shopkeepers used to unfurl the flag of the separatists. In 2022, the shopkeepers decorated the town with tricolour lights and the national flag on each shop for Independence Day. This is how Pulwama district is being transformed with the focused efforts of the officers at the helm



## DC'S AWAMI DARBAR IN SHADOW OF NATIONAL FLAG

National flag of the height of 120 feet was dedicated in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district on September 17, 2022. This is among the highest national flags in South Kashmir.

This is the level of achievement that had been achieved in Pulwama. It is highly creditable that Deputy Commissioner Pulwama Mr Baseer Ul Haq Chaudhary organises the Awami Darbar beneath the shadow of this national flag so as to inculcate the sense of patriotism among the people.

This is among the unique initiatives of the DC in Pulwama, once the hotbed of terror activities in Kashmir.



### **In 2022, the shopkeepers decorated the town with tricolour lights and the national flag on each shop for Independence Day. This is how Pulwama district is being transformed with the focused efforts of the officers at the helm of affairs. The same zest is being seen for the Republic Day celebrations 2023**

of affairs. The same zest is being seen for the Republic Day celebrations 2023.

Years ago, there was a huge controversy in Pulwama when some locals tried to install the hoarding of killed militants on the entrance of a park. With the support of the same people, the district administration named the same park after a martyred police officer and installed the board on its entrance.

During the Jashn-e-Nawjawan event in Pulwama in April 2022, thousands of youth participated enthusiastically. The same day, two terrorists were killed in the district. The earlier pattern was that

youth used to rush to take part in the funeral rallies of militants. But last year, they enjoyed the festivities at Jashn-e-Nawjawan event. This proved once again that there is no room for unscrupulous elements in our society and peace is the way ahead. All this has been possible with the unrelenting efforts of the civil and police leadership in the district. The DC and the SSP have remained at the forefront to turn Pulwama into the real heaven that is Kashmir. It is the responsibility of all local stakeholders to join hands with them for the progress of Pulwama.



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