UNJUST AND UNWISE: THE HINDU EDITORIAL ON COUNTER-INSURGENCY OPERATIONS IN J&K

Relevant for: Security Related Matters | Topic: Role of External State & Non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security incl. Terrorism & illegal Migration

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

December 28, 2023 12:30 am | Updated 12:30 am IST

COMMents

SHARE

READ LATER

In a conflict-prone border province such as Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), security forces have to tackle not only terrorism but also engage in counter-insurgency operations in a precise and just manner. The Pir Panjal Valley, comprising Poonch and Rajouri districts, has witnessed fierce encounters between security forces and militants in jungle terrain, leading to the death of 28 soldiers this year. The death of three civilians who were detained by the Army in the Poonch-Rajouri area following a deadly ambush on an Army convoy on December 21, and the fact that five other civilians were badly injured due to alleged torture by the security forces, is a severe indictment of the counter-insurgency tactics there. Such heinous actions by security forces targeting civilians in response to militant attacks are clearly problematic, on two counts. First, this increases the unpopularity of a regime that has not been democratically elected in the Union Territory where provincial elections have not been held for more than half a decade. This is a blow against counter-insurgency in an area that has been relatively more peaceful in comparison to the Kashmir Valley. In fact, the Pir Panjal region has been experiencing militancy in the last two years after relative calm for a decade and a half. Counter-insurgency operations of the kind that followed the ambush last week breed discontent among residents in a region which has not been supportive of militancy in the near past.

One of the aims of militants in the asymmetric warfare waged against Indian security forces is to provoke the forces into committing rights violations against civilians and to use grievances and indignation among them to increase their own support base. Such actions by security forces play into the hands of militants and their handlers across the border. Second, the legitimacy of force or violence and its use by the state depend on the justness of the actions. Indiscrimination in the use of violence targeting civilians without just cause only results in the questioning of that legitimacy in the eyes of the people. The J&K police have registered a murder case against unidentified persons following the deaths of the civilians and the Army has taken three senior officers off their posts while promising an inquiry. Both these agencies must now deliver justice quickly and in a firm manner. "Fake encounter" deaths and torture by security agencies in the Valley have resulted in spurts of increased militancy besides public outrage that developed into major law and order situations. The Bharatiya Janata Party-led Union government has tried to use a no-holds barred security-centric approach to tackle the problem of militancy and public anger in J&K. The repeated acts of rights violations and crimes in the name of counter-insurgency are clear evidence that this approach is not working.

COMMents

SHARE

[Jammu and Kashmir](#) / [security measures](#) / [terrorism (crime)](#) / [human rights](#) / [police](#) / [Bharatiya Janata Party](#) / [government](#)

BACK TO TOP

[Terms & conditions](#) | [Institutional Subscriber](#)

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.