

# SECURITY REPORT



## Kashmir Unrest in NIT and Handwara- Government Cannot Afford to Lower Guard

The first week of April witnessed massive protest, violence and unrest in the campus of National Institute of Technology Campus of Srinagar which erupted between the local Kashmiri students and the students from rest of the country who study there. The unrest there took violent turn that resulted in clashes and brutal assault of J&K Police on students raising national flag in the campus. The violence in the campus that erupted due to alleged celebration of some local Kashmiris in the campus when India was defeated by West Indies in the Semi Final of T-20 World Cup. The violence not only exposed the deep divide among the people of the valley and the rest of the country but also exposed to a great extent of the

double standard of civil society and the intelligentsia who remained silent when police were assaulting the students in the NIT campus even when the same lot had been critical of entry of police in JNU and arrest of those raising anti national slogans in JNU, Delhi. Eventually J&K Police was replaced by CRPF for security of the campus. However the tales of harassment and threats that the Non-Kashmiri students received in the campus including even horrific stories of female students being threatened with rape, for raising Indian flag in the NIT Campus, vindicated that even though terrorism has more or less subsided in Kashmir valley, the separatists and the anti-Indian elements have still remained successful in fomenting hatred towards Indians from rest of the country.

The incident in NIT also reflected how sensitive campuses in India have become and where flare-ups of major proportion can happen anytime. The event in NIT Srinagar was a major test case for the BJP-PDP alliance in power in J&K where each of the two constituent members of the alliance have two divergent constituency to cater too. While Mehbooba Mufti would surely try to appease the Kashmiri people to retain her popularity, BJP having got all its vote from Jammu, cannot afford to downplay or ignore the activities of separatists at the cost of the sentiments of Jammu and rest of the country.

The incident of NIT Srinagar was followed by similar unrest and violence in Handwara where rumors and concocted lies played a key role in triggering major anti-army unrest and stone pelting. There was a visible pattern in the violence in Handwara which started on the issue of alleged molestation of a Kashmiri school girl by Army personnel even though on record the girl denied it and instead blamed some local men for the same. However, by the time the first arrest of a local guy was made in Handwara based on testimony by the victim, five people had already died in the violent clashes. The army and the other security forces including J&K Police could not continue to remain silent recipient of relentless stone pelting and eventually they had to resort to fire to disperse the protesters.

One feels sorry for the Indian Armed Forces operating in J&K. When it comes to humanitarian work, they always have to be in the front when the state is struck by earthquake or floods or even hostage situations by terrorists. They also have to be on their tenterhooks twenty-four seven for fighting terrorists but meanwhile continue to be at the receiving end of hatred and stone pelting by a section of the population of the Kashmir valley (not to be confused with Jammu and Ladakh) who continue to remain compliant foot-soldiers of the separatists and radical hate-mongers. Eventually, the army had to remove three bunkers in Handwara which proved to a great extent that the protests were whipped up by separatists for this objective and the molestation allegations were just an excuse. No doubt that such removal of bunkers eventually helps the terrorists. The fight against terrorists and their supporters is far from over. Incidents in Handwara once again proved that Pakistan sponsored secessionist elements can go to any extent to foment unrest and violence in the state.



## ISIS threatens to attack India and implement Sharia- Is Bangladesh becoming a hub for ISIS?

In a recent interview published by Dabiq, the mouthpiece of ISIS, the head of ISIS in Bangladesh has threatened to attack India, wipe out Hindus and implement Sharia law in India and Bangladesh. The statement by Shaykh Abu

Ibrahim al-Hanif, cannot be taken lightly as the issue of rising radical extremism in Bangladesh is a given. Recently the Informational Minister of Bangladesh Government was quoted saying that there are more than 8,000 Bangladeshis who were trained by Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and now reside inside Bangladesh. The rising number of atheist and free minded bloggers being attacked in Bangladesh also point towards a growing concern. One has to connect the statements by the ISIS with the discovery of terror modules in Khagrachar and elsewhere in Bengal which indicated the shocking penetration of Bangladeshi terror groups like JMB inside some of the Indian states.

The threat of ISIS in India is a profound one and this threat is not just multifaceted but multidimensional. Recent reports indicated that ISIS communicates with around 30,000 sympathizers in India. Many of the Indian Mujahideen members have now become ISIS sympathizers. Further, ISIS has deeply embedded itself inside Afghanistan and in some places of Pakistan as well. India, which is already fighting a multitude of aggressors ranging from Islamic terror groups to ultra-left Maoists would not just have to be prepared for eventualities but would also need considerable capacity building as well as reforms and restructuring in the internal security architecture for dealing with the emerging threats. The Middle East and North Africa remain witness to the kind of brutality and resilience that ISIS is capable of and thus undermining the threat from ISIS would not be prudent.



## Ecuador, Japan Earthquake- Wake up call for India?

The recent spate of earthquakes in quick succession that happened in Japan and Ecuador has once again brought back the issue of the preparedness of India to deal with a

major earthquake. Many of the regions of India especially in northern part along the Himalayas and north-east are highly prone to major seismic activities and have been witness to many earthquakes in the past though most have been within manageable ranges. The earthquake in Nepal was exemplified the fragility of the region. The whole of North India has over the past few decades witnessed manor construction activities. While Disaster Management Authorities have been set up at the Central and State levels many years back and India also has in place a reasonably experienced National Disaster Response Force with 12 battalions at its disposal, the issues related to the structural strength of many of the buildings in most regions of North and North-East India remain a matter of concern.

The three issues that India needs to consider on a priority basis and work towards capacity building are as follows

1. Structural strength of Buildings
2. Disaster Response, Evacuation Architecture and Capacity of Hospital Infrastructure to take care of the wounded and victims.
3. Fund for rebuilding of affected public infrastructure.

It would be prudent if India makes it mandatory for all builders to construct only earthquake resistant buildings. Further, there is perhaps also a need to create an earthquake fund for rebuilding of destroyed regions. Additionally, it is also very critical to Indian private sector to take the threats of earthquake seriously and take adequate protection to secure the critical infrastructure and personnel in the private sector.



## India France close in on Rafale Deal

Recent reports suggest that in all probability the deal for the purchase of 36 Dassault Rafale would be signed between India and France in the near future. The price is expected to be around Rs 60,000 crore. Given the issues related to the dwindling squadron strength of Indian Air Force, the news of the Indian negotiators and their French counterparts having sorted out much of the issues related to pricing, is indeed a positive one. Meanwhile it has also been reported that HAL is in talks with SAAB for collaboration for the development of the upgraded HAL Tejas LCA. The Government of India has set a target of 2018 for the development of LCA Mark 1A for Indian Air Force. HAL has been tasked with manufacturing 100 of Tejas Mark 1A along with 20 in the initial design.

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