

# KASHMIR BLEEDS

**Kashmir** continues to bleed. On Dec'16, 2018, 7 persons died in a firing by the men of Rashtriya Rifles in Pulwama district of Kashmir. This killing adds to a long and unending list of people dying in similar instances. In this particular incident, 3 people are branded as "militants"; 3 are civilians who rushed to the scene hearing the gun shots and fell dead in the context of a so called encounter. Pathetically, one school kid also has lost his life in this firing.

The whole journey of Indian ruling classes since their signing of the Instrument of Accession with Hari Singh, the King of Kashmir, was one of dismantling the pillars of agreement and trust one by one rather than strengthening the trust, confidence of and bondage with people through concrete steps. They used coercion, manipulation, allurements, brutal suppression, back door, illegal, diversionist and divisive methods to nullify Kashmir's special status and throw the constitutional and political promises made to the Kashmir people to winds. The Congress had introduced and carried out these policies all through its rule in the Centre and they were frenziedly continued by the BJP led Indian Govt.

The Indian ruling classes are playing a drama democratic rule too in Kashmir. The Congress left no stone unturned to install the regimes of its choice in Kashmir either of Congress or backed by it or sought to rule through Governor. They did not bother whether the Kashmir people voted or not for the regime and whether the democratic norms were observed or flouted. They made and unmade the govts through corruptive, foul and coercive methods. Here the ruling classes were bothered about nothing but to claim to have a democratic sanction for all their anti-people and anti-democratic policies in Kashmir. Once BJP assumed power at the Centre, it too continued to play the same game in its own way in Kashmir.

BJP is known for its dogged opposition to the Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, which provides a special political status to Kashmir. It is also known for its frenzied attempt to communally divide the Kashmir people with an aim of weakening their strength of unity to fight for their rights. Curiously, the PDP, which was claiming to uphold the Article 370 and oppose the communal division of Kashmir people, formed a coalition govt. with BJP in Kashmir. The PDP-BJP govt. led by Mahabooba collapsed under the weight of its own contradictions and weaknesses and in the face of growing discontentment among the people. Then, finally, Kashmir was placed under the President's rule which was virtually a BJP's rule.

Kashmir people remained mere spectators to the entire gamble of making and unmaking of regimes. The squabble for power among the parties of ruling classes and their failure to float a regime only point out how severe is the crisis of their game of democracy.

The Kashmir people are experiencing countless problems in their struggle. They lost thousands of their near and dear in police firings. There are several instances where their sons, brothers, fathers and brothers were bodily lifted away by the security forces from their beds or fields or work places and many of them had never returned. The people had to knock the doors of offices, police stations and courts to ascertain whether they are alive or, if not, how they lost their lives and where their dead bodies were buried. They had to wage massive protest movements to get the bodies of people died in police firings so that they can bury with all honor and love. Rising costs of life and unemployment constitute an essential part of causes of people's protest. The massive deployment of armed forces protected by special powers to gun down the people and escape the legal action made the life of people in Kashmir most insecure. The gun wielding security forces frequently entering the scene to deal with the mass protests and freely using the guns and raining pellets on the people, placing vast areas repeatedly and for days together under Sec.144 and other restrictions and foisting false cases under special laws and arresting the people greatly disturb the normal life of people and lead them to feel as though they are living in a warlike situation.

The Kashmir people always adopted the forms of democratic mass protests. These protests are taking militant and violent forms in the face of provocations from the state and whenever they were sought to be ruthlessly crushed. The people of all ages and as families enmasse participating in the protests repeatedly and for days together and not caring the sufferings, dislocations in normal life and loss of life are distinct features of these protests. Opposing the fake encounters and protesting against the attempts to abduct the innocent people from their homes and branding the people as militants by the government and security forces has become a part of Kashmir people's struggle. In the course of their prolonged struggle, the people have reached a point where they cannot be scared away by the security forces. The instances of people intervening into the scene, as happened in Pulwama, are growing. The people and democratic forces fear that the Indian rulers are blowing up the danger of militancy in Kashmir in a deliberate attempt to deny the just national and democratic aspirations and

rights of Kashmir people, trying to show the problem of Kashmir as nothing but a conflict between the militants and Indian Govt. and are using it to justify their policy of brutal suppression. But it will serve no purpose. The Indian rulers can create more incidents like Pulwama, but cannot solve the Kashmir problem by these methods. The solution lies nowhere but in going deep into its roots. The need is to create democratic, free and peaceful atmosphere and conditions where Kashmir people can express their views on their political future. Negating the people's aspirations, seeking to impose the solutions against the wishes of people and dreaming of suppressing the people will only drive the Indian ruling classes into deeper quagmire of crisis.

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