

VIF Brief
June 2020

Kashmir

Is the Time Ripe for a
New Outreach Strategy?

C D Sahay &
Abhinav Pandya



Vivekananda
International
Foundation

© Vivekananda International Foundation 2020

Published in 2020 by

Vivekananda International Foundation

3, San Martin Marg | Chanakyapuri | New Delhi - 110021

Tel: 011-24121764 | Fax: 011-66173415

E-mail: info@vifindia.org

Website: www.vifindia.org

Follow us on

Twitter | [@vifindia](https://twitter.com/vifindia)

Facebook | [/vifindia](https://www.facebook.com/vifindia)

All Rights Reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior permission of the publisher



C D Sahay is a Distinguished Fellow at VIF. He is a Former Secretary (Research and Analysis Wing), Cabinet Secretariat. C D Sahay joined the Indian Police Service in 1967 and moved to Delhi in 1975 to join the Research and Analysis Wing, India's external Intelligence setup. He rose to head the organisation from 2003 till Superannuation in 2005. He has decades of experience in dealing with national security issues and international terrorism



Abhinav Pandya is a graduate in Public Policy from Cornell University. He has worked in political affairs, refugee rehabilitation, social capital and sustainable development in India and USA. He is interested in political affairs, counter-terrorism, religious extremism, international security, spirituality and comparative religions. He has been a regular contributor to the Vivekananda International Foundation (India) on issues relating to radicalisation, and security affairs.

Kashmir - Is the Time Ripe for a New Outreach Strategy?

Abstract

India's historic move on August 5, 2019, heralded a new era in Jammu and Kashmir, a state which witnessed an uncertain political status and 30 years of Pak-sponsored Jihadist militancy. Before the abrogation of article 370, the normal life had come to a standstill due to everyday encounters, mainstream politics dying a slow death, giving space to radical Islamist organizations. It appeared that Kashmir was entering the next phase of militancy where the Pan-Islamist groups like IS and Al Qaeda would hold sway in Kashmir.

However, August 5 dealt a death blow to terrorism in Kashmir. After 370, there was no major protest in Kashmir; however, resentment started when there was no palpable transformation on the governance and outreach front. This paper recommends a comprehensive outreach strategy for Kashmir, which includes many innovative and unconventional measures. It recommends a semi-official approach to reach out to the various stakeholders in Kashmir. Towards the end, the paper also draws the contours of formal political dialogue.

Introduction-How it all Began

Ideally, this story should begin with the imposition of the governor rule in Kashmir (June 2018), though it is currently more fashionable to place the marker on August 5, 2019, the day Article 370 of the Constitution was abrogated and other path-breaking measures were announced. With the latter, as we all know, intentionally or otherwise, an entirely new template of governance and security approach started in Kashmir.

For a better appreciation of the developments that have taken place since August 5, 2019, Kashmir watchers strongly recommend a closer look at the calibrated moves made over the 13/14 months of Governor rule. It is argued, with some justification, that several break-through initiatives were taken in dealing with matters of corruption, governance, education, and administration. The state gave 50 new colleges; Governor Malik's anti-corruption drive was a huge success and immensely popular among ordinary people and the grassroots level initiatives in governance and administration such ensuring the regular supply of basing facilities like electricity and water and quick redressal of the grievances, gavenew hope to the people. In his unique style of outreach, typical of an earthy politician, Gov. Malik regularly interacted with farmers, students, and scholars, even inviting them to the Raj Bhawan for casual discussions. He did not have any reservations about attending to phone calls from ordinary people.

While this was happening at one end, at the other, the elitist separatist leaders and mainstream politicians were losing credibility among the people because their opportunism, corruption, incompetence, and dubious loyalties were getting exposed. The youth was impressed with the new narrative of good governance, job creation,

anti-corruption drive, and access to high offices, including the Raj Bhawan.

Alongside this, the Security Forces (SFs) were tough on terrorism. SFs in 2017 and 2018 neutralized a record number of militants. Fatigue, hopelessness, and frustration were setting in gradually. After the encounter death of Zakir Musa, a celebrity militant, there was no protest. People were getting fed up with militancy, continuous fighting, and living in a security-centric state with stringent restrictions on movement, internet curbs, harassing security checks and frisking.

Amidst all these, a section of the people was progressively veering around to the view that Article 370 must go, and the State should integrate with India. Kashmiris should become part of the economic progress of India. After 30 years of a proxy war that got them nothing but death and destruction, Kashmiris deserved a better life with jobs, peace, and prosperity. It seemed as if people were mentally prepared for the abrogation of Article 370 and the dawn of a new era in the history of Kashmir.

This assessment was, in a way, later confirmed by the fact that, after the abrogation of Article 370, there was no significant protest. Skeptics, including the Pak-sympathisers, Separatists, mainstream political parties, and even some in the agencies, expected a massive civil revolt and mass uprising. However, there was none. The people had mentally prepared themselves for a new dawn in the history of Kashmir. Besides, people were also jubilant at the simultaneous action against the elitist separatist leaders, hawala operators, and some politicians for their involvement in terror financing. The mainstream politicians who missed no opportunity to blackmail India were pained from within when the people did not react against

370. Many of them had earlier declared that the valley would burn if article 370 was tempered with. Pakistan and its proxies, too, went into depression when the people did not react.

Internationally, India achieved a diplomatic victory over Pakistan and its allies on the Article 370 issue. Major Islamic countries supported India. Everything was fine in terms of management and public service until 2-3 months after the abrogation of article 370. Delhi and the state administration were doing an excellent job.

Where did things start going wrong?

However, ten months after the abrogation of Article 370, Kashmir appears to be on a downward slide. Militancy is witnessing serious attempts at revival; infiltrations are being frequently attempted, and simultaneously, local recruitments have started going up. In the recent encounters with terrorists, senior officers have started getting killed on a regular basis, clearly indicating that the new batches of foreign terrorists (FTs) are highly effective and better equipped for this game.

All these are disturbing developments but not yet alarming. SFs have strong capabilities to deal with militancy. Ideally, a few months after the abrogation of Article 370, the state should have relaxed internet controls and gradually restored 4G internet services. Along with that, if the security apparatus has sincerely gone after the Jama'at cadres, which dispersed in the rural areas after the ban on the organisation in 2019, it would have been challenging for the recent batches of foreign terrorists to regain a foothold and a supporting infrastructure in Kashmir.

What is really disturbing is the rising level of alienation of the people, especially the youth that expected a healing touch to follow.

They were hopeful of witnessing sincere state efforts to create jobs, revive economic activities and political processes, and usher in significant changes in the quality of the governance and local administration. More than ever before, after the abrogation of Article 370, the state needed a visionary political leadership with the capacity and will to connect with the masses. However, the entire administrative machinery became extraordinarily bureaucratized, and a vast majority of people feel that the state is being run by insensitive bureaucrats who tend to behave like viceroys.

Kashmir Needs a Big Outreach Push

Kashmir needs proactive outreach not only to counter the false propaganda by Pak-sponsored separatists and Islamists. Recent incidents such as the death of a civilian in firing while crossing a barricade (which he had no business to) and the burning of 15 civilian houses during an encounter in downtown Srinagar have tremendous potential to intensify further the hatred (Kashmir Wallah, May 19,2020). There was a perception of state apathy in situations like these. The ongoing big push to militancy, primarily led by FTs will further aggravate the public outrage and worsen the situation. Pakistan seems to be strategically working to orchestrate such a situation.

To turn the historic opportunity offered by the abrogation into long-term success and defeat the adversary in the proxy war, it is important for both Delhi and Srinagar to win the hearts and minds of the people through focused outreach activities.

The Outreach Objectives could be built around a template such as Confidence Building, Addressing Trust Deficit and Alienation, Opening Communication Channels, Engaging the target audience both mentally and physically, developing an Alternate

Narrative, and Countering Religious Extremism. These have to be done systematically, strategically, and in an organized manner. In line with internationally recognized evaluation templates, the outreach program can have deliverables outputs, outcomes, indicators of change, and, most importantly, a firm time-line. A team of dedicated civil servants, independent NGOs, intellectuals, journalists, academicians, school teachers, local community leaders, religious clerics, business people, university students, police officers, gender activists, sociologists and psychologists, local politicians, and historians can be constituted to plan and implement and monitor outreach efforts.

The Philosophy behind the Outreach

First and foremost, it must be clear that addressing the sense of alienation through outreach does not imply that the State is expected to go soft on terrorism or compromise from a weakened position. Instead, it should be from the position of strength that the State currently enjoys.

Pakistan and its proxies believe that growing alienation and hatred against India is the best possible scenario providing much-needed fuel to the furnace of militancy. They also believe that with every encounter, the level of alienation increases as in jihadi terrorism and death is an investment. The Islamic concept of an afterlife makes the idea of post-death/post-martyrdom rewards in the form of Jannat highly attractive and heroic. Every funeral of a terrorist becomes a fresh recruitment ground for many future militants. And the process goes on.

The economics of conflict is even more interesting. If the sense of alienation increases, the cost of sponsoring terrorism including

recruitment and logistics proportionately go down in Kashmir. With a ready supply of homegrown militants, the cost and risk associated with sending terrorists from their territory, also get minimized. On the other hand, India has to spend more and more on security operations, law and order, domestic and external intelligence etc.

Further, widespread alienation also adversely impact developmental activities. Huge funds are allocated for large-scale infrastructure, power and construction projects, and employment schemes. However, a conflict environment is scarcely suitable for the productive utilization of such funds to generate the desired outcomes, including reduced alienation and enhanced state-legitimacy. In such circumstances, massive corruption takes place with the funds filling the coffers of bureaucrats and politicians. These scandals further worsen the situation by increasing the alienation and loss of faith in the state institutions. Once again, it fuels militancy, and the bureaucratic-political nexus has another suitable occasion to demand more funds for development, and the process goes on.

Specific Measures for Specific Issues:

The brief analysis of the background makes it imperative to go for a strategic outreach initiative. In today's Kashmir, the youth resentment, frustration, and radicalization have become a problem. They have an obsession with gun culture. Gun wielded by security personnel, or a militant is seen as the only way of empowerment. The whole milieu of conflict and frustration aligns well with the aggression of contemporary youth. Hence, the first and foremost objective of the outreach effort should be to create alternate role models in sports, academics, arts, and business.

Outreach to be led by DCs and SPs: District Collectors and Police

Captains can play a very crucial role in the process of outreach. In the eyes of ordinary Kashmiris, the young, dynamic, and influential civil servants and police officers hold much charm and carry an aura of glamour.

DCs, ADCs, SSPs, and Add. SPs should regularly interact with young minds and school children through frequent visits to schools, colleges, and universities and engage young minds in conversation and discussions. They can invite a group of ten colleges and ten school students for lunch once in a week, listen to their views and suggestions, and some of those ideas could be put into action.

Promoting Sporting Activities: The starting point of the outreach could be through the promotion of sporting activities, not only by providing financial and material support but by inspiring and incentivizing participation- to create new success stories and dreams that can 'sell' to the youth. It is going to be a challenging task in a state neck-deep into pessimism and mutual suspicions due to decades of militancy.

In every village, tahsil, and a district, there should be a playing field. It should be well-maintained. Lower and district level administrative and police officials should encourage local students to participate in sports, play with them, and encourage informal interaction on the playground. The newly elected panchayat representatives should also actively participate in the sports life of their areas.

District and state-level tournaments should be organized, given media coverage that will be immensely helpful in satisfying youth desire for recognition. Winners and achievers should be rewarded with monetary incentives and special privileges in jobs. They should also be encouraged to participate and play at national levels.

District/Sub Divisional level development clubs: The DCs and SPs should also start debates, current affairs, and development clubs/forums at the district level or sub-district level. In these clubs, they should meet with students on a weekly or a fortnightly basis, encourage them to read, write, and discuss global and national events. They should talk about the pernicious effects of religious extremism and the advances of science in the field of AI and robotics. Such clubs will function as mind-churning centers where young minds will be exposed to the scientific, secular, modern, and progressive brains of young IAS and IPS officers. It will go a long way in providing counter-narrative to the religious narrative of fanatic maulvis and jamaatis. The members of these clubs should also be made to interact with senior officers and dignitaries who visit the districts. There can be essay and debate competitions in such clubs. The young IAS and IPS officers can take the initiative as their hobby and passion because it will have a tremendous impact. These officers carry much charm in Kashmiri society. Also, the education system is in shambles, and the youngsters are too pessimistic about their colleges and schools taking such initiatives. Further, the educational institutions have become channels for radicalizing and misleading young minds in Kashmir. Hence, Delhi can begin with sending a band of 50-60 young, motivated, and dynamic officers to coordinate and implement the activities mentioned above. Officers can come from other states for short and medium-term assignments under some special arrangements. Also, it will provide them an exposure to serving in a conflict zone.

Dist. Level Coordinating Committee: In a novel experimentation public outreach, every district can think in terms of setting up a committee of ten youngsters (22-32yrs) working as part of a coordinating committee for public grievances. DCs should interact with them

every week/10 days and try to get the complaints redressed. Such close interactions with young minds will be beneficial in checking new recruitments into terrorist organizations. The DCs and SPs will get to know the pulse of the area and will be able to prevent many on the verge of joining, from joining militancy through personal intervention. It will also provide them sound intelligence and build trust with citizens.

Involving retired government servants and others: DCs/SPs and other relevant people should also talk to those individuals (elders including retired government servants, religious leaders, social activists) who have some social and political influence and understanding of their district. Interactions with the parents of stone pelters and convince them that such tactics will ultimately ruin their children can be useful.

Development Expenditures With Accountability: In Kashmir, the outreach efforts have always swung between the two extremes of announcements of massive development expenditure and an emotionally charged drama of political dialogue process. The former hardly generates any ripples in Kashmir and goes mostly unnoticed. It is so because, in popular perception, the core issue is of sending across a message and assurance that Delhi respects Kashmiri identity and, at an emotional level, feels for them, i.e., giving a healing touch.

Huge developmental expenditure without accountability is alleged to have produced an undercover economy of bureaucratic-political corruption and kickbacks in Kashmir. It has, over the years, strengthened the sense of false entitlement and made every politically active Kashmiri, even one with nationalistic feelings, looking for ways to extract money from the security agencies and state institutions. In the process, this has killed the entrepreneurship

spirit. Corruption has provided an easy alibi to trouble makers inciting the youth to blame every wrong on corruption and bad governance, and join militancy.

Development with an agenda: What Kashmir needs is a strong development narrative to precede the development efforts and then continue in synchronous mode. People should realize the worth and importance of what is being offered to them. The idea is to get everyone talking about development on social media, university/college discussions, and other socio-political forums. Awareness and publicity need equal focus.

Transparency in Implementation: Along with that, the implementation of the development program has to be transparent and corruption-free, it should be visible on the ground. For that, we need an overhaul in the state administration departments dealing with estates, planning, infrastructure, construction, and power.

Creation of Employment Opportunities: The government needs to create employment opportunities and provide gainful employment to as many people as it can. The literacy rates are very high. The youth is very talented in skills and abilities. Good jobs and entrepreneurship opportunities will keep them away from the militancy. Further, there is an acute need to create spaces for healthy interaction and entertainment-cinema halls, play-theatres, and coffee shops. The society needs places that can facilitate constructive and creative interactions and counter the radicalization hotspots.

Outreach through Colleges and in Universities: Colleges and universities need particular focus in the outreach efforts. Professors and students with progressive mindsets need to be encouraged to start clubs and research forums to propagate a rational narrative and counter the

extremist religious propaganda. Along with this, we need to run down the education bureaucracy. There is a simultaneous need for high-profile HoDs, professors, and university officials to moderate their arrogant behavior, cut down delays, introduce transparency in matters such as scholarships and grants, etc..

Outreach through exchange programs/visits: Young MPs, athletes, journalists, business-people, writers, and academicians from other states of India should be similarly encouraged to visit Kashmir, tour different districts, interact with young minds. In return, Kashmiri students (schools and colleges) should be sent to other parts of India and foreign countries in a dispersed manner to expose them to the 'India Story'.

The unending list: The list of measures that are needed to reverse the process of deeply embedded alienation could be unending. Most of these are well-known and yet require reiteration since even small steps, seemingly insignificant, can make a difference. Some of these are:- *Counselling Cells at state and district levels* to work stone-pelters and those on the verge of joining militancy. Well-intentioned and learned religious scholars assisted by experienced psychologists can play a major role in convincing the subjects that stone-pelting and terrorism are un-Islamic and not in line with the Quranic idea of Jihad.

Another idea that has been tried before with a positive impact and is recommended for a repeat is the *beautification of Kashmir* and other environmental issues like Dal conservation. These environmental issues, the engagement from a small village (through panchayats) to big cities, will draw an encouraging response. The state can raise an environmental volunteer force in each district. It can be called Green Volunteerism Initiative. The DCs should try to associate as

many people in a district as he/she can. This group can work for improving tourism, beautification of Kashmir, and environmental concerns.

Implementation of the central government's *skill development schemes* should be strengthened as the target audience is hardly aware of such projects. The state information department, district coordinators, and educational institutions should pay particular attention to the publicity of such schemes. Trustworthy civil society organizations should function as coordinators and facilitators.

Investor Summits and Conferences- Inviting entrepreneurs and industrialists for a "Vibrant Kashmir" summit will not only help create an atmosphere for economic growth, investment, and business development but also provide an alternate narrative to the ongoing militancy-narrative.

Outreach on Social Media----Burhan Wani fever, was not a product of agitation or resentment. It was a product of religious radicalization and conspiracy theories aggressively peddled through social media. The current wave of militancy is firmly rooted in social media. It is recommended to have a variety of mechanisms to energise the outreach efforts through a well crafted, multi-pronged social media program. A strong counter-narrative has to be created to dominate the discussions in the social media outlets to have a powerful impact on transforming the minds of the people, particularly the youth. Through demonstrable state action, an alternate narrative has to be created, replacing the extremist and separatist narrative. Similarly, developmental issues and governance-related initiatives are likely to go viral on social media and change the entire narrative. Small initiatives like extending timely assistance and aid to people tormented by the inclement weather, addressing grievances relating

to electricity, water supply, action against adulteration will unleash an entirely new range of subjects to be discussed.

The state needs to have an *aggressive social media strategy*. The government can rope in the services of expert social media consultants. Most of the DCs and SPs already have social media accounts. Positive activities in sports, entertainment, development, and politics should be released and circulated on social media. SFs should refrain from the unnecessary glorification of militant-encounters. If possible, SFs should not let the pictures circulate on social media or even release in the press, particularly, in the case of local militants.

The government needs to *facilitate conferences on religion-philosophy* and its defining concepts by religious scholars and learned clerics. Inter-faith conferences can also be organized. Delhi-based think-tanks can be requested to organize conferences near Dal on IR issues, Middle East, conditions of HR, and atrocities on minorities in Pakistan and other Muslim nations. Such activities will generate new outlets for the youth to engage, feel hopeful, and come out of the militancy-mindset with an honest desire and positive outlook to find a meaningful, peaceful, creative, and prosperous life.

Revive cinema and entertainment in Kashmir. After a phase of some mild peace, the state can also get some brands to organize fashion shows in Kashmir. Kashmir Literature Festival, Kashmir Food Festival, and Kashmir Music Festival are great ideas to implement.

However, we can implement the ideas mentioned above only after we are able to bring recruitment down by-

- 1) Cracking the whip on the proxy-terror-radicalization infrastructure;

- 2) Engaging the youth in an informal dialogue for some time and building confidence and
- 3) Some demonstrable action on the grievances-redressal front, people-friendly governance, and corruption.

To conclude this section (before taking on the critical subjects of political engagement and dialogue), we can sum up our recommendations as a set of proposals to sell the Idea of India to the Kashmiri people. We first need to build trust and confidence. Delhi has to invest in the right kind of people with proven track records of efficiency, credibility, goodwill, honesty and integrity, enjoying widespread support, and with genuine nationalist fervour.

Political Process and Dialogue:

The split sub-heading above emphasises two separate sets of dialogue, one to restart the political process in the State, now a Union Territory with assembly, and the other to start the process of dialogue with all stakeholders in an attempt to seek the ever-elusive goal of resolution of the Kashmir conflict. It is widely agreed that this is not the time to contemplate the latter since the Kashmiri leadership is yet to come to terms with the recent changes and more importantly, yet to take ownership of the political destiny of the state by firmly opposing terrorism, both home-made and externally sponsored.

Therefore, in this paper on 'Outreach' in Kashmir, what is proposed to be discussed is the need for resumption of internal political activities that in a way, got derailed well before the August 5, 2019 announcements, indeed when the elected government collapsed and Governor's Rule followed by President's Rule were imposed.

In this context, it is widely assessed that the security situation in the Valley has vastly improved with ‘the back-bone of militancy broken’ and ‘militants are on the run’. These two significant statements have been deliberately placed under semi-quotes since these markers for the restoration of normalcy were defined way back in 1996-97 when the Parliamentary and Assembly elections were held in succession. Current statistical parameters fully support the initiation of discussions and informal engagements that could be a few notches short of a formal official political dialogue process. A semi-official approach is saner since, in a formal dialogue process in full public view, rigidities and vested interests invariably take center-stage. Hence, the approach should be an informal and decentralised process with youth and other segments of populations getting a significant role. The idea initially should be to open informal channels of communications through credible emissaries and bridge the existing trust deficit.

The youth needs a sense of involvement, dignity, and empowerment, not far-fetched and idealistic political solutions for the so-called Kashmir problem that perhaps, exists only in an abstract world. The ideal way to look at the subject is to see it as the “problems of Kashmir”, and not as “Kashmir problem”. There is a need to zero in on the particulars, not on the abstract generalisations.

An interesting way to begin the process may be by involving and encouraging civil society organisations to build channels of communication with the families of the dead militants because they become the center point in the rural society, getting enormous honour. Meaningful engagement with them will also help bring down recruitment. The program should include rehabilitation, spiritual, and psychological counselling. The Art of Living (AOL) had done commendable work in this field in the past. Burhan Wani’s

father spent several days at AOL's Bangalore ashram after his son's encounter killing. In the first place, there has to be a survey of the dead militants' families.

It must, however, be noted that delineating the contours of a formal political dialogue process is being rightly felt in the strategic quarters. Given the alarming state of alienation and pessimism, a formal dialogue process engaging diverse stakeholders holds a strong perception value. Merely the appointment and visit of centrally-appointed interlocutors raises hopes and changes the socio-political discourse in Kashmir. People still fondly remember the initiatives and outreach of the former PM Vajpayee and the UPA government-appointed three interlocutors.

However, it is important to reiterate here that the political dialogue suggested here is for the basic purpose of engaging with the political leadership to come out of their self-imposed political *Sanyas*, repair the damages caused by the recent events, reassemble the cadres and participate in the processes of delimitation upwards. While they continue with their legal challenges to the August 5 notifications and demand for restoration of the status of J&K. In politics, they know it better, long periods of inactivity invariably leads to a disconnect with the masses and emergence of new forces and realignments to fill up the void.

PMO/MHA could consider the appointment of Special Envoys to Kashmir. They can be people from diverse backgrounds with experience and knowledge of the region, understanding of the complex and layered Kashmiri minds, ability to garner trust, and build a comfortable equation with the ordinary people, having familiarity with the cultural nuances of Jammu and Kashmir, etc. However, compromising the fundamental principles and constitutional values will be unacceptable, they should speak truth to Kashmiris in terms

of what they should rightfully expect from Delhi, What Delhi can rightfully give and what should be the ethical and realistic future state of affairs. Previously, the people in the Jammu region felt that the interlocutors were obsessed with the Valley. This imbalance needs correction.

In addition to the usual requirements of the envoys being well equipped with due understanding of J&K's issues- development, governance, drugs problem, they should additionally have a deep understanding of new issues such as radicalization, youth mindset, gender perspectives, conflict and its impact on the ethics, culture and the individual and the collective psychology, regional disparities, dynamics of Pakistan's proxy war, destructive role and influence of Islamist organizations like Jamaat-i-Islami and Ahl-i-Hadith. They should also have an understanding of the geopolitics of Pakistan's proxy war, the terrorist groups, their foreign linkages, and the strategic and tactical changes in militancy after the abrogation of article 370.

To conclude, there should be no doubt that the dialogue process will, obviously be the most potent determining factor in the 'Outreach' process. Therefore, it should not begin with a clichéd understanding, dwelling on binaries and stereotypes, and should not hope for simplistic solutions. The dialogue process should become the channel to transform the dominant discourse, which currently is of resentment and alienation and needs to be converted into one of hope, healing, and happiness, development, peace, and prosperity.

About the VIVEKANANDA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

The Vivekananda International Foundation is an independent non-partisan institution that conducts research and analysis on domestic and international issues, and offers a platform for dialogue and conflict resolution. Some of India's leading practitioners from the fields of security, military, diplomacy, government, academia and media have come together to generate ideas and stimulate action on national security issues.

The defining feature of VIF lies in its provision of core institutional support which enables the organisation to be flexible in its approach and proactive in changing circumstances, with a long-term focus on India's strategic, developmental and civilisational interests. The VIF aims to channelise fresh insights and decades of experience harnessed from its faculty into fostering actionable ideas for the nation's stakeholders.

Since its inception, VIF has pursued quality research and scholarship and made efforts to highlight issues in governance, and strengthen national security. This is being actualised through numerous activities like seminars, round tables, interactive dialogues, Vimarsh (public discourse), conferences and briefings. The publications of VIF form lasting deliverables of VIF's aspiration to impact on the prevailing discourse on issues concerning India's national interest.



VIVEKANANDA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

3, San Martin Marg, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi – 110021

Phone: +91-11-24121764, 24106698

Email: info@vifindia.org,

Website: <https://www.vifindia.org>

Follow us on [twitter@vifindia](#)