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Thesis Title: Separatism, Identity and Populism: The Changing Nature of Insurgency in Kashmir

Main Findings of the Thesis

The following are some of the major findings of my thesis:

1. Insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir is primarily the result of the failure of the State policies vis-à-vis Jammu and Kashmir.
2. The central government's approach towards Kashmir was and continues to be significantly influenced by partisan interests and the presence of interventionist Pakistan.
3. The Kashmir insurgency has undergone some major and minor shifts during its course. These transformations were the result of myriad national and international factors.
4. The thesis mainly classifies insurgency in Kashmir into two phases: 'old militancy' and 'new age militancy' based on certain subjective and objective parameters.
5. Measuring on these parameters, it is not difficult to argue that Insurgency in Kashmir, on the whole, has considerably weakened primarily due to sustained counterinsurgency of Indian security forces. But it has certainly not been defeated as seen in the emergence of new-age militancy.
6. Pakistan, over the course of insurgency, has attained significant sway over it despite attempts of the Indian State to the contrary.
7. Therefore, for the complete eradication of armed militancy in Kashmir, political engagement with Pakistan is imperative. Unilateral measures at the domestic front may weaken the militancy but its ability to eradicate it is doubtful as suggested by the history of Kashmir militancy.

8. The study found some interesting changes and continuities in the organizational structure of militant groups, Recruitment tactics, Weaponry, modes of publicity and propaganda, the rise of populist strand among new militants, ideological transformations, agent-principal relationships, and impact on identity. The changes brought to light in the study are reflective of an interesting paradox: the fairly successful state counterinsurgency in containing militancy, yet its failure to completely eradicate it, demonstrating the adaptive character of the Kashmir insurgency. The resilience of insurgency despite strong counterinsurgency should compel the state to move away from its beaten track to address the problem of insurgency in Kashmir.