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Q9

Winning of 'Hearts and Minds' in terrorism affected areas is an essential step in restoring the trust of the population. Discuss the measures adopted by the Government in this respect as part of the conflict resolution in Jammu and Kashmir.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2023 · GS III · 10 marks · Border Security and Organised Crime

Security challenges and their management in border areas - linkages of organized crime with terrorism.

Core demand of the question

- Explain why winning hearts and minds matters in terrorism-affected areas
- **Discuss Government measures in Jammu and Kashmir as conflict-resolution steps:** development, politics, youth
- **Use careful facts:** Prime Minister's Development Package, Union Territory in 2019, youth schemes. Do not claim the conflict is over

Revision summary

Hearts and minds means restoring local trust so terrorists lose shelter and recruits.

In Jammu and Kashmir this sits beside, not instead of, counter-terror operations.

The Prime Minister's Development Package 2015 funded roads, power, tourism and social infrastructure.

The 2019 reorganisation created Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh; local and **DDC elections** reopened one political rung.

Youth schemes and the migrant-return package exist; jobs and actual return remain limited, so resolution is incomplete.

Introduction

A terrorist group needs **silence, fear, or sympathy** from the local population to move, hide, and recruit. **Winning hearts and minds means restoring ordinary trust in the State: safety, a job, a school, and a political voice that is not only a security camp. In Jammu and Kashmir** that work sits beside counter-terror operations; it does not replace them.

Body**Why hearts and minds**

- Intelligence and arrests shrink a module. They do not by themselves stop a new teenager joining if schools, jobs and grievance politics stay closed.
- Excess or opaque force without **accountability and services** hands a propaganda win to the insurgent.
- Restoration of trust is therefore a **security method**, not a soft extra.

Measures in Jammu and Kashmir

- **Security and law:** sustained counter-terror operations, a thinner but still real militant presence in some districts, and the legal frame after **5 August 2019**, when **Article 370's** special provisions were ended and the **Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019** created the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and of Ladakh. Local body and District Development Council elections were held to reopen a rung of electoral politics. Full Statehood remains a stated political debate, not a completed restoration.
- **Development:** the **Prime Minister's Development Package (PMDP), 2015**, for roads, power, tourism, health and education projects in the then State; later infrastructure such as tunnels, rail towards the Valley, and power transmission. Delivery has been uneven across items; the package is a programme, not proof that every project is finished.
- **Youth and return:** skill and job windows such as **UDAAN** (later wound down or merged), **Himayat**, and **Mission Youth** in the Union Territory; sports and start-up outreach; and a long-running **package for return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri migrants**, which has seen only limited actual return.
- **Rights and outreach:** outreach to families, surrender-and-rehabilitation policies for some militants, and attempts to restore tourism and pilgrimage as normal life. Human-rights complaints and communication shutdowns in crisis periods have cut the other way.

Honest limit

- Hearts and minds fail if development is only a press note, if youth schemes do not become jobs, or if political participation stays thinner than before 2019. Conflict resolution here is **partial and contested**, not a closed chapter.

Flow diagram

Terrorism-affected area -> Hearts and minds
 Hearts and minds -> Security with accountability
 Hearts and minds -> PMDP infrastructure
 Hearts and minds -> Youth jobs Mission Youth
 Hearts and minds -> Local elections UT 2019
 PMDP infrastructure -> Restore trust
 Youth jobs Mission Youth -> Restore trust
 Local elections UT 2019 -> Restore trust

Conclusion

In terrorism-affected areas, trust is part of security. In Jammu and Kashmir the Government has mixed operations with PMDP-type investment, Union Territory administration after 2019, local elections, and youth schemes. Those measures restore some ordinary life. They do not by themselves equal a finished political settlement.

Facts & figures

PMDP 2015

Prime Minister's Development Package for Jammu and Kashmir: a large project basket for infrastructure and services in the then State.

Reorganisation 2019

Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019: two Union Territories from 31 October 2019 after the 5 August constitutional change.

Mission Youth

Union Territory programme for livelihoods, sports and counselling of young people.

Himayat / UDAAN

Skill and placement windows aimed at Kashmiri youth; coverage and placement rates have been modest relative to need.

DDC elections

District Development Council polls after 2019 reopened a local elected tier under Union Territory administration.

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