

Kashmir Conflict and its Impact on the Culture and Economy of the Bakarwal
Nomads and its future in the Region

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Aim

The aim of this study is to find out the impact of disturbed conditions on the Transhumance practice or the seasonal movement of the Bakarwal Tribe and their displacement from it. The tribe has been uprooted either due to the external dimension of the conflict in the form of India-Pakistan hostility, or the internal dimension in the form of ongoing violent militancy in the Indian Kashmir. At its core, this paper seeks to find interrelationships between the unrest in Kashmir and its impact on the culture and economy of the tribe. Analysis is carried out after a broad survey of the effected families of the Bakarwal community in Valley.

Data & Methods

Since no work of significance has been done on the Bakarwal tribe of Jammu and Kashmir and no studies undertaken, the field work is being conducted to collect the data by household interviews with the help of Household schedules and Kafila schedules. For the demographic characteristics of Bakarwals population, Census of India 2011 is being used.

Results

Conflict has cultural impact on the community members, they left the wearing of traditional dresses. Male clothing usually includes a salwar kameez upto knees (dress), lungee (turban), sixty percent of the males have already left turban wearing culture. Since Bakarwals are Sunni Muslims, they keep long bearded but due to security reasons, security forces labelled them as the terrorists who generally keep such type of bearded. So, due to the pressure of the security forces and other related problems, seventy five percent of the tribe does not want to grow long beards. The community has Government mobile schooling education which moves with the tribe during the seasonal migration. Many of the mobile school teachers are being killed during the unrest in the region. Many of the schools are forced to shut down.

Conclusion

The study leads to the conclusion that there is a need to listen to the voices of the displaced Bakarwal tribal community and make policies keeping in view of their grievances and aspirations. The socio-political situation in Kashmir continues to be volatile, with the displaced Bakarwal tribe beginning to lose their cultural identity. If the present situation continues without any effective intervention, especially Kashmir and India in particular is likely to experience more conflict induced internal displacement of population, particularly the marginalized groups in near future. There is a need to take urgent measures to address the suffering of the uprooted people and to arrange the permanent return to their native places.

References

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