

## **J&K CEASEFIRE- BE PREPARED FOR A BIG BANG**

Reportedly the Ministry of Home Affairs at the behest of the PDP and BJP ruled state government has instructed the Security Forces not to undertake any offensive actions against terrorists during the period of Ramadan.

As a small concession to the Security Forces they are permitted to retaliate in the event of a terrorist attack. Small mercies as retaliation is permitted, though the army will be under scrutiny and questioned in case they retaliate going by past political statements. The instructions on ceasefire by the MHA are confusing, indicative that the decision makers both at Delhi and Srinagar have little or no idea of ground realities, leading to critical uncertainties among the Security Forces who are required to translate these impractical instructions. There is no clarity whether this is a unilateral ceasefire, cessation of hostilities or conduct of conditional operations. The Security Forces who in any case operate under ambiguous and challenging conditions would be totally confused especially as no time has been granted to them to lay down revised Rules of Engagement and Standard Operating Procedures which are mandatory to guide the leaders and troops who are in contact on the ground.

The need for the so called ceasefire is for reasons political and appeasement of the public and terrorist is likely to backfire. It is a well recognized fact that post Op All out launched by the Army the number of terrorist neutralized in 2018 alone has been over 60, leading to two major indicators. One that the terrorist are on the run and efforts by their masters in Pakistan to up the ante have failed. The desperation of the terrorist is visible as they have resorted to targeting tourist and school buses. The second and more important indicator of the security situation is that the SF in 2017 and 2018 during OP All out have successfully executed precision operations based on accurate and specific actionable intelligence. Such intelligence inputs are given by the Kashmiri people, implying that the majority is not for the so called cause.

The Security Forces in any case are known to be sensitive to the public sentiment specially during religious festivals. To impose further restrictions will confine them to their barracks and give a free run to the terrorists. As an outcome of this outreach by the government, the Security Forces should be prepared for a high profile terrorist attack as this ceasefire will embolden the terrorist who feel that they can strike at chosen targets with impunity.

The terrorist abely supported by the Pakistani masters will undoubtedly utilize this ceasefire well to recoup and regroup coming back strongly creating more havoc and terrorizing the people. ***The nation and Army should be prepared to face a high profile terror strike during the Ramadan and increased violence levels post Ramadan as terror outfits will be emboldened by the announcement of the Ceasefire.*** The ceasefire is a policy of appeasement which will backfire and is detrimental to peace and stability of J&K. The Security Forces with time and additional sacrifices which were highly avoidable will restore the situation, the cost however will be high and unnecessary . Appeasement alone in J&K is not going to yield any positive results.

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