and the ISI. The Pakistan-supported groups adopted an area domination programme where the geographical territories were marked either as green or red. Green represented areas where pro-Pakistan groups dominated, and red represented areas where JKLF was in control. The JKLF cadre was attacked repeatedly for taking secular positions and pressurised for defection. Those who disagreed were killed mercilessly.

Constitution and Strategy of JKLF

In the proposed constitution, JKLF envisioned a federal, parliamentary political system. This system comprised five federal units: Kashmir Valley, Jammu Province, Ladakh, Azad Kashmir, Gilgit and Baltistan. These units would be autonomous with elected provincial governments and subdivided into districts with their administrative structure. At the centre, it put forward bicameral houses of the legislature with proportional representation. The lower house of the parliament would have proportionate representation vis a vis the population. The upper house would have an equal representation from all units.[30]

The envisioned constitution provided social, economic, and political equality to religious and ethnic minorities and neutrality towards Pakistan and India. The proposed neutrality was such that the proposed republic of Jammu and Kashmir would develop economic cooperation and trade links with India and Pakistan. Regarding the socio-economic program, JKLF, strongly recommended by the Naya Kashmir manifesto adopted by the National Conference in the early 1940s, praised egalitarianism and social justice.[31]

The JKLF constitution promotes the non-homogenization of identity in many ways of autonomous federating units, which can provide greater recognition and establish legitimacy in many ways. Based on the interviews with activists from JKLF and reviewing newspaper articles, the strategies aim at actively disseminating nationalism. JKLF

30 JKLF Constitution (2003).

31 Ibid.

utilised negations, ambiguity, collective experience, solidarity, transmission, and territoriality to solidify expressions of ethnic Kashmiri nationalism. One could understand the strategies through four phases: establishing an organisational base, devising military strategy, pursuing international support, and mobilising popular support.

The most active years of JKLF (1989–1993) were characterised by massive political mobilisation and subsequent mass protests on the streets. Starting with the boycott of the 1989 elections, the famous slogans from this time like *Hai Haqq Humara Aazadi* (Azaadi is our right), *Jab tak na hogi rai shumari jung hamarai aazadi* (we will fight, till the world recognises our right to plebiscite)[32] suggest a meaningful framework for the articulation of ethnic demands. JKLF flags at every nook and corner of the valley and complete strikes on symbolic days suggested a state-seeking behaviour, creating legitimacy for a new power structure.

JKLF ensured that the government installations and offices considered symbols of authority were routinely targeted. Massive rallies were organised with people from different walks of life joining in, even those who were active parts of the state machinery before 1989. Taseer (1990) writes about how the collective oath taken by the JKLF leadership by Charar-e Sharief absolved previous attachments and awakened new impulses. Without alternate channels of collective action and protest, mosques emerged as focal points of mobilisation and resistance. So, it can be said that during the initial stages of protests, JKLF intensified and directed the tension and discontent of people. Garner (2013) explains that JKLF capitalised on the benefits of political Islam. The leadership of JKLF prided itself on the secular understanding of Kashmiri nationalism, but that did not stop them from utilising Islamic themes in the mobilisation and public discourse in response to the violence. Motivational literature uses symbols and metaphors from Islamic history.[33]

JKLF also mobilised international support for Kashmir's right to self-determination by repeatedly focusing on human rights violations.

32 The Srinagar Times, dated 1 March 1990.

33 Jklf pamphlets from 1990–1993 were seen to analyse this trend.

To maintain distance from Pakistan's position on Kashmir and as a total repudiation of the two-nation theory, fundraising was done in the Middle East, the United Kingdom, Europe, and the USA. The Kashmir diaspora in the United Kingdom was particularly active in mobilising international support.

With the intensification of militancy, strategies evolved into a more dissident and subversive model. The works of Mao and Che Guevara were translated into Urdu, and the tanzeem (organisation) frequently taught underground and guerrilla warfare tactics from them. Zahid (2018) informed in a personal interview that a hyper-revolutionary atmosphere was created, and it was strictly urged on the fighters of JKLF (*mujahids*) to show impeccable moral conduct and strict self-control so that the local population would spontaneously become sympathetic to militancy.

A particular impetus to militant nationalism during this phase was the death of Ashfaq Majid Wani, one of the founders of the HAJY group. His death inspired thousands of other young Kashmiri men to take up arms, making it very difficult for the state to control the militancy from this time forward.[34] Defying curfew orders, some 500,000 mourners participated in the funeral of Ashfaq, which easily surpassed other historical gatherings, let alone burials.[35]

To get people together and to create a sense of commonality, JKLF made several symbolic gestures, like visiting the families of militants after their deaths, setting up schools, and urging for the adoption of the children of dead militants. JKLF activists would regularly visit the families of the killed militants, whom they referred to as martyrs, honouring them immediately and also periodically. Martyr cemeteries were laid in every area specifically for militants. The valorisation of fighters was incorporated and manifested at the community level. The organisation tried to project slain militants as 'martyrs'. They explained how wives and children of martyrs need to be supported. These were the performative aspects of the commemoration of the nationhood. The multivalence of martyrdom was enacted through funerals, commemorative murals, and

34 *The Kashmir Times*, 30 March 1990.

35 *The Kashmir Times*, 1 April 1990.

the naming of places after martyrs. Tributes paid to the mothers of martyrs became archetypal events for recalling the goal of nationalism.

As more militants began getting killed, the memorial stones with the name, date of birth, and date of their killing started propping up at every nook and corner of the valley. The day on which the militants were killed was observed as 'martyr days'. Commemorative meetings were held on such days, and these days became events in their way. The goal of nationalism was recalled, recognised, localised, and reconstructed through these meetings. Using Anderson's (1983:9) important argument of how arresting emblems of the modern culture of nationalism exist in cenotaphs and tombs of unknown soldiers. Whether the tombs/graves are filled with anybody cannot be ascertained, but they become active sites for nationalistic imaginings. Thus, news of any militant's death evoked strong sentiments reminding of reliving and reinforcing the sacrifices made by Kashmiris. These acts foreground a counter-memory and produce strategies of cohesion and resistance. The martyrdom of a militant had a religious underpinning and gave meaning to the larger cultural systems surrounding it.

Faheem (2006) notes that ordinary people organised community dinners during infamous nocturnal crackdowns, and paramilitary search operations fostered solidarity and friction with the adversary. The crack-downs and combing operations incited fear but also made individuals come together and share one another's experiences, unconsciously importing and assimilating into themselves the gestures and attitudes of one another. In her unpublished memoir, Tabassum (1991), a JKLF supporter, writes that Eid in 1990 was entirely different from any other Eid she had ever seen. On Eid that year, early morning, the males from her mohalla were called out for an identification parade but soon were hurdled into buses and taken to some undisclosed location. Soon after, on some other buses, males from a village far away from hers were paraded on the typical community grounds. As it was Eid, she urged the other women to march out with the food they had made and share it with men from the distant village.