Cariappa Principles for Kashmir

What is the issue?

\n\n

\n
- Some commanders in Kashmir asserted to violence during the recent turmoil.
\n
- The people of Kashmir feel this attitude has been encouraged after a Major was awarded for using a civilian as a “human shield”.
\n

\n\n

What was Field Marshal Cariappa’s policy?

\n\n

\n
- **Supportive gestures -** Once, after chasing the raiders beyond Uri, Cariappa was stopped by a group of people at Baramulla.
\n
- They had suffered a lot due to the absence of food supplies.
\n
- He fulfilled his assurance the next day when he visited the old town and distributed flour, rice and salt to the neediest families.
\n
- He followed this gesture in many ways in various parts of Kashmir.
\n
- Respecting the local traditions - In 1945, he was posted as commander of the Bannu Frontier Brigade in Waziristan.
\n
- Having served in the NWFP as a young officer, Cariappa was conversant with the terrain as well as the habits of the Pathan tribesmen who lived in the area.
\n
- He had seen that the British policy of trying to keep them under control by force had not succeeded and he resolved to try a different method.
\n
- He decided to win the hearts and minds of the tribesmen by extending a hand of friendship.

\n
- He knew that they were warm and hospitable if treated with respect and as equals.
\n
- **Involving the community -** When he found out that Pathan women of Bannu had to fetch water daily from another village, four miles away, he immediately ordered a well to be dug near their own village.
\n
- So when Jawaharlal Nehru visited Bannu in 1945 as head of the Interim Government, Cariappa organised a public meeting which was attended by all tribal leaders.
\n
- When Nehru visited Razmak where another brigade was stationed, Nehru was fired upon.
\n
- **Fairness -** In 1946, he was appointed Presiding Officer of one of the General Court Martials constituted to try members of the Indian National Army (INA).
\n
- Cariappa visited some of the detention camps and wrote to the Adjutant General, requesting him to expedite the trials.
\n
- He also recommended that Shah Nawaz Khan, G.S. Dhillon and P.K. Sehgal should be pardoned.
\n
- However when as Chief of the Armed Forces he was to consider the same people for admitting into INA, he refused to take them, particularly for the reason that they would bring politics into the Army.
\n
- He was a very tough general when it came to leading the armed forces, but he never compromised his principles.
\n

\n\n

What is the way ahead?

\n\n

\n
- Many retired and serving generals have emphasised again and again that there is no military solution to the Kashmir dispute.
\n
- It has to be resolved through methods other than force.
\n
- The spirit of Cariappa’s soldiery would be a better guide at this critical juncture of the Union’s relationship with Kashmir.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: The Indian Express

\n