Targeted killings in Kashmir

What is the issue?

The removal of special status was not the end of the problem but the beginning of fresh challenges in Kashmir.

What is Package for Return and Rehabilitation of Kashmir Pandits?

- Kashmiri Pandits left the valley in the face of a surge in violence and targeted killings in the 1990s.
- After a long period the valley had welcomed a subtle and slow return of Kashmiri Pandits.
- Their return was encouraged by the Package for Return and Rehabilitation of Kashmir migrants offered in 2008.
- The Package offered
    - Employment to Pandit youths.
    - Cash assistance of Rs 13,000 per family.
    - Assistance of Rs. 7.5 Lacs for repairing their fully or partially damaged house.
    - Rs. 2 Lakh for dilapidated/unused houses.
    - Rs. 7.5 Lakh for purchase/construction of a house in group housing societies for those who have sold their properties after 1989 and before the enactment of JK Migrant Immovable Property Preservation, Protection and Restraint of Distress Sale 1997.
    - Construction of Transit Accommodation for migrants who are getting employed in the Government of Jammu and Kashmir.
- The financial assistance was later increased to Rs 20-25 lakh — in three instalments for those who settled in the Valley.

Why Kashmiri Pandits are contemplating a mass exodus?

- Recent targeted killings of civilians including Kashmiri Pandits and Hindus by militants in Kashmir has triggered a wave of protests in the Valley from the minority communities.
- After a long protest against such killings, over 4,000 Pandit employees recruited under a special package are on the verge of another migration as in the 1990s.
- Their leaders say they are contemplating mass exodus and resignations unless they are relocated outside the valley.
- The abominable terrorist violence and the predicament of the Pandits and Hindus denote a grim reversal of all the gains towards peace and reconciliation in the last decade or so.

How should government deal the situation?

- Abolition of special constitutional status to J&K in 2019 as well as policies implemented regarding land and government jobs are perceived as disadvantageous by the locals
- The resultant increase in the sense of alienation is being exploited by separatists and Pakistan-

backed terrorists.

- For example the killing of a Hindu goldsmith as well as members of the minorities like Makhan Lal Bindroo who ran the famous Bindroo Medicate shop in Srinagar.
- The Centre must take measures to ensure the security of Hindus, and migrant workers in the Valley, at any cost as an immediate response.
- It must also think afresh its Kashmir policy and create space for political dialogue.
- A careful handling is needed rather than just muscular triumphalism.

Reference

1. https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/grim-turn-the-hindu-editorial-on-targeted-killings-in-kashmir/article6548818ece
2. https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1705569

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering