

## Homegrown terror: Rajnath alive to trend

**Striking a rapport:**A young man taking a selfie with Rajnath Singh in Srinagar. Nissar Ahmad

Security agencies have assessed that infiltration of foreign terrorists from Pakistan has reduced marginally in the past five years, but the number of Kashmiri youth joining militancy has risen steadily.

The agencies shared the findings with Home Minister Rajnath Singh during his visit to Jammu and Kashmir earlier this week.

### Upward graph

An assessment of terrorists “active” in the Kashmir Valley in April 2016, 2017 and 2018 shows such a trend. In April this year, of the 276 “active” terrorists, almost 56%, or 154, were local youngsters. In April 2017, 48% of the 251 active terrorists were local youth. During the corresponding month in 2016, this was 54%.

A detailed report prepared by the Home Ministry shows that of the 57 terrorists killed in encounters with security agencies till April 30 this year, 37 were local men and 20 were foreigners, primarily from Pakistan. In 2017, of the 213 killed, 85 were local men and 128 were foreigners.

*The Hindu* reported on June 2 that two studies conducted by the security agencies showed that extremist ideology and pan-Islamic discourse had much less to do with the recruitment of militants. The studies found that only 2% of the militants had ever studied at a madrassa or religious school and local factors such as geography, involvement of friends, family and neighbours, and social media shares among close groups played a role in motivating these men, mostly in their 20s, to become militants and terrorists.

There has been a surge in number of Kashmiri youths joining terror groups after Hizbul Mujahideen “commander” Burhan Wani was killed in an encounter with security forces on July 8, 2016.

The fresh assessment shows that from 2012 to 2014, the “net infiltration” (those who succeeded in infiltrating from Pakistan) number was 283. From 2015 to 2017, 275 terrorists infiltrated from Pakistan.

The number of security personnel killed in encounters has increased. “Fifteen security force personnel were martyred from January-April 2017, whereas 29 security force personnel were killed in the same period in 2018,” the report said.

As many as 201 security personnel were killed from 2015 to 2017 and 115 from 2012 to 2014.

### Security review

Mr. Singh presided over an elaborate security review in Srinagar where agencies gave a “mixed” response on the success of the suspension of operations (SoO) announced by the Centre on May 16 during of Ramzan. “Any call to extend the SoO will be taken after Ramzan. Certain aspects of the analysis made by security agencies were encouraging and there were some areas of concern,” said an official present at the meeting.

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