



JAMMU KASHMIR COALITION OF CIVIL SOCIETY (JKCCS)

The

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**A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER BY JAMMU KASHMIR
COALITION OF CIVIL SOCIETY (JKCCS)**

AND

**ASSOCIATION OF PARENTS OF DISAPPEARED
PERSONS (APDP)**

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The Informative Missive is a monthly newsletter published by Jammu Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS). The Informative Missive is a collection of all human rights related news, stories and data on a monthly basis. The Informative Missive provides monthly figures of killings due to violence in Jammu and Kashmir and information on related human rights violations and abuses.



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Editor: Parvez Imroz

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1. Editorial

Just after returning from Geneva, where he had gone to represent JKCCS for the 39th session of UNHRC, Kartik Murukutla announced his decision of leaving Kashmir. Concluding his association with JKCCS came as surprise to the organization. Just a month before Kartik was worried about leakage in his houseboat and was looking for an alternate residence.

In 2011 Kartik came to Kashmir after working with the office of the prosecutor in UN-mandated Rwanda Tribunal. He was later joined by his partner Shrimoyee, a lawyer-turned-writer and researcher, who also became part of JKCCS. Kartik's interest in Kashmir was generated by a report on the existence of mass graves in Jammu & Kashmir. It was then that he had desired to contribute to the human rights documentation in Kashmir for just a few months. But he stayed here for a period of 7 years, which he had never even thought of.

Kartik's seven years stay at JKCCS were prolific, as he co-authored reports like "*Alleged Perpetrators*" and "*Structures of Violence*", which are a dossier on the perpetrators of human rights violations in Jammu and Kashmir. While gradually expanding his work, Kartik appeared in courts in human rights related petitions like Kunan Poshpora mass rape, Handwara molestation case, Dodipora killings, Sopore massacre, enforced disappearance cases etc.

The contribution from Shrimoyee was commendable, as she prepared reports like "*Anatomy of a Massacre*" which documented Sailan Massacre and "*Occupational Hazards*", a report on Kashmir floods 2014. The duo besides their documentation efforts substantially became part and parcel of JKCCS policy board and campaign activities like Haqeeqat-e-Kashmir, advocacy, drafting appeals etc. The suggestions provided by them, particularly regarding reaching the UN mechanisms and institutions like UN Department of Peace Keeping Operations for follow-up of the *Structures of Violence* report were not only fruitful but of great help.

Their contribution to JKCCS was on a voluntary basis with full commitment much to the surprise of people here, who otherwise are sceptic and distrustful of outsiders, especially Indian activists over staying here. Normally, people interacted with different Indians who were mostly from NGOs. The Editor was always concerned about their safety, as being non-locals and associated with JKCCS, which is strictly on State radar. Hitherto, never ever has any outsider contributed to Kashmir in this way and for that long. The contribution made by the duo earned them a lot of respect from the people here. People who know them respect them and love them. They developed a good social life.

The work done by them was surely going to irritate the State, as the intelligence agencies had approached Kartik's parents residing in Bangalore, causing unease to them, shortly after the release of *Alleged Perpetrators*. The visit of intelligence sleuths triggered serious concerns in his upper-middle-class family. Kartik's harassment and detention at the Immigration Office at the New Delhi airport in 2016, while returning for Geneva and putting him on a Lookout Circular, further worried his family. A fringe group in the valley also became a part of a malicious campaign against them. The threat and vilification might have disturbed them but the Editor is sure and confident that their leaving of Kashmir was not connected with it. The fact is, a young people spending their crucial seven years in Kashmir got emotionally attached with victims and with people he worked. They were obsessed with bringing change

in Kashmiri society, which they acknowledged is being oppressed and suppressed by the State. The duo will carry along nostalgic reminiscence for a long time.

Realistically, they had to decide at any point whether to stay in Kashmir forever or re-start their new innings elsewhere. We respected their decision, though it was painful and JKCCS will be missing them more for their zeal and enthusiasm with which they worked and accomplished many things, which otherwise perhaps were not possible. Shrimoyee and Kartik has done what others were unlikely to even think of.

2. Chronology of Incidents

Oct 01: An officer of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) shot himself dead in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district. Police sources said Inspector Gutti Lal of SSB's 13 Battalion killed himself with his service rifle in Dignibal area.

Oct 02: No incident of violence reported.

Oct 03: Two masked gunmen abducted a young butcher from his shop in Younsu village, an area that comes under Handwara police jurisdiction and is about 17 km from Sopore town in north Kashmir. Younsu village is not far from the area where a tailor, Mushtaq Ahmad Mir, was abducted and then killed by militants some two weeks ago. The abducted person has been identified as 26-year-old Tawseef Ahmad Ganai, son of Muhammad Afzal Ganai, a resident of Tujjar village in Sopore area.

Oct 04: For a period of about an hour small arms firing in Poonch's Gulpur area on Line of Control. No damage was reported.

Oct 05: Two former militants turned National Conference workers were shot dead from point blank range by militants in the heart of Srinagar's downtown Karfali Mohalla, while another colleague of theirs survived the attack with a bullet injury to his wrist. The gunmen killed on the spot two political workers named Nazir Bhat and Mushtaq Wani. Their fellow, Shakeel Ahmad Zangoo, sustained a bullet injury. While CRPF man was injured in a grenade attack hurled by suspected militants on its vehicle in Tral area of south Kashmir.

Oct 06: Dead body of the butcher abducted by unknown gunmen were found in an orchard in Sopore. The deceased was identified as Tawseef Ahmad Ganai, 26, of a resident of Tujjar Sharief village of Sopore.

Oct 07: Unidentified persons set ablaze a panchayatghar in Pinglena area of southern Pulwama district on Sunday evening, the police said. A police official said the incident took place at around 8.45 pm. Fire tenders were rushed to the spot to douse the flames, he said. The panchayatghar suffered damage to its roof and windows, the official said. While CASOs were conducted in five villages of Shopian in south Kashmir and in parts of Sopore in north Kashmir.

Oct 08: Armed forces launched CASO at Jalalabad, Adipora of Sopore in north Kashmir.

Oct 09: No incident of killing reported.

Oct 10: Protest took place in Noorbagh area of Srinagar district. Reports said forces were pelted with stones.

Oct 11: Two militants of HM were killed in an encounter with armed forces in Shotgund village Handwara area of north Kashmir. The slain militant was identified as Mannan Bashir Wani, who left doctoral research in geology to pick up the gun and Ashiq Hussain Zargar, son of Gulam Mohiudin Zargar, resident of Tulwari, Langate in Handwara. Dozens of people moved towards Shotgund and its adjoining areas, where they held street protests and hurled stones at government forces. The forces fired dozens of tear smoke shells and pellets to disperse the protestors, leaving at least three of them injured. While a Hurriyat (G) activist

was killed by unknown gunmen after being taken away from his home in Shopian area of South Kashmir. The deceased was identified as Tariq Ahmad Gania of Meminder, Shopian. In another incident a SPO was shot at by suspected militants in Pulwama district. In cross LOC shelling an army man was injured along LOC in Poonch.

Oct 12: Clashes took places during CASO laid by armed forces in Naidgam village of Shopian. While suspected militants hurled a grenade at a patrolling party of army at Yarigund area of Narbal in Budgam district. No damage was caused. While a soldier and porter were injured in a landmine explosion in Krishna Ghata area of Mendhar along the Line of Control.

Oct 13: A militant of Hizbul Mujahideen outfit was killed and another injured in an encounter with armed forces in Babgund area of this south Kashmir district. The slain militant was identified as, Shabir Ahmad from Samboora. Suspected militants shot at a police constable at his home in Warpora village of Sopore and he succumbed to his injuries on way to hospital. The 37-year-old Javid Ahmad Lone was at home on leave. He is survived by two sons, aged 3 and 5 years, and his wife.

Oct14: Pakistani troops reportedly targeted forward posts along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said. Indian troops guarding the LoC retaliated and the exchange of fire between the two sides continued for over an hour, they said. There was no immediate report of any casualty in the firing in Digwar sector.

Oct 15: A soldier ended his life by shooting himself with his service weapon at Bari Brahamana in Samba district, police sources said. He was identified as Sepoy Bahadur Thappa Mager, 19, of Nepal. He was posted with 4/11 GR, Bari Brahamana. "He died on the spot," sources said, adding that the body of the deceased soldier was later shifted to the Military Hospital Satwari for performance of the legal formalities. Two CRPF personnel were injured when militants attacked their camp at Newa village in southern Pulwama district.

Oct 16: Two militants were killed in an encounter with a joint contingent of CRPF and SOG in Fathe Kadal area of Srinagar district. The slain militants were identified as LeT commander Mehraj-ud-Din Bangroo of Fathe Kadal and Fahad Mushtaq Waza, a resident of Khanyar. In the encounter a SOG personnel and a civilian was killed. The slain civilian was identified as Rayees Ahmad of Fateh Kadal. While a militant of the Tehreek-ul-Mujahideen (TuM), recruited earlier this month, was killed in an ambush laid by armed forces in Kakpora area of Pulwama district. The slain has been identified as Showkat Bin Yousuf, alias Khalid Dawood Salafi, son of Muhammad Yousuf Bhat, resident of Awantipora in Pulwama district. A B. Pharmacy graduate from Kashmir University in 2017, Showkat had joined TuM on October 3 this year, days after collecting his certificates from the university. In another incident, a youth was critically injured when he accidentally stepped over a landmine along the line of control (LoC) in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir. Mohammad Ramzan (22), a resident of Deri Dabse village, suffered critical splinter injuries in the lower part of his body due to initiation of a mine near the anti-infiltration obstacle system at Pakhwari Gali in Mendhar sector, a police official said. He said the injured youth was given initial treatment at Mendhal hospital and later referred to Rajouri district hospital. In Baramulla, suspected militants hurled a grenade on 32 RR camp at Rafiabad. The damaged was reportedly caused. In Pulwama, militants attacked a CRPF camp leaving at least two troopers injured.

Oct 17: Three policemen including a Dy SP were injured in a grenade attacked launched by suspected militants in Pattan area of north Kashmir. Police claimed the assailant was arrested but the family of the arrestee rejected the police claim.

Oct 18: A gunfight between the army and a group of militants in Uri sector of north Kashmir's Baramulla district has led to the killing of four unidentified militants who had reportedly infiltrated the border. None of the militant has been identified.

Oct 19: Two militants were killed in a brief gunfight with government forces on the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad national highway in north Kashmir's Baramulla district. A police constable also sustained minor injuries in this shootout and was shifted to hospital. Police said that both the militants killed in Baramulla shootout were Pakistanis. They belonged to Jaish-e-Muhammad militant outfit. In another incident, a lady, pregnant by 5 months, was killed in "cross fire" which took place following a grenade attack by militants on an army camp, in Qasabiyar area in south Kashmir's Pulwama district. The slain has been identified as Firdaus Akhtar, wife of Khursheed Ahmad Sheikh, resident of Qasabiyar village. In another incident, seven army troopers were injured when they were targeted by militants by triggering an IED in Pulwama district.

Oct 20: Two army men were injured in an encounter with militants, who managed to escape, in Pathan village of Pulwama.

Oct 21: Seven civilians were killed in a blast caused by explosives left at the site of an encounter in which armed forces killed three local militants in Laroo village, on the outskirts of Kulgam town. More than 20 civilians were wounded, five of them with bullets and the rest with pellets, as the forces opened fire at protestors near the encounter site. The slain civilians were identified as Irshad Ahmad Padder and Zubair Ahmad Lone of Shurat village of Kulgam, Talib Maqbool Laway and Mansoor Ahmad Dar of Laroo Kulgam, Uzair Ahmad Dar of Reshipora, Kulgam and Aqib Ahmad Sheikh of Makenpora, Kulgam and the slain militants were later identified as Shahid ul Islam Tantray of Shopian, Yazil Makroo of Anantnag, and Zubair Lone of Kulgam. Police said that all three were affiliated with the Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) militant outfit. While army claimed two Pakistani infiltrators and three of its soldiers were killed after the army foiled an infiltration attempt in Rajouri. In another incident, a paramilitary trooper of SSB was killed after he got injured in a grenade attack triggered by suspected militants at CRPF camp in Midrooa, Tral.

Oct 22: Valley wide shut down was observed against the civilian killing in Kulgam.

Oct 23: The march to Lal Chowk called by the Joint Resistance Leadership (JRL) could not take place as state forces set up barricades and detained those attempting to take out the march. While a blast took place inside an army camp in Poonch in Jammu. But no damage was caused.

Oct 24: Two militants were killed and six army soldiers were injured in a gun fight at Nowgam area of Srinagar district. The slain militants were identified as Sabzar Ahmad Sofi (Ph D scholar) of Bashir Ahmad Sofi, resident of Naina Sangamand, Anantnag and Asif Ahmad alias Khubaib, son of Ali Mohammad Shergojiri, resident of Khiram Anantnag, were affiliated with Hizbul Mujahideen, according to police said. While clashes erupted in Sangam the native place of Sabzar in which at least three persons were hit by pellets in their eyes. While a soldier committed suicide with his service weapon at Kaman post, Indian military post on this side of the Line of Control (LoC) in Uri sector, reports said. Reports said that troops heard firing from inside a bunker at the post, and rushed towards it to find a Sepoy Devindrappa Gulgandi in a pool of blood. Gulgandi was rushed to hospital where he was declared brought dead.

Oct 25: In two encounters six militants were killed in north and south Kashmir. Four militants, two each from Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM) and Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT), according to police, were killed by government forces in a gunfight in Arwini area of Anantnag district. The militants were identified as Owais Lone of Hawoora and Sahir Makroo of Arwini of Hizb and Muzamil Magray of Watoo Aharbal and Amir Tantray of DH Pora, both from Lashkar. In Baramulla, two militants were killed in a gunfight in Kreeri area. A top police official told media on the condition of anonymity that both the slain militants belonged to the Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) militant outfit. The slain militants according to one report were identified as Aqil Ahmad Sofi, son of Abdul Rashid Sofi of Sofi Mohla Khanpora. Protests

also took place near the encounter site. In Tral area of south Kashmir, an army trooper of 42 RR was killed and another injured when militants launched an attack on their camp in Nadar area of Tral.

Oct 26: An army soldier and two militants were killed in the gunfight that took place in Pazalpora village in Behrampore area of Sopore in Baramulla. The slain were later identified Abu Maaz and his associate Zubair alias Ali Bhai were killed in Friday's gunfight in Pazalpora. While an army man died at a hospital after he sustained head injuries during stone-pelting by a group of youth in south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

Oct 27: A Central Industrial Security Force officer was killed after militants attacked a security post at a power grid station in Wagoora area of Nowgam on Srinagar outskirts. While suspected militants fired upon a Special Police Officer (SPO) in Crawni Chrar-e-sharief area of Budgam. The injured SPO identified as Mohammad Hafiz has been shifted to Srinagar for specialised treatment. Reports said militants barged into the house of Hafiz leaving him in a pool of blood. Currently, the wounded policeman was posted at SDPO office Chrar-e-Sharief. In another incident, militants attacked near district police line Batpora, Shopian, however, no damage was caused.

Oct 28: A police officer of the intelligence wing was shot dead by suspected militants in Wahibugh area of Pulwama district.

The slain officer has been identified as Imtiyaz Ahmad Mir, son of Jalal-ud-din Mir, resident of Sontbugh village in Pulwama district. Mir was a Sub-Inspector and was currently serving in the CID wing of police in Srinagar. Meanwhile in Kulgam, the family of abducted civilian Sheeraz Ahmad Bhat, owner of the house in which three militants were killed and later a blast at the site led to deaths of seven civilians on October 21, made a fervent appeal for his release, asserting that he was an innocent man. Bhat was abducted from his village Laroo in Kulgam district on October 27 evening by unidentified gunmen. In another incident, unknown gunmen shot dead a PDP worker on Srinagar outskirts. Locals in the area said that the PDP worker, identified as Mohammad Amin, was shot at by gunmen at Gangbugh area of Srinagar district. In Rajouri, two army personnel, including a lieutenant colonel, were injured in a landmine explosion along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district. Reports said, the blast was accidental and both the injured persons were taken to a hospital where their condition was stated as stable. In one more incident, suspected militants attacked an army patrol in Poterwal area, some six kilometers from district headquarters Shopian, but there was no injury or loss of life in the attack.

Oct 29: Five Border Security Force (BSF) troops sustained bullet injuries after militants attacked their vehicle in a high-security zone near BSF headquarters Zewan in Pantha Chowk area on outskirts of Srinagar. The BSF troopers retaliated to the attack but the militants escaped from the scene, reports said. While suspected militants attacked the residence of a former law maker Abdul Razaq Wagay at a village in Shopian district. The grenade, however, exploded outside the house, causing no injuries or loss of life. In another incident, three militants were arrested after a brief shoot out on the outskirts of Srinagar district.

Oct 30: Two Jaish-e-Muhammed (JeM) militants, including the nephew of outfit's chief Maulana Masood Azhar, were killed in a fierce gun-battle with armed forces in Chankitar village of Tral in Pulwama district. Usman Haider, the nephew of Maulana Masood Azhar and his associate Showkat Ahmad Khan of Handoorra Tral were killed in the encounter that lasted for more than four hours in Chankitar village of Tral, reports said. Intense clashes took place around the site of the encounter as well as in main town Tral. The forces fired pellets and tear smoke shells to disperse the stone-pelting youth. In another incident suspected militants fired at an army patrol at Meminder village of Shopian, but no loss of life or injury was reported on either side. Soon after the joint team of government forces arrived in the village, local youths came out and began hurling stones at the forces, who retaliated with tear

smoke shells and pellets. A video journalist was injured by pellets in his head during the clashes. He was identified as Aijaz Ahmad Dar, who works for a New Delhi-based TV channel. While armed forces launched a cordon and search operation (CASO) in Palhallan area of Baramulla district. Reports said that a joint team of army's 29 RR, SOG of police, and paramilitary CRPF launched the operation at Tantary Mohalla in Palhallan village.

Oct 31: The armies of India and Pakistan exchanged heavy gunfire across the Line of Control (LoC) in Tangdar sector of north Kashmir's Kupwara district. There was no report of any injury. While at least four Cordon and Search Operations (CASOs) were launched by troops in twin south Kashmir districts of Pulwama and Shopian. The villages where CASO was launched include Frasiyora and Khaterpora in Pulwama and Baderhama in Shopian.

3. Killings in October 2018

In October 2018, a total of 57 killings took place in different incidents of violence, which included 14 civilians, 29 militants and 14 armed forces. The day to day break up of killings is given below.

Table of Killings

Date	Armed Forces	Militants	Civilians
Oct 01	1	-	-
Oct 02	-	-	-
Oct 03	-	-	-
Oct 04	-	-	1
Oct 05	-	-	2
Oct 06	-	-	-
Oct 07	-	-	-
Oct 08	-	-	-
Oct 09	-	-	-
Oct 10	-	-	-
Oct 11	-	2	1
Oct 12	-	-	-
Oct 13	1	1	-
Oct 14	-	-	-
Oct 15	1	-	-
Oct 16	1	3	1
Oct 17	-	-	-
Oct 18	-	4	-
Oct 19	-	2	1
Oct 20	-	-	-
Oct 21	4	5	7
Oct 22	-	-	-
Oct 23	-	-	-
Oct 24	1	2	-
Oct 25	1	6	-
Oct 26	2	2	-
Oct 27	1	-	-
Oct 28	1	-	1
Oct 29	-	-	-
Oct 30	-	2	-
Oct 31	-	-	-
Total	14	29	14
	Total Killings	57 Killings	

4. Human Rights Stories

**Five civilian died, many grievously injured in a post encounter explosion
Mystery around blast remains, people blame forces**

On October 21, after an encounter was over, in which three militants were killed, five civilians lost their lives and over two dozen were injured when an explosive, believed to be an IED, went off in Laroo village of Kulgam district in south Kashmir. The blast occurred when youth rushed towards the damaged house, in which militants were hiding, after the forces left the spot. As they entered the smouldered house, an explosion with big bang occurred. The intensity of the explosion was such that it shakes the houses in close vicinity. It was all chaos. Nobody has, initially, any idea as to what has actually happened. People close to the encounter site see badly injured people lying on the ground turning the earth red.

Police claimed, when civilians went close to the house, post encounter, there lay an explosive and when people started fiddling with it, the explosive went off.

However, people refused to buy the police version and blamed the forces for planting the explosion to cause "civilian damage".

In past many years, dozens of people mostly children died of littered explosions but



Photos of Talib and Mukeem were only managed

Bhat, 17, - twelfth class student - son of Habibullah Bhat of Laroo, Kulgam, 2. Talib Maqbool Laway, 19, - BA Ist year student -son of late Mohammad Maqbool Laway of Laroo, Kulgam 3. Aqib Ahmad Sheikh son of Ghulam Ahmad Sheikh of Makanpora, Kulgam 4. Irshad Ahmad Padder son of Syedullah Padder of Shurat, Kulgam and 5. Javaid Ahmad Lone of Hawoora, Kulgam.

A researcher of *The Informative Missive* visited the area and talked to relatives of the victims and locals in Kulgam. One of the eyewitnesses shared horrible sequence of the incident.

On October 21, on a tip off forces from army, CRPF and J&K police jointly launched a Cordon and Search Operation (CASO) in Laroo village to track down the JeM militants. To corner the militants hiding in a house, the forces bulldozed

walls of many houses to make way for their armoured vehicles. The army also entered some houses around the premises, where militants were hiding. At around 3 am, bullets were exchanged between the militants and forces.

The houses occupied by forces were used to target militants and bullets were

"Normally, the forces sanitize the encounter sites before leaving but this time they only collect the militant bodies and left."

this time people suspects forces involvement in the explosion, which, according to them, was not littered but planted with purpose.

People were upset with poor media reportage of the incident. Instead of writing five civilian killings in explosion it misreported seven deaths. The names of the youth died were not all accurate. Two more people who died, on the same day, were shot by armed forces in two different locations of Kulgam district, however, these two killings were also included in explosion incident in the media reportage. One of the persons reported dead in media reports was found to be alive by the researcher of *The Informative Missive* during his researcher of the incident.

The identity of the deceased youth were established as 1. Mohammad Mukeem

showered turning the area into a "battle field". The roaring of guns has terrified the local populace.

The encounter ended at 10:30 in the morning with the killing of all militants. The house of Ghulam Mohammad, where militants had taken refuge, got destroyed in the encounter. Thereafter, the police took the custody of slain militants. According to the locals, there was no stone pelting during or after the encounter.

As the forces leave the spot some youth went to the smouldered house, the moment they stepped in, a big explosion took place having the earthquake effect around the area. People were dumbfounded as to what happened, what was the explosion about. The people close to the encounter site witnessed

smoke and dust, and some badly injured bodies lying on the ground. Blood spill everywhere. Some injured were crying in pain and calling for help. Few motionless bodies were also on the ground.

Everybody in the area got worried for their dear ones. It was all chaos. People were seen running helter-skelter looking for the relatives who had ventured near the encounter site.

According to victim families, the explosion was planted on the threshold of the house, most probably, after the encounter was over when the forces went inside the house to retrieve the militant bodies.

When the people were taking the injured to the District Hospital Kulgam they were halted by police at the main market Laroo. The police didn't allow them to take the injured to the hospital. Then the people took the different way to reach to the hospital. The delay caused by the police further worsens the conditions of the injured. Five of the injured later died. Some died in hospital and some on way.

One among the killed was Mukeem Bhat, a 12th class student. Mukeem was taken to Sub-District Hospital Qaimoh but was declared brought dead.

Mukeem father's said, "It was well-understood that the blast was a trap laid by the forces to target civilian, as they were clueless from last many years, as to how the protests could be blocked near encounter sites. Normally, the forces sanitize the encounter sites before leaving but this time they only collect the militant bodies and left."

"There were many unanswered questions. Why not police noticed a conspicuous explosion planted there, which, according to them were fiddled with by the youth who later entered the house. They (forces) easily went in and went out with militant bodies. There were enough circumstantial leads which only points towards the forces plating the explosion," questioned Mukeem's father.

Like Mukeem, his neighbour Talib Maqbool had also visited the encounter site after the forces left. As the explosion took place he suffered grievous injuries. The delay caused by the police by blocking people in taking him to the hospital proved fatal. Talib succumbed there in the vehicle.

When the police realized that the boy had died, the people were allowed to move.

He was taken to the hospital only to confirm his death officially.

Talib is survived by his mother Naseema and sister. His father had died few years ago. Since the family have been left with no male member, they had not made any effort to take up the matter before any forum. However, the family has a plan of filing a petition before the district office only to claim *ex gratia* relief, which it thinks is a possibility.

Talib's maternal uncle had visited the police station and got the copy of death certificate.

Three other youth Aqib Ahmad Sheikh, 20, Irshad Ahmad Padder and Javaid Ahmad Lone were part of the group which has entered the house. All the three were injured seriously and later succumbed to their injuries.

Aqib Ahmad Sheikh was working as a labourer. He has left his studies mid-way to support his poverty ridden family.

Irshad Ahmad, 21, was perusing his graduation t Government Degree College Kulgam.

While Javaid Ahmad Lone, 23, was a mini bus driver. He is survived by his wife, a year-and-a-half-old son and parents.

From a witness eye: Rahil Mohi-ud-Din, 15, of Naikpora, Kulgam was on the spot of explosion. Rahil's statement before *The Informative Missive*: Rahil was at his aunt's house at Laroo, on the fateful day. He too visited the encounter site. He was in the courtyard of the same house in which the militants were trapped and killed. Rahil witnessed that the house had been burnt completely, only the walls were partly intact.

As soon as the people stepped on the porch of the house covered under the debris of the destroyed house, an explosion occurred. Rahil has seen people falling on the ground. He saw some people badly injured, on some injured meat was missing from their ribcages and blood drenching the earth. Some were laid with their legs and arms badly injured. Most people received injuries on their faces. "It was a massive explosion. Everything engulfed by black dust blocking the sight. I was also down with multiple splinter injuries all over my body. As I was at some standing away, tentatively 10 feet, from the site well behind a couple of rows of people, the magnitude of my injuries was not that graves," stated Rahil.

He further stated, "For a moment, my body freezes and I couldn't hear or feel anything. As the dust got settled and people

got the idea of the explosion the injured were taken to hospitals.”

At main market Laroo, the army trucks, part of encounter, were parked. The army men stopped people from taking injured to the hospital. Then the people took the injured in different directions to reach to the hospitals.

“Some were taken to District Hospital Anantnag and some were taken to Public Health Centre Qaimoh. Five people died. I believe, if they would have reached the hospital on time they possible might have survived. The District Hospital Kulgam is just 2 kilometers away from the encounter site but as the army did not allow people to take the injured to the District Hospital, it resulted the killing of five people,” stated Rahil. Besides deaths more than fifty people received injuries.

Rahil was taken on a scooter to Primary Health Centre Qaimoh, due to the lack of medical facilities, he was referred to District Hospital Anantnag. There he was admitted for two days. He still feel pain in his body mostly in right arm pit, a splinter had entered into it and created a hole. He is still on medication and visits the doctor on the advised dates.

The incident has laid a horrible impact on Rahil psyche.

Rahil was struggling to have peaceful sleep. The gory scenes of the incident keep haunting him in his dreams. “Since the incident I never had a sound sleep. The horrible pictures had captured his imaginations. The scene was never away from my sight. It keeps recurring. Now I fear darkness and avoid sitting alone, as it causes great discomfort. I stop touching electric gadgets. In short I fear everything now,” stated Rahil.

Rahil accused the army of planting the explosive with intent to cause civilian damage. He based his allegation as the army leaving

the site immediately after the encounter was over. According to him, army didn’t bother to sanitize the site. Usually, the army did not allow people to go even near the encounter site until it’s sanitized but this time how come they left without doing that.

“After leaving the site, why did they stopped their vehicles in the main market of the village and didn’t allow the injured to be taken to the hospital,” questioned Rahil.

Rahil said he was never called by police to testify indicating there was no investigation going on how the explosion occurred.

Police Version

Jammu and Kashmir Police issued a detailed statement about the incident, which is being used verbatim here:

“In Kulgam encounter while three terrorists of JeM terror outfits were killed, in the aftermath of the encounter when a large congregation entered the encounter site before it was cleared led to an explosion in which six people died...

After the conclusion of the encounter as the forces moved out, the locals from the area started assembling at the site of the encounter and had apparently fiddled with some stray explosive materials leading to an explosion. Consequently, some individuals sustained grievous injuries and some of the injured identified as Ubaid Laway, Tajamul, Irshad Ahmad Padder, Uzair Ahmad and Masroor Ahmad, unfortunately, succumbed when brought to hospitals, besides five other injured were are undergoing treatment. It is pertinent to mention that this incident occurred post encounter.

Citizens are requested not to visit any encounter site until the site is sanitized by the bomb disposal team. We seek the cooperation of people in this regard for avoiding accidents of such nature. Police have registered a case in this regard and investigation has been initiated.”

Just 13, boy fired in head 1 km away from encounter site

The media reported seven civilians were killed post-encounter explosion occurred in the house at Larnoo, Kulgam on October 21 where militants had taken refuge. However, the research of *The Informative Missive* found that five civilians were killed in the explosion while two other civilians were shot dead by the forces away from the encounter site. One of the boys reported dead in media reports was found to be alive with some injuries.

The boys killed away from the encounter site were identified as Mansoor Ahmad Dar s/o Ghulam Mohahmad Dar of Bogund, Kulgam and Uzair Ahmad Dar son of Mushtaq Ahmad Dar of Gousia Colony Kulgam.



Uzair's photo shared by his family

Uzair, 13, was a student of 8th standard.

The Informative Missive only managed to visit Uzair's family to collect the case details. Muhtaq Ahmad, Uzair's father said his son didn't die at encounter site explosion but was shot by the forces away from the encounter site.

"On October 21, at 9:30 am, Uzair Ahmad Dar asked his aunt to roast four corns for them. He took one roasted corn and left

Nigeena, only family member present at home that time, about the incident. Both of them rushed to the District Hospital, just nearby their house. Upon reaching there, they were told that Uzair has been referred to S.M.H.S hospital at Srinagar. Both of them came back and informed other family members.

Couple of hours later, at around 2:00 pm, Uzair's body was brought home by the people.

"When I see Rakib, I asked him about Uzair and he gave me shock of my life telling Uzair has been shot in the fields when they were heading towards the encounter site. Uzair was taken to a hospital he said."

with Rakib, a relative. Just 2 km away from our house at Larnoo there was an encounter," stated Muhtaq Ahmad.

Uzair and Rakib had decided to go to the encounter site to see the faces of the killed militants. The army was deployed in the main market Kulgam and were not allowing any civilian to move ahead towards the encounter site. To avoid the army, the boys took a route through fields to reach the encounter site.

"As the situation was grave due to the encounter, not only the internet service was cut off but the mobile network was also suspended. So we were unable to reach Uzair on his mobile number," stated Mustaq.

As the encounter ended and the forces left the encounter site, a large number of people gathered in the courtyard of the house where the militants were killed. When some of them make their entry into the house a big explosion occurred. The explosion took place at the threshold of the house leaving dozens injured many of them critically. Momentarily, five of the injured died of their injuries.

As there was no news of Uzair and the situation was grim so at 11:30 am, Mushtaq Ahmad left his house to locate his son. While on his way he spotted Rakib at District Hospital Kulgam. "When I see Rakib, I asked him about Uzair and he gave me shock of my life telling Uzair has been shot in the fields when they were heading towards the encounter site. Uzair was taken to a hospital he said," Mushtaq said while sharing the details of how he came to know about his son's bullet injury.

On hearing this, Mustaq went back to his home and informed his sister-in-law

Uzair was shot on his head at least 1 kilometer away from the encounter site. Rakib has not shared anything to Uzair's family about the incident till the day *The Informative Missive* researcher visited his house.

While taking his body for last rites to a local graveyard, the forces deployed blocked the mourners and were not allowing them to take the dead to the graveyard. The funeral procession kept on marching. The forces used tear smoke shells to disperse the people. Both men and women in large number were part of the funerals.

Uzair's mother, Shafeeqa, part of the march, was hit by a shell on her right foot. Uzair's sister Taufeeqa, a 10th grade student was slapped by a policeman when she requested them to allow his brother's body to be taken to the graveyard. The relentless mourners took the body to graveyard through a different route.

After a lot of struggle and hardship Uzair's was laid to rest.

The family has no idea of whether FIR was filed or not. However, an employee of Deputy Commissioner's (DC) office had visited victim's house and advised his father to file the case for ex gratia relief. The employee had come along with some documents on which he wanted signatures of Mustaq Ahmad and details of his bank account. However, Mushtaq refused to share the details he was asked for and was not interested to approach DC office. An application for the death certificate has been filed at Town Hall committee Office, Kulgam, mandatory for withdrawing money from bank account of the deceased.

Youth tortured, putting up as shield and killed: Family

On October 17, a joint contingent of CRPF and SOG laid late evening cordon and search operation (CASO) on a tip off presence of militants in Syed Ali Akbar area of Father Kadal in Srinagar down town. While the searches were going on, the forces established contact with the militants hiding in one of the

as to how to respond to their baseless accusations," stated Mudasir a PHD scholar.

Then the SOG men cornered Rayees and started asking him about the militants. He keeps rejecting their allegations and, meanwhile, Rayees's father heart started racing. With ever second his condition was

"At around 5:30 am after torturing Rayees was taken to old house. He was used as a shield since the SOG men had pin point information of militant presence in the old house. On reaching the attic of three storey old house, the militants hiding opened fire. In the militant firing, one SOG man Kamal Kishore, a front line assaulter, get injured and died immediately. Rayees also get killed."

houses. One youth and SOG personnel were killed at initial state of the encounter. The family of youth, who has bullet in his head, accused the forces of using him as shield and later killed him the moment the militants opened fire on them. The killed youth, his family said, was tortured by the forces before being used as human shield. In the encounter, which continued for over two hours, two militants were killed and the house was raised to ground.

A researcher of *The Informative Missive* visited Fathe Kadal area to collect the details of the incident and how things unfolded leading to the killing of the youth.

The slain youth was identified as Rayees Habib Hanga - BSc, B Ed, M Ed- son of Sofi Habibullah Haga of Mohalla Syed Ali Akbar, Father Kadal, Srinagar. Rayees make his earning by running a bakery shop. The boy according to his family has no covert or overt connection with on-going militancy. Rayees was survived by his wife and six-month-old daughter.

There remains a mystery as to how Rayees actually was killed. However, his family blamed forces of killing him.

Rayees's elder brother Mudasir Habib while sharing the details of the incident blamed squarely the SOG men for first torturing and then killing his brother. "We have no idea of CASO until a team of 10 to 12 SOG personnel entered our house and woke us up. It was around 12:00 at night. The SOG men were speaking in Dogri and Punjabi, and it was easy for us to establish the language since my mother is a Punjabi descent. The sudden entry of SOG men panicked everybody in house. They were accusing us of sheltering Pakistani militants. We have no idea

worsening forcing Mudasir to take him to the hospital.

One of the SOG men, part of the team, was identified as Shah Jahan by his name plate. Rayees was taken to one of the rooms of the house. He was badly tortured there for some hours. One of the SOG personnel was addressed by his men as Ashiq sir, appears he was leading the SOG party. When Rayees's sister-in-law tried to intervene he was pushed back by Ashiq sir who threatened of killing the boy. The torture was so grave that he was unable to stand on his feet properly.

Rayees's family has two closely build houses, one old and the other newly constructed. The distance between the two houses is merely 20 meters. The family has shifted to new house and the old one was occasionally used for sleeping purpose by some family members.

"At around 5:30 am after torturing Rayees was taken to old house. He was used as a shield since the SOG men had pin point information of militant presence in the old house. On reaching the attic of three storey old house, the militants hiding opened fire. In the militant firing, one SOG man Kamal Kishore, a front line assaulter, get injured and died immediately. Rayees also get killed. Rayees had bullet in the backside of his head. Clearly shows that he was fired by the SOG men not by the hiding militants. Had he died of militant bullet, he would surely had bullet on front side of his body, not in his back portion of head," questioned his family while accusing the forces of killing the youth.

The family, claimed, it had no idea of militant presence in their house. For them militants had taken refuge there without seeking permission from the owners.

Soon after the militants were traced the encounter erupted which continued for over two hours and two militants were killed. The SOG men used ULBG to kill the militants and in the process the house was raised to ground.

After the encounter ended, the police issued an advisory asking people not to venture close to the encounter site. "The police was supposed to sanitize the site and clear the rubbles immediately after the encounter was ended, but it didn't. I made several rounds of SR Gunj police station only not to be heeded. One day the SHO told me that a rifle of dead SOG man was missing likely to be under the rubbles. The SHO told me to get it. Then he told me to go SP office at Khanyar," stated Mudasir.

After 10 days, fearing untoward incident around the encounter site Mudasir took it on himself and called a JCB to clear the rubbles. The moment the JCB arrived on the spot, Mudasir's brother Asif received a phone call from police station Sherghari. It appears police has some informer planted in the area indicated by the phone call from the police the moment the JCB reached the spot.

"As the JCB arrived my brother Asif got a phone call from police reprimanded for calling JCB.

After a while a police team arrived and sanitize the site but the rubble was not removed leaving scope of doubt in our mind that there might be something under the

rubble," stated Mudasir while failing to decipher the delay in clearing the rubble.

As the encounter was over, the media personnel for covering encounter accused the police of attacking them. The cops attacked camera persons working with different media outlets and left many injured.

A Srinagar based photojournalist said that as the encounter was over, they were just clicking the photos of the site and suddenly a group of SOG personnel came and started beating them. "Later a police party joined them and we all were beaten to a pulp," he said and added that police also resorted to the aerial firing. The incident has resulted in injuries to many photojournalists.

"I was beaten by four policemen and the only thing I could do was to save my camera, many of us have sustained injuries," Vice President Kashmir Photographers Association told media.

Police Apologises

The police said they were investigating the matter and have apologised to journalists who were injured.

A senior police officer said they are verifying details of the incident. "I have personally apologised to journalists who were roughed up," said SP Pani, a senior police officer.

The journalists said senior officers, including an officer of the Deputy-Inspector General rank, were present when they were being beaten.

Sopore butcher abducted, tortured and killed

Oct 06: Tawseef Ahmad Ganai son of Mohammad Afzal of Batipora, Pinjar, Sopore in north Kashmir was abducted and subsequently murdered by gunmen, whose identity remained a mystery. The killings of Tasweef, a butcher by profession, has not only shocked the people in his native village but has injected a deep fear among local populace. In recent past, there were various incidents of killings of civilians by unknown gunmen. As of this month, none of the perpetrator was identified.

A researcher of *The Informative Missive* visited the house of Tawseef to find out the incident details. His brother Shahid Afzal volunteered himself to relate the case details.

"As usual he went to his shop situated at national highway while I went to school. At

around 12:45 pm, I surfed the internet to check the news updates. One of the updates was showing abduction of my brother by unknown gunmen," stated Shahid.

Just after five minutes Shahid got a call from his father who had crying for the safety of his son. Shahid tried to console him and asked him to keep hope of his safe return. Meanwhile, Tawseef's uncle and aunt went to his shop to collect money and meat from his open shop. However, knives were missing. The shopkeepers in the market informed his uncle that at 11: 10 am few gunmen appeared at his shop and took him along. The shopkeepers saw he was taken in the direction of Godibal area through orchards. After walking some distance the gunmen vanished along with him from the site of shopkeepers.

“Whosoever has killed my brother by no means could be called as humans. His throat was slit, his little finger was cut off and there were multiple stabbing marks on his shoulder. He was brutally tortured before his killing.”

“When my uncle went into the direction to catch the abductors army launched a CASO and prevented my uncle to proceed in aimed direction. Then the army launched a drone search to locate him but failed to find any trace of him. The police assured us he will be located and the family will be informed forthwith,” Shahid further stated.

The family has filed a missing report with concerned police station.

Tawseef’s aged parents had made an appeal through a video on social media to his abductors to release him. The appeal evidently made no difference to the killers.

Tawseef’s family at their own level made efforts to locate him but failed to fetch any result. They searched him in all nearby areas for three consecutive days.

Shahid stated, “After three days search we got a call from our distant relative Nazir Ahmad informing us that the *Sarpanch* of Hawan has asked him to identify a unknown dead body lying in his area. When Nazir met the *Sarpanch*, he took him to Chakprea orchards where my brother’s body was thrown after being killed. Nazir immediately informed us to collect his body.”

When Shahid reached to collect his brother’s body he calls SHO Bomia requesting

him to visit the spot. “When I call SHO asking him to reach the spot he refused and instead told me to take the body Sub District Hospital Sopore. Then I took the body to home for last rites,” Shahid averred while talking about how he reached the dead body of his brother.

Shahid was shocked to see the conditions of his brother’s body. He said while explaining the conditions of his brother’s body, “Whosoever has killed my brother by no means could be called as humans. His throat was slit, his little finger was cut off and there were multiple stabbing marks on his shoulder. He was brutally tortured before his killing.”

Tawseef was also robbed off by his killers. His money and mobile phone was taken away. Tawsee, according to his family, has no affiliation with any political party of social formation. He was purely a shopkeeper.

The family has failed to decipher the reason behind his killing.

The Block Medical Officer (BMO) of Sopore, Dr Sami, told media that even though the family did not allow a post-mortem, it was not necessary as the cause of death was evident to everyone.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Sopore, Javid Iqbal, said that preliminary investigations indicated the hand of militants in the killing.

Elections bring along miseries to local population

Pellet victims complain of routine harassment

Oct 2: In Kashmir holding elections were always challenging and this challenge further gets tougher, as the political situation has taken a new turn since 2016, when people came out in thousands to protest killing of militant commander Burhan Wani. The Govt. of India is delaying parliamentary elections in south Kashmir since 2017, as it feels the situation was not conducive to conduct the exercise. However, after the announcement of ULB and Panchayat elections the situation in Kashmir further gets worse. There were repeated threats from militant leadership to those who contest election or take part in it. Killing of political activists by “unidentified gunmen” also took place. While to ensure smooth election the state machinery heightened its surveillance over the youth. Some were arresting. Many youth were called to the police stations to mount pressure on

them to dissuade them from protesting on election days. The forces and police action of harassments has forced, as reported, dozens of youth in south Kashmir to migrate to the places of their relatives

A JKCCS volunteer from Pulwama came up with a brief report on arrest and harassment, which has increased, in his area after the announcement of ULB elections.

As the ULB elections draw closer the allegations of harassments and arbitrary detentions were reported from various places mostly from south Kashmir.

The JKCCS volunteers shared the details of arrests by the armed forces and police in his area. The volunteer comes from Rohmu village of Pulwama district where on October 2/3 four boys were arrested by the armed forces in nocturnal raids. The arrested boys were identified as Muzarrif Ahmad Dar,

21, B. Tec student, Arshed Ahmad, 26, carpenter, Azhar, 16, student and Aqib, 16, student.

On the night of October 2 and 3, as many as forty youth were arrested from various parts of Pulwama villages like Karimabad, Muran, Kangan and Shangarpur villages. The boys seem to be arrested with the aim to send a message to the other youth of the area not to exhibit any dissent activity particularly during forthcoming elections. Most of the boys were later handed over to the Special Operation Group (SOG) at Kakapora, Pulwama to detain them. Some of the boys were freed after sometime. The arrested boys, according to the volunteer, fall in the age group between 16 to 25 years old, most of them students.

On the same night, after 1 ½ hours the army from Rohmu camp again came to Wampora in Rohmu and started beating people after forcing their entry inside some houses. As many as six persons were injured. Then the forces stood outside the Masjid doors to ensure people would not come out to protest and use public address systems of Masjids for sloganeering. Till 3 am they stayed in the village until they were sure that no one will come out to protest.

The volunteer further said, when the families of arrestees went to the SOG camp for release of their children they were told they would be set free only after elections.

Pertinently, a month ago, a group of village elders was summoned by the Rahmu army camp. They entered in to a verbal understanding with the armed forces that both sides will show restraint. On the orders of village elders, the youth stopped all types of protests and agitation. However, there was no change in forces behaviour and they continued to act aggressively with the local population, therefore, showed no respect for the understanding.

Pregnant woman killed in cross-fire after militant attack on army camp

Oct 19: A lady, pregnant by 5 months, was killed in "cross fire" which took place following a grenade attack by militants on an army camp, here in Qasabyar area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district on Friday evening.

The slain has been identified as Firdausa Akhtar, wife of Khursheed Ahmad Sheikh, resident of Qasabyar village.

Six days after the verbal agreement, the army intensifies its operation some youth were arrested during raids and many were summoned to the camps. Checking of cards, investigating the boys, poking into mobile phones was almost a routine.

Well before the verbal agreement with the village elders, the army had cut off the water supply to the villages in the backdrop of the continuous protests. For four days, there was no water supply to the villages. It was after the meeting of villagers with the army the water supply was restored.

The continuous forces highhandedness forced the villagers to stay inside during evening and people prefer to offer late evening prayers at their house to avoid forces harassment.

Due to perennial harassment by forces as many as 20 to 30 per cent youth have migrated to various places, they believe safer, to avoid arrest and harassment.

There were also allegations of harassment of pellet victim due to the conspicuous nature of their injuries. The I-cards (mostly the newly issued Adhaar cards) and mobile phones of victims were confiscated by the forces only to get collected from the military camps.

Those who had visited the camps to claim their cards and mobile phones were either humiliated or beaten by the forces.

This treatment has injected deep fear in the pellet victims, many of whom were following medical treatments. The frustration of the victims, the volunteer said, has generated even suicidal tendencies in them. The victims see no forum that can be effective to put an end to their almost routine harassments. The fear of snatching of *Adhaar* cards, obtained after cumbersome process, forced the youth to carry the ordinary I-cards.

"She was brought dead to the hospital. She was five months pregnant," a doctor at Pulwama district hospital told media.

The incident took place at about 7 pm. "The militants used an Under barrel Grenade Launcher (UBGL) to fire a grenade at the 44 RR camp, also known as the Shadimarg camp, here in Pulwama," a senior police official told media.

He said that the grenade exploded within the premises of the camp but caused no damage.

“Both the militants and the army men opened fire, after the explosion. One of the bullets unfortunately hit a woman nearby,” the official said.

He said that the lady was evacuated to the nearby Rajpora camp and then to district

hospital Pulwama, where she was declared brought dead.

Local sources told media that Firdausa was in her orchard when the bullet hit her.

As the news of her killing spread, hundreds reached her home in Qasabyar village.

Don't know who the gunmen were says family of killed Hurriyat activist

Who were killing the political activists in Kashmir particularly from resistance camp continues to be an excruciating mystery. The actual culprits enjoy cover of blame game, as the state authorities blame militants while the pro-freedom activists accused the state secret agencies for carrying the political killings. The families of activists were in fix whom to blame, forget about justice. The pain to ascertain the fault for which these activists get killed haunts their relatives throughout their lives.

In yet another killing of an activist associated with Hurriyat Conference faction (G) Hakim-ul-Rehman Sultani, 45, son of late Mufti Nizamuddin Sultani, resident of Reshipora Bomai, Sopore again the perpetrators were unidentified armed men. One of the relatives of Hakim, Mohammad Iqbal while taking to a visiting *The Informative Researcher* stated, “On September 08, Hakim was shot dead when he was out for beard dressing to a local barber shop. Few gunmen appeared fired him from close range targeting his throat making sure he will not survive the assault. He died then and there.”

For confirming his death officially he was taken to a local hospital.

As the body of Hakeem fell on the ground it shocks the people of his village.

When asked who killed Hakim, it was quite difficult for Hakim's family to name anyone. It shared the details of his activities that may provide some base to suspect his killers. Hakim was quite active in his area for many years. Hakim, his family said, was instrumental in a campaign launched in 2009 for relocation of army camp in Bomai, Sopore

after killing of two civilians by armed forces. In 2010 during peoples' agitation, he organized peaceful protests during which he was fired by forces in his arm and thigh leaving him seriously injured. It took him six months to recover from those injuries. Then he started working with a FMCG company Mehak Spices and was also working as an *Imam* (one who lead prayers) in a local Masjid.

“He was doing well for his family and at the same time was on the radar of state police. In 2016 police after conducting several raids at his house finally arrested him. Subsequently, he was booked under PSA for supporting agitation post Burhan Wani killing. He spent 18 months in jail. Just after a month of his release he was shot dead,” stated Iqbal.

Iqbal further stated, “In Kashmir it was never easy to unmask the unknown gunmen. One can only assume from the situation that makes one vulnerable.”

Police in a statement said that a case has been registered over the killing and investigations initiated.

As soon as the news of the killing spread in Bomai area, thousands of people from adjacent villages reached the village to attend funeral prayers of the slain activist.

This is the second killing of a Hurriyat (G) activist in Sopore area. On June 9, 2015, prominent Hurriyat activist Mohammad Altaf Sheikh, 45, who was a pharmacist by profession, was killed by suspected militants near New Colony Sopore. Police then said he was killed by the Qayoom Najar-led militant group due to some rivalry, but the slain's family blamed army and police for the killing.

Mystery shrouds Hurriyat activist's killing in Shopian

Oct 11: Drenched in blood and lying on the roadside 200 meters from his house, the body of Hurriyat (G) and J&K Muslim League (ML) activist Tariq Ahmad Ganie was found minutes after he walked out with an unknown

person from his home in Shopian's Meminder village.

“He was at home, looking after the construction of house while other family members were busy at their orchard, when an

unknown person took him from his home," a neighbour said.

Witnesses said that they heard four gunshots before Ganie's body was found. "We found him lying in a pool of blood on a street leading to Shal-lattoo village. He had multiple gunshots on his head and had died on the spot," a villager said.

Riyaz Ahmad Ganie, younger brother of Tariq, said that he was 100 meters away from the spot where his brother was shot and killed. "We heard gunshots and my son told me that someone had been shot. We didn't dare to go there but in the meantime another person arrived and told me that it was Tariq who had been shot. I rushed to the spot and saw the body lying in a pool of blood. He took his last breath before me. He had two gunshots on his head," Riyaz said.

Another neighbour said he saw Tariq leaving his home with an unknown person. "Tariq was smilingly talking to him and they were chatting as they walked towards Bren (a landmark named after a tree), where he was killed," the neighbour said.

Another witness said that when Tariq and the unknown person were talking near Bren, there came by a black car from which gunshots were fired at Tariq. "They shot him from the car. The person who had taken Tariq from his home also fled with them in the car," he said.

Family members said that Tariq was affiliated with the J&K Muslim League headed by jailed leader Masrat Alam. The ML is a constituent of the Geelani-led Hurriyat Conference (G). Family members said that Tariq was a former militant who was arrested in the 1990s. After he was released from jail, he became an activist.

Hand of militants suspected in man's killing

Habla Begum, whose husband was abducted and subsequently killed by unknown gunman presuming militants hand behind her husband's killing. She based her assumptions on her husband's friend's association with armed forces that lead to her husband's killing.

On September 23 Habla's husband, Mushtaq Ahmad Mir, 45, had just returned home after offering prayers. It was 7:15 pm when a masked man entered his house and directed him to follow him. He wife tried to persuade the unknown

They added that Tariq was detained by government forces multiple times in the past and had been jailed as well.

A close relative told media that Ganie was booked under the draconian Public Safety Act (PSA) in the aftermath of Burhan Wani's killing in 2016 and was released this year after being in jail for one-and-a-half year.

Villagers in Meminder accused Indian agencies of carrying out the murder. "How can militants kill a Hurriyat activist? That, too, someone who was often in police lock-up and jails. It was a handiwork of (Indian) agencies," many villagers said.

A group of seven militants appeared during the funeral prayers of Tariq and fired multiple rounds in the air to give a gun salute to him. Witnesses said that the militants left the scene soon after offering the gun salute.

Family members said that Tariq was 43 years old. "He is survived by his three children: two sons and a daughter. The elder son and daughter are studying outside the state and we are waiting for their arrival before we bury his body," said a relative of Tariq.

Thousands of people came to Meminder village to attend funeral prayers of the slain activist. The gathered people raised pro-freedom, anti-India and pro-militant slogans. Tariq's body was wrapped in the Pakistan flag but not buried as the family was waiting for his children to arrive from outside the state.

The police statement on Tariq's killing said that militants had shot at and killed him. The statement said that police have registered a case and begun an investigation.

man not to take him away, and asked him whatever he wants to before her. However, he was taken away. Next day his body was found in an orchard.

A researcher of *The Informative Missive* visited the residence of Mustaq at Harwan village of Sopore in north Kashmir to get the information of the case. Mushtaq's wife Habla Begum was alone in her house on time of the researcher's visit.

"My husband had returned from prayers and we were sitting when a masked

"He was shot in knees, ankles and arm. There were marks of lashes on his shoulders."

man appeared. He asked Mushtaq to accompany him. When I tried to prevent him from taking my husband away by raising noise, he threatened of killing him there. I insisted the masked man ask him whatever he wants and not to take him away. However, he didn't pay any heed and took him away while I was watching helplessly," stated Habla Begum.

The unknown person while taking Mushtaq away told his wife that he will be set free soon. "While taking him away the gunman gave me some hope when he said Mushtaq will be free shortly," stated Habla.

As the gunman disappeared along with Mushtaq from Habla's sight, she went to her in-laws house living just nearby. As it was dark outside and dangerous to move around, so they decided to wait till the day breaks.

Next day morning, all of his relatives launched a search and moved in different directions. At 9:00 am his Mushtaq's body was located in orchards in adjoining village Nowpora, Kalan.

The body was taken to Sub District Hospital, Sopore for medical examination. "He was shot in knees, ankles and arm. There were marks of lashes on his shoulders," Habla stated while talking about the conditions of her husband's body.

Habla said, her husband was not affiliated with any political party or militant

organization. She said Mushtaq was purely a civilian.

"I don't know the actual reason behind his killing but I can assume that one Nawaz Khan was interrogated by militants during which he confessed his association with army and Mushtaq being his friend was also suspected and killed," stated Habla Begum while trying to decipher the reason behind her husband's killing.

"My husband was the only hope of my life. They took him away from us. Tell me, who will take care of us now? He was the sole bread-earner for his handicapped wife, his aged parents, and his two sons. Had he been a *mukhbir* (informer), then we would have not have been so poor and living in this miserable condition," Habla Begum said.

Few months back, Mushtaq's nephew Asif Maqbool Sofi, a medical representative, was also killed by unknown gunman at Harwan. Mushtaq is survived by wife Habla Begum and one son Mir Musadiq.

SSP Sopore Javed Iqbal confirmed to media that police with the help of locals had recovered the body of Mushtaq from an orchard in Latishut village.

"He was shot with three bullets," the SSP said.

5. Attacks against Journalists

Journalists continue to face attacks

The local journalists continue to find it difficult to cover the Kashmir's political situation. The difficulties and the threat continue to loom over journalism, as was re-confirmed by this month's incident in Srinagar down town, where journalists were attacked by the forces during covering an encounter. The assurances given by the politicians in power and top police officials to reporters failed to make any impact on forces behaviour. It appears forces often get annoyed by the presence of journalists on spots of protests and encounters. The frequent appeals made by journalist associations to allow the reporters to carry on their professional duties failed to fetch desired results. At one instance the journalist fraternity even threatened boycott if the forces behaviour will not improve towards journalists.

➤ Forces thrash journalists

Oct 17: At least 10 journalists were thrashed by government forces near the site of gunfight in Fateh Kadal area of old Srinagar while they were discharging their professional duties. The IG police later apologies for its men's behaviour.

Asif Qureshi, a journalist working with ABP news channel, said they didn't "cross the line drawn by forces" and were performing their professional duties during the gunfight in which two militants and a policeman were killed.

"We didn't cross the line that police had drawn for us. Men from the fire and emergency services were dousing the fire. The encounter had ended. I was talking to a top police officer to get details when a masked policeman started beating my cameraman Arshid Hussain Shah," Qureshi told Greater Kashmir.

Other policemen joined in and started thrashing journalists, he said, adding that senior officers told the policemen not to thrash journalists but they didn't listen to them.

"Other journalists present on the spot tried to stop the masked policeman from thrashing my cameraman. But suddenly we saw scores of policemen and a SP-rank official catching hold of around 10 to 20 journalists and beating them mercilessly," Qureshi said.

He said that the police fired several shots in the air and some empty cartridges even touched his ear.

"I was saved by some men from fire and emergency service department," Qureshi said, adding 10 to 12 journalists were beaten up by the police.

"We were performing our duties when forces started hurling abuses on us. An officer of SP rank along with other forces personnel manhandled us and even fired pellets to scare us," said Arshid Hussain Shah, who has suffered fracture in an arm and wounds in leg in the forces' action.

"It was shocking to see a senior officer trying to choke neck of a photojournalist," he said.

Journalists who were thrashed include, among others, Manzoor Mir, Qazi Irshad, Khan Yasrub, Basit and Bilal Bahadur.

A group of media-persons raised the issue with top police officials who were present on the spot. The officials later apologised, they said.

JOURNALIST BODIES CONDEMN

The Kashmir Press Club condemned the thrashing of journalists by government forces in Fateh Kadal.

"Many reporters and photo-journalists were beaten up while they were discharging their professional duties this morning. One of the injured journalists is also a member of the KPC's executive team," a KPC spokesman said in a statement. "It is also being reported that the thrashing took place right in front of senior police officers. The KPC has expressed shock over this behaviour by the forces and hopes the state administration will take a note of this and act."

Jammu and Kashmir Editors' Forum also condemned forces' action on reporters, video journalists and photographers.

"Forces even fired shots in the air to scare them away from the gunfight site which is against professionalism," a JKEF spokesman said, urging upon the government to ensure

safety and protection of media persons working in Kashmir.

Kashmir Press Photographers Association also condemned the thrashing of journalists "by two senior police officers while they were discharging their professional duties, covering a gunfight at Fateh Kadal in Srinagar's downtown."

In a statement, KPPA said two senior police officers "used abusive language against the photojournalists while they were covering the Fateh Kadal gunfight and roughed up several of them."

The spokesman termed the behavior of these police officers as "brazen" and "uncalled for" and urged the authorities to take immediate action against them.

Kashmir Journalists' Association (KJA) strongly condemned the manhandling of journalists by government forces.

"Police and other government forces have been harassing and assaulting journalists repeatedly. It is simply uncalled for and must be stopped to prevent any legal recourse by the journalistic fraternity against such incidents," a KJA statement read, adding: "Journalists are being stopped from performing their professional duties even as there are clear constitutional guidelines which govern the media in Jammu and Kashmir. The (Fateh Kadal) incident is unfortunate as it has taken place in front of senior police officials."

The KJA appealed to the governor's administration to take "appropriate measures and action in the incident to end this harassment."

"We raised the issue with inspector general of police SP Pani who extended unconditional apologies to the journalistic fraternity and assured action in the case," the statement read, adding: "Pani has assured the journalists' body that the police will frame SOP for crisis situations so that such incidents are not repeated."

Kashmir range Inspector General of Police Swyam Prakash Pani said he would look into the matter.

"We are looking into it. I apologise if unintentionally something has gone wrong. We (police and media) are colleagues. We work in difficult situations. And I hope it will not come as hindrance in our professional ethos," he said.

Police Apologises

The police said they were investigating the matter and have apologised to journalists who were injured.

A senior police officer said they are verifying details of the incident. "I have personally apologised to journalists who were roughed up," said SP Pani, a senior police officer.

The journalists said senior officers, including an officer of the Deputy-Inspector General rank, were present when they were being beaten.

➤ **Fateh Kadal gunfight: Journalist alleges forces fired at his house**

Additional director general of police (ADGP) Munir Khan however said that forces never resort to firing in opposite direction of the "target."

Oct 18: Senior journalist Qayoom Zulfi alleged that forces, who were involved in Fateh Kadal encounter, "fired at my house resulting in immense damage to property".

Zulfi said he and his family – wife and a daughter – had a narrow escape. "Bullets pierced window panes and walls of my house and some bullets even hit some household items including a television set," he said.

"My house is located in opposite direction to the site of gunfight. I along with my family members took refuge in a wash room till encounter ended," he said. "For a moment I thought it was end. We came out only after firing stopped completely."

Additional director general of police (ADGP) Munir Khan however said that forces never resort to firing in opposite direction of the "target."

"We have stated that militants fired indiscriminately at the forces. One of the militants came out and fired at forces. So it is obvious whose bullets hit the house in opposite direction," said Khan.

6. Vandalization of Civilian Property by Armed Forces

There seems no let-up in vandalism of properties by armed forces and at some places by suspected militants triggering protests at various places of valley this month. Reports of harassments, beating were also reported from various places. The houses vandalized including of a policeman and a militant. The frequency with which the vandalism took place in the valley from last few years has no intervention from former elected government or by the ruling Governor of the state. The damage caused by the vandalism is so far not ascertained, as only through a detailed research the amount of damaged caused can only be gauged.

➤ **Several families migrate from Pulwama's Newa to evade 'wrath of forces'**

Oct 18: Locals from Newa in south Kashmir's district Pulwama staged massive protest against the alleged vandalization of property and thrashing of people by government forces.

The protesting population alleged that during the dead of the night after brief exchange of fire between militants and forces, the CRPF personnel barged into the houses and let loose a reign of terror in the area.

From past two months militants have attacked the CRPF 183 Battalion camp located in Newa for at least five times.

Recently two troopers sustained injuries in an attack. Locals said that on

Wednesday night there was a brief exchange of fire, the Forces personnel entered into the houses and resorted to massive damage of electronic items and parked vehicles.

"The Forces personnel thrashed people when they were fast asleep. It was hell like situation in the area. Women folk hid themselves as the troopers were showering invectives," they said, adding that two brothers sustained grievous injuries and were shifted to Srinagar hospital for treatment. The locals told CNS that after every militant attack, the troopers target civilian population while authorities have failed to give them any respite from the troopers.

The protesting population threatened to migrate from the area while some of the people packed their baggage and left the area. On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Pulwama, a police party led by an officer visited the area to pacify the protesters. The police officer assured the local population that in future action would be initiated against those who will target them. Witnesses said that despite assurances, some of the people migrated from the area. "We are investigating the matter and trying to create sense of security among local population," said an official.

➤ **Many hospitalised after army allegedly thrashed Pulwama villagers**

Oct 19: Seven women were among fifteen people who had to be hospitalised, with grievous injuries, after army personnel allegedly assaulted them late Thursday night in Triczal village of Pulwama district, residents of Triczal and a doctor at Pulwama district hospital said.

The army men attacked the villagers after nine of their men were injured in an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) blast, planted by militants, on Triczal Bridge located over the Pulwama-Lassipora road.

The blast, followed by firing by militants, took place at about 9:15 PM Thursday, creating widespread panic in the village and adjoining areas, including in Pulwama town.

"It was a night patrol of the army, a Casper vehicle, which came under attack and was heavily damaged. Nine army personnel sustained injuries in the attack," a police official told media.

He said that the injured army men were evacuated to the nearby army hospital, soon after the militants fled the area. Later, at least two of them were airlifted to the army's base hospital in Srinagar.

Villagers said that late on October 18 night, army men entered many houses in the village and beat up whosoever came their way.

"Women, young girls, children, they did not spare anyone," a villager told Kashmir Reader, adding that the women and girls were dragged around and beaten mercilessly.

The army men, villagers added, ransacked the village and kept beating the villagers for more than three hours.

"No police was to be seen anywhere and repeated calls to police and district administration brought no respite," villagers said.

They said that the army men used foul language with the women of the village while beating them and dragging them around in their houses and outside.

"Parked cars, windowpanes, doors and everything that came their way was smashed by the army men," the villagers alleged. "What was our fault?" they asked.

The injured were shifted to Pulwama district hospital in the wee hours of Friday morning, only after the army left the village.

A doctor at the hospital said 15 injured were brought to the facility.

"Seven of them were women. They had cuts, bruises and injuries inflicted due to

dragging and beating," the doctor told media, adding that all of the injured were treated at the hospital.

He said that all of them were now stable.

Police have maintained that there has been no formal complaint regarding the incident. "Formally, no such complaint has been lodged with us. Still, if there is any such complaint we will look into it," Director General of Police (DGP) Dilbagh Singh told reporters in Srinagar.

Army spokesperson Rajesh Kalia said that facts were being ascertained regarding the incident.

➤ **Forces ransack seminary in Srinagar**

Oct 22: Late evening reports said that forces allegedly attacked a seminary-cum-orphanage—AshrafulUloom—at Hyderpora and fired dozens of teargas shells into its premises, evoking strong resentment from people.

A witness said forces also beat up Haji Abdur Rashid Shah, and Mufti Showkat who leads prayers at nearby Masjid Ibrahim, while Bilal Ahmed Mir, son of Ali Muhammad Mir—a staffer at the seminary—was taken away by police.

Furious over the forces' action, Ghulam Ahmad Laigroo, president coordination committee (IG Road) announced a complete shutdown in the area on Tuesday.

➤ **Unknown gunmen ransack houses of policemen in Kulgam**

Oct 23: Unknown gunmen ransacked house of three brothers working in the Jammu Kashmir Police department in South Kashmir's Shopian district.

Locals said that at least three unknown gunmen barged into the house of one Mushtaq Ahmed Thokar at Paddarpora village of gunmen and ransacked the house. "There were only little girls present in the house. The gunmen ransacked the house and left away," said an eyewitness.

They said that Mushtaq Ahmed has three sons working in the police department, two are posted in Ladakh Division while one at Bandipora district. A police official feigned ignorance about the incident saying that they are ascertaining the facts.

➤ **Mourners beaten and slain militant's house**

Oct 27: Six people were injured in Waripora village of DH Pora area in Kulgam district, the native place of slain Hizb militant AamirTantray, who was killed at Arwani-Bijbehara on Thursday evening.

"Forces broke into the house and thrashed the mourners who had come to express solidarity with the family. The youth later pelted the forces with stones, triggering clashes," a local resident said.

The forces fired teargas canisters and shotgun metal pellets into the protesters, injuring six who were taken to nearby hospital.

➤ **Lolab village protest vandalisation of property during CASO**

Oct 28: Residents of Cheerkoot area of Lolab in north Kashmir's Kupwara district staged a protest against government forces on Saturday, who they alleged damaged public property including vehicles and houses during a cordon and search operation (CASO) in the area on Friday evening.

Police sources said that a CASO was launched by a joint team of forces including army and CRPF in the area, during which some youths pelted stones and tried to disrupt the CASO. Some youths were beaten, they said, adding that some vehicles were damaged due to stone pelting.

However locals alleged that forces failed to trace the militants and damaged public property in revenge.

On Oct 27, Saturday, morning a large number of people blocked the Lolab-Kupwara road and demanded strict action against the forces officials involved in the vandalisation.

SSP Kupwara A S Dinker said that he had no reports about the incident.

"I don't have any report like that," SSP said. The phone number of Deputy Commissioner Kupwara Khalid Jahangir was out of reach.

➤ **Villagers allege soldiers vandalised militant's home**

Army denies involvement

Oct 29: Residents of Nazneenpora village in Shopian district alleged government forces vandalised the family home of an active militant on August 28 night, a month after an unsuccessful attempt at torching it.

They accused soldiers arrived in Nazneenpora around 8pm and ransacked the house of Syed Naveed, an active militant with Hizbul Mujahideen group.

"They smashed the window panes of his (Naveed's) home and damaged the doors," a villager said, speaking on condition of anonymity fearing reprisal.

"The war is between militants and the forces. We don't understand why they are dragging innocent family members in it?" another villager asked.

Defence spokesperson Rajesh Kalia refuted the allegation, saying no army man had ransacked or damaged the property of any one in the area.

"The allegations are baseless. Army doesn't indulge in any kind of vandalism," Kalia told media.

Earlier on August 29, government forces allegedly attempted to torch Naveed's family home during an overnight raid. The house, according to the residents, was saved by timely intervention of neighbours.

The flames, however, consumed one of its rooms, they say.

7. Harassment of Kashmiris Living in India

As per the data collected in past few years only indicates the upswing in the incidents of harassment and assaults on Kashmiris mostly students spread across India states. The perennial harassment of Kashmiris not only disturbs them mentally and jeopardizing their careers but also their families back home gets badly disturbed and worried about their relatives safety. This month's incidents only re-confirm the difficult situation the Kashmiris lives in while perusing their careers and businesses outside Kashmir. Even though time and again the assurances came from state

governments and Indian ministries but the situation shows no sign of improvement. There was also a worry that what has been reported was only part of it, and not the whole incidents that are taking place. Herein below are the reported cases in media in the month of October.

➤ **2 students detained in Chandigarh**

Oct 02: A Kashmiri student has been detained by the police in Punjab in connection with an incident regarding decamping of seven rifles and a pistol by a Special Police Official (SPO)

from a PDP legislator's residence in Kashmir recently.

Another student, Mir Imran, a third semester engineering student of Aryans group of colleges was also detained but released by the intelligence wing of the Punjab police on October 1 night.

His classmate Gazi Ahmed Malik of Heff Shopian continues to remain in the custody of cops at the CID office Kharar, Mohali near Chandigarh, reported a news agency.

Gazi is allegedly being quizzed on the inputs provided by SOG Kashmir to their Punjab counterparts over the fleeing of SPO Adil Bashir from the Jawahar Nagar residence of Aijaz Mir last week. As per reports Adil has joined militancy.

"We were returning to our flat from the market when cops in civvies intercepted us. They bundled us in a van and took us to CID office Kharar in Mohali near Chandigarh, where we were questioned," Imran, who was released a day after his detention, told media over phone.

Imran said that he and Gazi were told by the Punjab cops that they were picked up on the information shared by Kashmir police.

He said he was let off and handed over to the college authorities after a day of detention, while Gazi is still in police custody.

"Gazi is being questioned about the SPO, who happens to be his relative," Imran said, adding "I am deeply disturbed here. I will return home for sometime in a day or two."

SHO Banur, Surenderpal Singh told media that Imran was released and handed over to the college authorities after questioning last night.

"I heard that another student has been taken away by Kashmir police to Jammu and Kashmir," he said. Kashmiri student assaulted in Greater Noida university

The student, who didn't wish to be named, said that Ahtisham was injured when a scuffle broke out between the local and Afghani students on the university campus.

➤ **Kashmiri student assaulted in Greater Noida university**

Oct 04: A Kashmir student was injured after he was ruthlessly beaten on Thursday by a group of students at Sharda University at Greater Noida in Uttar Pradesh. Governor Satya Pal Malik asked Uttar Pradesh Chief

Minister Yogi Adityanath to ensure safety and security of Kashmiri students in educational institutions in his state.

Talking to media over phone from the university, a student said that Ahtisham who is pursuing bachelors in Medical Imaging Technology (BMIT) was later admitted at Sharda hospital.

The student, who didn't wish to be named, said that Ahtisham was injured when a scuffle broke out between the local and Afghani students on the university campus.

"A group of students ruthlessly beat up Ahtesham, leaving him badly injured," he said.

Following the attack, the Kashmiri students are feeling insecure in the varsity.

Another student told media that the local students were asking them to show their identities. "We have kept ourselves confined to the varsity premises. We are not feeling safe at Sharda University now," he said.

A University official confirmed the incident, saying they were ascertaining the details.

On October 5, Governor Satya Pal Malik asked Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to ensure safety and security of Kashmiri students in educational institutions in his state.

The Governor spoke to Adityanath a day after a Kashmiri student was beaten up at the Sharda University in Greater Noida.

"The governor Friday morning spoke to the Uttar Pradesh chief minister, urging him to ensure that Kashmiri students are provided a safe and secure environment in the educational institutions of the state," an official spokesman said.

The student was thrashed after a fight broke out between groups of Indian and Afghanistan students at the varsity Thursday, prompting police to book over 350 students for rioting and related offences.

The spokesman said the chief minister has informed the governor that strict disciplinary action would be taken in the incident.

"He (Adityanath) has told the governor that the Uttar Pradesh government has already ordered an inquiry into the incident and assured that all measures would be taken to ensure the safety of Kashmiri students so that they can continue their studies in a safe environment," he said.

➤ **3 Kashmiri students held in Punjab**

Oct 10: Punjab Police claimed to have arrested three Kashmiri students and seized an assault rifle and explosives in a raid at a college hostel in Jalandhar.

Punjab's Director General of Police Suresh Arora described the three students as a module of Kashmiri terror outfit Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind and said they had links with Jaish-e-Mohammed.

The students were picked from the hostel of CT Institute of Engineering Management and Technology, located at Shahpur on the outskirts of Jalandhar in a joint operation by Punjab Police and the Special Operations Group of Jammu and Kashmir Police.

The team seized two weapons, including an assault rifle, and explosives from the hostel room of second semester B.Tech (Civil) student Zahid Gulzar, Arora said in a statement.

He was arrested along with two Pulwama residents, Mohammed Idris Shah and Yusuf Rafiq Bhatt.

The DGP said the arrests followed leads about the activities of certain militant organisations and individuals operating in Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab.

A case has been registered at Sadar Jalandhar police station.

He said Punjab Police is working closely with Jammu and Kashmir Police to unravel the network built by these outfits in the two states. PTI

➤ **3 Kashmiri students suspended, booked under sedition for trying to offer funeral prayers in AMU**

Oct 12: Three Kashmiri students of the AMU were suspended after they allegedly tried to hold a prayer for Hizbul Mujahideen commander Manan Bashir Wani, who was killed in a gun-battle with government forces in north Kashmir, officials said Friday. Some Kashmiri students of the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) on October 11 had gathered near Kennedy Hall in the campus to hold funeral prayers for Wani, following which the varsity staff and student union rushed to the spot and tried to stop them, AMU spokesperson and Professor Shafey Kidwai said. The students were suspended, which was later revoked for want of evidence. Also sedition charges were filed against them by UP police.

There was a heated exchange between the AMU Students' Union leaders and the

Kashmiri students but they finally moved out of the area, Kidwai said, adding three Kashmiri students were suspended for trying to hold an "unlawful gathering".

He said the university has made it clear that there was zero tolerance for any act which would even remotely be described as anti-national.

The 27-year-old Wani, who quit PhD studies in Allied Geology and joined the militant ranks in January this year, was killed at Shatgund village in Handwara area of Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district during the encounter on Thursday.

On October 14, Kashmiri students studying at the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) have threatened to leave for their homes on October 17, if the sedition charges against three of them are not dropped.

In a letter to AMU vice-chancellor, AMU students union former vice-president Sajjad Rathar said, "If this vilification does not stop, more than 1,200 Kashmiri students will leave for their homes in the Kashmir Valley on October 17 as a last option."

Terming the slapping of sedition charges as "vendetta", Rathar said, "The option of holding Namaaz-e-Janaza (prayer meeting) in absentia was dropped after the AMU authorities did not give the permission."

"If no prayer meeting was held as confirmed by all official agencies, the slapping a case of sedition against three Kashmiri students is simply a vendetta, harassment and denial of justice," he said.

The letter was handed over to AMU Proctor Mohsin Khan in presence of large number of Kashmiri students at his office on Saturday night.

AMU spokesperson Shafay Kidwai, however, denied the Kashmiri students' charges of harassment and stressed that "no innocent would be framed".

Prof Kidwai also made it clear that "there is zero tolerance for any anti-national activity on AMU campus".

Three Kashmiri students of AMU were booked on sedition charges for allegedly for raising "anti-India" slogans and trying to hold a prayer meeting for Hizbul Mujahideen commander Manan Bashir Wani on October 12 (Friday).

Twenty seven-year-old Wani, pursuing a PhD course in Allied Geology at the AMU, had quit the university and joined militant ranks in January this year. He was killed in an encounter at Shatgund village in Handwara

area of north Kashmir's Kupwara district on Thursday.

Aligarh's Senior Superintendent of Police Ajai Sahni said police took the action (on October 12) after a video surfaced, showing the three Kashmiri students raising "anti-India" slogans.

"Police have filed an FIR against Wasim Malik, Abdul Mir and one unnamed person. They have been identified on the basis of a video recording," he said.

Prof Kidwai said show cause notices have been issued to nine students for trying to hold an unauthorised gathering on October 11.

"A three-member inquiry committee has been set up to probe the incident. It will submit a report in the next 72 hours," he said.

The three students were suspended from the AMU earlier.

On October 12, they were booked for sedition by the Uttar Pradesh Police. The police slapped charges under IPC Section 124A (Sedition) and other relevant provisions of the law against these two named and other unnamed accused. The case was registered after a video surfaced showing the accused raising Azadi slogans.

On October 15, Kashmiri students studying at the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) organised a protest march on the campus against slapping of sedition charges on their three peers and harassment by local authorities.

The students marched from the Sir Syed Gate to the office of Vice Chancellor Prof. Tariq Mansoor.

Five of the protesting students met the university registrar Abdul Hamid and handed over a memorandum alleging that they were living in a state of constant fear.

On October 16, Aligarh Muslim University revoked the suspension of two students from Jammu and Kashmir, saying "no credible evidence" of their participation in any "unlawful assembly" in the varsity campus was found.

AMU spokesman Sahafay Kidwai said the suspension of AMU research scholars Wasim Ayub Malik and Abdul Hasib Meer was revoked after "they were exonerated by a three-member enquiry committee of the university".

"No credible evidence was found against the two students," Mr Kidwai said.

Speaking to ANI, Professor Mansoor said: "The imposition of sedition charges comes under district administration. We have

requested the authorities to conduct a thorough investigation into the matter and spare those who are innocent." On October 16, Governor Satya Pal Malik asked Minister for Human Resource Development Prakash Javadekar to ensure that studies of Kashmiri students at the AMU are not disrupted.

The governor spoke to the HRD minister and Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) Vice-Chancellor Tariq Mansoor in this regard, an official spokesman said.

Malik urged them to ensure that the issue is resolved at the earliest and there is no disruption of studies of the Kashmiri students and they are allowed to continue their studies in a safe and secure academic environment, the spokesman added.

Kashmiri students studying in Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) have threatened to leave for their homes on October 17, if the sedition charges against three of them are not dropped.

In a letter to AMU vice-chancellor, AMU students union former vice-president Sajjad Rathar said, "If this vilification does not stop, more than 1,200 Kashmiri students will leave for their homes in the Kashmir Valley on October 17 as a last option."

Terming the slapping of sedition charges as "vendetta", Rathar said, "The option of holding Namaaz-e-Janaza (prayer meeting) in absentia was dropped after the AMU authorities did not give the permission."

"If no prayer meeting was held as confirmed by all official agencies, the slapping a case of sedition against three Kashmiri students is simply a vendetta, harassment and denial of justice," he said.

➤ **Fearful of police profiling in Punjab, Kashmiri students returning home**

ADGP Punjab says it is an 'outreach programme'

Oct 19: Kashmiri students studying at various colleges in Punjab have started returning home to the valley fearing harassment and arrest, alleging police were profiling them.

The students and their parents said Punjab police have issued "forms" through college administrations to be filled in by the Kashmiri students.

The forms entitled "Other students database" asks for details like full name, date of birth, gender, father's name, address, contact, Aadhaar detail, date of admission and a photograph to be pasted on the supplied data sheet.

Kashmiri students were also being asked to intimate the police before going on leave and also on returning.

Consequently, the Kashmiri students from some colleges in Punjab have started informing respective local area Station House Officer (SHO) before heading out on leave.

Some of the students spoke to media over phone saying they "have apprehensions of arrest" and therefore decided to return home.

"There is nobody to take care of us here," a student said, declining to be named.

Additional director general of police (Law and Order), Punjab, H S Dhillion said the effort of collecting the details from the students was an "outreach programme".

"This all is part of outreach programme," Dhillion told media.

"The students from Kashmir must not worry."

Recently, a national newspaper reported that at least 40 students of the CT Institute of Engineering Management and Technology alone have proceeded on leave. Other institutions where Kashmiri students are enrolled also reported similar flight out.

"At least 40 students have proceeded on leave. Students submitted applications, but before we could grant them leave they left. Intimations of all these students are being given to the police," the report quoted Manbir Singh, MD, CT Group of Institutions as saying.

The report also quoted Police Commissioner Gurpreet Singh Bhullar as saying, "We are treading carefully and only students with confirmed terror links are being arrested. So a panic of this kind with PG accommodation owner is uncalled for. Kashmiri students are welcome in the state and there are no orders of any kind on their separate verification."

➤ **Kashmiri engineering student assaulted in Chandigarh**

Oct 27: A Kashmiri engineering student was assaulted with iron rods and knives by a group of persons, among them his neighbours and fellow students, at his rented residence in Chandigarh on October 26, Friday, night. Mubashir Matoo, a final-year student in computer engineering at Chandigarh Group of

Colleges, has sustained injuries in his back, left arm, and leg.

Anoop Kumar, the administrator of the college, told media over phone that the incident happened outside the premises of the college where students are themselves responsible for their acts. He said the college cannot do anything for two days due to weekend holidays.

"On Monday (October 29) we will see to this, the process for which has already been started. We are ascertaining as to what has happened," he said.

Zahoor Ahmad, the Kashmir-based guardian of Mubashir Matoo, said that the assailants thrashed Mubashir with iron rods and knives leaving him in a state of unconsciousness.

Ahmad said that nobody took Mubashir to hospital after the assault.

"I will bring him back to Kashmir. He is not safe there. He was beaten even though he had done nothing wrong," Zahoor said.

The incident happened at the rented flat of Mubashir when a group of seven assailants, four of whom were masked, knocked at his room. Mubashir said three of them, one of whom is living in the same building, beat him to pulp. He also said that two of the assailants study at the same college as he does, and one of them was his junior.

"On October 25, Thursday, the three persons who assaulted me gave me threatening looks. I did not pay any heed. In the evening, I was beaten," Mubashir told Kashmir Reader over phone from Chandigarh.

Mubashir said he recalled an incident when he had intervened to prevent some fellow Kashmiris from being beaten. He said the assailants had threatened him that day and on Friday night they attacked him.

Zahoor Ahmad said that police in Chandigarh have taken cognizance of the incident and begun a search to nab the assailants.

After the assault, Mubashir said, the assailants on phone told him that it was a misunderstanding, and they are willing to pay for his treatment.

"I refused politely," Mubashir said. "I told them that the misunderstanding could have been solved by a conversation, not by an assault."

Police resignation continues

Eight policemen resign after attack on SPO in Budgam

Oct 28: At least eight Special Police Officers (SPOs) announced their resignation from their

jobs after suspected militants shot and injured an SPO inside his home in Charwani area of

Charar-e-Sharief in central Kashmir's Budgam district on October 27.

Five of the eight SPOs released videos on social media announcing their resignation.

"I am Mohamad Altaf Bhat, son of Abdul Majeed Bhat, a resident of Futlipora Charar-e-Sharief. I am working as an SPO in police department but from 28 October I have no connection with the police," one of them said in a video circulated on social media. So did Mohammad Iqbal Hurrah, son of Abdul Hameed Hurrah, resident of Tilsara Charar-e-Sharief. In a short video, he announced his resignation and said that he has no affiliation with the police department from now on.

Three SPOs - Myser Ahmad Laway, Firdous Ahmad Bhat, and Aijaz Ahmad Bhat - submitted their resignation but did not announce it on video, a police officer in the district told Kashmir Reader.

Bilal Ahmad Hajam, son of Abdul Raheem Hajam, and Imtiyaz Ahmad Yatoo, son of Abdul Rasheed Yatoo, both residents of Hayatpora Chadoora, were working with the police department for the past one year. They released a video together and said that they resigned from the police department two

months ago, but were announcing it on video today.

"I have resigned two months ago and have nothing to do with the police department. Today I am announcing resignation via video today," both of them can be heard saying.

Hilal Ahmad Dar from Zinpanchal village in Charar-e-Sharief also quit his job as SPO. "Now I am resigning from my job and have nothing to do with this department anymore," he said in a video that was widely circulated on social media.

No police official could be contacted for comments on this matter by the time this report was filed.

On October 27, night, suspected militants had shot at an SPO inside his home. The cop was identified as Mohammad Hafiz, resident of Charwani in Charar-e-Sharief. He is currently posted at the SDPO office in Charar-e-Sharief.

Police officials said that the SPO suffered bullet injuries in his leg and was hospitalised soon after.

42 suffer pellet, shell injuries during CASOs in Kulgam, Shopian.

8. Use of PSA to Curb Dissent Continues

Public Safety Act has been continuously used as a "tool" to curb the dissent. This month more cases of detention made under PSA were being reported from different parts of valley. The legislation has come under severe criticism from human rights organizations for its draconian nature, however, unmoved by the concern the authorities continue to book people under this legislation without any hesitation. The grounds of the detentions made in the PSA dossiers were almost always laughable and defeats the logic.

➤ **In 9 months, 18 booked under PSA in Awantipora**

Oct 03: As many as eighteen people have been imprisoned under the Public Safety Act in Awantipora alone during the last nine months of the year, according to information revealed by the police.

The police believe many among the eighteen are militants and over-ground workers of different militant outfits. Some of them are lodged in prisons in Jammu and some in Kashmir. The families though deny the police accusations that their kin are involved in

unlawful activities. The charges, they said, leveled against these detainees are "concocted and totally baseless". These families are now planning to knock on the doors of court with the hope that court may quash their PSA.

"The administration has unnecessarily slapped PSA on my son who is a shopkeeper. Besides being a shopkeeper, he was preparing for various ongoing job examinations like for PSC and JKSSB. He is innocent and he is being jailed because of mere suspicion otherwise he is guiltless. Let administration prove any wrongdoing of my son," said Ghulam Mohudin Dhobi of Tral whose son Hilal Ahmad Dhobi was recently slapped with the act.

All these persons have been booked from various areas of police district Awantipora including Tral, Awantipora, Pampore and Khrew. "These persons during this year were first detained during naka checking and nocturnal raids at various areas," said a police officer.

An official said that the persons whom they have booked are militants and OGWs who were involved in dozens of grenade

attacks on security establishments across the police district. "Many among them had indulged in stone-pelting at police and paramilitary troopers besides creating law and order problems as well as instigating others to join the protests across southern Kashmir," an official said.

On October 1, the state government sent away two more young men from Tral to a jail in Jammu under PSA. Hilal Ahmad Dhobi, a shopkeeper, was picked up from home at night a few days back, while a former Hizbul Mujahideen militant Arizoo Bashir Najar has been in custody for almost a year now.

A police source informed that Hilal was arrested during a nocturnal raid at his house on Sunday while as Arizoo was under police custody since last year. In October 2017 Arizoo was arrested in Tral in a joint operation by police and the security forces.

According to a source, the government is tight and focused towards the upcoming Municipal and Panchayat elections in Jammu and Kashmir. "The government in wake of these elections is taking no risk to nab the suspected OGWs and stone pelters for maintaining peace," source said.

➤ **Qazi Yasir booked under PSA; TeH activist Ashiq Narchoor also booked**

Oct 15: The chairman of politico-religious group Ummat-e-Islami (UeI), Qazi Ahmad Yasir, has been booked under the Public Safety Act (PSA) and sent to a Jammu jail.

The Tehreek-e-Hurriyat (TeH) Tehsil President in Anantnag, Ashiq Narchoor, has also been booked under the controversial act and sent to the Hiranagar jail in Jammu.

Yasir was arrested last week following his visit to Redwini area of Kulgam district where people have been protesting against the establishment of a new camp.

While he was in detention his obscene pictures and a video went viral on the social media evoking widespread public outrage and demands for his removal from the post of a "self-styled Mirwaiz"

Feeling the pressure the Qazi family posted a video of Abdullah Shah on a news portal run by Yasir's brother. Shah posed as the patron of Idara-e-Tehqiqaat (IeT), a religious seminary run under the banner of UeI, and announced that Yasir has been removed from "all posts"

A couple of days after the announcement was made, the authorities announced that Yasir has been booked under the PSA and shifted to Jammu.

The police have maintained that Yasir has been booked for "anti-state" activities and has been shifted to Jammu.

A senior police official confirmed this while talking to media.

"Yes, he and Asiq Narchoor have both been booked," the official said.

Interestingly, this is only the second time Yasir has been booked under the controversial act, the first being in 2010 when he was behind the bars for four months.

Narchoor, on the other hand, has served jail from 2005 to 2010 for alleged militant links. In the following years he has been regularly held and kept under detention for days at a stretch.

A few years back Narchoor joined the TeH, following which his detentions have been more frequent. He works as a teacher at a private school.

9. Internet Shutdowns

India has been figured in the list of highest internet shut down in 2017-2018, according to UNESCO report. The report further says the justification given by the states for shutting down the internet was to maintain law and order. In India, Kashmir Valley experienced nearly half of the cases of Internet shutdown in the country. Clamping down on communication generally followed military operations in which militant or civilians were killed, the report said.

This month as well the internet services continues to be doggy in valley. The

internet shut down has developed a deep relation with the situation in Kashmir. Whenever there was encounter or civilian killing anywhere, the first thing the state administration do was to cut down the internet service area in the particular specific area. Every year there is growing increase in the internet shut down. The continues internet shut downs hit the business badly, often the business community of the valley demand an end to this practice. According to a report internet shutdown costs Kashmir subscribers Rs. 2.5 crore a day. Now it has almost become

difficult to keep the track of the number of internet shutdowns in valley. This month for the first time since July 2016, government authorities snapped mobile voice call services on October 21, in the wake of the civilian and militant killings in Kulgam.

➤ **Internet shutdown a day costs Kashmir subscribers Rs 2.5 crore**

Oct 18: Internet subscribers in Kashmir lose an estimated Rs 2.5 crore every day the authorities snap the connectivity.

Jammu and Kashmir has around 12 million subscribers, of which seven million are in Kashmir division that includes Kargil and Leh districts, according to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) figures.

And the subscriber base is continuously expanding in the state where 1.5 lakh to 2 lakh are added each year, according to the TRAI.

Mobile internet service is often blocked in Kashmir Valley which is estimated to have around 6.5 lakh subscribers across its 10 districts.

On a safe estimate, an average subscriber uses 1 GB of data a day (this assumption is based on the fact that some use 2 GB per day packs while others don't avail internet data services). The cost of an average data plan is Rs 399 for 90 days, which means one GB data costs Rs 4.33 a day.

So, on a day when authorities shut internet the subscribers in Kashmir pay around Rs 2.5 crore for data they cannot use.

The losses are huge as the government directs internet shutdowns during frequent disturbances in Kashmir.

The latest such instance was October 16 when data services were snapped as four persons were killed in old Srinagar's Fateh Kadal area.

In Kashmir, internet services were snapped more than 15 times this year so far.

According to Software Freedom Law Centre (SFLC), a Delhi-based non-profit organisation, J&K has witnessed highest number of internet shutdowns among all the states since 2012.

The frequent disruption of data services has annoyed the subscribers who have now begun demanding cellular companies should refund or extend the plan date by number of days the internet services are barred.

"Why should a subscriber suffer loss because cellular companies are following

instructions of the government?" said Ajaz Lolpuri, a Srinagar resident.

He said when subscribers purchase a plan, companies clearly mention its expiry date and disconnect the data service on failure to pay up on time.

"But at the same time they are following instructions of the state government but why don't they refund or extend the service period? We cannot suffer because these companies are following instructions of the state government," Lolpuri said.

Cellular companies say they too face losses due to frequent government "diktats" on snapping the internet services.

"We have to follow instructions of the police and state government on this issue, otherwise they will terminate our contract," said a senior executive of one company, wishing anonymity.

But it's not only the cellular companies and subscribers who suffer losses due to the frequent internet blockade in Kashmir.

A recent study by a Delhi-based think-tank – International Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) – said frequent suspension of Internet services in the Valley during last several years has delivered a body-blow to Kashmir's economy, causing losses worth almost Rs4000 crore between 2012 to 2017.

Tourism, IT services, press and news media, banking, education, healthcare, manufacturing and heavy industries have also been hit by internet shutdowns.

➤ **Voice calling services snapped on mobile phones**

Oct 21: For the first time since the aftermath of Burhan Wani's killing in July 2016, government authorities snapped mobile voice call services on October 21, in the wake of the civilian and militant killings in Kulgam.

Many south Kashmir districts were facing ban on high-speed internet since a month ago when three policemen were killed in Shopian and later videos were widely circulated on social media in which policemen were announcing their resignation.

The suspension of voice call services not only barred information about the encounter at Kulgam's Larnoo village in which three militants were killed but also left people to speculate about the blast that killed several civilians at the encounter site.

Voice call services were barred in Kashmir in 2016 after Burhan Wani's killing.

Internet also remained suspended for more

than two months following the killing.

Repeated 'surveys' by army in Bijbehara irk residents

Oct 02: Residents of Bijbehara town here are irked with repeated "surveys" conducted by army personnel, who are neither accompanied by police nor by civil officials.

The civil administration has expressed ignorance over the issue, saying it was security related and they were not taken onboard.

Police are calling it an "area domination" exercise by the army.

According to locals, army personnel have been visiting after regular intervals to different localities of the town and have been collecting data from every family residing in the area.

"They take names of every member of the household, phone numbers, information about professions and vehicles owned by the family," a resident told media.

The locals allege that the army personnel have been visiting after every month to collect the data afresh, "or revise the data that is already with them,"

"Only yesterday I asked an army man why they are visiting regularly and he replied that they come to see if any one new was born in the area," another local told Kashmir Reader, "I was perplexed and disgusted with the reply,"

The army men have also numbered the houses in the town with black paint, for reasons better known to them.

"They have also been carrying GPS machines and are recording the coordinates of

the household they visit and collect other data from," the locals told media.

The local residents complained that the army men come during the day while the men of the household are out working, putting the women folk to utter discomfort as they have to face the visiting army men.

"What adds to the discomfort is the fact that they are not being accompanied by any policemen or any one from the civil administration," the locals alleged.

This allegation of the locals was ascertained by the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Bijbehara as well as the local Station House Officer (SHO).

The SDM, Abdul Rashid Das, told media that he was not aware of any such survey.

"We have not been intimidated about any such thing. This must be a security related issue," Das said.

The SHO, Anzar Khan, on the other hand acknowledged that the army was carrying out these surveys for the purpose of area domination.

"No, policemen are not being taken along by the army," Khan told media.

An army officer contacted by media said the exercise was meant for "regular updation of records" in the area.

"We conduct interactions and for that we need local data about the prominent citizens in the area. The data is maintained and updated regularly," the officer said.

Govt acquires 50 kanals land in Baramulla for Kashmiri Pandits

Oct 05: The government has acquired 50 kanals of land in Baramulla district for construction of transit accommodation and rehabilitation of displaced Kashmiri Pandits desirous of returning to the Valley under the Prime Minister's development package.

The land situated at Kanispora-Jahama road in north Kashmir's Baramulla district has been purchased from a Canada-based Kashmiri Sikh family for around Rs 16 crore after due process following placing of an "indent" by relief and rehabilitation commissioner in June.

"In exercise of the powers vested in me under the provision of sub section (1) of section-4 of J&K land acquisition act samvat 1990, I, collector land acquisition, Baramulla do hereby notify the land for public purpose

namely accommodation for government employees appointed under prime minister's package in Baramulla district," reads the notification issued by the district authority under section 4 (1) of Land Acquisition Act.

Earlier government had identified seven sites across Kashmir for construction of transit accommodation for displaced Kashmiri Hindus desirous of returning to the valley.

The proposed sites are located in north, south and central Kashmir which include Shivpora in Srinagar, Gund in Shopian, Mattan in Anantnag and Hall in Pulwama.

The previous government had informed the legislative assembly that 723.02 kanals of land were identified in the Valley for constructing transit accommodations for Kashmiri migrants who were recruited or

would be recruited under Prime Minister's Development Package (PMDP) announced for Jammu and Kashmir in 2015.

Former state revenue minister, Syed Basharat Bukhari had informed in the house in 2016 that the government of India has proposed construction of 6000 additional transit accommodation units in the Valley for

16-yr-olds to be tried as adults, J&K govt proposes

Oct 23: The Jammu and Kashmir government has issued a draft Juvenile Justice Bill that provides for trying persons aged between 16 and 18 years as adults in matters of heinous crimes.

Child rights activists and legal experts have criticised the move, arguing that juveniles in Jammu and Kashmir deserve special sympathy and consideration due to being "children of conflict".

As per the new draft law, the age of criminal liability will be reduced to 16 years in case of heinous offences. "In case of a heinous offence alleged to have been committed by a child, who has completed or is above the age of sixteen years, the Board shall conduct a preliminary assessment with regard to his mental and physical capacity to commit such offence, ability to understand the consequences of the offence and the circumstances in which he allegedly committed the offence, and may pass an order in accordance with the provisions of subsection (3) of section 18," reads the draft, a copy of which is with Kashmir Reader.

Earlier, the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children's) Act was introduced in 2013 with no provision of lowering of age. However, its implementation is still in the infancy stage even after five years.

Experts have opposed the new proposal saying that the age bar should be kept as per the 2013 Act. They have expressed apprehensions about misuse of the law and violation of rights of children. They say that minors may be charged, as many have been in the past, with "attempt to murder" and "rioting" after being caught during stone-pelting clashes with government forces.

"The new draft of J&K Juvenile Justice Bill is similar to the central act which was enacted in 2015. However, in this case the law can be misused because in Kashmir, children are children of conflict. Law-enforcing agencies usually fake the age of minors and

the migrants, apart from 3000 additional jobs for them.

District officials in Baramulla said the agreement with the Canada-based landlord was undertaken under Private Negotiation Committee (PNC).

"The agreement with the landlord has been completed and further course of action will be started soon," a top official said.

detain them illegally. In such a situation, the provision can be misused," said Dr Sheikh Showkat, a legal expert and Head of Department of Law at Central University of Kashmir.

He said the existing act is also being misused as children are not being tried in special courts.

Child rights activist Qurat Masoodi termed the amendments as "politically motivated". She said, "It will not give chance to children to reform. It will snatch their innocence. We will fight this strongly in the best interests of children."

Another activist, Kalpana Tikku, said it would be disastrous to even contemplate bringing down the age of criminal liability to 16 years.

"In J&K, children get affected by the prevailing violence at early age. Most of the children, whether they realise it or not, are suffering from mental health problems and PTSD issues like anxiety," she said.

According to Tikku, a large number of children fall in the category of "conflict with law".

"Instead of reducing the age for a juvenile, it would be better if more attention is paid to bringing reforms in the prevailing act and concentrating on care programmes and reformation programmes. Otherwise, this amendment would only increase the numbers of offenders and also not give them a chance to be rehabilitated. It is certainly not in the interest of the welfare of children and should not be even mulled upon," she said.

The draft law was framed during the PDP-BJP government but could not be brought into the public domain due to opposition from various officials in the law department. Governor NN Vohra also rejected it after it was sent to him. But now the new governor's administration has formally issued the draft Bill.

Govt. rejects 45% rights violation cases of SHRC

Oct 14: The government has rejected 45 percent recommendations of State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) till September-end 2018.

The recommendations pertain to different cases of human rights violations filed by victims or their representatives before the commission.

REJECTED RECOMMENDATIONS

Of the total 142 cases listed before the commission, the government rejected recommendations of 64 cases.

In these recommendations, there are 51 previous cases of which the government rejected 17 recommendations.

The recommendations are rejected by the government's Empowerment Committee or the concerned officer at a district level.

ACCEPTED RECOMMENDATIONS

Till September-end 2018, the State government accepted only 33.09 percent of recommendations including 34 previous cases which were listed before the commission with regard to the compensation and ex-gratia relief to those human rights victims whose cases and petitions are filed in SHRC.

PENDING RECOMMENDATIONS

However, of the 142 cases, Action Taken Report of 21.83 percent of such cases are pending before the government and recommendations in 31 cases are under process.

According to the official documents available with Rising Kashmir, an agenda for the meeting of the empowered committee was constituted last year in which 24 compensation cases were taken and the majority of the cases were forwarded to Police and civil administration.

However, both the respondents are yet to file their inputs regarding those cases.

The documents read that the State government held a meeting regarding 54 cases which was taken by the District Level Screening-cum-Consultative Committees (DLSCC) of Kupwara under the chairmanship of district magistrate on 20 January 2004 which was attended by Superintendent of Police, Handwara, representatives of 7 and 8 Sector of Rashtriya Rifles of the Army, and the representative of paramilitary BSF.

"In the meeting, a total number of 51 cases came up for the discussion of which 34 cases including the cases of complainant were cleared for grant of ex-gratia relief of one Rs 1 lakh each and two among them were given ex-

gratia relief of Rs 75,000," reads a government reply.

CASE STUDIES

The Home department in 30th meeting of agenda said Police in a case Mohammad Shafi Wani, son of Noor Mohammad Wani of Zampathri Shopian said during the fresh verifications it was established that Ghulam Qadir Wani son of Noor Muhammad Wani of Jampathri was affiliated with Al-Jehad militant outfit.

"He was arrested by Army 2 Para Camp Balpora in the year 1995 and case under FIR No 65/95 under section 7/25 of the Arms Act was registered against him in Police Station Rajpora, of district Pulwama," Police said. "After his release, he was putting up with his brother-in-law Ali Muhammad Wani, son of Ghulam Muhammad Wani of Jampathri due to some personal dispute with his brother Muhammad Shafi Wani, son of Noor Muhammad of Jampathri."

The Police report also read that on 2nd August 2002, Ali Muhammad Wani, the brother-in-law of Muhammad Shafi Wani lodged a written report in Police Station Keller that on 29th August 2002 during early hours, Ghulam Qadir Wani went to the river for washing his face in a routine manner and did not return.

The government said Police informed that despite a thorough search made by the relatives, he could not be traced.

A missing report was entered in the daily diary of Police Station Keller vide DD No 8 dated 2nd August 2002 and a search of the missing person was carried out.

During the search and as per the records of the Police Station, it was expected that the missing person has ex-filtrated to Pakistan administered Kashmir in the year 2002.

After looking into this the government committee observed that in view of the affiliation of the brother of the complainant with the militant outfits, the recommendations of the SHRC cannot be accepted.

Similarly, the government while listening to the recommendations of SHRC in connection with the case 'Death of one under-trial prisoner Muhammad Ismail Shah son of Abdul Rehim Shah of Churat Kulgam said the Director General (DG) of Prison said, "In pursuit to Para 57.4 of J&K Jail Manual the powers for holding inquest into the death case

of a prisoner rests with the District Magistrate concerned."

"However, a prompt is required to be given by Superintendent Jail and conveyed to the nearest concerned magistrate immediately after such deaths occur in the jail. The Superintendent, Central Jail Srinagar, has timely informed District Magistrate, Srinagar about the death of the prisoner," the DG said.

The prison department said even (Superintendent, Central Jail Srinagar) made a request to district magistrate Srinagar on 6 April 2013 to conduct a magisterial inquiry in the matter vide Letter NO Estt/131-32 dated 6 April 2013 but till date, nothing has been heard from District Magistrate, Srinagar.

"Further, circular instructions have been issued by Prisons department to all the Superintendent Jails to ensure safety and security of prisoners. Pending outcome of the

magisterial inquiry, the Superintendent Central Jail, Srinagar was asked to identify and locate the defaulting official responsible for the said episode," reads a DG Prisons reply.

The DG said that it was found that the incident under reference as per circumstances was an isolated one which happened in the spur of moment apparently and does not seem to be the result of any laxity or inadequate measures.

The (government) committee accepted the recommendations of the SHRC and decided to forward the case to the State Legal Services Authority to consider the payment of Rs 2 lakh to the NoKs of the deceased us per SRO 229 read with SRO 394 of J&K Victims Compensation Scheme, 2013 after fulfilling all codal formalities.

10. Official Statements

➤ **52 killed in 1,435 ceasefire violations in JK this year**

Oct 1: The first seven months of this year saw 52 deaths and 232 people getting injured by 1,435 ceasefire violations in Jammu and Kashmir, according to an RTI reply by the Home ministry.

According to the data provided by the MHA in reply to an RTI application filed by activist Raman Sharma, till the end of July this year, 28 civilians, 12 armymen and 12 BSF personnel were killed.

During the same period, 140 civilians, 45 armymen and 47 BSF personnel were injured in 945 ceasefire violations along the LoC and 490 along the International Border, according to the data provided by MHA's Jammu and Kashmir Affairs Director, Sulekha.

Last year, in 971 ceasefire violations, including 860 along the LoC and 111 along the IB, 12 civilians, 15 armymen and 4 BSF personnel were killed, and 151 injured including 79 civilians, 58 army men and 14 BSF personnel, it stated.

During 2016, Jammu and Kashmir witnessed 439 ceasefire violations, in which 26 people including 13 civilians, 8 armymen and 5 BSF men were killed and 182, including 83 civilians, were injured.

In Jammu and Kashmir, the International Border between India and Pakistan is guarded by the BSF while the Army guards the Line of Control.

➤ **Cross-border firing quadruples along IB in Jammu, BSF suffers maximum casualties: Official data**

Oct 03: Incidents of unprovoked firing from the Pakistani side along the international border (IB) in Jammu have quadrupled this year as against 2017 and the figure was the highest in the past five years, according to official data.

The latest data accessed by PTI also shows that the Border Security Force (BSF) suffered the maximum casualties this year – 12 deaths and 40 injured.

The data shows that till September this year, a total of 498 incidents of cross-border firing have taken place along the IB in Jammu as compared to 111 last year.

The corresponding figures for the previous three years were 204 (in 2016), 350 (in 2015) and 127 (in 2014).

Twelve BSF personnel have been killed in these incidents this year, including the brutal killing of Head Constable Narender Singh last month.

A "record-high" number of 40 jawans have been injured in these incidents this year and these figures are the highest in the past five years, the data said.

A BSF soldier was also killed along the small portion of the Line of Control (LoC) that falls in Jammu this year, the data said. While the BSF is deployed under the operational

command of the Army along the LoC, it secures the IB independently.

Last year, two personnel of the border guarding force were killed and seven injured due to sniping and mortar shelling incidents along the IB while three BSF personnel were killed and 10 injured in such incidents in 2016.

Similarly, a BSF soldier was killed and five were injured in 2015 while two men were killed and 14 were injured in 2014 at this frontier in Jammu and Kashmir.

A senior official of the force said in view of the recent killing of the BSF soldier along this frontier by Pakistani border action team (BAT), the force has asked the forward units along the IB to be on "extra alert and vigilant".

➤ **India has mishandled Kashmir: Governor**

Oct 05: Jammu and Kashmir governor Satya Pal Malik in an interview to Indian Express has said that India has made mistakes while handling Kashmir and in the process, alienated itself.

Malik said: "Yeh koi, ek tarah se, occupation nahin hai. Isko ab aap occupation term do, woh ek alag baat hai. Lekin nahin, woh baat baithti nahin hai. Ye kaho ki humse mishandling hui hai. India se galti hui, India ne apni galtiyan se apne aap ko alien banaya. Occupation force ke taur pe India ko pesh kiya ja sakta hai, jo cheezein hui hain. Lekin Kashmir is not an occupied territory, apni marzi se hamare saath aaye hue hain," he said. ("This is not an occupation. It is another matter if someone chooses to use the occupation term. But no, that is not correct. You can say we have mishandled. India has made mistakes, and its mistakes have, in the process, alienated itself. Because of what has happened, India is being presented as an occupation force. But Kashmir is not an occupied territory, it came to us of its own free will.")

Allaying fears over the moves to tinker with state subject laws of the state, Malik said: "There is nothing to worry about. It is possible that we have not kept the promises made at that time but I guarantee that on 370 and 35A, and I have faith in the Indian judiciary, there is nothing to worry about."

Malik said that the arguments on Article 35-A should be deferred until there is an elected government in the state. "I am not an elected representative but my stand is that arguments on 35A should be deferred until

there is an elected government in power. But even in Himachal (Pradesh) and the (states of) North East, you cannot buy land. *Ye kaun sa bada gunaa hai* (How is this a major wrong)? These are issues raised due to political reasons."

Malik, who took over the governor of the state two months after the collapse of PDP-BJP government said that he was in favour of wiping militancy, and not militants.

"*Mai unko maarne ke paksh mein nahin hoon. Militants ko nahin maarna hai, humko militancy ko maarna hai. Logon ki nigah mein militancy ko useless banana hai, ki iski koi zaroorat nahin hai* (I am not in favour of killing them. We have to kill militancy, not militants. It has to be made useless in the eyes of the people.) You kill one militant, and five more will join. But I'm not for that."

He also said that Azadi or merger with Pakistan was not possible. "I want to tell them (militants) respectfully that the dreams they have been shown in the last 15-20 years are unrealistic. From Sheikh (Abdullah) Sahab's time until now – Azaadi or Pakistan – I want to say to them that they are not even one-fourth of the LTTE. The LTTE had such a committed cadre that 12-year-old girls would fight barefoot in the jungles. They got money and weapons from 14 nations. When they could not take over a country, it is not possible here," Malik said.

➤ **300 militants active in Kashmir, 250 ready to infiltrate: GoC Lt Gen Bhatt**

'South Kashmir should take lessons from north that hasn't sheltered any militant outfit'

Oct 06: At least 300 militants are "active" in Kashmir while another 250 are ready to infiltrate into this side of the Line of Control from "different launch pads" in Pakistan, a top army commander said here on Saturday.

Addressing the closing ceremony of 15-day 'public mela' in Keran area along the LoC in northern Kupwara district, the general officer commanding (GoC) of the army's 15 corps, lieutenant general AK Bhatt said: "Around 300 militants are active in the valley and more than 250 militants are ready to infiltrate into this side, but our soldiers are ready to foil their attempts."

"We have dominated all areas along the LoC," he said, adding that in coming months, infiltration attempts may increase due to the onset of winter "but our forces are vigilant to foil all such attempts."

The GoC said that southern Kashmir "should take lessons from north Kashmir that hasn't sheltered any militant outfit." The 'mela' was organised to "strengthen the bond between the army and locals", the GOC said.

Asked about upcoming civic elections in Kashmir beginning Monday, Bhatt said: "With the help of police and CRPF, our soldiers are working round-the-clock to ensure that elections take place in a secure environment."

➤ **Troops prepared to get ULB polls conducted: Rajnath**

Oct 07: Home Minister Rajnath Singh Sunday said incidents of violence in Jammu Kashmir had gone down and asserted that troops were fully prepared to get the Urban Local Bodies (ULB) polls conducted in the State.

Elections to ULBs in Jammu Kashmir would start from Monday and be held in four phases.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of an event of the paramilitary CRPF here, Singh said the paramilitary forces had given a "befitting reply" to militants in Kashmir valley.

Incidents of violence have come down in the recent past, he said.

About the overall security situation in the State, the minister said the forces were vigilant.

Singh also said Pakistan was not mending its ways, indicating that it was fuelling infiltration and militancy activities in Kashmir.

The polls would see a direct contest between the BJP and the Congress, with major regional political parties – the National Conference (NC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) – boycotting polls over the legal challenge to Article 35A of the Constitution in the Supreme Court.

➤ **Mannan Wani was victim of relentless violence in Kashmir: Mehbooba**

Oct 15: Former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Mehbooba Mufti Monday described Hizb ul Mujahideen militant Manan Bashir Wani, who was killed in a gunfight with forces, as a "victim of relentless violence in Kashmir".

The PDP president said this while demanding withdrawal of cases against three Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) students from the Valley who were booked after they

allegedly tried to hold a prayer meeting for Wani on Friday.

"It will be a travesty to punish them (students) for remembering their former colleague (Wani) who was a victim of relentless violence in Kashmir," Mehbooba said in a tweet.

Twenty-seven-year-old Wani, who was pursuing a Ph.D course in allied geology at the AMU, had quit the university and joined militant ranks in January.

"Pushing youth to the wall will be counter productive. Centre must intervene in withdrawing cases against students & AMU authorities must revoke their suspension, she said in another post on Twitter.

The former chief minister said state governments outside Jammu and Kashmir should be sensitive to the situation and prevent further alienation.

➤ **SAC approves: Hike in SPOs' honorarium**

Oct 17: The State Administrative Council (SAC), which met under the chairmanship of Governor, Satya Pal Malik approved increase in the honorarium of Special Police Officers (SPOs) of Jammu and Kashmir Police with effect from 26 September 2018.

The SPOs have been engaged in the police department from mid-nineties to assist the state police in law order and various counter-militancy operations. Presently, the SPOs with less than one year of engagement are paid a monthly honorarium of Rs 5000 per month, upon completion of one year Rs 5500 per month and upon completion of three years Rs 6000 per month.

By virtue of the SAC decision, the monthly honorarium of SPOs with less than 5 years of engagement has been enhanced to Rs 6000 per month, upon completion of 5 years to Rs 9,000 per month and upon completion of 15 years to Rs 12000 per month. The decision having financial implication of Rs 106 crore annually will benefit over 30,000 SPOs working in the police department and improve their living conditions.

Over the years, SPOs have been assigned with various responsibilities including deployment for law and order, guarding vital installations, assistance in organising important events and counter-militancy operations in the State.

The payment on account of honorarium is reimbursable under Security Related Expenditure Scheme (SRE) of the

Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

➤ **Militants should not expect bouquets if they fire bullets: Governor**

Oct 17: Governor Satya Pal Malik said militants don't have "much of a shelf life" with more than 40 being killed since August and should not expect bouquets if they fire bullets.

Stone pelting has come down as has the number of local recruits in militancy, Malik said while describing the situation in the state as "not grave".

"It is simple. *Goli chalaogay to goli chalegi, koi guldasta toh milega nahi* (If you resort to firing, you will get a bullet in return. You are not going to get a bouquet in return)," Malik told PTI in an exclusive interview here Tuesday night.

"Militants do not have much of a shelf life. The situation is not grave. Since I have joined, about 40 militants have been killed, stone pelting has come down and the number of local youths joining militancy has also come down. I am satisfied that on this front there is no worrying situation," he said.

My opinion is based not just on official briefings but also on narratives provided to me by common people, Malik said.

According to Malik, the youth are unhappy not just with New Delhi but also with Pakistan, local political groups as well as the Hurriyat and are unable to see any ray of hope.

For a country like India, getting rid of these 400 people (militants) is nothing, he asserted. But the effort is to end militancy and not militants, the governor added.

"Here we are making attempts to kill the ideology of terrorism. Terrorism is not in the gun but in the mind... I will be making every attempt to set these minds free of the poison of terrorism," he added.

➤ **Situation in Kashmir under control: MOH**

Oct 19: Minister of state for Home Affairs Hansraj Ahir said the situation in Kashmir was under control and the government forces were capable of dealing with militants both within the valley and infiltrating from across the Line of Control.

"There is no rise (in militancy). We have been foiling the infiltration attempts and we will continue to do so. The soldiers are fighting the infiltrators and terrorists (sic),"

Ahir told reporters after taking part in Dussehra celebrations at BSF's Humhama camp here.

➤ **Army, CRPF can't handle situation without J&K police, says Governor**

46 policemen killed this year: DGP

Oct 21: Governor Satya Pal Malik said the feedback he has got from heads of various security agencies suggests that the army and the Central Reserve Police Force "can't handle Kashmir situation without the involvement of Jammu and Kashmir police." He also said that the recently-concluded Urban Local Body elections remained peaceful and wherever stone-pelters tried to throw stones at polling booths, "they were attacked back by voters in a similar fashion."

Addressing police commemoration day, Malik said that J&K police "was the best police force in India."

"I have travelled to all the states of India. I was Governor of Bihar earlier. I have grown up in Uttar Pradesh and I can tell this with full authority that J&K police is the best among the lot. I salute the professionalism and bravery being displayed by the policemen here," Malik said.

He said in his two-month stint so far as the J&K's Governor, he observed "policemen performing their duties in a most professional manner despite working under tremendous pressure."

"If we talk about the recent threats (abductions), policemen and their families bore the brunt, but there was no change in their commitment," the Governor said. Malik said that being the head of the State, he keeps on discussing the situation with top army and CRPF officers. "They told me that it was not possible to deal with the situation in Kashmir without police," the Governor said.

He said that there were certain genuine issues of policemen which needed urgent attention including making ex-gratia of policemen killed in line of duty at par with the central forces.

"I told the J&K police chief to make whatever is possible from their own funds first. So it became around Rs 70 lakh. I recently met home minister Rajnath Singh and requested him to make the amount Rs one crore," he said. "The home minister has agreed in principle. So the amount would be paid to the next of kin (NoKs) of policemen who are killed on duty."

The Governor said that similarly, the ex-gratia for families of Special Police Officers was Rs 30 lakh. "I have requested Home Minister to make it Rs 50 lakh," he said.

The Governor said that every village and the entry point should "have a statue of every martyr from the police or the other forces."

Meanwhile, the state police chief Dilbagh Singh said that the overall situation in Kashmir was peaceful and both stone throwing protests as well recruitment of youth into militant groups was "down." Singh said this year, 46 policemen including some officers were killed "in the line of duty."

"Overall situation is peaceful. Stone pelting has gone down and there is a sharp decline in the local recruitment of youth into various militant groups," the DGP said. "Youth are now joining sports activities." The police chief said, except some incidents like the one witnessed recently at Shadimarg, Pulwama where a pregnant lady was killed, the "law and order situation has improved." "Militants shouldn't target forces at the places where there are chances of civilian casualties," Singh said.

Earlier, addressing police ranks, the DGP said 414 policemen were killed across India while performing their duties, out of which 46 died in Jammu and Kashmir.

➤ **'Kashmiri students leaving AMU would have been India-Kashmir separation'**

Guv says Manan's killing saddened him

Oct 25: Governor Satpal Malik said if Kashmiri students would have left Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) campus over Manan Wani's killing that would have been a separation between India and Kashmir.

Speaking at the inaugural function of Kashmir Autumn FAM Tour-2018 at Sheri Kashmir International conference Centre (SKICC) here, the Governor said, "When AMU incident happened, I could not sleep that night and contacted Union HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar to revoke the expulsion of a few students."

He also said he was saddened by the killing of militant Manan Wani as he was highly educated.

"Had he not chosen the path of violence, Manan could have served his society in a better way," Malik said.

The Governor said in reply to the sedition charges, around 1200 Kashmiri

students decided to leave the campus if the charges would not be taken back.

"I personally monitored the entire situation and contacted the Vice Chancellor of AMU to take back sedition charges against the students," Malik said. "I also contacted the concerned Chief Secretary about the incident and he assured that all charges against the students will be taken back."

He said soon after the incident during the Sir Syed day function, around 500 Kashmir students participated in the national anthem of the country.

"If students from Bihar can contest student union election why not those from J&K," the Governor said. "I have personally asked my near ones and dear ones in Aligarh to help Kashmiri students in contesting students elections."

For students studying outside State, he said liaison officers would be placed in every corner of the State to look after issues of students from Jammu Kashmir.

On October 15, three Kashmiri students of AMU were slapped with sedition charges for allegedly raising anti-India slogans and trying to hold a prayer meeting to mourn the death of HizbulMujahideen commander Manan Bashir Wani.

➤ **Governors acting as new viceroys: P Chidambaram**

Oct 25: Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram took a dig at Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik for his reported remarks that political parties have no right to talk about India-Pakistan dialogue, saying the country's governors are the new viceroys.

In a series of tweets, the former finance and home minister referred to the Jammu and Kashmir governor's reported criticism of the National Conference and Peoples Democratic Party for their alleged frequent reference to Pakistan's role in resolving the Kashmir issue.

"J&K Governor says political parties have no right to talk about India-Pakistan talks. He is probably a votary of 'partyless democracy' or 'no democracy' at all," he said.

In a sarcastic comment, Chidambaram said, "We were told that the last viceroy was Lord Mountbatten. Wrong. Appointed Governors and Lieutenant Governors are the new Viceroys".

Governor Malik, referring to the National Conference and the PDP, said in

Srinagar on Wednesday, "These [political parties] have no right to talk about India-Pakistan peace talks. It is between governments of the two nations, as being neighbours makes it obvious that talks will happen for sure. But political parties bringing up the issue of Pakistan into dialogue process was neither acceptable to us then, nor will it be now.

➤ **Indian Army, State strong enough to ensure J&K remains part of India: Rawat**

'Stone pelters must be dealt with sternly'
New Delhi Oct 27: A day after a 22-year-old Army soldier was killed in stone pelting in Kashmir, Army chief Gen Bipin Rawat on Saturday said stone pelters are over ground workers of militants and they should be dealt with sternly.

Gen Rawat also sent a tough message to Pakistan, saying if Islamabad continues to support cross-border militancy, then the Indian Army can resort to "other actions" too.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of an event to mark the Infantry Day, the Army chief, however, did not elaborate on what could be the possible action he was talking about.

The Army chief also asked Pakistan to "desist from aiding and abetting militancy" in Jammu and Kashmir, asserting that the Indian State was "strong enough" to ensure that the border state remains a part of India and no one can take it away by force or any other means.

On death of Rajendra Singh in stone-pelting in south Anantnag district, Rawat reiterated his earlier stand that the stone-pelters are over ground workers of militant outfits. "I still say the same... If they (stone-pelters) can kill people with such acts, are they not becoming like militants," he said.

22-year-old Singh died at a hospital in Srinagar on Friday after he sustained head injuries during stone-pelting by a group of youths on Thursday.

"I want to tell them (stone-pelters) that no one will benefit from stone-pelting," said the Army chief, adding tough action should be taken against the stone-pelters. He said the Army has got an FIR lodged in the case.

Talking about Pakistan's support to alleged cross-border militancy in Jammu and Kashmir, Gen Rawat suggested that the neighbouring country was resorting to a "proxy war" to avenge its defeat at the hands

of India in the 1971 war when Bangladesh was liberated.

The aim of Pakistan, he said, is to keep the Indian Army "embroiled in this proxy war that they have lost."

"But, let me assure you, Indian Army and the Indian State is strong enough to ensure that Jammu and Kashmir remains part of India... No one else can take it away by force or by any other means, because legally, legitimately J-K is integral part of India," he said.

Asked about the cross-border infiltration, he said Pakistan would be wise to know that by indulging in such activities, harm is coming to Pakistan only.

"We are capable of finishing any infiltrators who reach our side. But, if Pakistan continues to support infiltration, we can use other kind of action too," Rawat said.

➤ **Politicians dictated J&K Bank recruitments, deprived 582 qualified candidates: Governor**

Oct 27: Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik has claimed that 582 candidates who qualified Jammu and Kashmir Bank's recruitment examinations were sidelined by politicians to adjust their relatives and workers.

In an interview with Times Now, Malik said that a group of 40 candidates met him and told him that they had been dropped from the selection list despite qualifying the exams as well as interview for recruitment in Jammu and Kashmir Bank.

"I called the chairman of the bank. I told him I don't want loans for anyone, I don't want settlement of loans, I want jobs for these youths who have qualified the exams. The chairman told me that these were not just 40 but 582 such cases, where qualified youths were not given the jobs," Malik said in the interview.

"This is the tragedy of Kashmir. People who don't pay bribes don't have any change to get a job. Corruption is rampant in Kashmir," he added.

Malik said that he told the J&K Bank chairman to do justice with the youth who had qualified the bank examinations.

"The chairman told me that he will speak to the finance secretary, who is also a board member of the bank. I, too, spoke to the finance commissioner. He assured me he will bring a proposal. Last week, all 582 candidates got the appointment letter," Malik said.

"There's (also) a case," Malik said, "where a candidate didn't sit in KAS exams but still got selected."

After the Governor's revelations, former chief minister and National Conference (NC) president Omar Abdullah was quick to take a dig at the PDP-BJP government which was in charge when these recruitments were made.

➤ **Kashmiri people should stand with Govt, not with separatists in fight against militancy: Jaitley**

Oct 27: Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said the people of Kashmir ought to stand with the government and not with the separatists in the fight against militancy.

"I think it is absolutely essential for all of us ...that in this battle, we need the Kashmiri people on our side. It's a battle for sovereignty, it's a battle against separatists and militants and the key is also held by the people," he said.

"And therefore our approach has to be guided by the fact that those people are on our side, and not with the separatists," he said while delivering the first Atal Bihari Vajpayee Memorial Lecture here.

He regretted that at a time when the country is dealing with troubles being fomented from across the border, some local groups have joined them and the worst sufferers are Kashmiri people themselves.

"How do we resolve the situation? Governments have said that we are ready for the most logical option. We are willing to talk to people, we are willing to even interact and involve regional mainstream parties into it," he said.

➤ **Kidnappings of kin of policemen 'probably' cost me my job: Former JK DGP Vaid**

Oct 28: Former Director General of Jammu and Kashmir police (DGP) Shesh Paul Vaid has said that the kidnapping of kin of policemen "probably" cost him his job.

In a freewheeling interview with News 18, Vaid, who is currently serving as the state's Transport Commissioner, said the kidnappings of kin of policemen by the militants "created panic in the police force".

"If you think that cost my job, you are probably correct. I have no regrets at all," Vaid told News18 when asked whether the kidnapping of kin of police personnel and the events which followed cost him his job.

"It (the police kidnappings) did create panic in the force at that time. Some SPOs did resign. But you have to understand that J&K Police is facing this problem since early 1990s. They have braved such situations. Besides, I am no more in police. So beyond a point, I cannot comment," Vaid told News 18.

"It is government's prerogative. I took it positively," he added.

However, Vaid said he was not given a reason. "No, nothing," he said, "I learned about my transfer at 11:30 in the night. I took it positively. Though instead of passing the order in the night, it could have been issued in the morning."

Terming the kidnapping of policemen as unfortunate episode, he said that the families of policemen are caught up in difficult situation.

"The decision to release Riyaz Naikoo's father and other militants didn't come from Governor's office. Whatever happened that day, was done only on basis of my decisions," the report quoted him as saying.

In August this year, the militants abducted, and then released, 11 relatives of state police personnel in apparent retaliation to police detention of the families of three Hizbul Mujahideen men.

The 11 family members were abducted from villages in the Pulwama, Anantnag, Shopian and Anantnag districts of south Kashmir on August 30.

➤ **4 years after J&K floods, defence ministry raises Rs 286 cr rescue bill**

Government asks MHA to pay

Oct 28: Nearly four years after devastating floods hit Jammu and Kashmir, the state government has got a bill of Rs 286 crore from the defence ministry for the rescue and relief operations undertaken by armed forces during the deluge. The state, however, has asked the ministry of home affairs to foot the bill.

In a letter sent to state authorities on July 19 this year, the defence ministry has written: "It is requested to take necessary action for reimbursement of expenditure incurred by armed forces during the operation 'megh rahat' in J&K in consultation with the ministry of home affairs."

The communiqué was sent by Sudershan Kumar, under-secretary, MoD to J&K's revenue secretary.

The revenue department was looking after the relief and rehabilitation works during natural

calamities in J&K before the department of disaster management, relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction was carved out from it in 2015.

As per the defence ministry's claim, the expenditure incurred by the army's 15 and 16 corps—based in Srinagar and Jammu respectively—for rescue operation is Rs 2.08 crore.

he bill of the army's aviation department is Rs 32.23 crore and that of its operation and logistics department Rs 8.11 crore.

The Indian Air Force has charged a whopping Rs 243.96 crore for its services during the deluge, according to the bill.

After receiving the bill, the government discussed the matter threadbare and wrote to the MHA on September 12.

"The said claims (five files) are submitted to the ministry (MHA) for reimbursement to the ministry of defence," reads the letter written by the state government to joint secretary, J&K division in MHA.

The state sent the bills to MHA because it (MHA) had set aside Rs 500 crore in 2015 to pay the bills raised by defence ministry for airdropping essentials and rescue operation during the floods.

Of Rs 1602 crore approved by a high-level committee headed by home minister Rajnath Singh under National Disaster Response Fund following J&K floods, Rs 500 crore were meant for payment for airdropping of essential supplies and rescue, based on the bills raised by the ministry of defence.

Devastating floods hit J&K in September 2014, consuming more than 280 lives apart from damaging private and public property worth thousands of crores.

➤ **'Stone-throwers can't be treated as militants': Omar**

Oct 29: Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah while reacting to Governor SP Malik's remark on stone pelting said, 'Stone throwers can't be treated as militants and (we can't) randomly keep shooting them.'

Governor Malik in an interview to The Hindustan Times had claimed that the former

Chief Ministers Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti "agree privately that civilians should not pelt stones or rush to encounter sites but don't say so publicly."

Omar while taking to Twitter questioned the Malik's remarks and said "how the governor could know what he (Omar) was thinking about." "How does Gov Malik know what I think about anything? Is he quoting a conversation I've had with him privately? Are my calls being monitored? Is my office/residence bugged? He owes me, if not @MehboobaMuftiSahiba an explanation," Omar wrote on Twitter.

"Let me say this publicly so that Governor Sahib is under no confusion - civilians should not throw stones and should not rush to encounter sites. I'm not saying this publicly for the first time and it won't be the last time I'm saying this," Omar said.

➤ **Killing militants won't wipe out militancy: Guv**

Oct 31: Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik said militancy in Kashmir cannot be wiped out by killing militants but by bringing them back to the mainstream.

Talking of Pakistan's role in fanning militancy in Jammu and Kashmir, the governor said the neighbouring country wants the state to remain disturbed, but its designs keep failing as happened during the recent municipal polls.

"Terrorism cannot be wiped out by killing militants. More of them will keep joining terror groups. They will keep attacking police and security forces which will in turn, fire bullets, not bouquets. And they will die in the process," he said.

"We do not want them to die. We want them to leave the gun culture and come back to the mainstream," he added.

Malik made the remarks while talking to reporters on the sidelines of a Power Department function.

"Our aim is not to hunt them down but to eradicate terrorism. We want the people in the Valley to understand that nothing is to be achieved from terrorism," he said.

11. Suicides by Armed Forces

➤ **SSB officer shoots self in central Kashmir**

Oct 01: An officer of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) shot himself dead in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district.

Police sources said Inspector Gutti Lal of SSB's 13 Battalion killed himself with his service rifle in Dignibal area.

➤ **Soldier ends life**

Oct 15: A soldier ended his life by shooting himself with his service weapon at Bari Brahamana in Samba district, police sources said.

He was identified as Sepoy Bahadur Thappa Mager, 19, of Nepal. He was posted with 4/11 GR, Bari Brahamana.

"He died on the spot," sources said, adding that the body of the deceased soldier

was later shifted to the Military Hospital Satwari for performance of the legal formalities.

Bari Brahamana police have registered a case under relevant sections of the law and taken up further investigation.

➤ **Army trooper ends his life**

Oct 24: A soldier committed suicide with his service weapon at Kaman post, Indian military post on this side of the Line of Control (LoC) in Uri sector, reports said. Reports said that troops heard firing from inside a bunker at the post, and rushed towards it to find a Sepoy Devindrappa Gulgandi in a pool of blood. Gulgandi was rushed to hospital where he was declared brought dead.

