



JAMMU KASHMIR COALITION OF CIVIL SOCIETY (JKCCS)

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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

From Kunan Poshpora to Kathua – growing campaign against sexual violence

The rape and murder of eight-year-old Muslim girl belonging to Gujjar nomadic community in Kathua region of Jammu, like the case of Jyoti Singh, the Indian student in 2012 who was gang raped and later killed, shocked the people of Jammu and Kashmir and beyond. Never before in the history of sexual abuse has there been such condemnation and mobilization throughout Jammu & Kashmir as was witnessed in this case. All sections of civil society condemned the gory incident in which the perpetrators were supported by the ruling BJP party. The incident receive attention not only in the Jammu & Kashmir but its reportage by the international media like the *New York Times* and other International media groups, prompted a wide scale condemnation by the Indian media and the Indian civil society who otherwise are indifferent to the excesses being perpetrated on the marginal members of the society, which includes crimes against women as well. Signature campaigns were conducted and hundreds and thousands joined the campaign demanding justice for the minor girl. Under the mounting pressure, the state acted and initiated the required action in this case.

The sexual violence perpetrated in the valley by the state actors since 1989 have not triggered such wide-scale mobilization and condemnation by the Indian civil society. It is true that in Kunan Poshpora case a section of Indian civil society expressed their anger and anguish but generally speaking they have been silent on the widespread cases of sexual violence at the hands of armed forces. The use of sexual violence by the army personnel present in every nook and corner in the state, particularly near the Line of Control where the inhabitants have to submit to the army's imposed culture of silence, have been imposed upon people and sexual violence has been normalized. There have been no investigations, no prosecutions and no punishments against the erring armed personal. On the contrary, the perpetrator's crimes have gone unregistered and unnoticed. Most of the accused armed forces personnel are now retired from the services and they're having their post retirement lives. Those perpetrators at the highest positions have settled in foreign countries.

The campaign launched for justice for sexual violence cases from Kunan Poshpora to Kathua by *One Billion Rising* founder Eve Ensler, the play right and activist - is a welcome and pleasant surprise. The *One Billion Rising* campaign is a global campaign that has culminated in the biggest global action movement, which has educated millions about the issue of violence against women and efforts to end it. They have funded 13000 community-based anti-violence programs in different countries including India. It is active in 200 countries including India. In 2012, the *One Billion Rising* launched a campaign against sexual violence, which was dedicated to the rape victim Jyoti Singh who was gang raped by six men in Delhi bus. More than 5000 organizations joined the campaign, which is also aided and endorsed by religious ministries. In 2013, rallies were taken out in more than 190 countries to join together to dance in a show of collective strength. The event was held on the 15th anniversary of the V.D movement. In 2014, a *One Billion Rising for Justice* events were held in India and in Los Angeles where a number of events were held in protest against violence against women soldiers and prisoners. In 2015, *One Billion Rising* events were held in 200 countries, more than 100 cities had events including 34 provinces of Afghanistan. In 2016, *One Billion Rising-Rise for*

Revolution 2016 was launched for the collective action of activists worldwide and it allows the use of imagination, art and political actions. In 2017, *One Billion Rising for Justice* video was launched which included footage from amateur and professional videographers from around the world as well as the interviews with global coordinators. This year the *One Billion Rising* campaign on sexual violence is focused on Kashmir and it's a big breakthrough for JKCCS, which had approached the *One Billion Rising* for making an appeal for independent international enquiry for all the sexual cases in Jammu and Kashmir right from Kunan Poshpora to Kathua for the reasons that there is complete impunity against the perpetrators in Jammu & Kashmir. And therefore we must appeal to the global civil society for highlighting the impunity for human rights violations in Kashmir.

As far as Kashmir is concerned, many international organizations have remained selective in highlighting human rights issues. Even in India the Christian community has taken positions on the excesses of Israel in Palestine but are silent on Kashmir. The celebrities and cine stars including Hollywood have been very active and have spoken against the sexual violence in Syria, South Sudan and the Central African Republic but have never uttered a word on Kashmir.

Since domestic remedies are ineffective due to the impunity to perpetrators and a deepening moral impunity that prevails under this situation, we believe that the international organizations and the international community have to play a significant role for a humanitarian intervention in Kashmir.

2. Chronology of Incidents

April 01: Thirteen militants, four civilians and three armed forces personnel were killed and over 200 injured some of them critically in three encounters that took place at three different places in Shopian district of south Kashmir. The slain militants, all locals, were identified as Yawar Ahmad Yattoo, Nazam Dar, Adil Thokar, Abaid Mallaha, Zubair Turay, Rayees Thokar, Ishfaq Malik, Aetimad Fayaz Malik, Ishfaq Thokar, Sameer Ahmad, Mohammad Abbas Bhat, Waseem Ahmad and Ishfaq Ahmad all residents of Shopian, the slain civilians were identified as Mehraj-ud-Din Mir, Mohammad Iqbal, Zubair Bhat and Mushtaq Ahmad Thokar.

April 02: The protests and shut down continued against the Shopian killing. The authorities had imposed strict restrictions at various places to choke any kind of protest. In the protests in central, south and north Kashmir over a dozen persons sustained injuries.

April 03: One of the injured youth in police firing Gowhar Ahmad Rather, 20, of Kangan Ganderbal, succumbs to his injuries in SKIMS hospital at Srinagar. Gowhar's death triggered clashes in his native area in which three youth were injured one of them critically. While police recovered bullet ridden body of an abducted youth from a bund in outskirts of Hajin area of Bandipora. The slain identified as Naseer Ahmad Sheikh, 23, alias Munna son in-law of Farooq Ahmad Parray was abducted by unknown gunmen from his in-laws house in Hajin. While an army soldier was killed and four others injured in an alleged BAT attack by Pakistani troopers along LOC in Poonch, Jammu. People in Baderwah and Kistwar observed shutdown to protest the Shopian killings, meanwhile, the shutdown continues for third day in Kashmir.

April 04: The Hurriyat leadership was prevented from visiting Shopian as per its scheduled programme today. While two CRPF men were mowed down by a paramilitary vehicle when it lost control due to stone pelting at Hiller area of Kokernag in South Kashmir. While a 50-year-old man died after allegedly being hit by mortar splinters during practice firing by the Army in the Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, a senior police officer said. Rattan Singh, a resident of Nonial, was hit by splinters during practice firing by army at Gadhi in Nowshera area of the district this evening, the officer said.

April 05: Widespread student protests took place across Kashmir that triggered clashes between the forces and the students which continued for hours. While eleven persons were injured in clashes in Shopian district. Father-daughter duo were injured in cross LoC shelling in Rajouri, Jammu.

April 06: Armed forces killed Hizbul Mujahideen militant in Kangun village of Pulwama district leading to clashes in the village. The slain militant was identified as Musavvir Ahmad, a Hizbul Mujahideen, a resident of Delipora Pulwama. Local sources said that three militants were caught in the exchange of fire; however, two of them managed to escape. In Hajin area body of an abducted youth Manzoor Ahmad Bhat, 25, son of Abdul Gaffar Bhat of Hajin, Bandipora was found. In view of the Shopian killings, Kashmir observed shut down and at various places protests took place while authorities imposed restrictions at various places including Srinagar downtown.

April 07: An army soldier was reportedly injured in cross LOC shelling in Rajouri district of Jammu province.

April 08: Shutdown continues across Shopian and Pulwama districts to protest killing of local militants and civilians.

April 09: Two Indian army men were killed and another critically injured in Pakistan Army firing in Keri sector in Akhnoor area of Jammu province. In Budgam, the killing of nine civilians on last year poll day was commemorated by the locals.

April 10: Suspected militants barged into the house of a special police officer (SPO) in Lassipora area of Pulwama district and beat him up, then left the village firing several shots in the air. While during protest, clashes took place between youth and armed forces personnel.

April 11: A 16-hour-long encounter in Khudwani area of Kulgam ended with two militants emerging alive to much jubilation, but not before four civilians had been killed and more than 60 wounded, four of them critically by bullets, two houses completely gutted, an army soldier dead and two other soldiers wounded. The slain civilians have been identified as Sharjeel Ahmad Sheikh of Khudwani, Bilal Ahmad Tantray of Kujjar, who was residing at his uncle's place in Hawoora, Faisal Ilahi of Melhura Shopian, and Aijaz Ahmad Palla of Tulkhan Bijbehara. The Kulgam killings triggered student protests, as hundreds of students came out on streets to register their protest. SHO Baramulla was injured in clashes. While an army soldier was killed in cross LOC shelling in Mendhar area of Poonch district in Jammu.

April 12: Two policemen were injured when a grenade hurled by suspected militants exploded within a premises of a police station in Pulwama. While a boy was injured when he fiddled with some explosive at Khudwani encounter site.

April 13: Yet again the historic Jamia Masjid of Srinagar stayed locked on Friday while strict restrictions on public movement were imposed in several areas of old Srinagar.

April 14: Cross LOC firing took place along LOC on Rajouri district. While gunmen attacked a police patrol in Khanyar area of Srinagar district. However, no damage was caused.

April 15: Amir Ahmad Lone, a civilian, who was injured during protests on April 3 and succumbed to his injuries at SKIMS. Amir, 22, son of Abdul Hamid Lone, was a resident of Chuturgul, Kangan. He sustained a bullet injury in the head during clashes with government forces.

April 16: An army porter was killed in cross LOC shelling in Uri sector of north Kashmir's Baramulla district. The slain porter was identified as Khurshed Ahmad, 35, son of Mohammad Sharief of Nawarada, Uri. While unidentified gunmen fired at and injured an SPO in south Kashmir's Shopian district. In the firing a civilian was also hit by a bullet.

April 17: One army soldier was injured in a militant attack Seer Jagier area of Tral. After the attack the armed forces launched cordon and search of the area. While student protest against Kathua rape and murder turned violent in Sopore area of Baramulla district.

April 18: As many as thirty persons were injured in south Kashmir during clashes between young protesters and police and paramilitary forces. The student protests over Kathua rape were reported from various places of valley. Reportedly, sixty students fainted after inhaling smoke from teargas and PAVA shells.

April 19: Several students were injured in protests in various parts of the valley.

April 20: At various places in Kashmir valley and in Chenab valley people took out protests to press for justice in Kathua rape and murder case. While cross LOC shelling took place in Nowshera in Rajouri district.

April 21: At least three persons, one of them a minor boy, sustained bullet wounds after army soldiers opened fire on stone-pelting youth here in Karimabad area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district. The injured have been identified as 13-year-old Faizan Farooq, 45-year-old Tanveer Ahmad Pandit and 35-year-old Sajad Ahmad Sheikh, all residents of Karimabad village.

"All of them had bullet wounds. They have been shifted to Srinagar for specialised treatment, in a very stable condition," Medical Superintendent (MS) of Pulwama District Hospital, Dr Abdul Rasheed Parra, told media. While an army soldier injured in cross LOC along shelling along Rajouri district dies. The Indian and Pakistani forces exchanged fire along LOC in Poonch.

April 22: Army soldiers fired some shots in the air after their vehicle was stoned by some youths in main chowk Pinjora in Shopian district. Later in the afternoon, vehicles of the Additional Superintendent of Police were stoned at Kundalan village.

Local sources said that as soon as the vehicles were stoned in the village, the police resorted to heavy tear smoke shelling and pellet firing to disperse the stone throwers. At least eight policemen and four students were injured in clashes with students of Government Degree College (Boys) in Khannabal area of Anantnag. In Ganderbal, a policeman sustained minor injuries after the students clashed with the police and paramilitary forces. While Pakistani troops reportedly targeted forward posts and villages along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir with mortar shells and gunfire. A 60-year-old shepherd was critically injured when he accidentally stepped over a landmine near the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, police said. The injured was identified as Abdul Gani who lost his left foot in the blast at the Khari Karmara.

April 23: Four JeM militants, two local and two Pakistanis, an army soldier and an SOG personnel were killed in a day-long encounter in the forest area of Laam in Tral, Pulwama. The local slain militants were identified as Abid Ahmad of Khargund and Ishfaq Ahmad of Handoora and the non-locals as Mufti Yasir and Omar Khalid. During the encounter, reports said, army choppers also hovered over the area and para-commandos were air-dropped in the area to take on the militants.

April 25: Suspected militants shot dead Ghulam Nabi Patel, a former Congress politician who had switched over to the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), near Rajpora Chowk in Pulwama district. Two personal security officers (PSOs) of Patel were also wounded by bullets that the militants fired in broad daylight. Patel was a native village Dangerpora Shadimarg, Pulwama. While two policemen and a civilian were injured in a grenade attack aimed at Kulgam police station by militants in Kulgam.

April 26: Army claimed it had killed three unidentified militants in an encounter near LOC in Girat Post, Keran sector of Kupwara district. While a 22-year-old man was killed after a bullet pierced his chest when militants opened fire at a Road Opening Party (ROP) of paramilitary CRPF and "missed the target," police said. The slain civilian has been identified as Shafaq Shabir, son of Shabir Ahmad Shah, resident of Khar Mohalla area in Shopian district. In another incident two policemen and a civilian was injured when militants lobbed a hand grenade at Kulgam police station in south Kashmir.

April 27: Clashes broke out in Shopian town after Friday prayers as protesting youth hit the streets and pelted stones on forces guarding the court complex. The forces hit back with tear smoke shells and sound canisters. However, there were no reports of injury from either sides. Meanwhile, a CRPF personnel was injured in Tral town on Friday during clashes that erupted between youth and government forces after Friday prayers.

April 28: Shopian observed shut down over the killing of a youth in a militant fire aimed at policemen on April 26.

April 29: Suspected militants attacked an army patrol near Malikgund bus stop in Shopian, however, no damage was caused on either side. In another incident, a BJP activist Zubair Majeed Parray was shot at in Alochi Bagh, Srinagar by unidentified gunmen.

April 30: Three civilians were killed by unidentified gunmen near Khanpora bridge in old town Baramulla. The slain were identified as Asif Ahmad Sheikh, Haseeb Ahmad Khan and Mohammad Asgar all residents of Khanpora, Baramulla. In another incident, two HM militants were killed and two soldiers including an army Major were injured in encounter in Drabgam area of Pulwama while a

youth was shot dead by the armed forces during the encounter. In the forces, reportedly, firing around thirty civilians were injured during protests. The slain militants were identified as Sameer alias Tiger and Aqib Khan while the boy was identified as Shahid Ashraf Dar of Arihal, Pulwama. During the encounter helicopter services by the forces were pressed into service.

3. Killings in April 2018

In April 2018, at **56 killings** took place in different violent incidents in Jammu and Kashmir. The casualties included that of **20 civilians, 23 militants and 13 armed forces**. The day to day break up of killing is given in the table below.

DATE	ARMED FORCES	MILITANTS	CIVILIANS
April 01	3	13	4
April 02	-	-	-
April 03	1	-	2
April 04	2	-	1
April 05	-	-	-
April 06	-	1	1
April 07	-	-	-
April 08	-	-	-
April 09	2	-	-
April 10	-	-	-
April 11	2	-	4
April 12	-	-	-
April 13	-	-	-
April 14	-	-	-
April 15	-	-	1
April 16	-	-	1
April 17	-	-	-
April 18	-	-	-
April 19	-	-	-
April 20	-	-	-
April 21	1	-	-
April 22	-	-	-
April 23	-	-	-
April 24	2	4	-
April 25	-	-	1
April 26	-	3	1
April 27	-	-	-
April 28	-	-	-
April 29	-	-	-
April 30	-	2	4
Total	13	23	20
TOTAL KILLINGS IN APRIL 2018		56 KILLINGS	

4. Human Rights Stories

Kulgam civilian killings not in cross firing

A young man who was scheduled to get married next month was shot dead by the armed forces during cordon and search operation of Khudwani village of Kulgam district. There was no stone pelting or gathering of people anywhere when Sharjeel Hameed, 28, son of Abdul Hameed Sheikh of Khudwani, Kulgam was fired with bullets by a soldier, who was part of the cordon. Sharjeel was fired when he was out to wash his faces in the morning. For some time he was staying at his friend's house to make arrangement for him, as he friend was also getting married before him. Three more civilians were killed by the forces near the site of an encounter.

Three others civilians were also killed as forces opened fire on protestors. Police however maintained that the civilians were killed in, "cross fire". The slain civilians were identified as Bilal Ahmad Tantray son of Nazir Ahmad of Kujjar, Kulgam, Faisal Elahi of Melhora, Shopian and Ajaz Ahmad Palla of Tulkhan, Bijbehara. A 16-hour-long encounter ended with militants managed to escape the forces cordon.

The people in unisons rejected the police claim that the boys were killed in cross firing. They blame police for twisting the facts only to the advantage of perpetrators.

A researcher of *The Informative Missive* visited Sharjeel's house to talk to his family about the incident in which their son was killed. The family, the researcher observed, was in a state of shock.

The visiting researcher managed to talk to Nadeem Ahmad, elder brother of Sharjeel, who made a detailed statement about the incident.

On April 10, 2018, Sharjeel was at his friend Shakeel Ahmad's home. Sharjeel and Shakeel were close friends living in the same neighbourhood. Shakeel was scheduled to get married after few days so Sharjeel was staying at his home in order to make arrangement for his marriage.

house shot number of bullets towards him. Two bullets hit Sharjeel in his belly and chest and few bullets fired hit the wall of the bathroom. After he was shot the soldiers continued firing towards in the same direction and did not allow his friend's family members to take Sharjeel inside the house.

For around half-an-hour Sharjeel was lying in the compound, and blood was gushing out of his bullet wounds. Thereafter, Sakeel's family brought children along and came out in the compound presuming that army would not fire over the children. It worked for the family and they were able to take Sharjeel to the hospital. By then he had lost all his blood. He was taken to District Hospital Anantnag where he was declared brought dead.

Sharjeel's family came to know about his killing only after he was taken to the hospital. But due to the cordon they were not able to reach to the hospital. At around 9 am, the victim was discharged from the hospital but due to the ongoing encounter in his native village his dead body was taken to his uncle's house at New Basti, Khudwani. He was laid to rest on the same evening.

The encounter continued till 6 pm of April 11 and the militants managed to escape. During the encounter three more civilians were killed and four houses were gutted in fire.

Sharjeel was engaged and his marriage was fixed in May this year 2018.

No case filed by the family neither the police has summoned the family to police station for investigation purpose. It seems police was not conducting any investigation.

Faisal Elahi Of Melhora, Shopian

Thousands attended funeral prayers of 14-year-old Fazil Ahmad Allie of Melhoora village of Shopian, who was killed in forces firing on protestors near Khudwani village of Kulgam district on Wednesday.



**Sharjeel's photo shared
by his family**

For around half-an-hour Sharjeel was lying in the compound, and blood was gushing out of his bullet wounds.

In the same night army had cordoned off village at around 9:30 pm, as they had inputs about militant presence. As soon as the army cordoned off the area Sharjeel's brother Nadeem Ahmad Sheikh called him not to come out of the house. The army brought generators to put on lights around the house where militants were trapped. The house where the militants were hiding was sizeable distance from Shakeel's house; however, the cordon was laid around the entire area.

The cordoned continued till next day and the army soldiers were firing intermittently during the night.

Next day morning, April 11, at 7 am, Sharjeel woke up and went to bathroom in the compound of his friend's home. He was only in inner wears. As soon as he came out of the bathroom an army soldier, part of the cordon, deployed on the second floor of a neighbouring

As soon as the news spread that Fazil succumbed to injuries, thousands of people from different villages of Anantnag, Kulgama, Shopian and Pulwama marched towards deceased civilian's native village at Melhoora in Shopian amidst chanting of pro-freedom and anti-India slogans.

Back to back five rounds of funeral prayers were held for the deceased civilian. Thousands of people participated in his funeral prayers.

Fazil's body was buried at village graveyard in Melhoora in the afternoon.

Fazil was a class 9th student of Government Higher Secondary school Arwani.

A cousin of Fazil, Arshid Ahmad Allie told Rising Kashmir that at around 8 am they left Melhoora along with three other boys.

“Some youth were clashing with forces at Wanpora village near Khudwani,” he said adding when they reached near a bridge in Wanpora, forces fired towards civilians.

“We ran away but Fazil trailed behind,” he said adding they stopped at a distance and found Fazil lying flat on ground.

He said Fazil was hit by bullets in neck and chest and was shifted in an ambulance to a primary health centre, Kulgam, where he was declared brought dead.

A dejected father of Fazil, Ghulam Ahmad Allie said he was at a relative’s house in the night and when he returned home today, his neighbours gave him sad news about his son’s death.

“A neighbour informed me that my son was shot dead,” he said.

“I also learnt that before leaving home in the morning, Fazil had told his mother that he will return home dead today. He (Fazil) had told his mother to make arrangements at home for receiving his body,” he said. Fazil is survived by parents, elder brother and three sisters.

Ajaz Ahmad Palla Of Tulkhan, Bijbehara.

Aijaz, a famous cricketer of his area, Batpora Khudwani, and nicknamed as Tendulkar for his batting style died after receiving a bullet wound at around 3 pm near the encounter site in Khudwani.

He had left home to work. He worked as a carpenter to support his small family comprising wife and mother in law.

He had been married some eight years ago at Tulkhan and was not having any children. He had sold off all the property and managed to construct a one storey concrete house there.

“He left for work in the morning saying he won’t take lunch along today. He was mostly known for his batting style in his native area as he played lots of cricket”, says one of the cousins of Aijaz.

Police on Wednesday claimed in a statement that all the four dead civilians were killed in crossfire during the gun battle.

Bilal Ahmad Tantray S/o: Nazir Ahmad Of Kujjar, Kulgam

Bilal Ahmad Tantray, was fourth boy killed in the forces firing. Bilal was living with his grandparents in Mishpora’s Havoora village. On the fateful day he had tea made by his grandmother before setting off for Khudwani with his friends.

“I was cutting vegetables when I saw that he was getting ready to leave for the encounter site,” his grandmother says. “I pulled his *pheran* and told him not to go, not to leave me. He didn’t listen. ‘Why stop me when all the other boys are going,’ he said and left.”

The news of the tragedy reached Bilal’s grandmother around noon. He is injured, she was told. Half an hour later, his father was informed that his son, shot in the chest, had died on the spot.

Majid Tantray, a minor, blamed the armed forces for killing his brother.

On April 12, hearing a petition on the civilian killings in Kulgam, the State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) directed the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam and Senior Superintendent of police (SSP) Kulgam to file a detailed compliance report to answer under what circumstances the deaths of the four civilians took place. The commission directed that the report be filed by May 16.

The petition also stated that more than 60 civilians were injured by pellets, bullets and tear gas shells in Kulgam during the encounter between government forces and militants.

Family’s only son fell to bullets near encounter site He didn’t tell anybody where he was going that day

Now almost in every encounter where militants get trapped people particularly youth gathered around the site to help the trapped militants to escape from armed forces cordon. In doing so, dozens of civilians lost their lives in last couple of years. Shahid Afridi, 28, son of Mohammad Ashraf Dar of Arihal Pulwama was another addition to list of encounter site killings. Shahid, a higher secondary dropout, as the poverty didn’t allow his to continue his studies, was killed on April 30 by armed forces.

On April 30, Shahid heard about that some militants including Sameer Tiger, a famous militant commander, were trapped in Drabgam area of Pulwama district. Pertinently, not all the people gathered near encounter site indulge in protest some just visit the site to have the firsthand account of the situation. During the encounter, the armed forces opened fire towards the

civilians gathered near the site. As many as thirty civilians were injured. Shahid was one of the injured who later died.

To collect the details of the case a researcher of *The Informative Missive* visited Shahid’s family in Pulwama. The family’s shock could be understood by the atmosphere of the house. It was silence all around. Shahid’s father was sitting in a corner of a room silently mourning his young son’s killing.

On April 30, it wasn’t ascertained whether Shahid Afridi Dar was killed while protesting against the army operation or he was just standing when bullets were fired at him by the armed forces. That day three militants including a top militant commander Sameer alias Tiger was trapped in a house at Drabgam, Pulwama. As soon the news spread to other areas people



Shahid's photo shared by his family

mostly youth gathered around the encounter site to mount pressure on the armed forces to halt the operation against the trapped militants. Twelfth class student Shahid son of Ashraf Dar of Arihal of same district also went to the encounter site without telling anything to his parents.

A researcher of *The Informative Missive* visited Shahid's house to collect the details of the case. Shahid's father Ashraf Dar spoke was at home who agreed to shared details of the case with the visiting researcher, as he thinks doing so will highlight the killing of his son.

"On April 30, at around 11 am, an encounter started between armed forces and militants at Drabgam,

and motionless for a while. Somehow God gives me some strength. I saw two bullets in his body. Both in his backsides," stated Mohammad Ashraf while struggling to hold back his tears.

People who claimed to have witnessed Shahid's killing at Drubgam said that government forces shot him twice, and he had two bullet marks on his body.

The encounter continued till 2 pm, both the militants were killed. Shahid's body was brought home by the locals. Thousands of people participated in his funeral. He was buried in a local martyr's graveyard.

Family has not filed any case in police station or moved to court. Neither have they received the copy of FIR filed by police. "We have no idea whether police

"It was a shock of my life. I got speechless and motionless for a while. Somehow God gives me some strength. I saw two bullets in his body"

Pulwama. Two militants including Sameer Tiger were trapped in a house at Drabgam village both belonging to Hizbul Mujahedeen outfit. As soon as the news of the encounter spread in the surrounding areas people began to march towards the encounter site. Shahid Afridi also left from his house without telling anybody where he was going," stated his father.

Number of people had gathered around the encounter site. During the encounter people hurled stones over the forces to help the militants to flee from the spot. Clashes erupted between forces and the people.

Mohammad Ashraf further stated, "At around 1 pm, I received a call from a Shahid's friend who had also gone to the encounter site with Shahid. He informed me that Shahid has been injured and was taken to District Hospital Pulwama. I along with my wife Haseena and some villagers rushed to the hospital. When we reached there, we found Shahid was already declared dead by the doctors."

Ashraf was shell-shocked after hearing his son is no more. "It was a shock of my life. I got speechless

has filed FIR or not. We never approached the police station. We have received a copy of his death certificate made by Registrar of Births and Deaths which was made by the police. The certificate has no mention of place of death or and cause of death. This is all what we have about Shahid's killing," averred the father.

In Ashraf's family it is now his wife Haseena, and two daughters in the family. The elder daughter has left studies in the final year of her graduation course after she failed in exams. The other daughter is studying in UKG. Shahid was the second child and the only son of his parents.

Muhammad Ashraf, is a driver by profession and has been hired by a villager to drive his vehicle. Shahid left studies after completing Class 12 and was now helping his father in family responsibilities. With him his family lost a hope of its future.

A neighbour said that Shahid was arrested by police last winter and was in detention for about a month. He said that Shahid had been arrested by police a dozen times since the killing of Burhan Wani in July 2016.

Militat bullet aimed at CRPF kills young Shafaq

April 26: Twenty-two-year-old, Shafaq Ahmad Shah son of Shabir Ahmad Shah of Hergam, Khar Mohalla, Shopian was hit by a bullet fired by militant to target a road opening party of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) at Laizbal area of main town Anantnag district. The bullet hit Shafaq's chest who later died in the hospital. A shopkeeper informed Shafaq's family about how he received bullet while he was traveling in a public transport.

A researcher of *The Informative Missive* visited Shafaq's family to collect the case details.

"He was travelling in a Tata Sumo when a bullet fired by militants hit him in his chest leaving his seriously injured," stated Shabir Ahmad Shafaq's father.

When Sahafaq's father went to police station Ananatnag to get his son's belonging, he said, he met with the Sumo driver in whose vehicle he was hit by the bullet. The driver was summoned by the police, probably, to record his statement.

"The driver told me that when Shafaq received the bullet he took him to Janglat Mandi hospital. There he gave his friend's number to the driver and asked him to inform his friend about the incident. The driver did what he was told by Shafaq. It was this friend who informed us about the incident," the dejected father stated.

While taking injured Shafaq to SMHS hospital at Srinagar his conditions started to be get worsen. On seeing this, the driver and the policemen,

"When militants opened fire on a CRPF road opening party, a vehicle in which Shafaq was on board was just passing through the area was hit by a bullet. The bullet hit the chest of the youth sitting close to the door of the vehicle"

who were assisting Shafaq, decided to take him to nearby Sub District Hospital Bijbehara. Soon the doctors stated examined him, he was declared dead. From there his dead body was transported to police station Bijbehara for legal formalities.

After few days of the incident, the father and mother of the slain youth visited the place where Shafaq received the bullet. "We went to Laizbal area to ascertain details of the incident and there we came across a baker who told us militant bullet killed my son. While sharing the details of the incident, the baker, whose shop was also hit by few bullets, said, at around 2:00 pm, when militants opened fire on a CRPF road opening party, a vehicle in which Shafaq was on board was just passing through the area was hit by a bullet. The bullet hit the chest of the youth sitting close to the door of the

vehicle," stated Shabir Ahmad while sharing the details he had gathered from site of the incident in which his son lost his life.

Earlier in the day, Shafaq had gone to Mattan area of Anantnag district to buy stuff for his shop from a wholesale dealer. After placing his order and making all the payments, he moved to Leazbal area of Anantnag to meet another wholesaler. While on his way to the wholesaler he met with the incident.

Police claimed it has identified the in which militants were traveling. "Militants travelling in a car, bearing number JK03 B-1*4*, fired at security forces in Laizbal area. They missed the target and a bullet hit a civilian travelling in a Tata Sumo," police stated.

Eyewitnesses says policeman killed Gowhar: Family

There were as many as ten eyewitnesses to the fatal attack on Gowhar Ahmad Rather son of Rehman Rather of Kangan, Ganderbal on April 2 by a policeman who took his life. Gowhar was fired by a policeman in his head, leaving his survival chances bleak. Next day, Gowhar breathed his last in SKIMS hospital at Srinagar. Government ordered probe.

According to information gathered by a researcher of *The Informative Missive* reveals on April 2, Gowhar was sitting at a parapet on the side of national Highway road. In the meantime at around 6 pm, a Police Vehicle called Rakshak came and stopped at some distance. One person in police uniform namely, Gulzar Ahmad Najar S/o Abdul Rashid Najar belonging to Jammu Kashmir Police serving as SGCT (Special grade constable) ran towards Gowhar with his Pistol in his hand and shouted to kill Gowhar.

Gowhar ran from the spot and the Police cop fired at him. While some of the bullets missed him, one bullet pierced through the back of his head. The people rushed to the spot and saw Gowhar with blood oozing from his dead. Seeing the gathering of people, The Police Cop ran away from the spot, and immediately Gowhar was taken to a local Trauma Hospital Kangan and later was referred to another hospital called as SKIMS (Sheri Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences) Soura, Srinagar. Gowhar was operated upon and later on 3rd of April 2018, Gowhar succumbed to his injuries. With the demand of locals and family, a criminal complaint (referred to as first information report - FIR). came to be registered with attempt to murder, which later was converted into murder. The investigation is under process, and the statements have been recorded of many eye witnesses.

The relatives of the deceased said they were in possession of hospital records which reveal that he was hit by a 4-5 mm bullet.

"On April 2, evening, a group of policemen came to SKIMS and asked doctors and to change the statement," said Muzaffar, Gowhar's cousin. "Yesterday the doctors had given us in written that it was a bullet injury but now they say he was injured by some metallic nut."

As the news of the Gowhar's death spread, dozens of relatives and youth from Kangan and adjoining areas reached the hospital to express condolences with the family.

While Police claimed that a group of "miscreants" had gathered in Kangan market to throw stones and disturb law and order in the area.

"A police party reached the spot and the miscreants started running during which Gowhar fell and injured his head on the edge of the drain," Police said.

"The reports regarding bullet injury are completely false as no bullet was fired on the spot," police said.

Probe ordered:

On April 03, the district magistrate Ganderbal has ordered a magisterial probe into the death of a youth in Kangan area of central Kashmir's Ganderbal district.

"I have ordered a magisterial probe to ascertain the cause of death of Gowhar Ahmed Rather, a resident of Kangan," said the district magistrate Ganderbal, Dr Piyush Singla.

He said that the justice will be served to the family of the deceased.

While Inspector General of Police (Kashmir Range) immediately ordered a departmental inquiry besides initiating a criminal investigation to ascertain the complete facts of the case, he added.

Cop suspended

On April 04, Constable Gulzar Ahmad Najar of Chatergul, Kangan, who has been accused by Kangan residents of shooting at a youth who succumbed at SKIMS Soura, has been suspended from services.

It was learnt the police has ordered a departmental inquiry which is being conducted by the deputy inspector general of police central Kashmir range VK Birdi.

An order issued by Ganderbal senior superintendent of police Fayaz Ahmad Lone reads: "In connection with case FIR No. 18/2018 u/s 307 (attempt to murder) Selection Grade Constable Gulzar Ahmad is hereby placed under suspension with immediate effect, pending enquiry."

Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal Piyush Singla said additional deputy commissioner Ganderbal



Syed Shah Nawaz Bukhari has been appointed as the inquiry officer, and asked to submit the report within 20

days.

Four more civilians killed near encounter site

On April 1, thirteen militants, four civilians and three armed forces personnel were killed and over 200 injured some of them critically in three encounters that took place at three different places in Shopian district of south Kashmir. The slain civilians were identified as Mehraj-ud-Din Mir, Mohammad Iqbal, Zubair Bhat and Mushtaq Ahmad Thokar.

The J&K Police have labeled the three civilians killed during the Shopian gunfight this year as "miscreants and stone pelters" whose objective was to "provide an opportunity to holed-up militants to escape the spot".

However, the police report states that one person, namely Mushtaq Ahmed Thokar, was a civilian and got killed in cross firing at Dragad encounter site the next day.

In its report to the State Human Rights Commission (SHRC), the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Anantnag, states that on March 31, police, army and CRPF personnel cordoned village Kachdoora after reliable inputs about the presence of militants was received. During search operation, the militants fired indiscriminately upon the search party. The security forces also retaliated in defence, and the gunfight continued.

Mehraj-ud-Din Mir

S/o: Mohammad Yaseen Mir

R/o: Okey, Kulgam

Mehraj a civilian who was killed in firing by armed forces in Kachdoora Shopian on Sunday. He left his aged parents, handicapped brother and a mentally challenged sister behind.

Mehraj, a resident of Okey Kulgam died on way to Srinagar, where he was being taken for treatment. He was hit by bullets in left side of kidney near encounter site at Kachdoora on Sunday.

Mehraj was the lone bread earner of his family and due to poverty he had not been able to continue his studies. Mudasir Ahmad Mir his handicapped brother said that we were living peacefully in this mud house and Mehraj would always say that "I will construct a new house by earning money. With tearful eyes he said now after brother's death "who will feed us and who will construct a house, and our dream remained dream."

"My brother will pray in heaven for our parents which will be his gift may his soul rest in peace," he said. Mentally challenged sister of Mehraj kept wailing when his brother was talking with this correspondent.

The father of Mehraj, a *kangri* (fire pot) weaver by profession said that Mehraj left the home at 9am after saying that he will go to Aherbal for a picnic.

"At around 6pm we received a call from an unknown person that our son was injured in Shopian and has been shifted to Srinagar, and after some time we heard the loud slogans outside my house, this was a big loss for me and for my two disabled children.

He said he was not in a position to weave kangris now due to bad health.

The locals said Mehraj was a pious soul who would pray five times a day.

Mohammad Iqbal Bhat

S/o: Manzoor Ahmad Bhat

R/o: Khasipora, Shopian

The death of one of the civilians in the shootout at Kachdoora in South Kashmir area Shopian has left a family devastated. He left behind a toddler and a young widow.

Mohammad Iqbal Bhat, 30, a resident of Khasipora village of Shopian, who died at SKIMS after he was hit by bullets near encounter site at Kachdoora on Sunday left behind an 18-month old baby and a young wife.

Iqbal was himself an orphan and had lost his father and mother 22 years ago when he was only 8-year old.

After his parents death Iqbal was raised by his elder brother until he was married two years ago and started living separately.

Bilal Ahmad Bhat, elder brother of slain civilian, said that on April 1 morning Iqbal had left his home after informing his wife, Ruhi Jan, that he is visiting his in laws in Chatwatlan, a village that lied some distance from Kachdoora.

"Since a gunfight was in progress at Kachdoora so he opted to move through orchards," he said, adding that "when he was moving to visit his in-laws he was hit with bullets."

After Iqbal had received bullets, he was shifted by local residents to a hospital in Harmain. "Someone informed me on phone that Iqbal was hit with a bullet," he said, adding that "I rushed to the hospital to shift my injured brother to SKIMS, but he was declared brought dead."

He said that he had visited his in laws house to get some documents that were required for his regularization. Iqbal was working as a casual labourer in forest department.

His wife was wailing inconsolably. "He was my only companion and now with whom I would share my secrets," she said, crying.

The family she has lost a breadwinner. "The death of my husband has made my 18 month old baby, Aiza Jan as an orphan," she lamented.

Mushtaq Ahmad Thokar

Ghulam Mohammad Thokar

Sugan, Dragad

The family members of a civilian who was killed in firing during the encounter at Dragad Sugan village of South Kashmir's Shopian district are finding it hard to console his twins.

Relatives of Mushtaq Ahmad Thoker, 35, son of Ghulam Mohammad Thoker, informed that they find it very hard to console Abdul Hadi, 10, and Lubina Mushtaq, 10, twins left behind by him.

"Both of them were living a happy life till Sunday", a close relative of the deceased civilian said, adding after they learnt about their father's death both of them were shattered.

"Neither they want to talk to anyone nor they want to eat anything," the relative informed.

The devastated family, which lost its bread winner, has been trying its best to bring happiness on the sullen faces of these twins.

Both the kids, the family members said are in class 3rd and had more affinity with their father, who left "no stone unturned to give them best education."

Mushtaq, in whose neighborhood an encounter broke out on Sunday late night, was brought out by army men from his house.

Rakeeba, wife of slain civilian, said that on 2 am army men knocked at their house asking her husband to come out.

"We didn't open the door initially but when they broke a window and threatened of dire consequences we were compelled to open the door," she said, adding that when the army men took her husband along with them she resisted pleading with them that he has a physically challenged mother and an aged father to look after but to no avail.

She said that she was assured by the army men that they will let him back quickly. The family members informed that they were instructed to hand a torch to him.

They further said that after five minutes of his departure from his house they heard gunshots and a fierce gun battle started in their neighborhood where some militants were holed up in a neighbor's house.

The family members of Mushtaq were evacuated at around 6:30 am and they again enquired about whereabouts of Mushtaq and they were assured he is safe.

The wife of the slain civilian said that they learnt about her husband's death only when they received his body after its autopsy.

The family blames army for killing Mushtaq as he was used as human shield, while police stated that he was killed in cross firing.

Relatives of Mushtaq said that he was asked by army men to go into a house in their neighborhood to inform if any militant is hiding there and when he was coming out he was hit with bullets. They said that he had bullet wounds on chest and neck.

Zubair Ahmad Bhat

S/o: Abdul Ahmad Bhat

R/o: Gopalpora, Kulgam

A civilian was killed during clashes with the government forces in south Kashmir's Shopian district.

Reports said that Zubair Ahmad Bhat, son of Abdul Ahmad Bhat, a resident of Gopalpora village of Kulgam was injured in clashes near the gunfight site in Kachdoora Shopian.

He was admitted at district hospital Kulgam where he succumbed to his injuries.

Hajin Killings

Two civilians abducted from their homes and then brutally killed, their bodies later found lying in orchards, in Hajin area of Bandipora district between April 3 to April 6. The police blamed the militants for carrying out the killings while the militants rejected the allegations.

*The locals were clueless about the killers. The killings have created fear and uneasiness among the local populace, **The Informative Missive** learnt that the locals were badly disturbed by the killings and have stopped moving alone in the village. The people in Hajin were wondering why the civilians were being targeted by the mysterious gunmen and are questioning the motives behind the killings.*

➤ Hajin youth abducted and killed, family wounded with knives by gunmen

April 3: After killing his son in August last year, militants abducted and killed the son-in-law of Farooq Ahmad Parray in north Kashmir's Hajin town. Family members also suffered grievous injuries, inflicted by knives, when they resisted the abduction of Naseer Ahmad Sheikh, 23, from his father-in-law's home.

Relatives of the family said that at 10:45am on April 2, Monday, some unknown gunmen barged into the house of Farooq Ahmad Parray and asked about the whereabouts of his son-in-law, Naseer, also known as Muntazir.

Sensing trouble, the family members told the gunmen that Naseer had gone to bed and was preparing to sleep. The gunmen forced their way in and pulled Naseer out "almost naked", a relative said. Before they dragged Naseer away, the gunmen took out knives and wounded his mother-in-law Rafeeqa, his wife Neelofar, and his cousin Hilal Ahmad Parray, "who are all admitted in JVC Hospital Srinagar", said Aijaz, a family member.



Naseer Ahmad & Manzoor Ahmad

Aijaz said that Rafeeqa has undergone surgery, Neelofar has a grievous neck injury, and Hilal has cuts in his arm and hand.

After Nasser's abduction, family members and relatives held a protest in the main market of Hajin. The police assured swift action and registered an FIR. On April 3, Tuesday afternoon, the family received a phone call from a farmer in the nearby village of Shahgud. He said, "The body of Muntazir is lying in an orchard."

"We retrieved the body and handed it over to police. After a post-mortem conducted at Hajin hospital, doctors said he died due to a bullet injury in his upper waist. He had a bullet injury in his leg, too, and a deep mark from a knife on his right hand," a relative who accompanied the body to the hospital said.

Doctors at CHC Hajin confirmed to media that the bullet injury in the waist was the most probable cause of Naseer's death.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Bandipora, Sheikh Zulfikar, said that the abduction and killing was the handiwork of a local Lashkar-e-Taiba militant and four of his Pakistani associates.

"Saleem Parray, a local militant from Hajin town, with his four foreign associates, all Pakistanis, have killed Naseer Ahmad Sheikh", the SSP said.

He added that Muzaffar Ahmad Parray, 26, Naseer's brother-in-law and Farooq Parray's son was also killed in August last year by a militant group headed by Mehmood Bhai. "That entire group was killed in November last year," SSP Zulfikar said.

He added that the Parray family was very humble and it is not clear why militants have targeted them.

Naseer ran a tea stall in Hajin market and also worked as a private Maruti car driver.

Married at the age of 18, Naseer is survived by his parents, brother, wife and two daughters: Aisha, a three-month-old toddler, and Zaina, three years old.

Naseer lived only a few hundred meters from his in-laws' house in Par Mohalla and had visited them on April 2.

➤ Abducted youth's body found: head severed, 'raw neck' burned

April 06: "The head was severed from the upper end of the neck with a sharp weapon. The back of the torso was bruised all over, and so were the legs. There was a superficial burn injury on the right chest. The left shoulder seemed fractured and dislocated. The upper end of the raw neck which was separated from the head was burned."

These were observations made by doctors who performed the post-mortem of Manzoor Ahmad Bhat, 25 years old, who was abducted from home late Wednesday night by "unknown gunmen", who also abducted his father, Abdul Gaffar Bhat. The father told media that his abductors "released" him the same night, but only after firing a bullet into his waist.

At his home in Hajin, where family members awaited news of the young man, news beyond their worst nightmares arrived on Friday: one kilometer from their home in Gundboun village, locals had found his decapitated body in an apple orchard.

"We received a phone call from a farmer. He told us the decapitated body of Manzoor was lying in the orchard. We immediately ran to the spot and brought the body to hospital," said a neighbour who was among the men who went to retrieve Manzoor's body.

When the body was brought home, after a post-mortem was conducted at hospital, it was kept for a very brief time. "It was unbearable to many, and the family seemed to lose control over themselves," said a local. After villagers performed the body wash, it was buried in a graveyard at Khos Mohalla after funeral prayers.

According to Abdul Gaffar Bhat, "Two unknown gunmen barged into our home on Wednesday midnight, and took me and my son with them. Though I was released, they fired upon me. My son was taken away and I returned home with a firearm injury in my waist."

Gaffar said that "from the time they took my son, we had been searching for him everywhere in the village."

Manzoor was a labourer who had a small herd of sheep that he grazed on pastures around the village. He is survived by his parents, a brother, and two sisters.

Police say the killing is the work of a group of Lashkar militants. Senior Superintendent of Police

Sheikh Zuflikar told media that Lashkar wants to avenge the killing of its militants last year in this Hajin village.

"It is the reason why they are targeting civilians who are not involved in any criminal activity. They want to spread fear among the villagers," the SSP said.

In an official statement, Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti condemned the beheading of "a youth of Hajin in Bandipora district who was abducted during Wednesday night."

The chief minister said the inhuman way in which the youth was done to death is "against the social ethos and cultural value system of people."

"The Chief Minister has conveyed her sympathies with the bereaved family," the statement said. Former chief minister and National Conference working president Omar Abdullah hit out at pro-freedom leaders for not criticizing and condemning the killing of youth.

"Any shutdown call or call for "peaceful protests" for Manzoor Ahmed who's decapitated body was found in north Kashmir after he'd been abducted and killed by militants? No? I'm not surprised.

The "unknown gunmen" are conveniently termed to give cover to those who don't want to/can't criticize terrorist crimes."

On April 07, two civilians abducted from their homes and then brutally killed, their bodies found lying in orchards, in Hajin area of Bandipora were suspected of being informers for government forces, but both of them were innocent, Senior Superintendent of Police Bandipore, Zulfiqar Azad, told media.

"Both the persons were innocent," Zulfiqar said. "The militants are actually venting out their frustration at the successful security operations in the area. They believed that the two civilians were helping the security forces, working as informers, but the truth is that they had no affiliation with the forces."

On the same day, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) chief Mehmood Shah has strongly condemned the brutal killing of Manzoor Ahmad of Hajin, Bandipora and the attack on women in his family, terming the acts as shameful and inhumane.

Lashkar spokesperson Dr Abdullah Ghaznavi in a statement issued to a local news agency GNS quoted Shah as saying, "It is such a nefarious act that it deserves more than mere a condemnation. Lashkar-e-Taiba has always put up its matters before public. We have never imposed such a punishment on culprits but have exposed them in public. We have no involvement in this murder. We will fully investigate the matter."

Kangan youth succumbs to bullet injuries

April 15: Thousands of mourners participated in the last rites of Amir Ahmad Lone, a civilian who was injured during protests on April 3 and succumbed to his injuries at SKIMS.

Amir, 22, son of Abdul Hamid Lone, was a resident of Chuturgul Kangan. He sustained a bullet injury in the head during clashes with government forces that erupted in Kangan during the funeral procession of a civilian youth from Kangan, Gowhar Ahmad Rather, who died of injuries sustained during police action on protestors. Since April 3, Amir was on life support at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of SKIMS Soura.

Doctors at SKIMS Soura said that Amir succumbed to his bullet injuries on April 15 morning. Medical Superintendent of SKIMS Soura, Dr Farooq Jan, said, "He had been taken off the ventilator. He was in the ward. He was talking," said Dr Jan, adding that Amir may have died due to thromboembolism, in which a clot is formed in a blood vessel that breaks loose and is carried by the blood stream until it plugs another vessel. He said that Amir was hit by a bullet that pierced his head from the right side.

"We were at home and came to know in the evening on that day (April 3) that Gowhar had succumbed to his injuries. Amir left home to attend

funeral prayers of Gowhar. On way to Kangan, Amir and other youth accompanying him were fired upon by troops near the powerhouse at Kangan. He sustained a bullet injury in his head, while others escaped unhurt," a close relative of Amir told Kashmir Reader.

He said Amir suffered excessive blood loss after being hit by the bullet.

Amir was a second-semester student at Government Degree College Ganderbal, the relative said.

Eyewitnesses said Amir was laid to rest at his ancestral graveyard in Chuturgul after people carried his body to the graveyard shouting pro-freedom, pro-Islam and anti-India slogans. Women, children and elderly also participated in his funeral procession.

A witness said that despite nakas (checkpoints)

installed by police at almost all entry and exit points of the area, thousands of people arrived at Amir's home at Chuturgul.

"People started thronging to his residence. A large number of women also reached his home," the witness said.

At about 12:15 in the afternoon, funeral prayers for Amir were held at a local ground. Hundreds of women could be seen beating their chests and wailing upon the body of Amir.

A spontaneous shutdown was observed in Ganderbal district after people heard the news of Amir's death. Shopkeepers downed their shutters and public transport went off the roads.

Baramulla families Clueless why their sons were killed

April 30: The three Baramulla youths who were gunned down by unidentified gunmen near Khanpora bridge in the old town Baramulla. The slain were identified as Asif Ahmad Sheikh, 21, son of Ali Mohammad Sheikh of Mohalla Syeed Karim, and Haseeb Ahmad Khan, 19, son of Gulam Nabi Khan of Kakar Hamam Mohalla and Asgar Ahmad Sheikh, 19, son of Mushtaq Ahmad Sheikh of Kakar Hamam.

Talking to media, Gulam Nabi Khan said that his son Haseeb was studying in Class 12 when he was arrested by police on charges of stone-pelting. Police later shifted him to Kot Balwal jail in Jammu, from where police took him to sit in the Class 12 board exams, but he failed to pass the examination. Khan said his son was not an informer of any pro-India organisation. A driver by profession, Gulam Nabi Khan said that he was in Sonamarg when he heard about the tragedy.

The relatives of Asgar Ahmad Sheikh of Kakar Hamam said that Asgar was arrested by police several times in stone-pelting cases and recently he came out from jail after two months. They said Asgar was not associated with any pro-India organisation. Asgar was the father of two small kids. Asgar's father Mushtaq Ahmad Sheikh is from Pattan area of the district, but

Asgar was living with his divorced mother in Kakar Hamam locality of old town Baramulla.

The father of Asif Ahmad Sheikh, Ali Mohammad Sheikh, also said that his son was not associated with any pro-India organisation. He said that Asif was selling shoes in different areas of the district, mostly in Uri. He said that Asif left studies after Class 6 to start his own work. He said Asif reached home on April 30, Monday, evening but when someone called on his mobile phone, he went out. That was the last time the family saw him alive.

Family members of all the three slain youths appealed to militant outfits that if they had killed them, they must explain why they did so.

Police have said that the three youths were killed by a group of three militants, two of whom were locals and one a Pakistani.

Militant outfit Hizbul Mujhideen condemned the killings and described it as handiwork of agencies.

Resistance groups have also denounced the killings, while the High Court Bar Association called for an impartial probe into the matter.

Family gets info of its disappeared boy lodged in a jail for 20 years

In a rare case of enforced disappearance family of a disappeared man got the strong leads of his survival and location of his detention. Perhaps this is the first case of its nature where a disappeared man was found alive after 23 years of his disappearance.

In the autumn of 1994, a young man Nazir Ahmad Wani, aged 21, son of Ghulam Ahmad Wani of Mangloo village 25 km from Sopore town in Baramulla district left his home without telling anything to his family. His family has no idea where exactly he had gone. The family contacted all their relatives to ascertain his whereabouts but without any success. The family was hesitant to contact the police about his disappearance for their own reasons.

After twenty days of his disappearance, a Gujjar (member of nomadic community) of Rajouri district of Jammu, summer capital of Kashmir, who owns a piece of land in Mangloo village (Sopore) came into the contact with Nazir's elder brother Abdul Rashid when he was enquired by some of his neighbours about

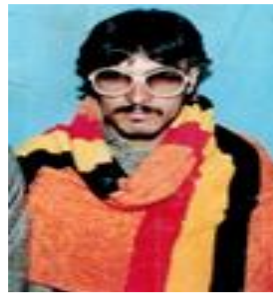
Nazir's whereabouts. The Gujjar informed him that exactly 20 days ago there was heavy firing along the

LOC in Kupwara district and that day some boys had gone to cross over to Pakistan Administered Kashmir (PAK) for arms training. During that period a lot of Kashmiri youth went across PAK to acquire arms training. The Gujjar suspect that Nazir might have been one of the boys who also tried to cross LOC and more likely they might have been intercepted by the armed forces guarding the LOC, as that night he heard heavy firing in the jungles of Kupwara.

This news came as a big shock to Nazir's family who had no inkling of his interest in armed rebellion. It was the

day when Nazir's family gave up all the hopes of his survival.

Suddenly, after 23 years of his disappearance, in July 2017, a heart-warming news reached Nazir's family. The family was told that Nazir was alive and was lodged in Tihar jail.



Nazir Ahmad photo shared by his family taken 20 years ago

A youth of Kanis, Bandipora (name not know) who had gone to meet some of his relative met Nazir in the jail. The youth, who is currently outside the valley, had informed his father to pass on the news to Nazir's family that their son is alive and is lodged in the Tihar jail. Nazir had requested the youth to inform his family about his location of detention. The youth's father has informed Nazir's family through a local youth of Mangloo village who had visited Bandipora in July 2017.

Amir's statement:

Few months later, in December 2017, another boy namely, Amir, aged 17, from Dewar Lolab, informed Nazir's family of his detention location. Amir then was working as a steward in a hotel in Mumbai. Amir had gone along with a Kashmiri colleague namely, Javaid of Kupwara who was going to meet his maternal uncle (Mama) incarcerated in "Byculla or Mikala (need to check the exact name)" jail.

According to Amir, the jail is situated 20 minutes' walk from Haji Ali Dargha. When Amir and Javaid went to get the Mama out of the cell, they were seen by Nazir talking in Kashmir. Nazir was lodged in an opposite cell. Nazir shouted at them, pleading them to come close to him, as he wants to talk to them. Recognizing him as a Kashmiri, Nazir asked Amir about his residence and when he heard that Amir comes from Kupwara, Kashmir he further enquired from Amir that does he know anybody in his native village Mangloo. Then Amir told him yes his parental aunt is married to

SUDDENLY, AFTER 23 YEARS OF HIS DISAPPEARANCE, IN JULY 2017, A HEART-WARMING NEWS REACHED NAZIR'S FAMILY. THE FAMILY WAS TOLD THAT NAZIR WAS ALIVE AND WAS LODGED IN TIHAR JAIL.

Mohammad Ramzan Lone of the village. Then he asked Amir does he know Raja Aapa to which he said yes. When Nazir enquired about her health, Amir told him she had died. After hearing this, he cried loudly

and banged his head with the iron bars of his cell. He told Amir if she would have been alive she would have definitely done something in his case. Nazir literally bowed to Amir's feet pleading him to pass on his survival message to his family and his lodgement location. During the interaction Nazir introduced to Amir one-by-one the names of his family members and the exact address of his family.

During the conversation, Nazir told them that 23 years ago he was arrested in injured conditions by the armed forces while he was crossing over the LOC. He told Amir since his arrest nobody from his family ever came to meet him. Nazir was donned in jail uniform bearing no. 27.

Nazir told Amir that he was shifted from one jail to another. Amir only was able to remember the name of Kathua jail.

After receiving the news, the family has no idea what to do. The family met a lawyer and SHO Warpora whom told them to provide him the exact details of his detention location. Since the family comes from far off village has no idea what to do next. A local of their area asked them to contact APDP to pursue the matter.

Civilian killed during firing practice

April 04: A 50-year-old man died after allegedly being hit by mortar splinters during practice firing by the Army in the Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, a senior police officer said.

Rattan Singh, a resident of Nonial, was hit by splinters during practice firing by army at Gadhi in

Nowshera area of the district this evening, the officer said.

The body of the deceased was removed from the scene and was being handed over to his family for last rites after legal formalities, the official said. Further details are awaited, he said.

Forces besieged civilians in orchard and opened fire

April 03: Farida Banoo, 50, shivers as she recalls the horrific evening of Sunday when her 17-year-old son came home wounded and blinded by pellets.

"It was agonising to see my son's condition. He was pale, his whole body was bruised, and he was covering his left eye with a cloth," Farida told Kashmir Reader in ward number 8 of SMHS Hospital.

She said her son, Asif Mehraj, left home in Feripora village in Shopian when he heard about the exchange of fire between army and militants in Kachdoora village. He went there with his friends. In the evening he came home badly injured.

"He left home in the morning at about 8am, without informing us. We thought he went to his tuition centre. Later we came to know from his friend that he was among the injured in Kachdoora," said Farida.

Asif said he woke up to appeals made from loudspeakers of the local mosque to people to march towards Kachdoora. Minutes later, a teacher called him to inform that the tuition centre will not be open due to disturbance in the area.

"I didn't inform my parents and left quietly with my friends for Kachdoora," he told media at SMHS.

For the next hour or so, Asif walked towards Kachdoora along with other people, covering nearly 4km.

"As soon as I reached there, I saw that an encounter was going on. I could hear the gunshots all around. A sea of people had already gathered there. They were going towards the encounter site to help the militants escape," Asif said.

As they entered a nearby orchard, people started raising slogans and throwing stones at government forces.

"After some time, police, CRPF personnel and army men surrounded the orchard from all sides and shot at us," Asif said. "A barrage of pellets hit me and many people around me. I also saw a civilian dying on the spot."

"I couldn't walk after being hit by pellets. My friend helped me to get away from the orchard," he said.

Asif said that the forces had taken position at the road which is at a certain height above the orchard. He said that the firing became more intense when more army and police personnel were called in. "There was chaos all around. I had no strength to walk anywhere as

bullets and pellets were showered at us. After some hours I walked back home with my friend,” he said.

His mother said that they couldn't take Asif to hospital immediately as army men stopped them at Chawalgam. “His treatment got delayed for two days because army stopped us at Chawalgam while we were going to Kulgam district hospital,” she said.

On April 2, the family sought help from the Nehama hospital in Shopian, which gave them an ambulance to ferry Asif to SMHS Hospital.

According to doctors at the Ophthalmology ward of SMHS, pellets have entered deep into Asif's left eye. “It is very difficult to remove the pellets from his eyes as they have settled behind the eyeball. We have decided to keep him there and administer drugs to prevent any kind of infection and further damage to the eye,” said the doctor who is treating him.

Another survivor, Mohsin Nabi of Memandar, told media that a joint team of police, CRPF and army laid a siege around the orchard to prevent people from reaching the encounter site in Kachdoora.

“I joined many of my village neighbours after early-morning announcements from the mosque. Our village is 3km from Kachdoora and I walked along with

other people. When we reached near the encounter site, we saw thousands of people gathered there. When police attacked us, I tried to escape but was hit by pellets,” he said.

Sabzar Ahmad, another pellet victim who lives in Kachdoora village, recalled the intervening night of March 31-April 1 when militants were trapped in a neighbourhood house. “We were frightened when the firing started at around midnight. We were planning to leave the village to save ourselves but then someone suggested we stay back till the morning,” he told Kashmir Reader.

According to his brother, Adil Ahmad, the family ran away from the village in the morning. But while doing so, Sabzar was hit by pellets in his eye.

“Police targeted everyone who was fleeing the village. We were unaware of Sabzar till a neighbour called from a hospital,” Adil said.

In the evening, the family reached SMHS Hospital, where Sabzar is still admitted.

“He has already undergone one surgery but doctors are not sure about whether he will regain vision or not,” Adil said.

10 lie at B&J Hospital with limbs fractured by bullets

Army fired indiscriminately, ‘like one shoots ducks’, say Shopian residents

April 02: Daanish Hamid, 18, had a close shave with death on April 1, Sunday, in Wangam village of Shopian. He was outside his house, he says, when he saw army soldiers firing indiscriminately at people of his neighbourhood. “I tried to run away but they targeted me also. I felt a painful sensation in my right leg and fell down. I gained consciousness in hospital, after surgery,” he told Kashmir Reader at Bone and Joint Hospital Barzulla, where a surgery was performed on him to remove the bullet in his right thigh.

As many as 10 civilians injured in Shopian district by bullets, which doctors say were fired from “close range”, are admitted at the Bone and Joint (B&J) Hospital. Daanish is still in the trauma ward. He wants to go home, he says. His father, Abdul Hamid, tells him, “There is a curfew in Shopian. It's not safe to go home.”

Daanish said that the army men who fired in his neighbourhood were returning from the encounter site in nearby Kachdora village. His father alleged that the army fired without any provocation, as there was no stone-pelting going on in their area.

“There was a peaceful protest going on in a neighbourhood village. But the army didn't spare anyone,” Abdul Hamid said.

The bullet that hit Daanish shattered his thigh bone. Doctors said that it would take him some months to recover.

Others admitted to the trauma ward narrated a similar ordeal. Most of them said they were shot by the army or by policemen of the “SOG”, special operations group, as the police units engaged in counter-insurgency operations are known in Kashmir.

“They had gone wild. They shot people as one shoots ducks. People were running towards safety when the encounter was going on in Kachdora and Dragad,” said Mohd Altaf, a survivor from Chatterpur village.

“I was sitting in a park when the forces targeted me,” he said.

Nissar Ahmad Bhat of Kachdora said police fired pellets indiscriminately and made use of heavy tear gas shelling to disperse people who had gathered to offer funeral prayers for the slain militants.

“I was also participating in the funeral prayers when the army fired at me, leaving me seriously injured,” he said.

Medical Superintendent of B&J Hospital, Dr Abdul Rashid Badoo, told media that the admitted patients have been operated on. “They need complete bed rest for many months, as bones cannot heal quickly,” he said. “Most of them had fracture in their limbs,” he added.

22-year-old Tanveer Ahmad Malik of Saidapora is unable to move his left arm ever since it was hit by a bullet. But he is grateful that he is alive.

“I am thankful to Allah that I survived,” he said. “I was knocked down after being hit by a bullet and I don't know what happened later. It was mayhem all around. They beat people after hitting them with bullets.” People attending to the injured unanimously asserted that army and police fired “unprovoked.”

“It was totally uncalled for and unjustified,” said Tariq Ahmad of Kachdora.

Pellet horror revisits SMHS Hospital: 41 youth look at partial or complete blindness

April 3: Horror wreaked by pellet ammunition in 2016 has revisited the SMHS Hospital, where at least 41 youths who suffered pellet injuries in anti-government protests in Shopian on Sunday face imminent partial or complete blindness.

In Ward No. 8, 14-year-old Murtaza Hussain writhes in pain. Both his eyes are bandaged shut. An unspecified number of metal pellets have penetrated his face and eyes. He couldn't get a wink of sleep last night, his uncle Ghulam Ahmad said. But more than the pain,

Hussain's family is worried about the ultimate nightmare the mere mention of pellets invoke: vision loss.

An early morning check by the doctor has only added to the worries.

"Doctors said nothing can be said as of now and things will become clear only after a few days or may be a week," said Ahmad.

On the bed next to Hussain's is 17-year-old Abbas from the same district. Both his eyes have been damaged by pellets.

Until bleeding in both eyes of Hussain and Abbas stops, a doctor in the Ophthalmology ward said, the extent of the damage and resulting vision loss can't be predicted at this stage.

More or less, the 41 youth admitted to the hospital on April 1 are destined for the same fate as that of hundreds of persons who ultimately lost sight in one or both eyes during the 2016 protests spanning several months.

Despite repeated assurance from both the Government of India and state government in the past about replacing pellet guns with "less lethal weapons", their use continues.

The Government of India had constituted a seven-member expert team headed by a joint secretary in the home ministry TVSN Prasad to look for an alternative to pellets.

The panel recommended introduction of PAVA (Pelargonic Acid Vanillyl Amide) shells, which were later withdrawn, leaving pellet shot guns as the main weapon for crowd control in Kashmir again.

Later, the forces said aluminum deflectors were being fitted to pellet guns to minimise injuries to eyes but

that did not work. More than 1100 people were hit by pellet in face and eyes during the five-month-long unrest in 2016 triggered by the killing of militant commander Burhan Wani.

"Our young sons are being blinded and their future ruined and nobody is moved, neither the government nor the people. What has happened of our society?" screamed a woman whose son is also admitted in the ward with pellet injury in one eye.

Ten other youths have suffered serious pellet injuries in other body parts during the mayhem in Shopian. They are being treated at the department of neurosurgery.

Among them is Zakir Ahmed, a 20-year-old science undergraduate from Shopian.

Zakir's neck, doctors said, has taken the brunt of an entire pellet cartridge (which has up to 600 metal pellets).

"He is lucky. His spinal cord has been spared by a few millimeters, otherwise the injury could have been fatal," said a doctor treating him.

However, these words of assurance bring no comfort to Zakir's family. "Why is he not able to speak well? Why can't he lift his neck?" a family member asks the doctors. Zakir has suffered fractures in his cervical vertebrae.

He was brought to hospital in a very serious condition and had to be resuscitated.

On April 1, as per official records, 202 people were brought to various hospitals of Shopian, Kulgam, Pulwama and Anantnag with injuries. Most of them had pellet injuries.

Teenager battling for life, many pellet-hit face risk of blindness

April 2: A 17-year-old boy is struggling for life while many pellet-hit youth are facing the risk of permanent blindness, a day after three gunfights in South Kashmir which left 20 people including 12 militants and 4 civilians dead.

A teenager of Gopalpora area of Kulgam who received bullet injury in abdomen on Sunday is critical and is battling for life at Shri Maharaj Hari Singh Hospital (SMHS) Srinagar.

The hospital remains also teeming with the pellet-hit patients, who have been admitted after the clashes between forces and protesters in different parts of Kashmir.

Muneeb Ahmad Wani, a 9th standard student, is among those who received bullets on Sunday at Kachdora, Shopian encounter site—some ten kilometers away from Gopalpora village.

The youth is undergoing treatment at Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of the hospital where his condition is stated to be critical.

Recounting the horror, Muneeb's father Abdul Majeed told Rising Kashmir that his son had gone to play cricket at a local ground with his friends, when he was hit by a bullet.

"It was 11:15 am. They were playing and suddenly heard firing and left the field to reach home. But in the meantime government forces arrived at the spot and chased the youth. There were minor clashes and security forces responded by opening fire on civilians," he said.

The youth has received two bullets, one in abdomen and another has caused damage to his liver, according to the witnesses.

"The place where the firing happened is just 500 meters away from the playground," said Majeed, a laborer.

Earlier, the young boy was taken to primary health centre Mohdipora where from he was referred to district hospital Kulgam and then to SMHS on a critical-care ambulance.

Medical Superintendent SMHS, Dr Saleem Tak, said that "youth has been operated by doctors and is in a critical condition."

"He was operated yesterday but he is serious and is undergoing treatment in the ICU. He has to undergo another surgery," he said.

On April 1, Sunday morning, Alim of Nagbal village in South Kashmir's Shopian district was excited to visit his orchard with his family to spray pesticides on apple trees but was unaware that he will land in hospital just hours later.

At SMHS hospital's Ophthalmology ward Alim, an 8-th class student and his 14-year-old sister, Iqra were discussing how they had planned to enjoy their holiday with their family at the orchard.

"We were busy in spraying pesticides in our orchard. I was helping my family. All of sudden a pellet hit my left eye and I fell down. I do not know where from the pellets came. I screamed," 13-year-old Alim said.

He said their land is near Dragad Sujan where an encounter had started. Alim is the only brother among four sisters. "His left eye has been damaged," said Iqra while wiping his tears. All the beds at hospital's ophthalmology ward remained filled with pellet victims. They shared their tales of the bloody Sunday.

Waseem Ahmad was quick to leave his home to attend funeral prayers of slain militant, Zubair Ahmad Turray (killed in Dragad village) at Eidgah Shopian but government forces targeted those who attended prayers.

"They rained pellets on people who had gathered to offer the prayers. We were not pelting stone. Forces targeted people present in the funeral procession," Waseem said.

Sameer Ahmad is another young boy who has received two pellets in his left eye.

"He was coming back to home from tuitions but was caught in firing and clashes. This is disheartening that forces do not see what they do," Sameer's father, Ghulam Mohammad said.

Naza Begum of Rawalpora Shopian is sitting next to her son Zubair, a 10th class student. He had gone to attend tuition but was fired upon with pellets on way to home.

"I was at home and all of a sudden I received a call at 9 am that my son has been hit by pellets. I did not paid heed first and later felt unconscious at the court yard. I do not know who took his school bag away," she said.

Another pellet-hit youth, Mushtaq Ahmad, of Shopian is not able to open his right eye which has been damaged by the pellets.

"If such incidents happen in any other part of India whole media will highlight it but nobody talks about it. This is most painful," Mushtaq's father said.

At ward 7, another pellet hit youth Adil grabbed the attention of all the patients lying in the beds as his left eye had swelled.

"He has received at least ten pellets on his face. We were on way to work but we were caught in firing incident," Adil said.

At the ophthalmology ward pellet victims had to even share beds. Shukour and Abass, both of Shopian village shared one bed. They were surrounded by a group of friends who arrived at the hospital amid restrictions.

The story does not end here. Mohsin a driver by profession of Arshpora is another fresh pellet hit youth at the hospital.

"He used to takes passengers especially students and employees in the morning in the sumo. On Sunday he left home at 8 am and he was stopped some distance away from our native place by forces. As the passengers alighted from the vehicle he was hit by pellets," his brother-in-law, Mohamad Shafi said.

"I was at work and my cousin informed me over phone about it," he said.

Another woman, Shameema of Shopian is lonely attending her son, a 12th class student on bed 31.

"We were awake for the whole night due to the sound of firing. In the morning we were at home and suddenly the forces raided our area. He was in the courtyard but he too was targeted with pellets. They even fired bullets and pellets on our house. I have never seen such a bad day," she said.

"My husband is already ailing. He is on medicines," Shameema said.

Dr Saleem Tak told Rising Kashmir that they received a total of 40 pellet victims and 4 bullet injury cases.

"All the patients have been hit by pellets on one eye only. Out of 40 pellet victims, 35 have been operated by the doctors, including nine who were treated at surgery and one at ANT," he said. He also said that the remaining patients will be operated tomorrow.

Appeal for an Independent International Enquiry into Kathua Rape and Murder

On January 10th 2018 an eight-year-old Muslim girl belonging to the Gujjar community of nomadic shepherds went missing from the vicinity of her home in Rassana village of Hindu-majority Kathua district of Jammu. Seven days later, her mutilated body was found in the Rassana forest. The girl, who the world today knows as Asifa, (AP story) had been raped and then bludgeoned to death. The Crime Branch investigation has revealed that the child was kidnapped and held captive for five days in a local Hindu temple where she was sedated and repeatedly raped. So far eight men have been arrested for the crime. They include Sanji Ram a former government employee who was the caretaker of the temple, and two policemen. The police say that the crime had been planned for over a month. The main motive behind it is believed to be a land grab. The perpetrators hoped they could terrify the nomadic shepherds and drive them off the lands on which they have traditionally camped to graze their flocks in the winter months, so the land could fall into the hands of local developers. This is borne out by the mass rallies by local members of the Kathua Bar Council and thousands of men and women who belong to the Hindu Ekta Manch (Hindu Unity Forum) waving the Indian Flag and trying to prevent the Crime Branch from filing a charge-sheet and demanding the release of the accused men. It was only several weeks

after the crime, when reports of the crime began to appear in the international press that Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, member of the Hindu nationalist BJP, saw fit to comment publicly. Even then, he chose to remain ambiguous. He said "India's daughters" would receive justice. Implicit in this statement, as well as in the other protests and candle-light vigils by "patriotic" Indians is the fact that the rapes and murders perpetrated by Indian armed forces on Kashmiri men and women—who do not consider themselves to be the sons and daughters of India—do not deserve justice.

The rape and murder of 8 year old Asifa needs to be understood in the paradigm of widespread militarization in Jammu and Kashmir, which is the densest military occupation in the world today. The conflict has claimed more than 70,000 lives so far, and continues to generate vast range of unimaginable forms of violence, including tens of thousands of victims of severe torture and the recent blinding of hundreds of young men and women who were hit in their eyes with pellets from pellet guns. The systematic use of sexual violence as a weapon of war by the armed forces is a common feature of this militarized violence. Owing to the legal and political impunity and zero records of prosecution of crimes by the armed forces, non-state

actors too have felt emboldened to perpetrate sexual violence as a tool of hegemonic politics.

Here are some examples of cases of sexual violence that have taken place over the years. (The documentation that backs up each of these complaints is available in various reports on www.jkccs.net)

1. On 18th of May 1990, an 18-year-old bride and her pregnant aunt were gang-raped by the troopers of the Border Security Forces (BSF) near Badasgam Village in Anantnag. This happened as a bus of a marriage party including the bride and the groom was stopped and fired upon without reason, injuring almost 10 people including the groom. The bride and her pregnant aunt were dragged into the nearby fields and gang-raped. The bride, who was suffering from shock and gunshot wounds, was held in BSF custody for 48 hours. No convictions happened in the case.
2. On the 10th of August in 1990, about 8 to 10 women were raped in Ballipora village in Kupwara by an army patrol of the 6 Rajputs, of the 68 Brigade. The Army was engaged in a gun battle with militants in Pazipora. All men fled from the village and women took refuge in the adjacent Ballipora village. After the encounter, 8 to 10 women were gathered in a cowshed in Ballipora and gang-raped one after the other. About 25 men were killed. The survivors did not pursue the case for the fear of reprisals from the army.
3. On the 23rd of February 1991, during a cordon and search operation while men were tortured in makeshift interrogation centres in villages of Kunan and Poshpora in Kupwara District, soldiers of 4th Rajputana Rifles of the 68 Mountain Brigade raped 40 women. This remains one of the most traumatic memories of the conflict in Kashmir. A recent book by five Kashmiri women *Do You Remember Kunan Poshpora?* meticulously documents the crime and its decades-long aftermath. The case continues to languish in the labyrinth of India's legal system.
4. In 1992, Rashid Pahloo an Ikhwan (State sponsored private militia) Commander from Preng area of Bandipora was accused of repeatedly raping a girl for over four months. Pahloo would visit the victim's house; take her to a separate room where he would rape her. Out of shame she felt, the victim did not say anything to her family. Pahloo's aide Ikhwan Bashir Ahmad Rather alias Chengiz also visited the house of the victim with the intention of raping her. The victim was repeatedly tortured, raped and molested by the Ikhwan group. In 1993, she became pregnant and died after two days of hospitalization as a consequence of rape and torture.
5. On 15 May 1994, a woman in Qazigund area of Anantnag was gang-raped by two soldiers of the 1 Rashtriya Rifles (RR) division. It took the police 11 years, from 1994 to 2005, to complete investigations and submit the documents for seeking sanction for prosecution. After applying for the prosecution sanction the Government of J&K has lost track of the case and nothing at all has been done.
6. On 2nd January 1997, Major Arora and two other personnel of 5 Rashtriya Rifles were accused of raping two sisters and killing their father in Dooru area of Anantnag. One of the sisters was raped by Major Arora and the other was gang-raped by the other army personnel. Their house was burned and the sisters spent the night naked in a bathroom in the

village. The father continues to be disappeared. The available documents, in this case, suggest that not even a court-martial took place.

7. In April 1999, a 43-year-old woman and her 16-year-old daughter from Baldarri in Doda district were gang-raped by the soldiers of the 322 ADA after a grenade blast near their house. They were first assaulted in their house and then taken to the camp at Goha where they were repeatedly raped for 5 days. Then they were released to the custody of the Doda and Bhaderwah police where they were detained for 8 days. The woman's sons, have, on several occasions been detained in the Joint Interrogation Centre and tortured to prevent them from giving testimonies.
8. On 14th February 2000, Captain Ravinder Singh Tewatia of the 12 Rashtriya Rifles along with 3 Special Police Officers (SPOs) entered a house in Banihal, Ramban district of Jammu. The mother and daughter of the house were taken into two separate rooms and raped by the Captain and one of the SPOs while the other two SPOs kept guard. The perpetrators were convicted in a court martial. It was challenged in the High Court and the perpetrators were acquitted.
9. On 3rd June 2001, three women from a single family, from Bihota in Doda were raped by personnel from the 8 Rashtriya Rifles. An FIR was registered in Police Station Doda. Their medical examination was conducted in District Hospital Doda. No investigations were carried out.
10. On the night of 9th February 2002, a woman from Korafali Haand in Doda was raped by armed personnel from 10 Rashtriya Rifles in her neighbour's house, where she and her mother-in-law had taken refuge as the army men had already threatened them during the day. She was 7 months pregnant at the time and developed serious complications in her pregnancy after this incident. She filed a complaint in Police Station Doda on 22nd February 2002. The names of the accused are Naresh Kumar, Pawan Singh, Narendra Singh, Surinder Singh, Lekh Raj, Simran Singh, Raj Singh and few others. No details about any further investigation are known.
11. On the night of 6th November 2004, Major Rahman of the 30 Rashtriya Rifles was accused of raping a 30-year-old woman and her 10-year-old daughter at Badra Payeen village near Langate in Handwara area of Kupwara district. The incident sparked protests in the entire Kashmir valley. Following a court-martial, Major Rahman was dismissed from services but he was later reinstated.
12. On 3rd July 2004, a minor girl was picked up from her school and taken to Zachaldara Police Post in Kupwara where she was tortured. The then DSP Altaf Khan tore off her clothes and kicked her in the abdomen until she lost consciousness. The girl realised that she had been raped while she was unconscious as she was bleeding profusely from her vagina. The girl was then hospitalized for close to fifty days where she was operated upon and her uterus was removed. She filed an application in Handwara Police Station but no FIR was filed. She approached the State Human Rights Commission and in its final decision on 19 November 2008, the SHRC indicted Altaf Khan and recommended an

investigation into the case, which is yet to be carried out.

13. In 2009, a 22-year-old woman and her 15-year-old sister in law were raped and killed, their bodies found a day after they went missing, in the Rambiyar Nallah in Shopian. This incident led to a series of mass protests across Kashmir Valley. The police, after its initial investigation, claimed that it was a case of drowning. The Justice Jan Commission instituted to probe into the case clearly stated that, "it is evident that both the girls were raped and in order to destroy evidence, they were killed". The case was hurriedly transferred to the CBI, which exhumed the bodies of the women and again claimed that the reason for their death was drowning. The CBI further charge-sheeted the lawyers and doctors who had been supporting the struggle for justice.

These are only a few cases that point to the systematic use of sexual violence in Jammu & Kashmir and also to the systematic denial of justice. In most of these cases the families of victims and the survivors have

given up the hope from the existing judicial remedies. Those who are fighting are often coerced into silence. There have either been no investigations in these cases, or investigations have not led to the prosecution and conviction and enquiry commissions have been an eyewash. Sanctions for the prosecution of Armed forces personnel are either denied or not followed up by the State Government. The perpetrators continue to enjoy absolute impunity.

We, the Undersigned appeal to International Organizations, Independent Organizations, Feminists, Gender and Justice Activists to send Independent Fact Finding teams to Kashmir to conduct an impartial investigation into all cases of sexual violence in Jammu & Kashmir.

We also appeal to the United Nations to send a Fact Finding team to conduct an impartial investigation into the massive scale of human rights violations perpetrated by Indian Armed Forces in Indian Occupied Kashmir.

Kathua rape & murder: Chargesheet narrates sordid, horrific sequence of one man after another raping the little Asifa

Former revenue official and custodian of Kathua's Devasthan temple, Sanji Ram, had "separately" tasked his nephew and a policeman with kidnapping 8-year-old Asifa, administering her sedatives, and confining her in Devasthan temple. The conspiracy was hatched days before the little girl was raped and found murdered, the investigation by the police crime branch has revealed.

The crime branch's special investigation team took over the case a week after Asifa's body was found on January 17, seven days after she went missing. It was Sanji's nephew who kidnapped her. "He told Asifa that he had seen her horses. He led her to the jungle and called there Mannu (Parvesh Kumar @Mannu, whose assistance was sought to execute the plan), who was already waiting for his signal," the chargesheet filed by the crime branch reads.

"Sensing some trouble, the victim tried to flee away. The juvenile (Sanji's nephew) stopped her by catching hold of her neck and covered her mouth with one of his hands and pushed her and she fell on the ground. Accused Mannu held her legs and the JCL (Juvenile in Conflict with Law) administered Manars (sedatives) one by one forcibly to the victim," the chargesheet reads.

After the girl fell "unconscious", she was "raped by the juvenile" and later taken inside the temple (Devasthan).

"Mannu also attempted to rape her but could not do it. Later on, they took the girl and kept her inside Devasthan under the table over two chatayees (plastic mats) and then covered her with two darees (cotton thread mats). Thereafter, both JCL and accused Mannu left Devasthan after locking it," the chargesheet says.

Next day at 12:00 noon, the accused Deepak came near the house of accused Sanji Ram and signalled the juvenile, who took keys and left for the temple. "Both of them reached Devasthan, opened the lock and accused Deepak Khajuria @ Deepu directed JCL to fetch water from a tap outside Devasthan. Thereafter, accused Deepak took out a strip of sedatives containing ten (10) tablets. While the JCL lifted the head of the girl, the

accused Deepak Khajuria @ Deepu opened her mouth, put two tablets out of the strip in her mouth and made her to drink water and rubbed her throat with his fingers. Then accused Deepak Khajuria @ Deepu left from Devasthan and the JCL locked the door and hid the strip under a heap of dry grass nearby," it added.

At about 5pm, the accused juvenile went to the temple for lighting the lamp (Jyoti) and to make sure that the girl was "unconscious".

Next day, the chargesheet says, the juvenile telephoned Sanji's son Vishal Jangotra (Shamma) about the kidnapping of the girl, and asked him to return from Meerut in case he wanted to "satisfy his lust".

Vishal returned to Rasana village on the morning of January 12 and the juvenile told him about kidnapping and confinement of the girl in Devasthan. "At about 8:30 am, the JCL again went to Devasthan and administered 3 sedative tablets to the girl while she was unconscious with empty stomach," it added.

After the family lodged a missing complaint with the police, the search for the girl began with the accused special police officer (SPO) Deepak Khajuria part of it. Investigations by the crime branch revealed that Khajuria "advised" the juvenile to give sedatives to the victim on time.

"Accused Sanji Ram had already taken the accused police officials into confidence and settled the deal with them to take care of the things which would ensue in the process of the conspired plan... In pursuance of the settled deal, accused head constable Tilak Raj, who was also accompanying the search party, took accused Sanji Ram to cowshed and reiterated that necessary payments have to be made to the investigating officer of the case, that is, accused sub inspector Anand Dutta in order to save him and other accused from the clutches of law and also not to conduct further searches," the chargesheet says.

On the morning of January 13, the day Lohri festival was being celebrated in Jammu, Sanji along with his son Vishal and nephew went to perform rituals at the temple.

"In the meantime, accused Mannu also reached Devasthan. The accused Sanji Ram left Devasthan from the back gate for performing some rituals and met Deepu who was waiting for him. The accused Vishal Jangotra @Shamma raped Asifa. Thereafter, the juvenile also raped the girl in presence of the accused Mannu. The investigation also revealed that after committing the rape, the juvenile directed accused Vishal Jangotra @Shamma and accused Mannu to leave Devasthan," reads the chargesheet, adding, "JCL again took out 3 tablets out of the strip which he had kept under a heap of garbage near an electric pole outside the Devasthan and gave the same to the girl and again covered her with mats and dropped the utensil container in front of her in order to hide her," it added.

On the evening of Lohri, Sanji was told by his nephew that he and Vishal had gang-raped Asifa inside Devasthan temple. He told them that "the time was ripe to kill the girl".

"Accused Deepak also reached there. On the spot, accused Deepak Khajuria @Deepu told juvenile to wait as he wanted to rape the girl before she was killed. As such, once again the little girl Asifa was gang-raped firstly by accused Deepak Khajuria @Deepu and then by the juvenile," the chargesheet says.

"After committing the barbaric act of rape on the minor victim, the accused Deepak Khajuria @Deepu kept her neck on his left thigh and started applying force with his hands on her neck in order to kill her. As accused Deepak Khajuria @Deepu was unsuccessful in killing her, another accused JCL killed her by pressing his knees against her back and strangulated the girl by applying force on both the ends of her chunni (stole). Thereafter, accused juvenile, in order to make sure that the victim was dead, hit her twice on head with stone," the chargesheet reads.

As per the plan, the body was to be disposed of in a canal at Hira Nagar, which, however, could not materialise because the vehicle was not available.

"The accused on spot decided to dump the body at Devasthan being the safe place till its disposal and, accordingly, the four accused namely JCL, Vishal, Deepak and Mannu lifted the body and dumped it in Devasthan while Sanji Ram was keeping watch outside," the chargesheet reads.

On January 15, Sanji directed his son and nephew to throw the body "in the jungle as it was not safe to keep it inside Devasthan anymore, as people were likely to visit Devasthan on the following day for Fanda which was to be performed by accused Sanji Ram himself."

Subsequently, the juvenile along with accused Vishal went to Devasthan where Sanji's nephew lifted the body on his shoulder. "The accused Vishal Jangotra @Shamma locked the door and JCL disposed off the

dead body by throwing it inside the jungle while accused Vishal Jangotra @Shamma was guarding outside (among the) bushes."

Forensic reports have also corroborated that the victim was kept inside the temple. A strand of hair recovered from Devasthan "matched" with the DNA profile of Asifa.

Similarly, another strand of hair recovered from the temple matched with the DNA profile of Sanji's nephew, "notwithstanding the fact that accused police officials SI Datta and Tilak Raj had made all efforts to destroy the evidence by washing the clothes worn by the deceased," the chargesheet notes.

"The medical opinion also established the fact that the victim had been kept without food and administered sedatives and her cause of death was Asphyxia leading to cardio-pulmonary arrest," the chargesheet says.

Conspiracy against Bakarwals 'abundantly clear'

"During investigation it has become abundantly clear that the accused (Sanji Ram) had a reason to act against the Bakarwal Community and hence the conspiracy ultimately resulting into the gruesome rape and brutal murder of an innocent budding flower, a child of only 8 years of age, who being a small kid became a soft target," said the crime branch in its chargesheet.

Apart from Rasana village, the mastermind Sanji was also against the settlement of Bakarwal community in Dhamyal and Kootah areas. He was motivating members of Hindu community to not provide land for grazing or another kind of assistance to them.

The crime branch corroborated this charge by citing cases where Sanji's involvement was established.

Sanji had started "campaign" against a man named Harnam after he sold his land to a Bakarwal. Sanji utilised the services of former sarpanches of Kootah and Rasana villages against him, the crime branch has mentioned in its chargesheet.

In December last year, Sanji had goats of Rashid, daughter of Chandia Bakarwal, "seized for watering his cattle at a pond near his house and Rs 1,000 was taken from him as fine for releasing the goats".

Sanji also collected Rs 1,000 as fine from Mohammad Yousaf Bakarwal for grazing his cattle in a forest pasture near his house.

"HC (Head Constable) Tilak and SPO Deepak Khajuria were also against the settlement of Bakarwals in Rasana, Kootah and Dhamyal areas. They had already discussed this issue with Sanji Ram to chalk out a strategy for dislodging the Bakarwals from the area. They were blaming the Bakarwals on one pretext or the other and used to threaten them. Accused Tilak Raj and Deepak Khajuria also had some serious issues with Bakarwals over land occupation and crop damage being residents of the same area," it says.

SHRC asks report from Kupwara SSP on brutal beating of handicapped man

March 11: The State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) on Wednesday directed the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kupwara to file a detailed compliance report to answer why a handicapped man from a village of Kupwara was beaten severely by policemen.

The commission directed SSP Kupwara to file the report by May 15, 2018.

A petition filed by a human rights activist stated that on April 5, 2018, a handicapped person

namely Mohammad Wali Mir of Khurhama, Lolab, was brutally beaten by policemen.

"The incident occurred when the handicapped Mir went to buy bread from a nearby baker (kandur) in the morning but on the way was apprehended by police and taken to a nearby police station where he was badly beaten by station house officer (SHO) and other policemen for around 10-15 minutes. Mir asked the policeman what had he done, to which he was beaten

again by the concerned SHO of the police station and other policemen present there,” the petition stated.

At around 1pm, the petition stated, the Deputy Superintendent of SOG (special operations group) was called to the police station and he took away Mir to the SOG quarter.

“At the said quarter his clothes were taken off and the SOG personnel beat him up to pulp. He was asked by the SOG men why you have raised an objectionable flag on a tree, to which Mir replied that he being a handicapped person cannot walk properly how come he will raise a flag at such height. Mir was again beaten and was taken back to police station Koligam. For the whole night he was kept there and on the next morning at around 8am, a dozen SOG men and other policemen started beating him again. The blood started oozing out from his mouth. The concerned SHO of the police station told two policemen to go to Mir’s house

and inform his family to take him back,” the petition stated.

The three family members of Mir came to the police station where they found him in a very bad condition, the petition said, adding that on prior visits made by Mir’s family to the police station, the SHO had not released him.

Later Mir was hospitalised and doctors at the Handwara sub district hospital referred him to Srinagar hospital for better treatment. “The doctors have said that due to the continuous beating, Mir had suffered injuries which can prove fatal for him,” Untoo said in his petition.

The petition prayed that action be taken against the erring police officers and report be submitted before the commission to answer why this kind of injustice is being done with innocent people and that, too, with a handicapped man.

5. Armed Forces Barging into Educational Institutions

As many as three incidents of forced entries into the educational institutions were recorded this month. The forces action has disturbed the education system of these institutions and arrested students arbitrarily allegedly for participating in anti-government protests and used tear smoke shells in one of the institutions. The forces entry into the educational institutions drew condemnations.

➤ **Army barged into Degree College**

April 11: Army and CRPF troops allegedly “barged into” Government Degree College Sumbal in Bandipora district and beat up some students. They also fired teargas inside the college premises due to which several female students fainted, teachers and students of the college said.

The college is located a stone’s throw from the CRPF 45Bn camp and the army’s 13 RR camp near Irrigation Colony Sumbal. Teachers at the college said that the army provoked the students to clash with them by breaking through the college gate when students were shouting slogans in favour of Azadi and against civilian killings in Kulgam.

“Three students were beaten ruthlessly by the army after they forcibly broke into the college premises. They also used tear smoke shells which left many female students unconscious, creating panic and chaos in the college,” an assistant professor at the college told media.

Teachers added that the armed troops were so aggressive that they couldn’t even dare to rescue the students and instead fled to protect themselves.

A college student said, “An army man first climbed the wall and entered the college. He then opened the gate and a cavalcade of bullet-proof vehicles came in. The army personnel chased the youth and caught some of them, whom they beat ruthlessly.”

A professor at the college said, “We escaped from the back side of the college as the armed forces kept us restricted to our college buildings. They were inside the campus and at the gates.”

Later, police came and the army troops left the college, students and teachers said.

➤ **Police enter Baramulla school, 70 detained**

April 23: A day after Education Minister Altaf Bukhari said that students have a right to protest in their schools and colleges, police entered boys higher secondary school Baramulla and thrashed several students who were protesting against the rape and murder of 8-year old nomadic girl of Kathua.

Around 70 students, who were protesting within the school premises, were detained by the police, many of them in injured condition.

The students this morning held a demonstration in the school premises, seeking stern punishment to the persons involved in rape and murder of eight year old Kathua girl.

However, policemen in large numbers entered the school and used force on the protesting students. The police action triggered clashes between the two sides. Police also fired teargas on the agitating students. SSP Baramulla said the detained students would be released “after proper counselling.”

➤ **IUST VC decries unprovoked ‘police action’**

April 26: The Vice Chancellor (VC) of Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) Awantipora has taken strong note of “unprovoked” tear smoke and PAVA shelling into the campus by police, while “normal class work in the university was going on.”

Police said that a “few” tear gas shells were fired after an army party that was laying/repairing a cable came under heavy stone-pelting from some “miscreants/students”.

According to sources in the university, panic gripped students and staff at around noon, when intense firing was heard near the campus.

“We did not know what was happening and tried to take the students to safer places in the building,” a source in the university said, adding that the firing was so intense that they first thought an encounter has broken out inside the campus.

The students and other sources in the university told Kashmir Reader that after a brief lull in the firing, tear smoke and PAVA shells started raining into the campus.

“Dozens of tear smoke and PAVA shells were fired into the campus and into one of the buildings,

suffocating the students and the staff, particularly the female members,” they said.

“The shelling by police continued for more than an hour even as no protests were going on from the side of the students,” the students said.

The VC of the university, Professor Mushtaq A Siddiqui, came out in support of the students and corroborated all that the students were saying happened.

In a press release, issued through Public Relations IUST, Siddiqui termed the police action as “unprovoked”.

“There was no provocation from the students as normal class work was on in the varsity and protests started only after firing incident led to tear gas shelling in

the campus,” Siddiqui was quoted as saying in the press release.

The release also mentioned that the students held a peaceful protest demonstration after the police action.

Police also issued a press release saying some miscreants pelted stones at an army party. “Police rushed to the spot to control the situation. Army was withdrawn and to control the severe and unprovoked pelting by students/miscreants, the police party used a few tear smoke shells to disperse the mob,” the police statement read.

The statement read that the “miscreants” also set on fire the cables being laid by the army. “An FIR has been registered into the incident,” the police said.

6. Sexual violence

➤ **Army personnel arrested for alleged abduction bid on minor in Poonch**

April 15: A serving army personnel, who allegedly tried to abduct a minor girl and attacked a policeman in Poonch district’s Mendhar area of Jammu and Kashmir, was arrested on April 14.

Identified as Gulshan Singh of Dasba village in Hoshiarpur district of Punjab, sources said that he was posted in Balakote sector along the Line of Control. Singh, who had been on leave, came to Mendhar on Friday evening and stayed in a local hotel there. On April 15, he called the girl from her home and brought her to Mendhar bus stand. However, before he could board any vehicle along with the girl, a police party nabbed him; sources said that he Gulshan Singh even attacked a cop in a bid to escape.

An FIR has been lodged at Mendhar police station, and the girl was sent to her parents.

➤ **Police officer hurls obscenities at girl students**

April 18: Some girl students who were part of protests to demand justice for the Kathua rape and murder victim in Anantnag alleged that a senior police officer and his guards hurled obscene abuses at them near the bus stand in the main town.

The video of a girl student who was making such accusations against policemen also went viral on social media.

The students said they were peacefully protesting to demand justice for the minor girl who was raped and murdered in Kathua district when police used force to disrupt their protests.

The girl speaking in the video said that a police officer at a nearby police post hurled obscene and vulgar abuses at her, apart from hurting her physically by throwing stones and firing a tear smoke shell towards her.

“I was walking when they threw stones at me and fired a tear smoke shell in my direction,” the girl says in the video. “When I confronted him, he asked me to sleep with him.”

The girl said that the police were “provoking” the students to pelt stones.

“I also picked up a stone and hurled it at them,” the girl said.

Other girls that media talked to also complained that the said police officer used abusive language against them.

“We cannot even speak the abuses and the obscene language they used to address us,” a girl student, accompanying another to the hospital, said.

The said police officer also allegedly misbehaved with some photojournalists at the general bus stand area of the town and repeatedly tried to stop them from performing their professional duties.

Media reported it tried to get the police version of the incidents but both Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Amit Kumar and SSP Anantnag Altaf Khan did not attend calls made by this reporter.

➤ **3 CRPF personnel suspended over ‘molestation’ case in Jammu**

April 29: Three CRPF personnel have been suspended for allegedly molesting a girl and circulating videos here. “On March 10, at 2200 hrs, a girl, along with two CRPF personnel, was found inside GC CRPF Bantalab Campus which prima facie seemed to be a case of security breach,” a CRPF spokesperson said in Jammu.

He said accordingly the matter was informed to Civil Police who also examined the lady and CRPF personnel as molestation was alleged, adding, “The two CRPF personnel were suspended nevertheless as it was found to be a lapse in security prima facie.”

“The video of the episode was circulated on social media after which the woman lodged complaint at Domana police station alleging outraging her modesty by CRPF personnel,” he said.

The spokesperson added that the CRPF personnel who circulated the video in media have been suspended by superior authorities.

“The matter is being investigated by the police,” he said and added that the CRPF is rendering full cooperation to the J&K Police in investigation so that the guilty get due punishment.

Police sources said a woman hailing from Poonch had lodged a complaint that she lost the way and was taken inside the camp by the CRPF men but instead of help, she was allegedly raped, beaten and filmed.

7. Harassment of Kashmiris Living Outside

➤ **NIA picks up seven Kashmiri students from Banda madarsa**

April 04: In a major crackdown, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) has picked up seven Kashmiri students from Jamia Arabia Madarsa in Banda district of Bundelkhand region on late Wednesday evening. The arrested students were suspected to be part of a valley-based terror network, however, there has been no official confirmation of the arrests by NIA.

As per the sources, an NIA team had visited the Banda madarsa last month on the suspicion of their links with terrorists activities. After a thorough probe, NIA identified seven Kashmiri students and arrested them. Before making the arrests, the agency officials had grilled the students along with Madarsa coordinator on campus.

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According to Madarsa coordinator Habib Ahmad, two NIA officials arrived in madarsa on Wednesday afternoon and conducted a prolonged closed-door interrogation of seven Kashmiri students who were studying Arabi in the institution. The coordinator said that in all nine persons were grilled by NIA officials and that they wanted specific information about an ex-student Tauseef Ahmed who had also learnt Arabi from the same madarsa and hailed from Kashmir. He was arrested by the probe agency a few days back in the valley. Following the interrogation, the NIA officials took all seven students into custody. However, according to highly placed sources, NIA got the clue about Kashmiri students from Tauseef's diary which had their reference.

Notably, Jamia Arabia Madarsa is situated in Hathaura village under Dehat Kotwali police station area, 16 km from main Banda city. A renowned institution of Islamic education, this madarsa was established way back in 1933.

However, the madarsa aalims and maulvis spoke very high of the students picked by NIA. "They were very bright students of out institution. We could never get the air of any of the links with terror outfits. All seven were very diligent and brilliant students who were completely focused on their curriculum," said Moahmmad Yunus, a teacher at the Madarsa.

➤ **Kashmiri student in Punjab arrested by Cyber Cell Delhi for being 'pro-Pak' hacker**

April 27: A Kashmiri youth studying Computer Applications at a Jalandhar college was abducted early Friday morning by gunmen in plainclothes, who later turned out to be sleuths of Delhi Police's Cyber Cell, from his rented accommodation while six of his roommates were held at gunpoint.

The youth has been identified as 23-year-old Adil Yousuf Teeli, son of Muhammad Yousuf, resident of Nanmani Yaripora in south Kashmir's Kulgam district.

All through the day the police in Kashmir and Adil's family had no information about why he had been picked up. Late in the evening, the Delhi Police issued a statement that they had arrested two "pro-Pak" Kashmiri hackers, Adil Teeli being one of them.

The Delhi Police accused the arrested duo of being a part of an "anti-national" hacking group called "Team Hackers Third Eye".

"The group claims to have hacked 500 Indian websites so far," the Delhi Police's statement read.

The Delhi Police also alleged that the two Kashmiri hackers had been in touch with several Pak-based anti-India hackers. "Some of them are believed to be backed by Pak Intelligence agencies," the Delhi Police said.

The press release identified the other Kashmiri hacker as 28-year-old Shahid Malla, son of Ghulam Ahmad Malla, a BTech second-year student at Aryan Group of College in Rajpura, Punjab.

"He is permanent resident of Watergam, Rafiaband, in Baramulla district, J&K, and was staying in a rented accommodation in Sheetal Colony, Rajpura, Punjab," the statement read.

The duo, as per Delhi Police, has been arrested under FIR Number-47 dated Apr 27, 2018. The statement does not specify the sections under which the duo has been booked.

The Delhi Police have accused the duo of "educating Kashmiri youth to bypass state-imposed social-media ban by use of VPN during April-May, 2017."

"Further, they were found to be pro-Kashmiri terrorism and pro-Pakistan through their anti-India and seditious posts. Laptops, mobile phones, SIM cards, internet dongles and memory devices recovered from them will be examined by Delhi Police in detail to ascertain anti-state activities," the statement read.

Delhi Police said that the two are likely to be produced before court by Friday evening and taken on police remand for further questioning.

A Kashmiri youth studying Computer Applications at a Jalandhar college was abducted early Friday morning by gunmen in plainclothes, who later turned out to be sleuths of Delhi Police's Cyber Cell, from his rented accommodation while six of his roommates were held at gunpoint.

Earlier in the day, SSP Kulgam Harmeet Singh told Kashmir Reader that he had been in touch with his counterparts in Punjab and it had come to fore that sleuths of Delhi Police's Cyber Cell arrested Teeli.

"Even Punjab Police did not know who had arrested him. Now we have gotten in touch with the Cyber Cell and we have been told that he was arrested in connection with an FIR," Singh said.

He said that the student's family had been intimidated about his arrest.

"We do not know what the case is, but we are in constant touch with the Cyber Cell," Singh said.

Teeli is a student of sixth semester of Bachelor of Computer Applications (BCA) at one of the colleges of the St Soldier's Group in Jalandhar city in Punjab.

He lives at a rented accommodation in 35-A, Mithu Basti, near his college, along with seven other students from Kashmir.

"At about 6:00 AM in the morning, while one of our roommates had gone for morning prayers, armed men in civvies barged into our flat and started inquiring about our names," one of the roommates of Teeli told media over phone.

He said that Teeli was singled out as soon as he uttered his name.

“They took hold of him and started to drag him away. When we inquired about the identity of the intruders and why our friend was being taken away, they pulled out their pistols and held us at gunpoint till they walked out of the building,” the roommate said.

Since morning, the roommates and other Kashmiri students at the college said, they had been making rounds between the local police station and the administrative office of their college.

“The police were initially reluctant in filing an FIR, and our Principal, Dr Pushkar Nath, scolded us for going to police,” the students said.

They alleged that the principal, when approached, shooed them away from his office.

The students quoted the principal as saying, “How would I know he wasn’t a terrorist? Kashmiri students have been arrested in JNU as well. Go away. I have nothing to do with this drama.”

Media tried to reach Nath on his mobile number but a lady picked up and after inquiring about the purpose of the call, she disconnected and switched off the phone.

Back home in Yaripora, Teeli’s worried family had been making repeated rounds to the local police station to get some information about their son.

“We are still outside Yaripora police station and have been told to wait. We got to know through the media that he has been picked up by the Cyber Cell. We don’t know why or how,” Teeli’s father, Muhammad Yousuf, told media in the afternoon.

Police say Beauty Jan of Shopian was killed by militants, not forces

April 27: The police have stated before the State Human Rights Commission that Beauty Jan of Shopian was killed by militants, not by the government forces.

The family of the woman and local residents have said that Beauty Jan was killed when armed forces fired bullets to disperse protesters near an encounter site in Shopian on December 19, 2017. “She was inside her home with her suckling child in her lap when a bullet was fired in her abdomen from a window,” the family says.

In reply to a petition filed by chairperson Centre for Peace and Protection of Human Rights, MM Shuja, police stated, “An inquiry was conducted into the matter through additional director general of police (ADGP) CID Jammu and police headquarter received a detailed report from CID headquarters which reveals that on 18th December 2017 on a specific information regarding presence of militants at village Batmuran, Wanpora Shopian, a joint cordon and search operation was launched by security forces.

“During search operations terrorists hiding in the residential houses fired indiscriminately upon security forces. The fire was retaliated as a result of

which some security forces personnel/civilians received bullet injuries. The operation continued till next day and ultimately all terrorists were eliminated and arms and ammunition recovered.

“During the course of investigation one injured lady Beauty Jan succumbed to her injuries. After completion of legal formalities her body was handed over to her next of kin for last rites.

“During further course of investigation, it came to surface that indiscriminate bullets fired by the terrorists from the house they were hiding in, not only injured the forces but also civilians including Beauty Jan.”

Deputy commissioner Shopian didn’t corroborate the police line. However, he sought to justify the killing of Beauty Jan by stating: “Since AFSPA is in force in district Shopian (along with other districts) no permission is sought from a magistrate before opening fire in militancy related cases.”

The Commission had sought personal appearance of SSP and DC Shopian in the case, but the officials didn’t appear before the Commission.

8. Violations Due to Explosive Devices

Shepherd injured in mine blast near LoC

April 23: A 60-year-old shepherd was critically injured when he accidentally stepped over a landmine near the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir’s Poonch district, police said.

Abdul Gani lost his left foot in the blast at the Khari Karmara sector around 3.45 pm and was admitted to a hospital, a police official said.

He said the shepherd was tending his sheep and goats when he stepped over the landmine causing the explosion.

The landmines are laid along the LoC to prevent infiltration of terrorists from across the border and sometimes these get carried away due to rains.

Boy injured while fiddling with explosive

April 12: A young boy was injured grievously after he fiddled with some explosive at Khudwani gunfight site.

The injured has been identified as Shahid Rafiq Dar, son of Muhammad Rafiq, a resident of Ganjipora village near Khudwani.

A police official told media that the boy picked up some explosive from the site and took it along to his home.

“The thing has exploded in his hand along the way,” the official said.

Shahid was immediately shifted to Anantnag district hospital and to SMHS hospital from there.

“Yes, we received an injured boy. He had injuries to his hand and face,” a doctor at the district hospital told media.

He said that Shahid was immediately referred to SMHS in Srinagar for further treatment.

Govt shuts schools for 24 days upto mid-April

Apr 29: The students have faced loss of 24 days of academic work upto April15 in view of the closure of

academic institutions forced by the government due to precarious security scenario.

Since the opening of academic institutions after a winter break, out of 47 days of academic work the

classes were held only for 23 days upto mid-April.

UN chief concerned about situation in Jammu and Kashmir

April 03: UN chief Antonio Guterres is "very concerned" over the situation in Jammu and Kashmir and wants all member states to protect their civilians, his spokesperson has said.

His remarks came after Indian security forces, on April 1, gunned down 13 militants in three counter-insurgency operations that also claimed the lives of three army jawans and four civilians in Anantnag and Shopian districts of Jammu and Kashmir.

UN chief Antonio Guterres concerned about situation in Jammu and Kashmir.

"The Secretary-General is, indeed, very concerned about the situation that we've seen in Jammu and Kashmir. He would like to remind that Member States are responsible under international humanitarian

law to protect civilians," Stephane Dujarric, spokesman for the UN Secretary-General, told reporters at his daily press briefing on Monday.

He said the Secretary-General reiterated his call to nations to find ways to address disputes in a peaceful manner.

He added that civilians need to be protected wherever they are, "whether it's in Gaza, whether it's in Jammu and Kashmir, or whether it's in Yemen. It's a basic principle of this organisation."

When asked if the Secretary-General is calling for an investigation into the matter, Dujarric said "any loss of civilians needs to be investigated wherever they occur".

GK employees thrashed by forces

April 12: Paramilitary personnel thrashed the driver and another employee of Greater Kashmir late April 11 evening when they were on way to their homes.

Greater Kashmir driver Bilal Ahmad and another employee Farooq Ahmed Parray were on way back to their homes when stopped at Safa Kadal in downtown.

"All of a sudden, forces personnel, who seemed to be from the CRPF as they were speaking

Hindi, dragged us out of the vehicle and beat us," Farooq said.

He said they were thrashed without any justification and despite showing their identity cards.

Greater Kashmir, quoting CRPF spokesman Rajesh Yadav reported that CRPF men were not deployed late night at Safa Kadal. "Our men are not involved in any such incident," he said.

1314 eyes of 1253 victims impaired since 2016 alone

April 07: Medical evidence is mounting to show the devastating effects, like blindness, of eye injuries caused by metal pellets fired from shotguns used by government forces for crowd control in Kashmir.

Continuing use of the indiscriminate guns has caused injuries blinding 1314 eyes of 1253 victims since 2016 alone. The so-called 'non-lethal' weapon has also caused deaths since it was introduced in Kashmir during the public uprising of 2010.

A number of empirical studies conducted on Kashmiri victims of the weapon recently published in international scientific journals emphasise the irreversible nature of damage caused to their eyesight.

"Pellet injuries in eye causes serious visual decline due to vitreous hemorrhage, cataract and retinal detachment," states a recent study on pellet victims from Kashmir.

A research paper titled Management of Ocular Pellet Injury was published in Global Journal of Medical Research (USA). The study, first since 2016 when mass scale pellet injuries were caused in Kashmir, has been carried out by doctors from an eye hospital in Amritsar on pellet victims visiting from Kashmir for treatment.

According to this study chances of regaining normal vision in an eye injured by pellets were minimal.

Another study (Pellet Gun Fire Injuries in Kashmir Valley - Cause of Ocular Morbidity) has documented how chances of improvement of vision "remained poor despite development of advanced micro-surgical techniques". The findings were published in Journal of Evolution of Medical and Dental Sciences.

Researchers found over 50 percent of eyes injured by pellets "had only perception of light" at the time of presentation in the hospital, "reflecting the severe nature of trauma caused by gun pellets".

After multiple surgical interventions, the final corrected vision remained "unchanged" in about 35 percent of victims, researchers found.

"About 50 percent of the cases had final corrected visual acuity less than 6/60" according to the study, meaning the person is able to see something at only 6 meters what someone with standard vision could see from 60 meters away.

An earlier study published in International Journal of Medical Science and Public Health found that only 16 percent of people who had been hit by pellets in eyes had vision more than 20/40, meaning "vision half good as normal".

The rest, 84 percent pellet victims, had blindness of varying degrees. One in three could not see beyond movement of hands in front of their injured eye.

An article published in Indian Journal of Medical Ethics in 2016, quoting from various clinical studies on pellet injuries concludes that the weapon was "far from being a benign non-lethal weapon" and has "far-reaching human costs".

Since the wide scale protests sparked by the killing of militant commander BurhanWani in July 2016, some 1253 victims of eye injuries caused by pellet guns have been treated at SMHS Hospital Srinagar, according to data accessed by media. Of these, 61 were injured in both eyes.

The use of pellet guns causing "dead eye epidemic" in Kashmir in 2016 caused an international outrage.

The Government of India at that time announced that it would introduce a less lethal alternative for the pellet gun, but it continues to be used as a 'weapon of choice' against civilian protesters across Kashmir.

Later the government also claimed defectors were fitted to pellet guns to avoid hitting eyes of protestors in a crowd.

12 civilians shot dead near encounter sites this year

Apr 11: In over three months of this year, at least 27 civilians have been killed in Valley and 12 of them died in forces firing near the encounter sites.

Four civilians were killed in forces firing on protestors near encounter site at Khudwani on April 11.

The trend of rushing to encounter sites in the Valley started after killing of Hizbul Mujahideen commander Burhan Wani in an encounter with forces on July 8, 2016.

The first civilian killing near gunfight site this year was also witnessed from Khudwani.

On January 9, 22-year-old Khalid Ahmed Dar of Ghat village of Khudwani, Kulgam was killed in army firing on protestors.

Dar's killing happened in the aftermath of the killing of a militant Farhan Ahmad Wani of Redwani

9. Official Statements

➤ War on terror in Jammu and Kashmir entered decisive phase: Deputy CM Nirmal Singh

April 07: Hinting at continuation of its policy deal to sternly deal with militants in the Valley, Deputy Chief Minister Dr Nirmal Singh said that those holding the gun will be dealt the same way.

“Sarkar ki policy bilkul clear hai. Jishey haath mein bandook hai usko usi tarkey se treat kiya jayega, aur jo wapaa aana chahtey hein...jinhoney crime nahi kiya hai unko concessions de ja sakti hein. Lekin agar algaowad aur ugarwad to le kar agey chalengey to unkey saath usi tarekey se treatment hoga jo ho raha hai” (Government policy is very clear that those holding the gun will be treated the same way and concessions can be given to those who wish to return home and who have not committed any serious crime. However, if they continue to tread the path of terrorism and separatism, they will be treated the same way like present), he told media persons after holding public durbar meeting party workers and general public at state BJP headquarters here on Saturday evening.

Pointing out that war against terror has entered a decisive phase in the Valley, he said, “dekhiye halaath kafi sambley hue hein. Yeh jo hai, pichely kai salon se chalta rehta hai. Badi baat hai ke situation humarey control mein hai. Terrorists jo hein bagh rahey hein ja marey ja rahey hein. Patharbazi par kafi rok lagi hai” (See, situation has improved to a greater extent. While the present incidents of violence have been taking place for past many years, the important thing is that situation is under control. Terrorists are either on the run or they are getting killed. Incidents of stone pelting too have stopped to a greater extent).

When his attention was drawn towards opposition demand to government for initiating dialogue, Singh asked “with whom”...“Those who are killing innocents, or with those who using hawala money are provoking youth to indulge in stone pelting”. While he criticized mainstream opposition of politicking over it demand for dialogue with Pakistan and the separatists, Singh also slammed Hurriyat Conference leaders of maintaining silence when an innocent is killed by militants. However, in the event of a militant getting

But, out of the 51 people brought to SMHS Hospital with pellet injuries on April 1, 41 had injuries to their eyes.

Khudwani, Kulgam in an encounter at Pehipora, Larnoo Kokernag.

On January 16, Mohammad Ayoub Bhat of Mulu Chitragaam succumbed to injuries. He had received three bullets during a gunfight in Batmuran village of Shopian

On January 24, a civilian Shakir Ahmad Mir of Kalampora Pulwama was killed in crossfire during gunfight at Chaigund village Shopian.

On February 10, Saima Wani of Odo, Shopian succumbed at SKIMS. She was injured in Chaigund encounter on January 24.

On April 1, four civilians were killed, three of them during clashes near two gunfight sites at Kachdoora and Dragg in Shopian.

killed at the hands of police or security forces, they immediately give hartal call, he added.

However, to initiate dialogue with those seeking an amicable solution to their problems through peaceful means, the Central government has appointed a special representative Dineshwar Sharma, he added.

➤ Shun stone pelting to stop use of pellet guns: CRPF to youth

April 09: A top Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) officer said the Kashmiri youth should desist from pelting stone on forces as that was the “best” alternative to pump action (pellet) guns that are being used by force personnel for crowd control in Valley.

“The best alternative to pellet guns is that people should not come and throw stones,” Additional Director General CRPF for Jammu and Kashmir zone, V S K Kaumudi told Rising Kashmir on sidelines of CRPF's valour function at Recruitment Training Centre, Humhama.

He was responding to a question whether there can be alternative to use of pellet guns for crowd control in Kashmir.

Kaumudi said all the law and order components of CRPF were using deflector-fitted pump action guns, locally called as pellet guns in Kashmir.

“Whatever the number of pellet guns have been given to all CRPF law and order components in Kashmir, are fitted with deflectors and pellets are fired in a lower direction. But, people naturally get hit by pellets when they bent down to pick stones,” ADG CRPF said without revealing the exact number of total pellet guns fitted with or without deflectors.

➤ 68 civilians killed since 2017, 42 near encounter sites

April 11: In the face of continuing killing of civilians near the sites of gun battles between militants and government forces in Kashmir, director general of police, Dr S P Vaid hinted that amendments to the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the forces may be amended.

During an exclusive chat with meia , Vaid suggested a meeting for this purpose of “top security officials of the grid” saying the civilian killings were not a point of prestige for the police as “they are our own people.”

“Any change in the SOP is the prerogative of the senior officers (of security grid). Once they would sit, they can deliberate upon it and try to find out possible loopholes in the SOP,” Vaid said.

Last year at least 55 civilians were killed across Kashmir, 30 of them during numerous gun battles between militants and government forces, according to police records. Such killings have continued in 2018 leaving 13 dead so far.

“We have been repeatedly appealing people not to go closer to the encounter sites, but they don’t listen and instead risk their lives,” Vaid said.

➤ **We have failed Asifa as humans: VK Singh**

April 12: In the first reaction from a BJP minister on the horrific rape and murder of Asifa, Union Minister of State for External Affairs VK Singh said that “we as humans” failed Asifa, but she would not be denied justice. Singh made the statement in a tweet.

➤ **Justice will be delivered: Mehbooba**

April 12: Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti said her government would not allow law to be obstructed and justice would be delivered in the rape-and-murder case of an 8-year-old Bakerwal girl Asifa Bano in Kathua district.

The rape-and-murder of Asifa has created a controversy after lawyers in Jammu called for a shutdown yesterday, demanding case be handed over to the CBI.

“The law will not be obstructed by the irresponsible actions and statements of a group of people. Proper procedures are being followed, investigations are on the fast track & justice will be delivered,” Mehbooba said in a tweet.

Mehbooba further said, “I want to assure the entire nation that I stand committed not just to ensure justice for Asifa but also seek exemplary punishment for those responsible for a crime whose brutal savagery has shamed humanity”.

“We will never ever let another child suffer in this way. We will bring a new law that will make the death penalty mandatory for those who rape minors, so that little Asifa’s case becomes the last,” she added.

➤ **Civilians thronging gunfight sites responsible for their deaths: DGP**

April 12: The solution to the Kashmir problem lies not in the gun but in everyone sitting down to talk, including Pakistan, J&K Director-General of Police SP Vaid said on Thursday in a live question-answer session on the JK Police’s official Twitter handle.

When asked about suggestions on resolving the Kashmir conflict, Vaid said: “I wish the Kashmir problem was so simple that I could answer in one reply. So many brains have been working for decades to find a solution. It is not so simplistic a problem. I personally feel that gun is not the solution. Every party concerned, including our neighbour (Pakistan), should sit together and talk it out. Violence is not the solution.”

Responding to another question on civilian killings during encounters, Vaid said that the civilians

thronging encounter sites were themselves responsible for their deaths. He said that bullets don’t distinguish between a boy, a stone-pelter, and a militant.

Saying that encounter sites were not venues where “marriage of militants was going on”, Vaid urged the youth to stay away from the danger zones.

Vaid said that the Jammu and Kashmir Police was making every effort that not a single civilian should get hurt. “Why are these boys coming near the encounter sites? It is not that the marriage of a militant is going on,” he said.

To another question on regular internet blockades in Kashmir, the state’s police chief said that his effort is to minimise the disruption of internet. “I am totally against it. But let me tell you there is mischief and misuse of it to spread hatred and false propaganda. This is what we want to prevent,” he said.

Vaid also blamed the “national media” for not playing a constructive role in Kashmir. “I agree, national media is not playing a very constructive role. We have been counselling them. The discourse of the national media as well as the local media should be such that it doesn’t hurt the sentiments of the Kashmiri people,” he said in response to a question.

Kathua rape victim’s family should get justice: Rajnath

April 13: Amidst nationwide outrage over the rape and killing of an eight-year-old girl in Kathua in Jammu and Kashmir, Home Minister Rajnath Singh said her family should get justice.

The Home Minister also said he has spoken to BJP President Amit Shah and Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti on the issue.

“The victim’s family should get justice,” Singh told reporters when asked about the case.

The minor girl, who belonged to the nomadic Bakerwal Muslim community, had disappeared from her house in Kathua on January 10. A week later, her body was found in the same area, and medical examination pointed towards sexual assault.

➤ **Neither us nor militants will achieve goals through the gun: army chief**

April 15: Indian Army chief General Bipin Rawat on Sunday said that radicalised youth of Kashmir Valley would soon realise that the gun was not the solution to their problem as neither the army nor the militants would achieve their goals through it.

Peace, he said, was the only way to improve the situation in Kashmir. “There is hope that the situation in Kashmir will improve. It’s not gone wrong. There are some youths in Kashmir who have strayed and have been radicalised. They think they can achieve their goal through guns. But the time is not far when even they will be convinced that neither the forces nor the terrorists will be able to achieve their goal. We have to together find a way for peace and we will be successful in that,” Gen Rawat said.

The army chief was speaking at the 70th foundation day of Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry regiment.

He said that although a section of people in the valley had strayed but that was a “very small” number and majority of people desired peace and believed that they were Indians.

“It is wrong to say that situation in Kashmir has deteriorated. The atmosphere is vitiated but the situation has not deteriorated,” he said.

Gen Rawat, who served extensively in Kashmir through his tenure, said the concept of ‘Kashmiriyat’ had to be brought back and the process must be initiated from the University of Kashmir.

He noted that ‘Unity in Diversity’ was the real essence of Kashmiriyat and it was important to inform the young generation about it.

“To revive that Kashmiriyat, we need to get our act together. It is not difficult. We have to get our act together, sit down together, work together and make sure that we all get united and bring about peace,” he said.

➤ **166% more civilian fatalities in JK in 2017:**

MHA

April 18: Jammu and Kashmir witnessed 166 per cent more civilian fatalities due to militancy while there was a 42 per cent rise in number of terrorists neutralised in 2017 compared to the previous year, the Home Ministry said.

The annual report of the Ministry of Home Affairs for 2017-18, released today, said that since the advent of militancy in Jammu and Kashmir in 1990, a total of 13,976 civilians and 5,123 security personnel have lost their lives till December 31, 2017.

“The year 2017 also witnessed a 6.21 per cent increase and 166.66 per cent increase in the number of terrorists incidents and fatalities of civilians respectively in comparison to the corresponding period of 2016,” the report said.

In 2017, there were 342 violent incidents in Jammu and Kashmir in which 80 security personnel, 40 civilians and 213 terrorists were killed.

There were 322 incidents in the state in 2016 in which 82 security personnel, 15 civilians and 150 terrorists were killed.

According to the report, there was 2.44 per cent decrease in casualties in security forces.

There has been a spurt in infiltration attempts last year from the Pakistan side -- from 371 in 2016 to 406 in 2017. As many as 123 infiltrations were successful in 2017 in comparison to 119 in 2016.

➤ **In 5 years, Kashmir witnessed spurt in violence, infiltration: MHA**

‘13,976 civilians and 5123 forces’ personnel killed in 28 years of militancy’

Apr 20: Kashmir has witnessed a spurt in violence and infiltrations during last five years, reveals the annual report of Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

According to MHA report from 2013 to 2017, there have been 1264 incidents of violence during which 1064 persons were killed. The deceased include 648 militants, 115 civilians and 301 forces personnel.

2017 witnessed a 6.21 percent and 166.66 percent increase in number of militancy-related incidents and civilian casualties respectively in comparison to the corresponding period of 2016. However, there is 2.44 percent decrease in casualties of forces in comparison to the corresponding period of 2016. During the year 2017, 42 percent more militants were killed in comparison to the corresponding period of 2016.

The MHA data reveals spurt in incidents of violence in Valley with 2017 recording 342 incidents of violence in which 213 militants, 80 forces’ personnel and 40 civilians were killed during last year—highest since

2013 when only 170 incidents of violence were witnessed in the region.

According to the report, 322 incidents of violence were witnessed in 2016 in which 150 militants, 15 civilians and 82 forces personnel were killed.

However, it doesn’t mention about the 2016 unrest in which nearly 100 civilians were killed post-Burhan Wani killing.

In 2015, 108 militants, 39 forces personnel and 17 civilians were killed in 208 incidents of violence while in 2014, 110 militants, 47 forces personnel and 28 civilians were killed in 222 militancy-related incidents in Valley.

2013 witnessed lowest magnitude of violence. 67 militants, 53 forces personnel and 15 civilians were killed in 170 incidents of violence this year.

The report further reveals 13,976 civilians and 5123 force personnel have lost their lives since the outbreak of militancy in the State in 1990.

According to MHA report, the militancy in J&K is intrinsically linked with infiltration of militants from across the Line of Control (LoC) and International Border.

Infiltrations

According to the data, during the past five years, the highest infiltrations attempts and net estimated infiltrations by militants was witnessed in 2017.

The number of infiltration attempts by militants from across the border jumped to 406 in 2017 from 277 in 2013 despite the Government of India and state government adopting a multi-pronged approach to contain infiltration.

As per the data, 222, 121 and 371 infiltration attempts were recorded in 2014, 2015 and 2016 respectively.

According to the report, 123 net estimated infiltrations by militants was recorded in 2017—highest in last five years.

The figures reveal 97 net estimated infiltrations by militants was recorded in 2013, 65 in 2014, 33 in 2015 and 119 in 2016 respectively.

The multi-pronged approach to contain infiltrations includes strengthening of the border infrastructure, multi-tiered and multimodal deployment along International Border and LoC and near the ever-changing infiltration routes.

According to MHA report, the counter infiltration grid also includes construction of border fencing, improved technological surveillance, weapons and equipment for forces, improved intelligence and “operational coordination besides synergized intelligence flow and pro-active action against militants” within the state.

“The government has adopted various countermeasures to counteract the efforts and capabilities of militants to disturb “peace” and has also encouraged policies to mainstream the youth, including providing employment opportunities to wean them away from militancy,” added the youth.

➤ **In 28 years, GoI spends over Rs 68 bn on security in Kashmir: MHA**

Apr 21: The Government of India (GoI) has spent over Rs 68 billion on forces during last 28 years of militancy in Kashmir, reveals the annual report of Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

The GoI has spent Rs 6871.52 crores on security-related expenditure in Kashmir till 2017 since the eruption of militancy in Valley in 1989, the MHA report revealed.

It states that the total amount reimbursed to J&K government from 1989 till 31 December 2017 under Security Related Expenditure (SRE)-Police is Rs 6871.52 crores. In order to support the State government in its initiatives, the GoI has been making available Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) as and when necessary and has also been helping to strengthen Jammu and Kashmir police, the report states.

During 2017 financial year, GoI reimbursed a sum of Rs 627.87 crores under security-related expenditure (Police) to the State Government.

The MHA reimburses the expenditure incurred by the State government on a variety of security-related measures including expenditure on carriage of constabulary, material supplies, rent of accommodation, honorarium to Special Police Officers, Civic Action Programmes—a public reach out initiative, air-lift charges, raising cost of India Reserve Battalions, transport, boarding and lodging, alternate accommodation for security forces etc.

For the deployment of state-of-the-art security and law order system in Kashmir, the MHA sanctioned Rs. 500 crores in 2017 while an amount of Rs 203.96 crores has also been sanctioned for the purchase of various high-end-equipments like Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) surveillance systems.

About 60 battalions of Central Armed Police Force (CAPFs) including paramilitary Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) are currently stationed in Kashmir.

CAPFs include Border Security Force (BSF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), SashastraSeemaBal (SSB) and CRPF.

While BSF, ITBP and SSB are border guarding forces, CRPF is particularly utilised to assist in dealing with law and order issues and assist army and police in anti-militancy operations in Valley.

CISF provides security and protection to vital installations of national/ strategic importance including public sector undertakings, airports, industrial units, important national museums, government buildings in and other important sensitive organizations.

The Government has been deploying extra CAPF men as and when needed like for Amarnath Yatra pilgrimage duty, electoral duties and to quell protests in times of street unrest in Kashmir.

Last year, over 100 additional companies of CAPFs were brought for poll duties during Srinagar Lok Sabha polls.

➤ **Dy CM says Kathua rape-n-murder a 'small incident'**

'We shouldn't give this incident so much importance'

Apr 30: Barely hours after he took oath as the Deputy Chief Minister, Kavinder Gupta, stoked a controversy Monday by terming the gruesome rape and murder of an eight-year-old girl in Kathua as a "small incident" which should not get so much attention.

An old RSS hand, 59-year-old Gupta, who is an MLA representing the Gandhinagar assembly seat, was asked by reporters whether the reshuffle carried out by the Mehbooba Mufti government was a result of the Kathua case in which some BJP leaders had participated last month in a rally in support of the accused.

"Kathua maamla ek chota sa maamla hai. Isko itna tool nahi dena chahiye (Kathua incident is a small incident which should not be given so much importance)," Gupta replied.

Known for having made controversial remarks during his stint as Speaker of the state Assembly, Gupta said the Kathua incident was "minor issue (chhoti si baat)".

"We have to think that this should never happen again, and the child gets justice. There are many challenges like this facing the government. We should not give this incident so much importance," Gupta added. Asked about the demand for a CBI probe into the Kathua case, he said "the matter is with the courts, let them decide for now."

