



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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1. Editorial

OHCHR report is a big breakthrough for Kashmir before the International Community

For the first time in twenty-nine years of armed conflict in Jammu and Kashmir, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has released a report on the situation of human rights in Jammu and Kashmir. Both in 2016 and 2017, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights had sought access from the governments of India and Pakistan to both sides of the Jammu and Kashmir to conduct a fact-finding investigation into human rights violations. India blatantly refused and Pakistan was willing to give access on the condition that only after India allows it. Thereafter the OHCHR decided to conduct remote monitoring of human rights issues, which it has conducted in many other countries. Based on the remote monitoring exercise, the OHCHR released its report on 14th June 2018. The report highlighted the desperate and life-threatening everyday reality of people of Jammu and Kashmir (under Indian administration) and the urgent need to address past and ongoing human right violations. The report further recommended to the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), the establishment of Commission of Inquiry, besides other recommendations like repealing the AFSPA, reparations and rehabilitation of pellet victims, revoking PSA, investigation of mass graves, ratifying the UN Convention on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances and UN Convention on Torture, accept the invitation request of almost 20 Special Procedures mandates in particular Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID) and fully respect the right of self-determination of the people of Kashmir. It was a big breakthrough for Kashmir before the international community. In fact, on the quotient of impact, the UN report was second only such report where Indian government's conduct in Kashmir was internationally condemned. In 1995, the then Indian government had allowed a delegation of International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) to conduct a fact-finding mission in Kashmir and the result of which was a report titled Human Rights in Kashmir: a report of a mission had caused it a major embarrassment. The first ever UN report has indicted the government of India and caused concern as the report has taken a position on the right of self-determination and called for the Indian government to respect it.

The government of India rejected the report by calling it, “fallacious, tendentious and motivated and a violation of the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity and a selective compilation of largely unverified information, overtly prejudiced, seeks to build a false narrative”. In addition to it, the government of India questioned the personal integrity of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Zeid al-Raad Hussein. The External Affairs Minister of India called the UN report as an ‘individual report that had nothing to do with the international body’ and also lodged a strong protest on the use of terminology used in the report and questioning the intent behind the publication of the report even accusing the High Commissioner of being a prejudiced person. The UN Secretary General had to publically back the High Commissioner by stating that the High Commissioner's action ‘represents the voice of the UN’. The Defense Minister of India also stated that the report has ‘ignored the ground level realities in the terror-ravaged state’. Besides politicians, the leading opinion makers in the media called it idiotic, not because of the quality of the research but for its expectations that it will help the people of Kashmir. The report was also dismissed by a leading Indian journalist who said that India is absolutely right in the rejecting the “airy fairy” report. Even the Army Chief stated the report was ‘motivated’ and India need not be concerned about the report as on the ‘record of human rights Indian army is absolutely above board’. The only reasonable response was made by the Congress leader Shashi Tharoor who stated that New Delhi needs to point out if there was any inaccuracy in the UN report on Kashmir

though it was contrary to his Congress party, which supported the government stand in dismissing the report and called it as 'a mischievous and misleading report'.

The overreaction and the immature response by the Indian government have drawn further attention to the report. The report no doubt is a dramatic setback for the BJP government, which like any other governments in India, has managed to prevent Kashmir getting attention or discussed before the UN body. But India's worst fear has come true, as India has always been managing to not bring international attention to the issue. It will give a hard time to the diplomatic community of India to neutralize the impact of the report. It has also opened the gate for the civil society groups in Kashmir concerned for human rights particularly JKCCS, which from last four to five months like other institutes/organizations have been providing valuable information to the OHCHR.

India refuses any external engagement in Kashmir. The United Nations Military Observers Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), which was stationed in 1949 for monitoring the ceasefire/LOC but the Indian government is preventing it to monitor the ceasefire violations even though India continuously alleges the violation from the Pakistani side. India rejects the mandate of UNMOGIP saying that UNMOGIP has outlived itself and after Shimla agreement in 1972 with Pakistan – Kashmir is now a bilateral dispute between India and Pakistan. Further on, India has refused the international body, the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC), which have several times sought access in Jammu & Kashmir for monitoring human rights situation. India refused to implement the European Parliament resolution of 2008 urging the government of India to investigate the mass graves in Kashmir. India has repeatedly refused to give access to UN mechanisms to visit Kashmir including the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances. In the neighbouring countries, where Enforced Disappearances is an issue – the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances were given access to Nepal, Sri Lanka and Pakistan by their respective governments.

India categorically refuses to give access to the international election monitoring bodies to monitor Jammu and Kashmir during elections, which are an established global norm mandated to monitor elections in the conflict area. In elections in 2002 and 2008, the request to monitor elections by the international election monitoring bodies was refused. That the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) which has a mandate in many countries and who have worked on missing people and mass graves and their skeletal presence in Kashmir have no mandate to do so particularly when we have here 3000-4000 mass graves speaks volumes about the seriousness of the Indian government caring for International norms. Foreign journalists have to seek special permission for reporting on Kashmir. And it is not without reason that India will have to fight before the international community where the contradictions of the Indian state are getting exposed.

The OHCHR report on Kashmir is a breakthrough but the challenges remain as to how to push the recommendations of the report. The UN report is an opportunity to get international attention on Kashmir and through this report we must lobby with the international institutions and mechanisms to halt the violations in Jammu and Kashmir, an ignored conflict where armed conflict is likely to continue in the forcible future.

2. Chronology of Incidents

June 01: One of the two youths, who were hit and critically wounded by a CRPF vehicle in the downtown on Friday afternoon during protests, succumbed in the hospital. The slain youth was identified as Qaisar Amin Bhat, 21 son of Mohammad Amin of Fathe Kadal, of Srinagar. Four CRPF troopers, a policeman and a pedestrian suffered splinter injuries in a grenade attack by militants at Khanbal Chowk in Anantnag town on Friday. The militants tossed the grenade toward a team of CRPF troopers and policemen deployed in the area. In another incident, Suspected militants on Friday threw a grenade at the residence of ruling People's Democratic Party's MLA from Tral, Mushtaq Ahmad Shah, in Tral Old Market. The grenade landed in the courtyard of his house but caused no casualty. In another

grenade attack suspected militants fired at a CRPF vehicle in Pulwama town. However, there were no casualties in the incident. In Srinagar, suspected militants lobbed a grenade at the CRPF bunker housing 49 battalion at Budshah Chowk Srinagar this evening. However, no damage was reported. In one more grenade explosion suspected militants attacked Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) camp in Nowdal area of Tral. However, there were no casualties.

June 02: The SPO who was shot at in Pulwama dies in army hospital. In two grenade attacks in different Fathe Kadal and Budshah Chowk of Srinagar, three CRPF men and two civilians were injured. While an Army soldier allegedly shot himself dead with his service rifle while on duty in Surfraw area of Kangan in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district last night. A police official identified the deceased as Havaladar Rajpal Singh son of Roop Singh resident of Kanpur UP.

June 03: Two Border Security Force (BSF) troops were killed and a police constable among 13 wounded in the shelling in Pargwal, Gadkhal and Kana Chak areas. While Army claimed that it foiled an infiltration bid in Keran sector of north Kashmir's Kupwara district by killing an unidentified militant.

June 04: The mother-daughter duo and seven security men were among 20 people injured in twin grenade blasts in south Kashmir's Shopian and Pulwama district. Police said militants lobbed a grenade towards a police party near Sumo Stand, Shopian at around 11.45 am. The grenade, however, missed the target and exploded on roadside injuring 12 pedestrians and three policemen. Among the injured civilians included a mother-daughter duo. Police said militants lobbed a grenade on a moving armoured vehicle of 182 bn CRPF near public Park along Tahab road in Pulwama district this afternoon. Commandant of 182 CRPF, NP Singh told media that an assistant commandant and three CRPF men received splinter injuries in the attack. While SSP Kupwara said that police received from the army a "decomposed" body that the army said was of a militant killed in Keran sector of Kupwara district on June 3 afternoon. SSP Kupwara AS Dinkar said that police received the body from the army and a post-mortem was being conducted on it. He also said that the police are not sure if the deceased was a local or a foreign militant.

June 05: Militants launched an attack on an army camp in Hajin area of Bandipora district and as per report no damage was caused from either side. In another incident, an army vehicle was partly damaged in an IED blast at Yambarzal area of Sopore. Bodies of the two local among the five alleged infiltrating militants killed in Tangdar sector last month were exhumed and handed over to their families. The slain militants were identified as Sheerez Ahmad Sheikh of Lajoor, Pulwama and Mudasir Ahmad Bhat of Kulgam. Earlier seven persons were injured in forces action in Pulwama where people were protesting and demanding the bodies of local militants.

June 06: Army claimed it had foiled an infiltration bid along the Line of Control (LoC) in Machil village of north Kashmir's Kupwara district by killing three "heavily armed" militants in a gunfight. While a woman injured in cross border shelling on June 5 succumbed to her injuries in the hospital. The victim was identified as Darshana Devi, a resident of Arnia village.

June 07: An army man was killed and another injured in an encounter with militants near Line of Control (LoC) in Keran sector of north Kashmir's Kupwara district.

June 08: Unknown gunmen shot at and critically injured a shopkeeper in Kakapora village of South Kashmir's Pulwama district. SSP Pulwama Mohammad Aslam Chaudhry said militants fired upon a shopkeeper, Manzoor Ahmad Pandith son of Ab Rehman Pandith of Kakapora. The shopkeeper sustained multiple bullet wounds and was shifted to SMHS hospital Srinagar in a critical condition. Local residents said Manzoor, who runs a shop of hardware items, was taken a little away from his shop by gun men and fired at his leg and chest at around 7:10 pm. While as many as five civilians and three policemen were injured in Nowhatta area of Srinagar district post Friday prayers. In Anantnag also clashes erupted between youth and police at Reshi Bazar main town immediately after Jama-tul-Vida prayers.

June 09: Two army men were injured in a land mine blast along LOC in Sawjian sector in Poonch district. While a brief encounter occurred between militants and armed forces in forest area of Bandipora.

June 10: The Army claimed it had foiled an infiltration bid along the Line of Control (LoC) in Keran sector of Jammu and Kashmir, killing six militants.

June 11: Two army men and a militant were reportedly injured in gunfight in upper reaches of Panar forests in north Kashmir Bandipora district after troops rushed commandos and para-troopers to track down a group of about 15 militants trapped there. While two Al-Badr militants from Haihama in Kupwara district, killed in a gunfight along the Line of Control (LoC) near Gulab Post adjacent to Lasdat area two days ago were buried in Pakistan-administered Kashmir (PaK).

“Abdul Majeed Khan, 38, of Manigah, Hajinaka village in Haihama and Muhammad Rafeeq Paswal, 39, of Humander village in Haihama had crossed the LoC in 2007.

On June 7, a gunfight broke out between a large group of Al-Badr militants and the army manning the fence near Gulab Post in Lasdat area adjacent to Shalabhutu in Kupwara. Two militants were killed,” a police official said.

June 12: In two separate attacks, militants shot at and killed two policemen, and left a third battling for his life, outside the district court complex in Pulwama, while in Anantnag town ten paramilitary CRPF men were injured after a grenade was hurled at them. The slain policemen have been identified as Ghulam Hassan Wagay of Rafiabad and Ghulam Rasool Lone of Kupwara, both residents of north Kashmir. Their colleague Manzoor Ahmad is battling for his life in SMHS hospital, Srinagar. In another incident, a jawan has died due to gunshot wounds in Poonch district, with the Army suspecting it to be a suicide case. 23-year-old gunner Ranjot Singh was at forward post in Poonch when other jawans heard a gunshot. They rushed to the area and saw him in an injured condition yesterday, police officials said. While clashes between government forces and protesters erupted in DK Pora area of Shopian district after army soldiers were pelted with stones when they were trying to erase pro-freedom graffiti from walls.

June 13: Four Border Security Force (BSF) personnel, including an assistant commandant-rank officer, were killed and three others injured in firing by Pakistan Rangers along the International Border in Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir, a senior BSF officer said.

June 14: Renowned Kashmiri journalist Sujaat Bukhari was assassinated by unidentified gunman in Press Enclave in Srinagar. In the attack on the journalist his two PSO were also killed. While two militants and an army soldier were killed in a gunfight in the forest in Bandipora district. In another incident, an abducted army man was killed by the suspected militants in Pulwama district.

June 15: A 15-year-old youth was killed and a 28-year-old woman injured after army soldiers opened fire on people protesting against alleged vandalism of the house of a local militant, in Pulwama district on Friday evening. The slain youth has been identified as Viqas Ahmad Rather, son of Ghulam Qadir Rather, resident of Nowpora village in Lassipora area of Pulwama district.

June 16: Gunmen opened fire upon two civilians in Shopian district. Both the injured have been admitted to the hospital. In another attack a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) jawan was injured in firing by suspected militants at Pantha Chowk in Srinagar.

June 17: Gunmen shot dead a 45-year-old civilian when they stormed his house at Kelam village of South Kashmir’s Kulgam district. The incident occurred on June 17 evening when unknown militants barged into the house of Mohammad Iqbal Kawa and fired indiscriminately at him at Kelam village. He was shifted to the hospital where he was declared dead on arrival.

June 18: A youth was killed and another injured after army opened fire on civilians protesting against the army in Kulgam district. The slain youth, hit in his chest with a bullet, has been identified as Aijaz Ahmad Bhat, son of Bashir Ahmad. The injured youth has been identified as Rayees Ahmad, son of Ghulam Qadir. While two more militants were killed in the ongoing military operation in Panar forest area of Bandipora district. Four militants have so far been killed in the operation that began 10 days ago. On Saturday, June 9, a massive army operation was launched against a group of militants who were moving through the forests and encountered an army patrol, triggering a brief gunfight.

June 19: Three LeT militants were killed and five armed forces personnel were injured in an encounter with armed forces in south Kashmir’s Tral area. The slain militants were identified as Adil Ahmad of Midoora, Danish Ahmad from Pingleish Tral and a foreigner. Danish has joined militancy barely 23 days back and Adil has joined militancy barely 24 hours before.

June 20: Militants attacked a police vehicle killing a policeman and injuring two others in Galender, Pampore in Pulwama district.

June 21: A complete shutdown was observed across Kashmir valley to protest the killing of journalist Shujaat Bukhari and recently killed civilians.

June 22: Four militants of an outfit affiliated to the global Islamist militant organisation, the Islamic State (IS), were killed by government forces in a fierce gunfight in Srigufwara area of Anantnag district. The owner of the house in which the militants were holed up was also killed during the gunfight, as was a policeman. More than 20 persons were injured when government forces fired bullets, pellets and tear smoke shells at people trying to reach the gunfight site in a bid to help the militants escape. At least nine among the injured have bullet wounds, hospital authorities said. The four militants killed in the encounter, police said, belong to the Tehreek ul Mujahideen (TuM). They were identified as Dawood Ahmad Sofi of Srinagar, Majid Manzoor Dar of Pulwama, Adil Rehman Bhat of Anantnag, and Muhammad Ashraf Ittoo of Anantnag. The civilian owner of the house who was killed has been identified as Muhammad Yousuf Rather. Yousuf's wife, Rafeeqa Begum, also sustained a bullet injury during the encounter and is being treated at a Srinagar hospital. While a policeman injured in a militant attack in Karan Nagar, Srinagar succumbed to his injuries in the hospital. In another incident, five policemen of the Special Operations Group (SOG) and five paramilitary troopers of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) were injured after suspected militants lobbed a grenade at their deployment in Tral town.

June 23: Shut down in Bijbehara and in parts of Pulwama district over the militant killings. While clashes were reported from Hajin area of Bandipora district during cordon and search operation.

June 24: Two LET militants including a foreigner were killed in an encounter with armed forces in Chidder area of Kulgam. One of the militants was arrested alive by the forces. During the encounter a civilian identified as identified as 24-year-old Yawar Ahmad Mir, a resident of Gassipora in Wanpoh area of Kulgam district died of bullet injuries that police said were sustained in "cross-fire" but locals said were due to government forces opening fire on protestors at a spot far away from the encounter site. Seven injured persons were brought to Qaimoh sub-district hospital during the day. One of them had pellet injuries in his eye and was referred to a Srinagar hospital for treatment. The slain local militant, as per a senior police official from the area, has been identified as Shakoor Dar, son of Muhammad Munawar Dar, a resident of Sopat Tangpora village in Kulgam district. While the injured civilian identified as Shahid Nazir Hajam, son of Nazir Ahmad, a resident of Sirhama village in Anantnag district succumbed to his injuries he received on June 22.

June 25: An Army officer died after he accidentally shot himself from his personal firearm in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir, an official said. Colonel J V Mahadik suffered grievous injuries after his personal weapon went off accidentally while he was travelling in a vehicle in Khundroo area of Anantnag district, a defence spokesman said.

June 26: No incident of violence reported.

June 27: Suspected militants hurled a grenade toward Police Station Pulwama which exploded with a bang.

Reports said, locals after the explosion, heard many gun shots which created panic in the area. No loss of life was reported in the incident. While a 65-year-old woman was injured in a landmine explosion near the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir, the police said. Makhan Bi, a resident of Noorkot village of Degwar, was near the border fencing when some of her animals strayed and triggered a landmine explosion, a police official said.

June 28: Clashes erupted during a Cordon and Search Operation (CASO) in Hajin area of Bandipora district. As soon as the forces launched the CASO, youth from different areas assembled and pelted stones on forces, leading to minor clashes.

June 29: Body of only one militant, identified as Sajad Ahmad Shah, a resident of Gund in Chogul area in Kupwara district, has been recovered from the gunfight site while two of his associates managed to escape in Thumna, Chatpora area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district, police said. During the encounter at least six civilians were injured in forces' action, two of them with bullets. One of the injured a minor boy identified as Faizan Ahmad Khan, son of Dr Abdul Gani, resident of Ladhoo

village in Pulwama district succumbed later. While a non-local militant was killed by government forces in an overnight gunfight in Trehgam forest area of north Kashmir's Kupwara district, the army claimed.

June 30: No incident of violence reported.

3. Killings in June 2018

The month of June 2018 witnessed **53 killings** in different incidents of violence in Jammu and Kashmir, which included **10 civilians, 25 militants and 18 armed forces**. The day to day break up of killings is given in the table below.

Table of Killings

Date	Armed forces	Militants	Civilians
June 01	-	-	1
June 02	2	-	-
June 03	2	1	-
June 04	-	-	-
June 05	-	-	-
June 06	-	3	1
June 07	1	-	-
June 08	-	-	-
June 09	-	-	-
June 10	-	6	-
June 11	-	-	-
June 12	3	-	-
June 13	2	-	-
June 14	4	2	1
June 15	-	-	1
June 16	-	-	-
June 17	-	-	1
June 18	-	2	1
June 19	-	3	-
June 20	1	-	-
June 21	-	-	-
June 22	2	4	1
June 23	-	-	-
June 24	-	2	2
June 25	1	-	-
June 26	-	-	-
June 27	-	-	-
June 28	-	-	-
June 29	-	2	1
June 30	-	-	-
Total	18	25	10
Total Killings in June 2018		53 KILLINGS	

4. Human Rights Stories

UN Releases report on Kashmir Human Rights Violations GOI rejects it as 'fallacious and motivated'

On June 14, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Geneva released a report titled the **Situation of Human Rights in Kashmir: Developments in the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir from June 2016 to April 2018, and General**

Human Rights Concerns in Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. This was the first report by the United Nations exclusively on Indian administered (IaK) and Pakistan administered (PaK) Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). After continually being denied access

since 2016, the OHCHR has based this report (49 pages in total) on its remote monitoring of the situation on ground, with closer attention to the period of July 2016 to April 2018.

On the same day, in a strong reaction, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) GOI said the report is "overtly prejudiced" and seeks to build a "false narrative". It violated the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity, it said.

"India rejects the report. It is fallacious, and motivated. We question the intent in bringing out such a report," the MEA said.

The report came as a huge relief to the victims of human rights violations in Jammu and Kashmir, as they feel the world body's report is "watershed moment" in the history of Kashmir. The victims also feel encouraged by this report.

The local civil society groups and activists welcome the report.

Executive Summary of the UN Report:

1. On 8 July 2016, Burhan Wani, the 22 year old leader of the Hizbul Mujahidin, an armed group, was killed by Indian security forces during an armed clash in Bumdoora village in Kokernag area in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. This triggered protests against his killing on a very large and unprecedented scale throughout the Kashmir Valley and in districts of Jammu. Indian security forces responded to protests with force, which led to casualties and a wide range of alleged related human rights violations throughout the summer of 2016 and into 2018. While Indian Administered Kashmir has experienced waves of protests in the past in the late 1980s to early 1990s, 2008 and 2010 this current round of protests appears to involve more people than the past, and the profile of protesters has also shifted to include more young, middle class Kashmiris, including females who do not appear to have been participating in the past. Some of the root causes of the discontent fuelling protesters are addressed in this report.

2. Shortly after the outbreak of violence, the High Commissioner for Human Rights met with the representatives of the Governments of Pakistan and India who had differing narratives about the ongoing events and the general situation in Kashmir. From July 2016, the High Commissioner for Human Rights has on numerous occasions requested the Governments of India and Pakistan that his Office be given unconditional access to Kashmir to assess the human rights situation. India rejected this request; while Pakistan offered access should the Office obtain access to Indian Administered Kashmir. Without unconditional access to Kashmir on either side of the Line of Control, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has undertaken remote monitoring of the human rights situation. This first report on the situation of human rights in both Indian Administered Kashmir and Pakistan Administered Kashmir is based on such monitoring.

3. This report covers both the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir (consisting of the Kashmir Valley, the Jammu and Ladakh regions) and Pakistan Administered Kashmir (Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit, Baltistan). The focus of the report is on the situation of human rights in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir from July 2016 to April 2018 over which period allegations of widespread and serious human rights violations were

received, notably excessive use of force by Indian security forces that led to numerous civilian casualties.

4. In responding to demonstrations that started in July 2016, Indian security forces used excessive force that led to unlawful killings and a very high number of injuries. Civil society estimates are that 130 to 145 civilians were killed by security forces between mid July 2016 and end of March 2018, and 16 to 20 civilians were killed by armed groups in the same period. One of most dangerous weapons used against protesters during the unrest in 2016 was the pellet firing shotgun, which is a 12 gauge pump action shotgun that fires metal pellets.

5. In the same context, since the late 1980s, a variety of armed groups has been actively operating in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, and there has been documented evidence of these groups committing a wide range of human rights abuses, including kidnappings and killings of civilians and sexual violence. The landscape of armed intervention by groups operating in Indian Administered Kashmir has shifted over the years.

In the 1990s, around a dozen significant armed groups were operating in the region; currently, less than half that number remain active. Despite the Government of Pakistan's assertions of denial of any support to these groups, experts believe that Pakistan's military continues to support their operations across the Line of Control in Indian Administered Kashmir.

6. Between January 2016 and April 2018, civil society organizations have accused members of armed groups of numerous attacks against civilians, off duty police personnel and army personnel on leave, including the killing of 16 to 20 civilians.

7. Impunity for human rights violations and lack of access to justice are key human rights challenges in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. Special laws in force in the state, such as the Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act, 1990 (AFSPA) and the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act, 1978 (PSA), have created structures that obstruct the normal course of law, impede accountability and jeopardize the right to remedy for victims of human rights violations.

8. Over 1,000 people were detained under the PSA between March 2016 and August 2017. Human rights groups had warned Jammu and Kashmir authorities that minors were being arrested under the PSA in 2016 and 2017.

9. During the 2016 unrest, there were numerous reports of attacks on, and obstruction of, basic medical services that had a severe impact on the injured and general civilian population in Kashmir. Human rights groups claimed that days long curfews and communications blockades also had a major impact on people and their access to medical care in Kashmir.

10. The Kashmir region experienced frequent communications blockades during the 2016 unrest as the state Government suspended mobile and internet services on multiple occasions. In 2016, the authorities in Jammu and Kashmir imposed restrictions on freedom of expression, targeting media and journalists.

11. Widespread protests, long periods of curfew and frequent strikes in 2016 and 2017 had a cumulative impact on students and their right to education.

12. Impunity for enforced or involuntary disappearances in Kashmir continues as there has been little movement towards credibly investigating complaints including into alleged sites of mass graves in the Kashmir Valley and Jammu region.

13. Authorities have failed to independently investigate and prosecute allegations of sexual violence by security forces personnel.

14. While the main focus of the report is on the situation of human rights in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir from July 2016 to April 2018, the report examines the situation in Pakistan Administered Kashmir within that timeframe. However, the human rights violations in this area are of a different calibre or magnitude and of a more structural nature.

15. Pakistan's prime minister, the federal minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan and the federal civil service have full control over all government operations in both Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). According to an international NGO, federal intelligence agencies are deployed across the two regions and have "considerable powers over local elected representatives and officials". Given such a constitutional relationship with Pakistan, residents of AJK and GB do not enjoy all the rights and protections available to those under the Pakistan Constitution.

16. The interim constitution of AJK has placed several restrictions on anyone criticizing AJK's accession to Pakistan, in contravention to international standards on the rights to freedoms of expression and opinion, assembly and association.

17. A national NGO found that "hundreds of individuals" had been imprisoned under the Pakistan's Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997 in GB, and it was being used to target locals who have been raising issues related to the "rights of the people".

18. A national NGO was informed that GB authorities had forcibly evicted locals in Maqpoon Das area, while the Chief Secretary of GB had allocated the same land to state authorities for the China Pakistan Economic

Corridor. The displaced claimed they had not received compensation or relocation from the authorities. OHCHR has received information that indigenous people in GB have complained of not being properly informed or consulted on decisions affecting them and their livelihoods.

19. Similar to the Constitution of Pakistan, AJK's Interim Constitution also defines who may be considered to be a Muslim. This definition is used to declare members of the Ahmadiyya community as non-Muslims and is the basis of institutional discrimination against them. Pakistan's blasphemy provisions are also reportedly in force in AJK and GB.

20. According to figures provided by the Governments of India and Pakistan, ceasefire violations have been increasing between 2016 and April 2018. Increasing civilian casualties and injuries and a large number of people being displaced appear to be the consequence.

21. OHCHR recognizes the complexity of the historical background and political issues that has led to the current situation in Kashmir, which has been divided between India and Pakistan. People on both sides of the Line of Control have been detrimentally impacted and suffer from limitations or denial of a range of human rights.

22. There remains an urgent need to address past and ongoing human rights violations and to deliver justice for all people in Kashmir who have been suffering seven decades of conflict. Any resolution to the political situation in Kashmir should entail a commitment to ending the cycles of violence and accountability for past and current human rights violations and abuses committed by all parties and redress for victims. Such a resolution can only be brought about by meaningful dialogue that includes the people of Kashmir.

APDP & JKCCS WELCOMES THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

June 14: JKCCS and APDP welcome today's important report by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Geneva. This is the first report by the United Nations exclusively on Indian administered (IaK) and Pakistan administered (PaK) Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). After continually being denied access since 2016, the OHCHR has based this report (49 pages in total) on its remote monitoring of the situation on ground, with closer attention to the period of July 2016 to April 2018.

This report affirms that J&K requires special attention and is a signal to governments that the United Nations is closely monitoring the everyday violence and the role of the parties to the dispute. It is also an affirmation of the documentation work done for decades. Following the early UN Security Council resolutions, this report has deep symbolic value following years of silence by the United Nations. Yet, this report remains connected to the historicity of the J&K conflict, and past UN Security Council resolutions, as it urges the governments to "respect the right of self-determination of the people of Kashmir as protected under international law" and favours dispute resolution through "meaningful dialogue that includes the people of Kashmir". The report ends with a series of recommendations, the most crucial of which is a call for an independent, international enquiry in the form of a "Commission of Inquiry" to be constituted by the UN Human Rights Council (inter-

governmental body established by the United Nations to monitor human rights). Commissions of Inquiry prove to be an effective tool for the United Nations and have been formed in the past to investigate allegations of violations of international human rights, international humanitarian law or international criminal law and make recommendations for corrective action based on their factual and legal findings (past examples include Palestine, Lebanon, East Timor and Syria). In the absence of any fair and proper investigations in J&K to date, UN Human Rights Council constituted Commission of Inquiry would be an important intervention.

The report addresses key human rights issues, with a major focus on the role of Government of India in IaK. The report highlights the "widespread and serious human rights violations" committed primarily by Government of India and the state of virtually absolute impunity where, through examples, the role of the Supreme Court of India is questioned for not intervening in J&K related human rights cases. Violations range from crimes of extra-judicial executions and excessive force (including by use of pellet shotguns), enforced disappearances, sexual violence, torture, arbitrary detention (including through the use of the Public Safety Act, 1978) and other violations of basic human rights. The report notes the existence of unmarked and mass graves and recommends impartial and credible investigations, including through assistance of the

international community. Military courts are unequivocally rejected as effective substitutes for civilian courts of justice in the case of crimes against civilians.

The call for a Commission of Inquiry – is in keeping with past demands by JKCCS and APDP, in light of the unwillingness of Government of India to allow for functioning of any processes of justice and fair and proper investigations. In addition, past offers of international assistance (European Parliament in 2008 for the investigation of unmarked and mass graves) have been rejected. It is imperative that a Commission of Inquiry be instituted to: a) record the violence, b) document the role of State institutions, including the judiciary, in systemic denial of justice, and, c) ascertain State and individual responsibility as per international human rights, international criminal, and international humanitarian law.

JKCCS and APDP emphasize that this report must serve as a beginning of continued and sustained OHCHR attention on J&K. As an immediate measure:

OHCHR, on its own initiative, and endorsed by the UN Human Rights Council, continue to monitor the situation in J&K and seek unconditional access for on the ground investigations. Crucially, all parties of the dispute must continue to be held to international human rights, international criminal and humanitarian law standards,

UN Human Rights Council consider the instant OHCHR report (in the present regular session beginning on 18 June or in a special session) recognize the urgency of the situation, and immediately constitute a group of reputed experts in the form of a Commission of Inquiry and both Governments of India and Pakistan must grant them unconditional access. This will serve as a vital first step to deter the ongoing violence, secure the evidence of crimes, and result in a more permanent mechanism at the UN Human Rights Council in the form of an international expert as a Special Procedure to monitor the human rights situation in J&K.

Other UN bodies, including the Security Council, with greater powers, must also give renewed attention to the situation in J&K.

Today's OHCHR report highlights the desperate and life threatening every day reality of the people of J&K and the need for the international community, specifically the United Nations, to intervene immediately. The evidence exists, as also noted by this report. It is therefore time for sustained action by the international community towards the resolution of J&K with full respect to political and human rights as per international law. In the intervening period, the scrutiny of the actions perpetrated by State and non-state actors under international humanitarian law must be institutionalized.

Renowned Journalist Sujaat Bukhari Assassinated

On June 14, a renowned journalist and activist, Sujaat Bukhari was assassinated by unidentified gunmen just outside his office at Press Enclave in Lal Chowk, Srinagar. Around 7: 15 pm assailants, believed to be three in number, assaulted Sujaat soon he boarded his personal car parked outside his office. In the attack two of his personal security guards were also killed. The unknown attackers easily managed to escape from the scene of crime.

The manner and the ease with which Sujaat was assassinated underscore the vulnerability the journalists and activists are exposed to in Kashmir. As per the documentation, Sujaat Bukhari was the nineteenth journalist killed in last over twenty-seven years in J&K.

Sujaat's killing shocked the entire journalist fraternity and drew widespread condemnations from all quarters, Indian Home Minister, top political activists, court bar associations, social activists etc. Hardly there was anyone who has not condemned Sujaat's assassination. UN also paid tributes to Sujaat. Sujaat's killing was seen as an attempt to pressure the free speech and freedom of expression in J&K. The people close to Sujaat described him as an upright professional who never bow to the pressures. It was not the first attack on him, earlier also he had miraculous escape when unknown gunmen abducted him and tried to shoot him, but the weapon used to kill him got locked and he managed to escape.

Pertinently, for some time a sustained online smear campaign was launched by unknown persons against Sujaat Bukhari and some other imminent persons of Kashmir valley particularly for attending Dubai Conference in 2017.

After years of working for The Hindu as a Kashmir correspondent, Sujaat Bukhari founded the English daily Rising

Kashmir. Although widely known as an editor, he contributed immensely to Kashmiri literature as President of Adbee Markaz Kamraz, a local literary and cultural organisation. Bukhari was well-known for his efforts to restore peace in his politically turbulent native land, and was a part of Track II diplomacy with Pakistan.

A series of write-ups and TV debates were conducted over Sujaat's killing leaving the teasing question who got benefitted by his killing.

The state police blamed the militants for carrying out Sujaat's assassination. On June 28, during a press conference the Inspector General of Police SP Pani claimed the Lasker-e-Toiba killed Sujaat.

"I cannot tell you at this time about the motive of the militants who committed this terror crime. The motive will be mentioned in the chargesheet," Kashmir Inspector General of Police SP Pani told reporters in response to a question on whether Bukhari was killed for being a journalist. "The conspiracy to kill Shujaat was hatched in Pakistan by a Kashmiri, Sheikh Sajjad Gul, and was executed by three LeT militants, including Naveed Jatt. This is what we have found so far," Pani said.

Pani was flanked at the presser by Special Investigation Team head Deputy Inspector General Central Kashmir VK Birdi and SSP Srinagar Imtiyaz Ismail. The officers said that the four militants have been identified as Sheikh Sajjad Gul, a Srinagar resident currently based in Pakistan, Azad Ahmed Malik alias Dada, a resident of Arwani Bijbhera and active in LeT since December 2016, Muzaffar Ahmad alias Talha from Sopat Qazigund, and Naveed Jatt from Pakistan.

"Sajjad has been found to be using the blog which spread a vicious campaign against Shujaat. We have



Sujaat Bukhari speaking during a function

evidence. The rest have executed the murder in Kashmir. During the investigation, with the cooperation of service providers, tangible evidence has been collected to establish that individuals behind it belong to LeT organisation and all the content on social media were posted from Pakistan,” Pani said.

Pani said that Sajjad Gul crossed over to Pakistan in March 2017 on a fraudulently obtained passport. Gul has been named as key conspirator behind the assassination of Bukhari.

According to Pani, Gul had called Bukhari as a traitor in his blog. The Lashkar has condemned Bukhari’s killing and called him a martyr who was killed by Indian agencies.

Bukhari was killed on June 14 by three men outside his office at Press Enclave Srinagar. Two of his PSOs were also killed in the attack. The senior journalist had been attending Track II conferences for achieving peace in Kashmir.

Pani said the investigation has so far established that this “terror crime” was committed by LeT. “The conspiracy was hatched in Pakistan and execution was done by the three accused” and added it was an important case and the investigators are going to focus on all the evidence they have”.

“There will also be a situation where transfer of evidence has to be done through the mutual legal assistance treaty,” he said.

Asked about the involvement of another suspect Zubair Qayoom, who was arrested two days after the 14 June incident, the IGP said at this stage his role is also being investigated.

“Two things are there — the pistol was recovered from him that he had taken from the scene of crime, two mobile phones were recovered from his possession, and he had tried to conceal his clothes and other things,” he added.

While the LeT in various press statements denied their role in killing the journalist. The militant organization blamed India secret agencies for assassinating Sujaat.

Within ten days of Sujaat’s killing, on June 23, former minister Lal Singh, who was removed by his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for shooting his mouth off, said in a press conference that Kashmiri journalists seemed to be waiting to be killed just as Shujaat Bukhari was.

He also warned them to never cross a line, suggesting instead that they worry about “how to live”.

Singh said made these insulting remarks at a presser he had called in Jammu to again demand a CBI probe into the Kathua rape-and-murder case.

“They (Kashmir’s journalists) have created wrong atmosphere about the whole case. Now I would like to ask them to draw a line and think about how to live,” the BJP leader said.

He asked, “Are they waiting for a similar incident such as happened with Bukhari?”

Lal Singh’s threat was taken seriously by the journalist fraternity who took out a protest rally in Lal Chow Srinagar

On June 26, the journalist fraternity of Kashmir took out a protest demonstration in **Yawar’s killing post-encounter could** On June 24, two LET militants including a foreigner were killed in a chance encounter with armed forces in Chidder area of Kulgam

Srinagar against the killing of senior journalist Shujaat Bukhari and against threats by former minister Lal Singh against Kashmir based media.

The journalists demanded that assassin of Bukhari be brought to book, and action be taken against BJP lawmaker Lal Singh for threatening Kashmiri journalists.

The newsmen led by members of Kashmir Editors Guild assembled at Press Enclave Srinagar and marched towards city centre.

The protest march was also joined by veteran journalists Muhammad Sayeed Malik and Jammu based editor of Kashmir Times Anuradha Basin Jamwal. Shujaat had started his career from the same newspaper.

“Brutal killing of journalist Dr. Shujaat Bukhari is an attempt to murder of freedom of speech but it would not hush the rest of newsmen to pen down the truth, besides we demand the investigation of the murder at earliest,” journalist Gowher Geelani said.

On Lal Singh’s threats to Kashmir media, Geelani said Singh is a serial offender and demanded action be taken against him.

Veteran journalist Anuradha Basin Jamwal said the controversial statement by BJP MLA “days after the brutal killing of veteran journalist Dr Shujaat Bukhari, directly means that BJP is doing its attempts to create tension and violence in Kashmir.”

“It is shattering that the journalists are being killed coldheartedly and also being threatened, even by the politicians,” said Ajjaz Ganiae, a freelance journalist.

“These ruthless acts could only delay the truth for a while. They can kill a human being but cannot kill a message and an idea,” he said.

The protest was led by Kashmir Editors Guide (KEG), and joined in by most of the Kashmir Working Journalists Association, Kashmir Journalists Association, Kashmir Press Photographers Association, and Kashmir Video Journalist Association, and others.

The protestors were holding placards reading containing slogans condemning the killing of slain journalist. Other placards read slogans against BJP MLA Lal Singh.

On June 15, Jammu Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS) strongly condemns the attack on Mr. Shujaat Bukhari. The killing Shujaat Bukhari comes as yet another blow to freedom of the press in Jammu and Kashmir. The attack on journalists is nothing new in nearly three decades of armed conflict in Jammu and Kashmir.

According to Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), at least 19 journalists have been killed in Jammu and Kashmir since the beginning of armed conflict in 1990. The killing of Mr. Bukhari is a stark reminder that freedom of the press is under continuous threat in Jammu and Kashmir and no steps have been taken by the government in safeguarding the freedom of the press.

The government must conduct an immediate and impartial investigation into the killing of Mr. Bukhari as well as into the killing of other Kashmiri journalists in the past and bring the perpetrators to justice.



Yawar’s photo shared by his family

have been “easily avoided” in south Kashmir’s one of the volatile districts. One of the militants was arrested alive by the forces. During the encounter a civilian

identified as, eighteen-year-old Yawar Ahmad Mir son of Abdul Rehman Dar, a resident of Gassipora in Wanpoh area of Kulgam district died of bullet injuries. Police said Yawar was hit by a bullet in “cross firing” but locals and his family stated he received bullet after the militants were shot dead by the forces.

A researcher of *The Informative Missive* visited Gassipora village in Wanpoh, Kulgam to talk to the family of Yawar Ahmad. At the time of the researcher’s visit Yawar’s elder brother Majid Rehman offered himself to share the details of the incident in which his brother received bullet and died.

While giving the sequence of the incident Majid said, “On June 24, at about 3:00 pm, an encounter broke out between militants and armed forces at Gubal, Khudwani. One of the militants trapped was a local youth Shakoor Dar. At the time of eruption of encounter Yawar was at his work, he was running auto rickshaw. At 3:30 pm, he came back home. After 15 minutes stay he went to encounter site.”

The three militants were coming from Asmuj village of Kulgam and were heading towards somewhere. The militants were secretly tailed by the army soldiers in a Tata Mobile 307 vehicle, a public transport vehicle. On reaching Gubal, Khudwani village, the militants recognized that they were being followed by the army. The militants to dodge the army tried to mix up with volley ball playing boys in a playground. Noticing that the soldiers had already identified them, they get separated for the playing boys to run away. It was when the soldiers opened fire at them and the militants also retaliated. The exchange of fire continued for a while in which two militants were killed while one was apprehended.

The killing of militants has enraged the youth

“At 5:00 pm I received a phone call from Yawar’s friend Zahid Ahmad Dar informing me that Yawar was shot by the forces. Zahid was very much present at the site. The protest and stone pelting started once the encounter ended,” stated Majid while talking about how he was informed about Yawar bullet injury.

Yawar was shot in chest. Majid further stated, “Yawar was ardent supporter of pro-freedom leadership and before going to protest he performed ablution thus preparing himself for any eventuality. He was shot in chest, just some distance away where the militants were killed.”

Majid while questioning the intention of the soldiers said, “They could have easily shot him in his legs, if he was protesting or hurling stones. Shooting him in his chest explain the *mala fide* intentions of the army who fired only to kill him,”

Yawar was the only person fired by the forces. Taking him to the district hospital was a mere formality. Majid said, “The body part where he was shot making it a mere formality to take him to the hospital. The doctors at Kulgam hospital on seeing his deteriorating condition referred him to Anantnag district hospital where he was declared brought dead.”

After Yawar’s death, his family had gone to Police Station Qazigund to obtain his death certificate. They, however, did not ask for a copy of the FIR. They had not filed any case regarding the Yawar’s death. The death certificate mentioned that Yawar was killed in the cross-firing between the militants and the Army.

The police version that Yawar got killed in cross fire was not only misleading but to the advantage of the forces responsible for killing him. “The content in his death certificate that he died in cross firing was far from the truth. This shows how easily the perpetrators

“They could have easily shot him in his legs, if he was protesting or hurling stones”

playing there who hurled stoned on the forces in a short-while some more youth joined them for stone pelting. Yawar Ahmad has also joined the protesting boys.

get away in Kashmir,” stated Majid while producing Yawar’s death certificate.

Gunmen kill man renders his four daughters orphan

On June 17, Mohammad Iqbal, 35, son of Mohammad Abdullah was shot dead by unidentified gunmen just only 60 meters away from his house in Kelam area of Kulgam district. His family has no idea, whatsoever, why he was killed and by whom. Working as a driver with J&K Food and Supply Department Iqbal has never get himself associated with any political party or any social formation. His killing has not only shocked his family but the entire locality where he lives from his childhood. Police has filed FIR into his killing but Iqbal’s family accused them of not seriously conducting the investigation.

The killing comes hours after GOI called off the Ramzan ceasefire and decided to resume anti-militancy operations in Jammu and Kashmir. GOI had declared the suspension of operations against militants from May 17 keeping in view the holy fasting month of Ramzan.

A researcher of *The Informative Missive* visited Iqbal’s

family to get the case details and their understanding of the case. None in the family see any reason making him prey to the unidentified gunmen or any other agency.

The family member while talking to the visiting researcher made the following statement:

On 17 June, 2018, at about 8:42 pm, Iqbal had gone to the nearby market at Herpora village, taking along his daughters, one-nine-old and the other only three-years-old. The day marked the second Eid-ul-Fitr,

the festival following completion of Ramzan fasting. On his way back, as he get closer to his house knowing that his daughters can reach home of their own, he asked his daughters to go home while he will join them in a while. He returned back to the market to purchase something.

Moments after his kids reached home, Iqbal was shot by some unknown gunmen just only 60 meters away from his house. Since it was dark and the spot where he was shot was a narrow lane making it



Photo shared by Iqbal’s family

impossible for the people to identify or even see how many gunmen shot Iqbal. The bullet shots were heard by

present at the house and the police had left without asking anything from them.

Three bullets were pumped in him making his survival chances minimal. He had one bullet in his chest, one each in his neck and face. No villager was present there and the woman who had raised cry had disappeared from the spot.

his family; however, they took it as sound of fire crackers because of Eid.

In a moment Iqbal's family heard a wailing cry of a woman. They rushed to enquire only to found Iqbal lying in a pool of blood. His brother-in-law, Abdul Hameed Dar along with his two sons was the first to reach the spot. Three bullets were pumped in him making his survival chances minimal. He had one bullet in his chest, one each in his neck and face. No villager was present there and the woman who had raised cry had disappeared from the spot.

Abdul Hameed pulled the victim up and put him on his shoulder and take him to the village congregational mosque (Jamia). One of his sons called a neighbor and the victim was taken in his car to nearby Janglat Mandi Hospital in District Anantnag. The doctors declared the victim dead upon arrival. At about 12:45 pm, victim's body was brought back to his home. This time, army personnel were seen deployed on the main road leading to his home. Earlier when Iqbal was taken to the hospital, there was no army presence.

While Iqbal's family was in hospital, at around 9:30 pm, a police party from Devsar Police Station along with army had arrived at the spot of crime and also visited Iqbal's house. At that time, only womenfolk were

Two days later, Iqbal's family was summoned by SHO Devsar police station *through the village Numberdar*. On visiting the police station, after five days, the family members were asked to record their statements which they did in-front of *Numberdar*. They also were asked to give the victim's mobile phone for investigation purpose.

Meanwhile, Iqbal's family has filed an application for compassionate and employment, as the victim has died in harness having four daughters. Iqbal was a hardworking employee driving a kerosene tanker and used to go for filling duties during night.

SP Kulgam had given a statement in which he said that Iqbal was killed by unknown gunmen. An FIR 27/2018 has been filed at Police Station Devsar under Sec 307 RPC, 7/27 AA, 13, 16, 18, 20, 38, 39, ULA(P) ACT.

Iqbal's family accused police of not carrying the investigation seriously for the reasons best known to them. Citing that police was not even question the people living around the place where Iqbal was shot. There were mere assurances from the police but nothing substantial.

There were serious concerns in the Iqbal's family happen to his small daughters and his widow.

Young dry fruit dealer twice fired in chest dies

On June 18, Aijaz Ahmad Bhat, 26, son of Bashir Ahmad of Aakhran, Nowgam village of Kulgam district was shot at and killed by the armed forces while the protests were

came arrived in our village. They stopped two local boys, Ishfaq and Mubarak, and confiscated their mobile phones. I was present there and witnessed it myself."

"When the army refused to leave the elders a separate group of youth hurled stones at the soldiers. The soldiers opened fire and Aijaz received bullets. He was shot twice in his chest and once in his left arm. Aijaz was standing away from the people who hurled stones."

going-on in the area over manhandling of two elderly persons of the village. Villagers in the area were already apprehensive of imminent trouble, as they were threatened by the armed forces a day before. On June 17, around 5:00 pm, happens to be second day of Eid, while the kinds were bursting firing crackers, a contingent of armed forces appeared in Nowpora village. The armed forces stationed at Ashmuj Camp threatened the playing children in puritan Hindi "*kal hum tumko sabakh sikhayenege*" - tomorrow we will teach you a lesson- and immediately left. The threat has unnerved the villagers, as they strongly believe the forces can easily execute what they said.

A researcher of *The Informative Missive* travelled to Nowgam village where he talked to Aijaz's father Bashir Ahmad about the incident. "On June 18, about 9:30 am, eight army personnel from Ashmuj Camp

stated Bashir Ahmad while started his conversation in chronological order about the incident which lead to the death of his son.



Aijaz's photo shared by his family

Bashir said, he politely requested an army official, who he said was a Major, to return back the phone to the boys. The Major assured him that their mobiles will be returned after a while. Bashir Ahmad returned back home. Some women of the village had also requested the army personnel to return the phones, but while they were leaving they told the women to send the boys to Ashmuj Camp later in the evening if they wanted their phones back. Bashir Ahmad also said that before he left the spot he had overheard the army Major telling his troopers; "*raat ko inko sabakh sikhayenege*" - we will teach them a lesson in the night. The threat has disturbed Bashir.

Aijaz and his younger brother, Zubair, had gone to their shop at Mir Bazar in the morning. "At around 11:45 am, Zubair was on his way to home but *en route* he was stopped by the same army personnel and was directed to show his mobile phone and his identity card. Zubair resisted to hand over his mobile phone to them, enraged the forces started beating him. The people gathered on the spot to intervene and Zubair was allowed to go," stated Bashir Ahmad.

At around 5:45 pm, Bashir Ahmad was sitting in the compound of his house when he heard noise of people. He went out to enquire. He saw people running helter-skelter to dodge the army, who were madly chasing them.

There were as many as thirty soldiers, all carrying guns and big sticks. This time, the army personnel came from Yessu Camp. They were beating everyone who they get catch hold of.

According to Bashir Ahmad, a local boy namely, Younis Shah was caught and was being simultaneously beaten by five army personnel. When Bashir intervened pleading them (soldiers) to leave the boy he was also hit.

When the army entered the locality, Aijaz was at a neighbour's house with some other local boys. Some woman informed him that his father had been hit by the Army.

"When he heard that I was beaten by the army he rushed out. He saw army soldiers had caught hold of two village elders and were dragging them through the village. He saw a peoples gathering following the army pleading to leave the aged men. Naturally Aijaz became part of the gathering," stated Bashir Ahmad.

When the army was not relenting, some youth hurled stones at the soldiers' truck. "When the army refused to leave the elders a separate group of youth, not part of the gathering, hurled stones at the soldiers. The soldiers opened fire and Aijaz received bullets. He was

shot twice in his chest and once in his left arm. Aijaz was standing away from the people who hurled stones. He was taken to District Hospital Anantnag where he was declared dead upon arrival," stated Bashir while sharing the details of the circumstances in which his son was killed.

Few days later, Bashir Ahmad was summoned to Mir Bazar Police Station. He got his statement recorded and asked the police whether they had filed FIR regarding the killing of his son or not. When he asked the police to show him what they had written in the FIR, he was shocked by the response of police. The police *Munshi* (clerk) told him that

they had written "*a mob had tried to snatch rifles from the army personnel and they were forced to open fire, due to which three persons were injured. The police had not mentioned the killing of his son in the FIR.*"

Bashir Ahmad then argued with the *Munshi* who then later conceded that army men had come to Mir Bazar Police Station and had beaten some policemen to coerce them into writing a favourable report. Bashir Ahmad replied to the *Munshi* that if police cannot file FIR as they too were beaten, how they would help people or filed a case against the army.

A couple of days after this incident, army had come to the village during the night. They didn't enter any house but they vandalize the tent erected for people who come for condolence.

- There was cross firing and I had move to bathroom to save my life.
- While the exchange of fire between militants and forces came to brief halt, at around 10:30 am, I took a chance and jumped out of the bathroom window.
- Shahid was fired on right side of his head. Post-surgery he slipped into coma and was kept on ventilator. On June 24 he breathed his last on the hospital bed.

Civilians injured near encounter site, one dies same day while the other two days later

On June 22, 2018, a civilian Mohammad Yousuf Rather, 55, son of Ghulam Mohammad Rather of Nowshehra, Srigufwara, Anantnag was critically injured in armed forces dies later in the hospital. Officially Mohammad Yousuf got critically injured during cross firing between militants and armed forces, however, his family blamed the forces personnel of shooting him with intent. Yousuf's son was also beaten by the SOG personnel for allowing the militants into their house, which got damaged in the encounter. While the encounter was going on six persons were injured one among them Shahid Nazir died later in the hospital. Shahid had fatal head injuries.



A researcher of *The Informative Missive* visited Nowshehra village where he talked to Yousuf's son Sayar Ahmad, a 12th class student, about the incident in which his father lost his life. While recalling the incident Sayar stated, "On June 22, around 11 pm, army laid a cordoned and search operation (CASO) of Nowshehra on a tip off militant presence in the area. The army searched each and almost every house of the village after taking the people out of their houses. The CASO continued for night."

In the morning, at 5:30 am, army entered Yousuf's house after separating his son from peoples' gathering, who

were assembled by the armed forces at road during CASO. "I was taken by the army to assist them to my house. The moment the army entered the house, the militants present there opened fire, which was immediately retaliated by the forces. There was cross firing and I had move to bathroom to save my life. In the firing an army soldier sustained injuries," stated Sayar while sharing the details of how he was forced by the army to assist them in counter-militancy operation.

Mohammad Yousuf and his wife Rafiqqa were questioned by army about the militant presence in their house. Mohammad Yousuf, as per his son's statement, was unaware of militants' presence in his house. Actually, militants had entered the house only after Yousuf's family left it on the announcement of army.

When Mohammad Yousuf expressed his ignorance about the militants' presence in his house, the army, his son stated, fired a burst of bullets in his right leg and fired a bullet in his wife's right hand. For over twenty minutes Yousuf was lying on the ground bleeding profusely along with his injured wife next to him. A group of civilians fearing Yousuf's death requested the army soldiers to allow them to take the injured to the hospital. They were allowed and even a military vehicle was provided to take them to the hospital.

They (injured) were taken to Primary Health Centre Srigufwara, wherefrom they were referred to District Hospital Anantnag in an ambulance. First aid was given to the injured and Mohammad Yousuf was referred to Bone and Joint Hospital at Srinagar on the same day. However, before reaching to Srinagar hospital Yousuf died *en route*.

"While the exchange of fire between militants and forces came to brief halt, at around 10:30 am, I took a chance and jumped out of the bathroom window. After reaching at the road there was a bunch of Special Operation Group of Jammu and Kashmir Police, part of CASO. Fearing they may mistook me as a militant I raised my hand shouting, I am civilian, I am a civilian," stated Sayar while talking about how he managed to get himself out of his house where bullets were showered by both militants and armed forces.

The SOG immediately arrested and took him to Joint Interrogation Centre Anantnag where he was severely beaten by the police. After an hour, he was taken to Sadder Police Station Anantnag. After couple of hours some elders of his village, after learning about his arrest, visited the police station and requested for his release citing his father's death.

Sayar said, "I was beaten ruthlessly by the police and my right leg and left arm was not functioning on my release. Seeing his conditions, people took him to Sub District Hospital Bijbehara where he remained admitted for three days."

The encounter ended at 11:30 am with killing of all the four militants.

In the encounter Yousuf's house got extensively damaged and the army before leave the encounter site sprayed gasoline and set the house on fire. The two neighbouring houses were also raised to ground and a cow shed was also burnt down.

While the encounter was going on, youth had assembled to protest and had pelted stone on the forces personnel. In forces action six civilians were injured out of whom one person identified as Shahid Nazir Hajam son of Nazir Ahmad of Sirhama succumbed two days later in the hospital.

On June 22, Shahid Nazir left his home in the morning, around 8:00 am, to the encounter site without informing his parents.

While talking to the researcher Shahid's brother Asif stated, "On June 22, at around 12 pm, I received a call from Shahid's phone. It was not Shahid calling but someone else. He informed me that Shahid was shot at Nowpora, Srigufwara near encounter site. He also told me Shahid was taken to sub district hospital Bijbehara."

As his conditions were critical he was referred to SKIMS at Soura Srinagar where he was operated upon on his arrival. Shahid was fired on right side of his head leaving almost no scope of his survival. Post-surgery he slipped into coma and was kept on ventilator. On June 24 he breathed his last on the hospital bed.

Faizan dies near encounter site

I saw my son's body wrapped in a blood soaked sheet near the operation theatre

June 29: Yet another boy lost his life near encounter site in Chatapora village of Pulwama in south Kashmir. The slain was identified as Faizan Ahmad Khan, 16, son of Dr. Abdul Gani of Ladoo, Pulwama. In the encounter three militants were killed. Faizan was studying in Class 9. Faizan was killed after armed forces opened fire at civilians protesting near the gunfight site. At least six other civilians were injured in forces' action, two of them with bullets.

A researcher of *The Informative Missive* visited Faizan's house to collect the details of the incident in which Faizan was killed.

For Faizan's father Abdul Gani Poshwaal and his family June 29, 2018 was doomsday. The body of his sixteen-year-old-son Faizan Ahmed Poshwaal was lying on the hospital stretcher in front of him. Faizan's

clothes and the stretcher were drenched with blood coming out from multiple bullet injuries fired by the armed forces during the encounter in Chatapora village of Pulwama district.



Faizan's photo shared by his family

Faizan was killed two months after his 15th birthday, and three months before he completed Class X Board examinations.

Dr Poshwaal recalls: " It was a gloomy day with rain forecast. I woke up before dawn, offered my morning prayers in the nearby mosque as per my daily routine. And found it a little strange that Faizan had not woken up, as it was rare for him to miss the morning prayers."

I went to the hospital, a five minute walk from my residence."

Shaheen Kausar, Faizan's mother said that he woke up around 11.30 and quickly got ready for the

Friday prayers at Pampore. He left without having breakfast, saying he would join the family for lunch after the prayers. He did not return.

Dr. Poshwal stated, "I was doing my work at the district hospital, Pulwama, when the news about the encounter at Chatapora came in. Within 30 minutes some persons with bullet and pellet injuries started being brought in for treatment. On seeing the large huge number of injured people I started to worry about Faizan so I called him on his cellphone to inquire about his whereabouts but there was no response on the other end. I got busy in attending the injured from the encounter site but my heart was worried about Faizan,"

Youth hit by CRPF vehicle dies another under intense treatment

June 1: One of the two youths, who run over by a CRPF armoured vehicle in Nowhatta Srinagar during post-Friday protests died in the hospital same night. This was the second incident, in less than one month, where a youth was killed by hitting with a vehicle driven the forces. Last month, on May 5, a youth in Srinagar downtown was hit and ran over by a police vehicle killing him on the spot.

The slain boy was identified as Qaiser Amin Bhat, 22, son of Mohammad Amin of Fathe Kadal, Srinagar and the injured was identified as Younis Ahmad Bhat son of Nisar Ahmad Bhat of Dalgate, uptown, Srinagar.

A researcher of *The Informative Missive* visited the house of Qaiser and also interviewed Younis in SKIMS hospital where he was under intense treatment.

While talking to the researcher Qaiser's sister Toiba Amin and cousin Rifat stated that



He further stated, "I decided to call him again but there was no response. After attending to five or six persons injured from the encounter I was heading back when my phone rang and I was asked to report to the Emergency again. As soon as I reached I felt that something was wrong. My colleagues looked worried, many were crying. I was approached by the Medical Superintendent and others who started to console me even as I was asking them what had happened. Then I saw my son's body wrapped in a blood soaked sheet near the operation theatre. Faizan had betrayed me, he had left me."

his aunt to accompany him but she refused citing work at home.

Rifat further said, "We learnt later, while reaching near Jamia Masjid, he had stopped, as there was stone pelting going on and there were chaotic scene around. Waiting stone pelting to end, he parked his two-wheeler near a shop at Nowhatta. Meanwhile, a CRPF vehicle came and hit him leaving him seriously injured."

Rifat rejected that the photo circulated on social media showing a boy under a CRPF vehicle was of Qaiser. "The viral photo showing a boy beneath CRPF vehicle was not of Qaiser, as the boy under the vehicle was wearing jeans and T-shirt. He was not Qaiser but someone else. That day Qaiser left his home in simple *Kurta Pyjama*. He was hit badly by the forces but the vehicle was not ran over him as reported in the media," stated Rifat while rejecting dominant version that Qaiser was ran over by the forces

"The viral photo showing a boy beneath CRPF vehicle was not of Qaiser, as the boy under the vehicle was wearing jeans and T-shirt. He was not Qaiser but someone else. That day Qaiser left his home in simple *Kurta Pyjama*. He was hit badly by the forces but the vehicle was not ran over him as reported in the media" - Qaiser's cousin

"When I saw people running towards the vehicle I also ran. I found a boy under the vehicle and the vehicle was moving over him back and forth. I tried to take the boy out chocking under the vehicle but the driver took reverse and drove over my chest and left me seriously injured" - Younis

Qaiser was critically injured when he was hit by a speedy CRPF vehicle during routine post-Friday protests. He was immediately taken to nearby JRNL hospital and later shifted to SKIMS hospital at Soura. The doctors, on seeing his conditions, quickly put him on ventilator. The injuries to him were grave and multiple, and on the same night around 12:00 he was declared dead.

Qaiser father had passed away ten years ago and a year later his mother also expired. Thereafter, he and his sister were looked upon by their parental uncle Ghulam Mohammad Najar and Aunt Shahzada at Buchwara, Dalgate in uptown Srinagar.

According to Rifat, on that fateful day, Qaiser left on his two-wheeler to offer *Asar* (late afternoon) prayers in Jamia Masjid, Nowhatta. He had also insisted

vehicle.

The medical reports of Qaiser read he died of "pulmonary rupture", as he was hit by a vehicle and was pushed to a wall which led to the rupture of his lungs.

According to his sister Toiba, he was not involved in any subversive activity and there was no adverse police record of him in any police station. He had been issued a passport and had signed a contract with one of the companies in UAE. He was focused and spend most of him time in promoting newly started Kashmir Arts business.

Qaiser is survived by two sisters, Toiba, who is B.A-LLB student at Nowgam Law College and Iffat a 12th class student.

The researcher reached SKIMS Hospital where Younis was being administered treatment to his injuries. His chest wear visible tyre marks and his face was swollen to the extent making it unrecognizable for his visiting relatives and friends. Younis complained he was not able to stand on his legs.

Young Younis is an ardent field salesman working for New Royal Agency, dealing with provision store items, at Lal Chowk Srinagar. That day he was in Nowhatta regarding his professional assignment.

While talking to the researcher Younis stated, "On June 1, co-incidentally Friday, I have to meet some of the shopkeepers in Nowhatta, Gojawara, Hawal and Alamgari Bazar areas of downtown Srinagar regarding my work. So I offered Friday prayers in Jamia Masjid and was heading towards a customer at Nowhatta. My colleague Bilal Ahmad was already waiting for me at the shop,"

Younis further stated, "Immediately after Friday prayers routine protest erupted outside the Jamia Masjid. I saw suddenly three forces Gypsies came from Khawaja Bazaar area, a stone thrown distance from Jamia Masjid. Two of the Gypsies went towards Jamia while the third one moved in the opposite direction towards Nowhatta police station. As there were scores of boys protesting, the CRPF Gypsy driver sped-up the vehicle, in fact, started driving recklessly hitting a boy, who got stuck under it. While I and my colleague were watching this from the shop where we met, suddenly I see my colleague rushed towards the spot where a boy was under the CRPF vehicle."

Army opens fire in Pulwama, minor killed, woman injured

June 15: A 15-year-old youth was killed and a 28-year-old woman injured after army soldiers opened fire on people protesting against alleged vandalism of the house of a local militant, here in Pulwama district on Friday evening.

The slain youth has been identified as Viqas Ahmad Rather, son of Ghulam Qadir Rather, resident of Nowpora village in Lassipora area of Pulwama district.

"He was shot in the abdomen and had lost too much blood when we referred him to SMHS in Srinagar," Medical Superintendent of Pulwama District Hospital, Dr Abdul Rasheed Parra, told media.

Viqas died on way to the Srinagar hospital. SSP Pulwama Chaudhry Muhammad Aslam confirmed that the youth had succumbed to his injuries. "Yes, he has succumbed," Aslam told media. "The injured woman is stable."

The injured woman has been identified as Ruqaiya, daughter of Ghulam Muhammad Magray, also a resident of Nowpora village.

The firing incident took place at about 6:15 PM Friday evening.

According to local sources, army soldiers had come to the house of a local militant, Abid Ahmad Magray alias Shuja, of the Hizbul Mujahideen.

"As they tried to vandalise his house and harass his family members, announcements were made on mosque loudspeakers urging locals to come out," local sources said.

They said that the army opened fire when they sensed people were coming out in huge numbers and were marching towards the house of the militant.

Most of the people standing and walking in the area rushed towards the spot to help out the boy. "When I saw people running towards the vehicle I also ran. I found a boy under the vehicle and the vehicle was moving over him back and forth. I tried to take the boy out chocking under the vehicle but the driver took reverse and drove over my chest and left me seriously injured," stated Younis while explaining the circumstances in which he was badly injured.

Fearing for the lives of the boys, the youth there hurled stones and somehow managed to take the injured away. We were taken to nearby JLNH Hospital.

"After first aid and x-ray, I was referred to SKIMS hospital. Then suddenly I slipped into unconscious state and only recovered after couple of days. MRI examination was done over me showing fracture in a bone in face. The victim was moved to emergency for further treatment.

A senior police official informed Kashmir News Service (KNS) that a case under FIR number 19/2018 under section 279 and 337 RPC has been registered against the CRPF over Nowhatta incident.

Now the question arises sister and cousin of Qaiser stated that their brother was not under the vehicle, he was only hit. However, the statement made by Younis clearly mentions that he went to rescue a youth (Qaiser) who came under the CRPF vehicle. While doing so the vehicle was run over him. Interestingly, the sources where from Qaiser's family learnt were not the eyewitnesses and they are basing their claim on mere hearsay.

"Two people were injured in the firing," the local sources told media.

The Pulwama SSP gave a different version of the incident, based on army inputs. He acknowledged that the army had fired in the area, injuring two persons.

"The army has maintained that their party was returning from a nearby village after distributing sweets on the occasion of Eid, when they encountered a road block laid by some miscreants," Aslam said.

He said that the army men had stones hurled at them as soon as they disembarked from their vehicle to clear the roadblock.

"Two people have been injured in the firing. One of them has been shifted to Srinagar in a critical condition," Aslam said.

The army said in its statement: "Army personnel were conducting an Area Domination Patrol in a MPV. The road at Naupora was blocked due to 3-4 cars being parked on the wrong side of the road. Army personnel got off their vehicle to request the drivers/owners to move the cars. The house reportedly belonged to Aabid Manzoor Magray. On seeing the Army personnel, a huge crowd gathered at the site and started pelting stones and closing on to the troops, endangering the safety of the troops and government property. The troops cautioned the crowd verbally. However, the mob turned violent and tried to overpower the troops. Army personnel resorted to aerial firing, extricated themselves and continued with their patrol."

Journalist beaten by CRPF

June 03: Journalist Junaid Nabi Bazaz was beaten by Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) men Saturday evening while on his way home from work. The assault on Kashmiri journalists is nothing new.

In 2016, while covering post Burhan Wani killing uprising, Junaid had quite a few brushes with the armed forces and a few times he narrowly escaped their wrath. Read this account by him while covering 2016 anti-India uprising.

"On another occasion when there was curfew, half a dozen personnel of CRPF again stopped me near Rainawari square. The display of an identity card and a

curfew pass proved useless, they firmly said nobody is allowed to move. Their officers, according to them, had ordered strict restriction of people's movement. I persisted and told them that the pass was issued by the district magistrate and clearly states my movement during the curfew period. One of the CRPF men angrily responded, 'I am the district magistrate, and I won't allow you. Go and tell them about me.' The other one said that it was because of the curfew pass that they (CRPF) were even bothering to talk to me. 'So what if you have a curfew pass?' he said."

5. JKCCS/APDP Statements

➤ **APDP & JKCCS WELCOMES THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT OHCHR REMOTE MONITORING REPORT RELEASED**

June 14: JKCCS and APDP welcome today's important report by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Geneva. This is the first report by the United Nations exclusively on Indian administered (IaK) and Pakistan administered (PaK) Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). After continually being denied access since 2016, the OHCHR has based this report (49 pages in total) on its remote monitoring of the situation on ground, with closer attention to the period of July 2016 to April 2018.

This report affirms that J&K requires special attention and is a signal to governments that the United Nations is closely monitoring the everyday violence and the role of the parties to the dispute. It is also an affirmation of the documentation work done for decades. Following the early UN Security Council resolutions, this report has deep symbolic value following years of silence by the United Nations. Yet, this report remains connected to the historicity of the J&K conflict, and past UN Security Council resolutions, as it urges the governments to "respect the right of self-determination of the people of Kashmir as protected under international law" and favours dispute resolution through "meaningful dialogue that includes the people of Kashmir". The report ends with a series of recommendations, the most crucial of which is a call for an independent, international enquiry in the form of a "Commission of Inquiry" to be constituted by the UN Human Rights Council (inter-governmental body established by the United Nations to monitor human rights). Commissions of Inquiry prove to be an effective tool for the United Nations and have been formed in the past to investigate allegations of violations of international human rights, international humanitarian law or international criminal law and make recommendations for corrective action based on their factual and legal findings (past examples include Palestine, Lebanon, East Timor and Syria). In the absence of any fair and proper investigations in J&K to date, UN Human Rights Council constituted Commission of Inquiry would be an important intervention.

The report addresses key human rights issues, with a major focus on the role of Government of India in IaK. The report highlights the "widespread and serious human rights violations" committed primarily by Government of India and the state of virtually absolute

impunity where, through examples, the role of the Supreme Court of India is questioned for not intervening in J&K related human rights cases. Violations range from crimes of extra-judicial executions and excessive force (including by use of pellet shotguns), enforced disappearances, sexual violence, torture, arbitrary detention (including through the use of the Public Safety Act, 1978) and other violations of basic human rights. The report notes the existence of unmarked and mass graves and recommends impartial and credible investigations, including through assistance of the international community. Military courts are unequivocally rejected as effective substitutes for civilian courts of justice in the case of crimes against civilians.

The call for a Commission of Inquiry – an international independent inquiry – is in keeping with past demands by JKCCS and APDP, in light of the unwillingness of Government of India to allow for functioning of any processes of justice and fair and proper investigations. In addition, past offers of international assistance (European Parliament in 2008 for the investigation of unmarked and mass graves) have been rejected. It is imperative that a Commission of Inquiry be instituted to: a) record the violence, b) document the role of State institutions, including the judiciary, in systemic denial of justice, and, c) ascertain State and individual responsibility as per international human rights, international criminal, and international humanitarian law.

JKCCS and APDP emphasize that this report must serve as a beginning of continued and sustained OHCHR attention on J&K. As an immediate measure:

OHCHR, on its own initiative, and endorsed by the UN Human Rights Council, continue to monitor the situation in J&K and seek unconditional access for on the ground investigations. Crucially, all parties of the dispute must continue to be held to international human rights, international criminal and humanitarian law standards,

UN Human Rights Council consider the instant OHCHR report (in the present regular session beginning on 18 June or in a special session) recognize the urgency of the situation, and immediately constitute a group of reputed experts in the form of a Commission of Inquiry and both Governments of India and Pakistan must grant them unconditional access. This will serve as a vital first step to deter the ongoing violence, secure the evidence of crimes, and result in a more permanent mechanism at the UN Human Rights Council in the form of an

international expert as a Special Procedure to monitor the human rights situation in J&K.

Other UN bodies, including the Security Council, with greater powers, must also give renewed attention to the situation in J&K.

Today's OHCHR report highlights the desperate and life threatening every day reality of the people of J&K and the need for the international community, specifically the United Nations, to intervene immediately. The evidence exists, as also noted by this report. It is therefore time for sustained action by the international community towards the resolution of J&K with full respect to political and human rights as per international law. In the intervening period, the scrutiny of the actions perpetrated by State and non-state actors under international humanitarian law must be institutionalized.

➤ **JKCCS DENOUNCES ATTACK ON FREEDOM OF PRESS AND DEMANDS IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION**

6. Atrocities in South Kashmir

The unabated atrocities continue unabated particularly in south Kashmir. People there are petrified and fear stricken and wants an immediate end to the atrocities committed against them. The Informative Missive compiled the following media reportage of violence in the month of June.

➤ **'Informer's' shops set ablaze, house damaged; youths attack fire vehicle**

June 12: Unknown persons set ablaze two shops and damaged the residential house of Kifayat Mir in Molu village in Shopian district. A video of Mir confessing to being an army informer had gone viral on social media in April this year.

The video had surfaced more than a month after four militants and two civilians were killed in a shootout at Pahnoo village in Shopian district on March 4.

The video showed Mir being questioned by militants and confessing that he informed the army of the presence of militants in Pahnoo village. Mir was shot in his foot by the militants on April 15 and the video of his confession appeared on social media the next morning.

Local sources said that the family of Mir had left their village soon after the video was circulated. Before they left, local people had hurled stones at their house several times. Locals said that their house had suffered major damage on its windows, glass panes, and property inside.

On June 12, some unknown persons set two shops of Mir on fire and also damaged his residential house. Eyewitnesses said that a fire tender reached the village to douse the flames but it was stopped by local youths who also hurled rocks on the vehicle.

Shopian Senior Superintendent of Police Shailendra Kumar Mishra was not available for comments on the incident.

➤ Shopian villagers accuse soldiers of assault, army says they are lying

June 15: Jammu Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS) strongly condemns the attack on Mr. Shujaat Bukhari, in which he along with his two security guards were killed by unidentified gunmen outside their office at Press Colony, Srinagar. The killing of senior journalist and Editor-in-Chief of daily Rising Kashmir Mr. Shujaat Bukhari comes as yet another blow to freedom of the press in Jammu and Kashmir. The attack on journalists is nothing new in nearly three decades of armed conflict in Jammu and Kashmir. According to Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), at least 19 journalists have been killed in Jammu and Kashmir since the beginning of armed conflict in 1990. The killing of Mr. Bukhari is a stark reminder that freedom of the press is under continuous threat in Jammu and Kashmir and no steps have been taken by the government in safeguarding the freedom of the press.

The government must conduct an immediate and impartial investigation into the killing of Mr. Bukhari as well as into the killing of other Kashmiri journalists in the past and bring the perpetrators to justice.

June 13: Residents of Ahgam village in Shopian district held a protest alleging that army soldiers ruthlessly beat up three persons of the village without any reason. They said the assault took place early in the morning when soldiers asked youth about the firing incident that took place in the area late Tuesday night.

Villagers said that beating, harassing and intimidating people is what the army does routinely. They said that army soldiers often fire gunshots themselves and later ask villagers about the firing. "How will villagers know about the firing?" a villager asked.

Villagers said that Muhammad Rafiq Lone, son of Muhammad Ashraf Lone, was so badly beaten by the soldiers that he is now admitted to SMHS Hospital in Srinagar. The brother of the injured youth told Kashmir Reader that his brother was beaten by soldiers when he went to his orchard where soldiers were already present. An elderly villager said, "We are not able to go to our orchards because the soldiers always remain present there. They continuously harass us without any reason. For the past 20 years no militant has come to our village."

Another villager said that the soldiers threatened, "Let Ramzan go, we will see all of you."

An army official denied that any soldier beat up civilians in Ahgan village. "No soldier beat any villager. These people are lying," he said.

➤ **Video shows army using youths as human shield**

June 18: A video showing army soldiers forcing four youths to sit before their vehicle during a cordon and search operation in Samboora village of Pampore went viral on social media. It showed the army soldiers daring protesters in the area to throw stones at them, while the protesters yell at the soldiers for being "cowards" to use the four youths as "human shield".

"See the hypocrite Indian forces that have been using our brothers as human shield," yells one of the

protesters, further saying that these youths have been dragged out of their homes.

Locals of Samboor told Kashmir Reader that a cordon and search operation was in progress when youth came out to protest, after which clashes began between stone-pelters and government forces.

In the video about nine army personnel are seen standing in front of the vehicle with four youths been made to sit on ground.

Superintendent of Police Awantipora Mohammad Zahid said that they too have seen this video and police is ascertaining the authenticity and genuineness of this video.

➤ **Shopian family left petrified after army puts AK47 on son's shoulders, takes photos**

June 24: The family of a Shopian youth, Syed Rubaan, has alleged that during a recent raid at their house, army soldiers clicked pictures of Rubaan after slinging their own guns over his shoulders.

Syed Rubaan, son of Syed Muhammad Hussain, a resident of Nazneenpora in Shopian district, has been routinely detained by government forces over the past couple of years, his family said.

"His detention had become routine and we were cooperating with the government forces. But this event, where he has been falsely photographed with AK-47 rifles that actually belong actually to the army, has left us petrified," said Syed Tajammul, Rubaan's elder brother.

The incident, family said, took place at about 11:15 PM on June 17.

"Army men from the nearby Ahgam camp beat up Rubaan and me black and blue, then they left me alone but slung their guns over Rubaan's shoulders and took multiple pictures of him," Tajammul said.

Rubaan was first picked up by forces, Tajammul said, after his friend Farooq Ahmad Hurra joined the Hizbul Mujahideen in October 2016.

His detentions did not stop even after Hurra was killed in March 2017. Indeed, the Rubaan began to be detained more frequently after one of his second cousins, Syed Naveed, a policeman, decamped with his service rifle and joined the Hizb in May 2017.

"All of us family members get called for routine questioning but Rubaan is being targeted for his religious bent of mind," the family alleged.

They said that the forces once picked him and took away his two mobile phones, of which they only returned one. The family has tried sending Rubaan away to Chandigarh, where Tajammul worked, but the army kept showing up at their door asking for him, suspecting that he may have joined militants.

"I left the job at Chandigarh and came back. Then I took Rubaan with me to Srinagar, but the army again started showing up asking for him. As a result, we have kept him here at home now," Tajammul said. He said that Rubaan's studies have been badly affected. He is a final-year student at Government Degree College Pulwama.

"We are worried about his safety after army took those pictures," the family said.

Rubaan is an avid cricketer and, the family alleges, has been forced by the army to play in their tournaments.

Tajammul maintains that he has been moving from pillar to post after the incident on June 17 but nothing is being done.

"I have met DIG South Kashmir, Amit Kumar, and apprised him of the situation. He sought details which I texted him. I have intimated SP Shopian, DC Shopian and some other officials as well," he said.

DIG Kumar did not respond to repeated calls made by the media.

SP Shopian Shailendra Mishra told media that he has not received a written complaint from the family.

"Whatever is being said is verbal and we cannot act on that. There has been no written complaint," he said.

Army spokesperson Rajesh Kalia noted the details when the media asked him about the incident. He said he will ascertain the facts and get back.

➤ **Budgam villagers say of army: 'They have made our lives hell'**

June 29: Residents of Pakherpora village in Budgam district are feeling harassed and fearful due to frequent night raids conducted by security forces. Villagers alleged that army soldiers beat up and arrest young boys without any reason. The arrested boys are released only after they are thrashed by the army, villagers said.

"We don't know what they want from us. They come during the night and start conducting searches. They have made our lives hell," said Ghulamr Nabi, a local resident.

"Earlier they damaged our property, now they come and thrash everyone without caring about gender and age. They deal with everyone with guns and sticks," Nabi said.

Locals said that they approached the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam to complain against the "highhandedness" of the army. "The DC Budgam assured us that he will intervene to bring this harassment to an end. But the army terror continues, showing how much power has been given to the army and that no one can stop them from doing what they want," another villager said.

Some villagers accused the army of "inhumane acts", which "provoke" young boys to take to violent means to resist. "If the army will continue such acts, there will be no surprise if young boys take up arms. The state government never wants peace in Kashmir because their masters in the centre (New Delhi) are reaping political benefits from the unrest here," a local, wishing not to be named, said.

Drivers ferrying on the Pakherpora route also complained that the army forcibly takes over their vehicles for their own use during cordon-and-search operations and raids. "Sometimes we are forced to drop passengers' midway, even at late hours. The army doesn't care about the security of these people," a driver from Pakherpora told media.

Station House Officer (SHO) Pakherpora Imtiyaz Ahmad refuted the allegations made by the locals against the army. "As per my knowledge, no such incident happened in the village. We have not received any written complaint from the villagers," the SHO said.

On the complaint of drivers, he said, "I brought the army captain to the police station and warned him to not take over vehicles from drivers. He assured that such acts will not be repeated."

Kathua Rape and Murder

Victim sank into coma due to overdose of sedatives: Forensic experts

June 24: Overdose of sedatives, forcibly administered to an eight-year-old rape victim during her captivity in Kathua in January this year, could have pushed her into coma before she was killed, forensic medical experts have said.

The crime branch of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, probing the gang rape-and-murder case, sent a sample of her viscera to a forensic laboratory earlier this month to examine the effect of “mannar” candies (believed to be local cannabis) and Epitril 0.5 mg tablets, administered to the girl by her captors.

According to the medical opinion received recently by the crime branch, the doctors said the tablet given to the eight-year-old girl could have pushed her into a state of shock or coma (loss of consciousness).

The crime branch had asked the medical experts to comment upon the plausible effect of the medicine on an eight-year-old girl with an empty stomach.

The crime branch decided to seek further medical opinion after it was claimed by the accused and their lawyers in the court, as well as on social media through their supporters, that it was virtually impossible that the girl could not have cried for help when such an alleged brutal attack was happening on her.

The doctors, after examining the viscera, opined that the medicine administered to the victim contained Clonazepam salt and had to be administered under medical supervision keeping in mind the age and weight of the patient.

“Considering her (victim) 30-kg body weight, the therapeutic dose of 0.1 to 0.2 mgs per day divided in three doses for patient (is recommended),” it said.

“She was forcefully administered five tablets of Clonazepam of 0.5 mg each on January 11, 2018 which is higher than the safe therapeutic dose. Subsequently more tablets were given...the signs and symptoms of an overdose may include drowsiness, confusion, impaired coordination, slow reflexes, slowed or stopped breathing, coma (loss of consciousness) and death,” according to the opinion of the medical expert.

The peak concentration of Clonazepam is achieved in the blood after one hour to 90 minutes of oral administration and its absorption is complete, “irrespective of administered either with or without

food”, according to the concluding opinion of the medical expert.

The opinion would be submitted before the district and sessions court in Punjab’s Pathankot, hearing the matter, after the summer break next week.

The trial of the case was shifted from Kathua (in Jammu) to Pathankot on the directions of the Supreme Court.

The doctors said the risk is higher if Clonazepam is “concomitant used with other CNS (central nervous system) depressants like alcohol...”

The doctors, however, could not give any laboratory analysis of ‘mannar’ candies and said “it is difficult to comment on the effect its co-administration with Clonazepam” would have.

‘Mannar’ is locally available cannabis, which keeps a person sedated for a few hours.

The eight-year-old child belonging to a minority nomadic community was allegedly kidnapped on January 10 by a juvenile nephew of the main accused, Sanji Ram, and later killed on January 14. Her body was recovered on January 17.

According to investigators, Sanji Ram was aware she had been kidnapped but didn’t know about the rape.

Besides Sanji Ram and his juvenile nephew, others named in the charge sheet filed by the crime branch are his son Vishal, special police officers Deepak Khajuria and Surender Verma and friend Parvesh Kumar alias Mannu.

It also names head constable Tilak Raj and sub-inspector Anand Dutta — who allegedly took Rs 4 lakh from Sanji Ram and destroyed crucial evidence.

The district and sessions court in Pathankot framed charges of rape and murder against the seven accused in the case on June 8.

Sanji Ram, considered the main accused, is alleged to have hatched the conspiracy with the other accused for kidnapping the girl as part of a strategy to remove the minority nomadic community from the area. The fate of the eighth accused, a juvenile, was yet to be decided after the crime branch of the Jammu and Kashmir Police moved an application in the high court claiming him to be an adult.

In Tihar jail, I lost 8 teeth in 7 years'

Kashmiri prisoners suffer ever worsening conditions: Farooq Dagga

Farooq Ahmad Dagga, who came home to Kupwara in Kashmir on June 08 after spending more than seven years in Delhi’s Tihar jail said the condition of Kashmiri detainees in the prison was worsening with the passage of time.

Dagga, now 51, was released from prison after he was convicted in a case of funding for militancy. He had already served more time in prison than the court awarded him for the crime he was convicted for.

He said that almost all Kashmir detained there were ill and medication was rarely provided. “There is nobody to listen to Kashmiri prisoners,” Dagga said.

“Condition of Kashmiris detained in Tihar is worsening day by day.”

Dagga was arrested from Srinagar in 2011 by the Special Cell of Delhi Police who later handed him

over to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in a case related to transferring of funds for militant activities in Kashmir.

On Monday, the Special NIA court awarded Dagga and two others, Mohammad Sidiq Ganai and Ghulam Jeelani Liloo seven years imprisonment. However, Dagga was released as he had already stayed in jail five months longer than the punishment awarded to him.

“I reached home yesterday (Friday) and saw my family (for the first time) after over seven years,” Dagga said.

Poverty prevented his two children and wife from seeing Dagga even once during his incarceration. He is suffering from orthopedic ailments he said developed in Tihar.

“I can’t walk properly; I have problems in both the knees.”

Dagga said he lost eight of teeth in the prison.

“In case there was little pain in my teeth, the medical staff simply removes it without any investigation.”

Anantnag’s minor serving PSA term in Kathua jail

Age proof goes unnoticed as family worries for mentally challenged boy

The prolonged detention of a mentally challenged minor from Malaknag seems a loud rejoinder of the much-hyped official amnesty for the first-time offenders. The 2002-born Umar Yusuf Khan suffers from a peculiar nervous disorder due to which he is not able to organize his thoughts or speak coherently. He was arrested November last on charges of “leading violent mobs to enforce closure of roads, damaging public property including and provoking youth to attack police and CRPF personnel with intention to kill.” Interestingly, the police last year had retrospectively booked him for “anti-national” activities in 2016 when the boy was barely 15-year-old.

Soon after his arrest, Umar was booked under the notorious Public Safety Act despite his family producing his birth certificate that confirmed him being under 18 years. The repeated pleas from the affected family for Umar’s release on grounds of being a minor seem to have fallen on deaf ears. His 50-year-old mother Saleema Bano has been living in abject poverty after her husband Yusuf Khan died five years ago.

Umar, who was born along with his twin brother Tariq Khan, has three more brothers. School and Municipal records of the twins testify that both were born on 1 December 2001. Saleema and Tariq say they had submitted Umar’s age proofs to the authorities but they dismissed them and booked Umar under PSA while recording his age as 21. He is being lodged at Jammu’s Kathua jail.

“Date of birth: 1/12/2001,” reads the date of birth certificate issued by office of the registrar births and deaths municipal council, Anantnag.

A school dropout, Umar was living with his maternal uncle in nearby Donipawa village before he was rounded up for charges of stone pelting and violent protests.

The family appears shell-shocked on Umar being treated as an adult criminal. Tarq and Saleema have been pleading with officials and jail authorities citing to them the Mehbooba Mufti-led government’s earlier announcement of amnesty for the “first-time offenders”.

Detaining minors under the draconian PSA is not unusual here. In 2011, the arrest of a teenager Faizan Rafiq Misgar of Reeshi Bazar had kicked up a huge row. Faizan at the time of arrest was 14 yet the police slapped PSA on him. But the issue grew bigger with human rights organizations including Amnesty International running a sustained campaign, which ultimately led to Faizan’s release.

The Public Safety Act was introduced by former chief minister Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah as a deterrent against timber smugglers but was later abused to tackle political opponents. The act would consider adult any offender of or beyond 16 years age. The state

legislature in April 2012, under pressure from human rights bodies, amended the controversial act and enhanced the age bar to 18. Under the renewed provisions, no persons below the age of 18 years can be detained under this law. Furthermore, the Supreme Court guidelines and JK juvenile justice act clearly states that any documentary evidence regarding the age of the accused should be considered authentication of final date of birth.

The police dossier against Umar reads: “During the 2016 unrest you were at the forefront of violent mobs and instigated them for closure of roads and damage to vehicles and other public property. You also provoked youth to attack police and CRPF personals with intention to kill.” It further says that the boy would instigate violence in Donipawa village by delivering “furious” speeches. “You have secessionist tendency and always go by the diktats of the separatists and have played a vital role in advocating, abetting and provoking people especially from Donipawa village,” the dossier reads blaming Umar of provoking people to raise anti-national slogans and damage public property “on a large scale.”

Umar has been charged with four different cases only during the 2016 uprising, which was triggered by the killing of Hizb commander Burhan Wani. However, the records available with Greater Kashmir suggest that Umar has already been bailed out in all cases by the court.

While in first three cases the accused has been bailed out by Chief judicial magistrate Anantnag, in the last one he has been bailed out by principal and district session judge.

Umar’s family lives in a mud house with her sons doing petty jobs in order to make their living. Umar despite his mental instability was driving an auto-rickshaw to support his family. Saleema said she had not been able to marry her sons because the all the incomes put together are barely enough to feed the family. What makes the matters worse for Saleema is her inability to visit Kathua due to financial constraints. “I miss him but can’t afford to travel to Jammu and from there to Kathua. I wish I could see him on Eid,” the visibly shattered mother says.

“I know my son would participate in protests after the killing of Burhan but he never resorted to violence. He is not well and has been on medication. He has never spent night away from his own or his maternal house where he often lived. I am pained at thinking how he would be living in Kathua jail amidst hardcore criminals,” laments Saleema as tears trickle down her cheeks.

Umar’s elder brother Zameer Ahmad, also an auto driver says that that they had been moving from pillar to post to seek his release.

Locals allege civilian injured in army firing in Srigufwara

June 19: Army soldiers allegedly opened fire in response to a gunshot-like sound, apparently caused by a fire

cracker, in Srigufwara area of Anantnag district on Tuesday. One civilian, identified as Javaid Ahmad Waza,

a 51-year-old vegetable vendor, was struck by a bullet in his shoulder. He is being treated at a Srinagar hospital, locals said.

Local sources said that an army vehicle was patrolling the area when a gunshot-like sound was caused by a fire cracker, following which the army opened fire.

“Javaid Waza was injured in army firing,” the locals alleged.

Police gave out a different version, saying the firing was done by “unidentified gunmen”. “There has

been firing and preliminary reports suggest it was done by unidentified gunmen. Rest is a matter of investigation, which is being carried out,” Anantnag SSP Altaf Khan said.

Police said they have registered an FIR into the incident.

Srinagar-based army spokesperson Colonel Rajesh Kalia said facts were being ascertained about the incident.

Govt dumps rehab plan for 2016 pellet victims

June 22: The J&K government has dumped its rehabilitation plan for pellet victims of the 2016 unrest who have suffered psychological illness following loss of eyesight.

In 2016, nearly 150 persons lost eyesight either completely or partially. As per psychiatrists, they are facing serious mental illnesses due to lack of psychological intervention and a rehabilitation plan for them.

“The counselling programme which was run by the health department in 2016 has been shelved by the government. This has led to serious mental illnesses like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) among the pellet victims,” a health official, wishing anonymity, told Kashmir Reader.

Earlier, the government had formed a crisis management team to visit pellet victims in hospitals and in the community, to identify their illness and start their treatment. However, after two years, the programme has disappeared from the ground.

As per doctors, the pellet survivors of 2016 are vulnerable to PTSD. “Only a few pellet victims are on follow-up treatment at SMHS Hospital. We usually catch hold of them at the ophthalmology department, as they don’t turn up themselves,” said Dr Muhammad Maqbool, Head of Department of Psychiatry at Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar.

“The crisis management programme had doctors seeing the pellet victims at their home. The programme ran for a limited period only and now it is difficult to treat them,” Dr Maqbool said.

During the 2016 unrest, the health department had formed a Crisis Intervention Mental Health Team following the huge number of pellet injuries.

“It was a medical emergency. The team was formed to prevent serious mental illnesses. But now the phase of emergency has gone and health authorities have other priorities and challenges to deal with. The government should devise a long-term programme for pellet victims who are showing symptoms of mental illness, so that the problem is prevented from getting worse,” a psychiatrist suggested.

He said the health department and the GMC Srinagar are already facing shortage of doctors and counsellors at the departments of Psychiatry and Clinical Psychology. “In such circumstances, the extra community programme for pellet victims was not possible,” the doctor said.

As per official figures, nearly 500 firing survivors are enrolled for counselling at the Psychological Clinics of the GMC. Most of them are pellet victims who have been showing serious symptoms of mental disorder since the day they got injured.

Dr Maqbool assured that a similar programme would be started once the staff strength in the department increases.

“We may start the community-based counselling and crisis intervention again, once we get adequate staff in the department. As of now, one of our post-graduate students is working on the subject to identify psychological problems faced by pellet victims,” he said.

Khanyar massacre survivors may finally see justice, as police begin process to prosecute CRPF men

June 02: Twenty-seven years back the paramilitary forces opened fire on a funeral procession in the Khanyar area of the old city and shot 28 people dead and wounded 52 others in a massacre that only deepened the hate against the government forces in the Kashmir valley. No one among the forces’ men was ever brought to justice. But now it appears justice for the survivors may not be far-fetched, after all.

In a first step to prosecute the men of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) for shedding the blood of innocent people in Khanyar, the state police have written to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) for the sanction to prosecute the CRPF personnel. Since the paramilitary personnel are involved in the massacre, the state home department has to take up the matter with MHA which is the competent authority to decide on the granting of sanction for the prosecution. Under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), the government of India’s sanction is mandatory.

The police have been delaying the process of seeking the sanction from the government under the pretext of not yet having the case file translated into English.

On 8 May, 1991, the government forces had opened fire on a procession carrying the bodies of civilians killed in Dachigam and Saida Kadal. 28 civilians were killed and 52 were wounded in Khanyar.

In 2013, a petition was filed by a human rights activist in SHRC. The commission had sought a report from the DGP. After five years, the police submitted a report before SHRC.

The report states, “Report received from IGP Kashmir Zone Srinagar reveals that on 08-05-1991 case FIR NO. 41/1991 was registered in police Station Khanyar regarding death of 21 persons and 54 injured persons in the shootout by 2nd Battalion CRPF personnel at Khanyar Srinagar.”

The report further states, “The investigation of the instant case was closed as challaned. Subsequently,

the file was submitted to Home department for accord of government sanction, wherefrom the case file was returned with some observation/ queries which are being taken care of.”

The commission asked the chief prosecuting officer (CPO) to file a copy of the final report which was sent to the home secretary.

The CPO in connection to the direction passed by the commission submitted the final report. The report states, “The investigation of the instant case was closed as challaned. Subsequently, the file was submitted to Home department for accord of government sanction, wherefrom the case file was returned with some observation/ queries. The same were replied and the file was again submitted to home department for accord of sanction”

“But the same has been received back from the government home department vide letter no home/pros/23/2017/5225 dated 14.12.2017 for English translation of copy of FIR statement of witness, final report and incriminating material relied upon and other documents in the CD file. The file will be submitted back to government home department immediately after

translation of the requisite documents by IGP Kashmir Zone Srinagar,” the report states.

Hamid Wani, a member of the State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) asked the police that the commission is least interested in the initial correspondences between the director general of police and home department and is interested in the dispensation of justice.

Hamid issued a notice to the police stating that the case is so old that with the lapse of time, it may become obsolete with no persuasion from any quarter. What needs to be done by the government which includes the home department and the director general of police, is to expedite the sanction for prosecution, otherwise there is no point in merely entering into correspondences between various police officers and home department.”

In response to it the police sent a report to SHRC informing them that the case has been forwarded to the government home department Jammu and Kashmir for the accord of sanction for launching prosecution in case FIR no 41/ 1991/ u/s 302, 307, 109 RPC 7/ 27 A. act of the police station Khanyar.

7. Militarization

CRPF occupies under-construction hospital at Bemina

June 06: The 500-bed maternity-cum-paediatric hospital at Bemina, under construction since 2011, has been occupied by the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) since last week.

The whole land of the building has been demarcated with barbed wires and bunkers have been erected on all sides. Bunkers have been also built on the front balconies on every floor.

The building is located only a few hundred meters from the CRPF headquarters.

Makeshift tents, mobile bunkers, tin-sheds and makeshift toilets surround the whole building and CRPF vehicles can be seen parked on the site.

Locals said that since last week they started noticing the CRPF movement in the building, which they said is “increasing” every day.

“This building was under construction and only labourers used to work and live there temporarily, but since last week CRPF made these bunkers all over the place,” a local said.

“Their movement is increasing every day. Each day, trucks and buses carrying additional personnel are placed there. It looks like a full-fledged camp now,” he added.

Intelligence sleuths cast net at KU, interrogate faculty members, students

June 07: Intelligence sleuths have recently interrogated teachers and scholars at Kashmir University for their alleged role in instigating students against the state and preaching radicalisation.

Several faculty members of social sciences have been, so far, summoned by different intelligence agencies for questioning in the dean’s office. The questioning is taking place a month after sociology teacher Dr Rafi Bhat was killed along with Hizbul militants.

A senior faculty member of the varsity, wishing not to be named, told Kashmir Reader that the intelligence agencies summoned colleagues of Dr Rafi

In October 2015, the then Chief Minister Mufti Muhammad Sayeed had told the media: “I have been promised by Minister of Roads and Buildings that the project would be fast-tracked and by 2016, we shall have it ready for use.”

Naeem Akhter, current Minister of Public Works, during his February visit to the hospital had said that the government would start the functioning of the hospital “this year”. He had termed the project of “vital significance” which will “decrease the workload” on other major hospitals in the city, especially on Lal Ded maternity hospital.

When the Public Relations Officer of CRPF was contacted about this development, he said he had “no information in this regard”.

When media called Government Medical College Principal, Dr Samia Rashid, she said “she is not the authority to talk on the matter” and dropped the call.

The Bemina hospital is being built at a cost of Rs 45.98 crore. Funds of Rs 25 crore were allocated to the paediatric hospital component but it missed the original deadline in the year 2015.

Bhat and they were put to sustained questioning for several hours.

Sources in the varsity said that the faculty members of sociology department taught were called by the dean of the faculty to her office where they were questioned for a couple of hours by intelligence officials.

“A faculty member was called to the Dean’s office and was informed that two journalists wanted to talk to him. After he resisted answering a few questions of the journalists, he was told that he will be summoned to the office again. The faculty member was later informed that the guys questioning him were intelligence sleuths,” the teacher who spoke to media said.

A student of the sociology department said that on Monday, June 4, the state police's intelligence department summoned two fourth-semester students to their Humhama centre. He said the students were interrogated for the whole day. "They are being questioned about Dr Rafi's ideology and the reason why he picked up the gun," the student said.

Students of the sociology department, in particular, are being harassed on the pretext of being questioned about Dr Rafi Bhat, he said.

Last month, intelligence officials had summoned one scholar at the sociology department and questioned him for the whole day.

Dean of Social Sciences, Dr Asifa, initially denied that she was involved in any questioning process or was even aware of such developments, but after certain details were shared with her she said she did not want to speak on the issue and dropped the call.

A top source at the varsity, who is privy to the developments, told media that the intelligence agencies

have tightened the noose around the varsity. "There is unprecedented surveillance around and inside the university campus," he said.

Sources said that the intelligence guys during questioning made offensive remarks against the faculty members and accused them of instigating students in the varsity. The intelligence agents also accused the faculty members of preaching hatred and radicalisation to the students, sources said.

Two other students have been summoned to the local police station at Nigeen. A student revealed that during questioning there, the summoned students were asked questions about the congregation that the varsity students organized on May 8 in honour of Dr Rafi Bhat.

The banned Kashmir University Students Union had organised a day-long congregation in honour of the slain professor. It saw massive participation of students.

Children continued to be affected: UN

June 28: Pakistan-based militant outfits Jaish-e-Mohammed and Hizbul Mujahideen recruited and used children in Jammu and Kashmir during clashes with security forces last year, according to a UN report released on June 28.

Report asks Pakistan govt to deter attacks on schools. The annual report of the UN Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict, covers the January-December 2017 period and 20 countries.

On the situation in India, the report of UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said children continued to be affected by incidents of violence between armed groups and the government forces, particularly in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and during tensions in Jammu and Kashmir.

Noting "grave violations", it said three incidents of recruitment and use of children by Jaish and

Hizb were reported in Jammu and Kashmir during clashes with the security forces.

"One case was attributed to Jaish-e-Mohammed and two to Hizbul Mujahideen," the report said, adding that "unverified" reports also indicate use of children as informants and spies by the security forces.

Guterres asked the Indian government to put in place measures to hold perpetrators of child recruitment and use to account and engage with the UN to end and prevent violations against children.

With regard to military use, the occupation of over 20 schools was documented by the Central Reserve Police Force in Srinagar in April.

"Increased tensions in Jammu and Kashmir reportedly also led to closure of school for varying periods, including in Rajouri (65) and Poonch (76) districts," it said.

7. Official Statements

➤ Local militant recruitments witness alarming rise: Security agencies

June 03: The unilateral ceasefire during the holy month of Ramadan may have brought a halt to anti-militancy operations in Kashmir but security agencies have warned of a rise in recruitment of local youths into militant groups, that has crossed 80, and a rise in infiltration from various sides of the Line of Control (LoC).

The security agency officials said the highly-volatile Shopian and Pulwama districts in South Kashmir continued to contribute more youths to the militant groups which included outfits like ISIS-Kashmir and Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind, a group which claims support of the Al-Qaeda.

As many as 20 more youths have joined the militant groups in the month of May which included Rouf from Ganderbal, a fourth-semester student pursuing a diploma course in government polytechnic, the officials said.

A Unani doctor, the brother of IPS officer Inamulhaq Mengnoo, has also been reported missing from Shopian and it is apprehended that he too may have

joined terror groups, they said, adding that the figure at the end of April this year was 45.

The officials said another 16 were missing mainly from the twin districts and a probe was on to ascertain whether they have joined any terror group.

The officials said infiltration was also picking up and some of the terrorists had managed to sneak in from Poonch and Rajouri district of Jammu region as well as from the LoC in the Kashmir Valley. This created a more alarming situation for the security forces which were readying themselves for the two-month long Amarnath Yatra beginning g this month-end.

Year 2018, according to the officials, may end up as the worst year in terms of number of youths joining various militant groups as the figures indicated that 81 youths had joined until May this year. In 2017, a total of 126 youths had picked up guns. It was the highest number since 2010, according to a recent data presented in the state assembly and Parliament.

There has been a steady rise in the number of youth taking up arms in the Valley since 2014 onwards as compared to 2010-2013 when figures stood at 54, 23, 21 and 6 in the respective years. In 2014, the number

shot up to 53 and in 2015, it reached 66 before touching the highest mark of 88 in 2016, the data showed.

This year's recruitment of youth joining militancy includes Junaid Ashraf Sehrai, 26, an MBA degree holder from Kashmir University, and son of Mohammed Ashraf Sehrai, who took over as chairman of Tehrik-e-Hurriyat from Syed Ali Shah Geelani. Tehrik-e-Hurriyat is a pro-Pakistan amalgam of separatists groups.

The list also includes a 26-year-old PhD scholar Mannan Bashir Wani hailing from Kupwara, officials said. Wani was studying in the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU).

According to a report prepared by the Jammu and Kashmir CID, which has been shared with the Union Home Ministry, the past three years have witnessed a consistent rise in the number of active local militants even in the face of successful anti-militancy operations undertaken by the security forces.

"It therefore become imperative for the state to deconstruct why, while militants are being killed, militancy continues to rise," the report had said.

The report said the situation is such that terrorists encounters "have turned into a spectacle in the recent years with attacks on encounter sites by protesters followed by glamourised funerals."

"The entire phenomenon has had a tendency to create an emotionally charged environment which is ideal for recruiting fresh cadres," it said.

The report, while drawing a correlation between the militants killed in encounters and the new recruitment, said, "It has been found that encounters of local militants are part of a vicious circle that acts as a catalyst to push further recruitment."

"Large glorified funerals of militants have also been witnessing presence of active militants who give gun salutes to their killed associate.

"The presence of militants in these funerals not only eulogises the deaths of militants but at the same time brings the active militants into open interaction with civilians," the report said, warning that such an interaction was one of the important steps in facilitating recruitment. PTI

➤ **Five more Police battalions to be raised in the state: Rajnath Singh**

June 08: Home Minister Rajnath Singh has said that government would raise five more battalions of Indian Reserve Police (IRP) in Jammu and Kashmir.

While talking to reporters at Kupwara during his visit, Singh said 60 percent of the vacancies for these IRP battalions will be reserved for the people of border areas.

Earlier, the local media has reported that newly raised battalion would comprise of 1100 personnel which mean the five battalions proposed for J&K will recruit 5500 policemen.

Expenditure on this count will be shared in the ration of 75:25 between the Central and the State Government.

The raising of five new IRP battalions would need Rs 305 crore expenditure and the Centre has agreed to bear 75 per cent cost of it.

226 crore rupees worth expenditure would be borne by the Government of India and Rs 79 crore by the J&K Government.

The total count of policemen in Kashmir numbers over one lakh. This figure does not include the already existing IRP battalions and the special police officers (SPO's).

➤ **Hit stone-pelters with bullets: BJP MP**

June 11: The BJP Rajya Sabha member D P Vats has said that stone-pelters in Kashmir Valley should be hit with bullets he said it sidelines on the sidelines if a functioning in Chandigarh.

"I am of the opinion that stone-pelters should be hit with bullet," Vats said when asked about the Jammu and Kashmir government's decision to withdraw cases against people involved in stone-pelting incidents.

➤ **Let's give peace, talks a chance in Kashmir: Army Chief**

June 12: Army chief General Bipin Rawat has favored New Delhi's dialogue offer in Kashmir saying "peace should be given a chance in Kashmir."

"Talks must happen. The issue is that a lot of locals are joining militancy. We kill them and more would join. Infiltration can be controlled, but this cycle of recruitment of local youth can go on and on. So...let's give peace a chance and see," General Rawat told Economic Times.

In April this year, the army chief had said the "radicalised youth of the 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 had said, was the only way to improve the situation in Kashmir that had been witnessing militancy for about three decades now.

Gen Rawat refrained from revealing much on the inquiry into a Srinagar hotel incident involving a Major Leetul Gogoi, who hit headlines when he tied a local to his jeep as a "human shield" in Beerwah area of central Kashmir's Budgam district during bypolls to Srinagar parliamentary seat last year.

Major Gogoi was caught with a girl in a Srinagar hotel last month and briefly detained by police.

➤ **No rise in militant recruitment during NICO: GoC**

June 12: There are no indications of an increase in militant recruitment during the unilateral Ramadan ceasefire by the Government of India (GoI) in Jammu and Kashmir, a senior army official said.

General Officer Commanding (GoC) of 15 Corps, Lt Gen A K Bhatt said people of Kashmir have responded well to the GoI's announcement of non-initiation of combat operations (NICO) during Ramadan and some peace has been achieved in the valley.

Asked whether there was increase in militant recruitment during the holy month of Ramadan, he said, "There are no indications as such at the moment and we hope it will come down".

"Since the ceasefire, some peace has been achieved and the public has responded well to it. We will be happy if there is no civil casualty in these 30 days of Ramadan," he said.

The GoC said any decision regarding extension of ceasefire will have to be taken by the GoI but the Army was ready to implement any such decision.

“That decision has to be taken by the government and we are ready to implement any such decision,” he said.

On infiltration, Lt Gen Bhatt said there were attempts by Pakistan but troops were deployed to stop them.

“As far as infiltration is concerned, Pakistan is still fully engaged in attempting infiltration, but our troops are deployed to stop such attempts,” he said.

On spike in weapons snatching incidents in the valley, GoC said it was the “frustration of the militants.”

“This is their frustration. Police have foiled many such attempts recently and the police are responding to it very effectively,” he said.

Earlier, Lt Gen Bhatt inaugurated Army’s Kashmir Super 30 (Medical) free residential coaching for NEET aspirants.

“It is a proud moment and a happy moment for us that we have selected 30 students from across the J-K for the Super 30 (Medical). I am sure these students will get good coaching and secure admission in best colleges across the country and earn a name for themselves, for their parents and for the country,” he said.

Lt Gen Bhatt said the endeavour of the forces is to join the youth of the valley with the mainstream.

➤ 14460 bunkers to be constructed along IB, LoC in Jammu
June 18: The Government of India has sanctioned construction of 14,460 bunkers at a cost of Rs 415.73 crore to safeguard the lives of the people living along the LoC and IB in J&K, Minister for Public Works, Naeem Akhtar was informed at a meeting to review the progress of construction of safety bunkers and evacuation shelters.

These would include 13029 individual bunkers and 1431 community bunkers. Besides, Evacuation Sheds are also to be constructed along the LoC and IB to deal with emergencies during cross-border shelling.

While 7,298 bunkers are being constructed along the LoC in the twin districts of Poonch and Rajouri, 7162 underground bunkers would be constructed along the IB in Jammu, Kathua and Samba districts, the meeting was told.

The meeting was further informed that the capacity of the 160 square feet individual bunker would be eight people, and that of the 800 square feet community bunker would be 40 people.

The meeting was informed that the hilly terrain of districts like Poonch substantially increases the head-load while bunkers in low-lying areas need water-proofing, which increases the cost of Rs 2.50 lakh per bunker fixed by the union government.

➤ **78 civilians were killed at encounter sites in 2017: Crime Branch**

June 21: The year 2017 might go down as one of those periods in the recent history of Kashmir during which a high number of protestors were killed at the sites of shooting between the government forces and militants.

According to figures compiled by the crime branch of the police, 78 of such protestors were killed at those sites while trying to save militants from being killed by the government forces.

After the uprising of 2016, triggered by the killing of the charismatic Hizbul Mujahidin militant commander, Burhan Muzzafar Wani, people started thronging encounter sites and pelted stones at the government forces in a bid to give safe passage to the trapped militants. To stop people from thronging

encounter sites, an advisory was issued by the Jammu and Kashmir police and Army, asking people to stay away from encounter sites to ensure smooth counter-insurgency operations, but the advisory had no takers. For people would prefer risking their lives than seeing a militant dying.

In the month of April, the data says, 15 civilians were killed at the encounter sites. And in the next month- May- 11 civilians lost their lives in order to save the lives of the holed up militants.

The killings, however, didn’t deter the civilians who would continue to show their presence at the encounter sites. In July 11 civilians were killed, and in March and August eight such protestors were killed.

Similarly, seven civilians were killed in October. In December four, In January, June, September and November three in each month and in the month of February two civilians lost their lives.

Also, 172 civilians were injured at the encounter sites in 2017, the crime Gazette reveals. Majority of the injuries have taken place in the month of March (31), July (47) and September (48).

Compared to 2016 - when 48 civilians were killed and 130 injured at the encounter site- year 2017 have been the deadliest. Interestingly, in July 2016 when protests have erupted in entire Kashmir after the death of Burhan Wani and civilian casualties have become a norm, 17 civilians had died at the encounter sites in that month as well.

With mounting civilian casualties, director general of Police (DGP), again, has urged the youth not to throng the encounter sites as they are not marriage venues. He has said that youth are responsible for their deaths as bullet don’t distinguish between a protestor and a militant. But again, the pleas had fallen to deaf ears, as the civilians continue to gather at the encounter sites.

➤ **BJP MLA Lal Singh threatens Kashmiri journalists**

June 23: Former minister Lal Singh, who was removed by his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for shooting his mouth off, on Friday said in a press conference that Kashmiri journalists seemed to be waiting to be killed just as Shujaat Bukhari was.

He also warned them to never cross a line, suggesting instead that they worry about “how to live”.

Singh said made these insulting remarks at a presser he had called in Jammu to again demand a CBI probe into the Kathua rape-and-murder case.

“They (Kashmir’s journalists) have created wrong atmosphere about the whole case. Now I would like to ask them to draw a line and think about how to live,” the BJP leader said.

He asked, “Are they waiting for a similar incident such as happened with Bukhari?”

Editor of Rising Kashmir, Shujaat Bukhari was assassinated along with his two security guards on June 14 outside his office in Srinagar, a day before Eid. Bukhari succumbed to his injuries and was declared brought dead at hospital.

➤ **More than 250 active militants in Kashmir: army commander**

June 24: More than 250 militants are active in Kashmir and about the same number are waiting at “launch pads” across the Line of Control to infiltrate into the valley, the

GOC 15 corps Lt Gen AK Bhat said on Sunday, adding that the Indian Army was ready to take them on.

The Indian Army will not allow anyone to disturb peace in Jammu and Kashmir, Bhat told reporters after the inauguration of 'Baramulla Youth Festival 2018' here at the Showqat Ali Stadium in Government Degree College Ground Khawajabagh.

Replying to a question, Bhat said that commandos of the National Security Guard (NSG) will work with Jammu and Kashmir Police in Srinagar city in anti-militancy operations.

"NSG will not work with army, yes. They will work with the local police, mostly in Srinagar city," he said.

➤ **Army chief Bipin Rawat slams UN report on J&K human rights**

June 27: Army chief Bipin Rawat broke his silence on a recent United Nations report cataloguing alleged human rights violations in Jammu and Kashmir, saying it isn't worth speaking about as it is "motivated".

"We don't need to be concerned about this report (the recent UNHRC report on Kashmir, which has been rejected by India). Some of these reports are motivated. The human rights record of the Indian Army is absolutely above board," said the Army chief.

➤ **Army operating with people-friendly rules: Gen Rawat**

June 29: Days after imposition of Governor's rule in Jammu and Kashmir, Army chief General Bipin Rawat Friday said army was operating with "people-friendly" rules of engagement in the Valley.

"Our basic purpose is to go after terrorists who create violence and disturbance in the Valley. Our aim is not to cause inconvenience to civilian population who are not indulging in arson or violence," he said on the sidelines of an event here.

"There is nothing like stepping up... Army continues to operate with the formulated rules of engagement," Rawat said when asked whether security has been stepped up in the Valley after the fall of the government.

The Army chief said in addition to the "stringent" rules of engagement, local formation commanders continuously give guidelines to soldiers as to how to operate.

"Our rules of engagement are very people-friendly and we conduct operations in a very people-friendly manner. And, motivated reports that Indian Army is carrying out brutal operations in Kashmir is not true," he said.

The Army chief interacted with a group of school students, including five girls, from Baramulla and other neighbouring regions of the Valley who visited him here at South Block as part of a national integration tour.

8. Armed Forces Suicides

➤ **Soldier ends life in Ganderbal**

June 2: An Army soldier allegedly shot himself dead with his service rifle while on duty in Surfraw area of Kangan in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district last night.

A police official identified the deceased as Havaladar Rajpal Singh son of Roop Singh resident of Kanpur UP.

According to the official, the soldier took the extreme step while he was on duty at his unit in Surfraw camp housing 24 Rashtriya Rifles.

He said the soldier's colleagues rushed to help him after they heard the sound of gunshot. "He was lying dead," said the official.

➤ **Army man dies of gun shots in Poonch**

June 12: A jawan has died due to gunshot wounds in Poonch district, with the Army suspecting it to be a suicide case. 23-year-old gunner Ranjot Singh was at forward post in Poonch when other jawans heard a gunshot. They rushed to the area and saw him in an injured condition yesterday, police officials said.

He was declared brought dead by a hospital later, they said, adding that the post-mortem of the body was conducted after registering a case.

A court of inquiry has been ordered into it, an Army officer said, adding that the deceased jawan belonged to Punjab.

He said that the Army presumes it to be case of suicide and further police investigations are on.

