



JAMMU KASHMIR COALITION OF CIVIL SOCIETY (JKCCS)

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KASHMIR COALITION OF CIVIL SOCIETY**

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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

LOSING SIGHT AND MUCH MORE

The pellet shot guns were introduced for crowd control in Kashmir in August 2010 following the mass agitation over Machil extra judicial killings. The pellet shot guns were first used in Seelu village of Sopore. In September 2010, eighteen-year-old Amir Kabir of old town Baramulla became the first victim to lose eyesight in both his eyes. In the same year, 14 year old boy Arshid Ahmad Parray and 20 year old Mudasir Nazir were the first victims who lost their lives to pellet shot gun injuries. The year 2016, following the killing of Hizbul Mujahideen Commander Burhan Wani, saw an unprecedented use of pellet shot guns for crowd control and till date the pellets are used unabatedly to control crowds.

According to official data 4 people died due to pellet shot injuries and as per the ex J&K Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti's statement in the legislative assembly, "between July 2016 to February 2017, 6221 persons received injuries due to pellet guns including 782 eye injuries". In response to a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) before J&K High Court, the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) informed the J&K High Court in an affidavit that 1.3 million pellets have been fired in just 32 days (between July 8 to August 11 of 2016) in Kashmir to control street protests.

The J&K State Human Rights Commission has taken a *Suo-Motto* cognizance of the matter in December 2016 and directed the Deputy Commissioners of all the 10 districts of Kashmir valley to send the list of pellet victims and state the nature of disabilities as a result of the injuries. The list of 1726 victims have been submitted, which the district magistrates have collected from concerned hospitals. Almost in none of the cases, FIRs have been filed against the police. The report submitted before the SHRC has deficiencies too, for example no case has been listed from the district of Bandipora while Amnesty International in their report on pellet victims *Loosing Sight in Kashmir* have listed 8 cases from the district. The list submitted by the District Magistrate is not perfect, and even the names are not accurate because many victims have given different names to hospitals for fear of reprisals from the police, who have booked several victims in FIR's.

Insha, a student from Shopian district, who lost both her eyes due to pellets, has become the face of pellet victims tragedy. The use of pellet guns has caused embarrassment to the Jammu and Kashmir government and the Government of India as the use of pellets over crowds in Kashmir has received international attention. The *New York Times* called it as an "epidemic of dead eyes". Following the international outrage, the government swiftly provided jobs and some relief to 13 victims including Insha but without any criteria for providing these jobs. This has caused fragmentation within the victims who wanted to collectively galvanise public opinion against this weapon, which the government has forever been claiming is a non lethal weapon.

The victims have now come together and constituted an initiative called J&K Pellet Victims' Welfare Trust. According to the Victims' Trust, there are at least 1300 pellet victims/members associated with them who have lost their eye sight partially or fully including 32 girls. Most of the victims are of the younger age and students and therefore cannot continue their studies due to loss of eye sight. Besides the physical harm, the injuries have caused enormous psychological, financial, social and security problems for the victims.

The question that should be raised is whether the use of the pellet guns in Kashmir is legal and under which provision of law are they being used. The J&K state has no Special Operating Procedures (SOP) of its own as none have been notified in public domain. It has adopted the central SOPs and even according to the SOP there are different stages for crowd control operations, like public address system for dispersal of protestors, persuasion, mediations, negotiations, and finally using water cannons, tear smoke ammunitions, lathi charge, rubber bullets and pump action guns. None of these measures are adopted by the police in Kashmir. The law enforcing agencies indiscriminately use the pellet guns as the first resort without firing in air or in the ground or at the legs of the protestors. It is been fired directly at the vital organs of the body. The pellet guns are not being used in any state in India neither it is being used in any other conflict area in the world except in Venezuela, where according to a 2017 UN report – plastic pellets were fired but immediately afterwards the police guard who fired the pellets was arrested and put on trial. The RTI filed by JKCCS seeking to know the decision-making authority on the use of pellet guns has received no response. The PIL filed by the JK High Court Bar Association for banning of the pellet guns is pending.

The fact of the matter is that impunity is prevailing in Jammu and Kashmir. With the result the police and paramilitary are using disproportionate force as a result of which young people are losing sight. The most unfortunate thing is that the victims are from the disempowered section of the society, and are not getting immediate proper medical treatment. Though the Pellet Victims Welfare Trust (PVWT) have appealed for the funds but the financial support they have received is not enough to cater to their immediate medical needs. Foreign funding is not possible because the government will not issue registration under FCRA for such an organisation nor will they allow the international organisations to visit and take care of the victims as for them it is a sensitive issue and Indian government's policy otherwise has been to keep away the foreign aid agencies to operate in Kashmir. It is Kashmir's human tragedy and it is likely to continue. The Supreme Court of India where the matter was earlier taken by JK High Court Bar Association has not passed any effective order on the use of pellet guns by the state forces. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of Kashmiri people, including the religious groups to come forward for the rescue and relief of the victims and at the same time reaching international human rights institutions and campaign for its banning.

2. Chronology of Incidents

Sep 01: Three unidentified militants and an army soldier were killed in a week-long operation in north Kashmir's Bandipora district. Defence spokesperson confirmed to media that three militants were killed and weapons were recovered in "Operation Dana". With the killing of three militants, the week-long army operation also "ended", the spokesperson added.

Two army soldiers suffered injuries during the initial phase of gunfight on August 31.

Sep 02: Around 18 people were injured in clashes between youth and government forces soon after a brief gunfight in Laddi village in south Kashmir's Shopian district. The trapped militants manage to escape. Authorities at district hospital Shopian said they received 13 injured.

Sep 03: A youth died of a bullet wound to the head and seventeen were injured including one suffered "severe nerve injury" due to pellets after government forces opened fire on protestors in Pulwama district, during a massive anti-militancy operation in which more than 18 villages were put under cordon. The slain youth has been identified as Fayaz Ahmad Wani, son of Muhammad Ahsan Wani, resident of Chewa Kalan village in Pulwama. According to reports, a cordon and search operation (CASO) was launched at about 7:00 AM in more than 18 villages of Pulwama district. Soon after the CASO was launched, clashes erupted in many parts of these villages. While a PDP worker escape unhurt when attacked by unknown gunmen at Naira, Pulwama.

Sep 04: Suspected militants hurled a grenade at Sangrama Chowk near Srinagar-Baramulla highway injuring three CRPF men and one civilian. According to a senior police official, at about 11am militants lobbed a grenade at a CRPF patrolling party at Sangrama Chowk. The grenade explosion injured three CRPF men and one civilian.

Sep 05: A brief exchange of gunfire between militants and government forces, which ensued after militants attacked an army patrol, proved fatal for a 17-year-old labourer from Uttar Pradesh who was on his way to work at a brick kiln in Lassipora area of Pulwama district. Identified as Arjun Kumar, son of Suresh Kumar, resident of Pilibhit area in Bareilly district of Uttar Pradesh, the teenage labourer was hit by a bullet in his head in the crossfire early Wednesday morning.

Sep 06: Armed forces launched CASO in Gole Masjid area of Tral in Pulwama district. While Police brought a man with severe neck injury and his throat cut to district hospital Anantnag in a critical condition. The victim has been identified as Feroz Ahmed Hajam—native of Kherti Kokernag area of Anantnag district. According to locals, Feroz was summoned for questioning to 19 RR camp at Adura, Verinag.

Sep 07: Protests post Friday-prayers took place in Nowhatta area in Srinagar downtown.

Sep 08: Suspected militants hurled a grenade on a SSB bunker in Mehjoor Nagar area of Srinagar district, however, no one was injured in the explosion.

Sep 09: Unknown gunmen shot dead a Hurriyat activist in Bomai village of north Kashmir's Sopore town. Shakir-ul-Rehman Sultani, 45, son of late Mufti Nizamuddin Sultani, resident of Reshipora Bomai, joined Hurriyat (G) in 2010 and was working as a tehsil president of Hurriyat (G). In another incident, unidentified gunmen shot dead an alleged militant belonging to the 'Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind' – an affiliate of al-Qaeda in the valley led by Zakir Musa in the Hazratbal area of the city. The slain youth was identified as Asif Nazir Dar, a resident of the Panzgam area of Awantipora in south Kashmir's Pulwama district. Dar was an active militant associated with the Hizbul Mujahideen (HM), but later defected to Musa-led Ansar Gazwat-ul-Hind, police said. While in a shootout one LET militant was killed and a cop was injured in Ranipora area of Acabal, Anantnag. The slain militant was identified as Bilal Ahmad Dar of Yaripora, Kulgam. In another incident, unidentified gunmen fired at and injured a woman travelling in a car near Murran Chowk, Pulwama. The injured was identified as Simran Jan of Saidakadal, Srinagar. While an army soldier committed suicide by shooting himself dead with his service rifle inside a camp in Samba, Jammu.

Sep 10: Unidentified gunmen shot dead a man from Kupwara at Khanyar Srinagar, police said. The deceased was identified as Abdul Ahad Ganie son of Ghulam Ahmad Ganie of Tewan Mohalla Lalpora Lolab Kupwara. "He was shot in the head while he was driving a car (No. DL 3C AY 6352)," a police official said. While India and Pakistani forces targeted each other with heavy gunfire across LOC in Keran sector of Kupwara.

Sep 11: Two militants were killed in a brief gunfight with armed forces in Langate area of north Kashmir's police district Handwara. The slain militants were identified as Liyaqat Ahmad Lone, son of Gulam Mohiuddin Lone of Harwan area of Sopore, and Furqan Rashid Lone of Shartpora in Langate Handwara. Reports said that a civilian, Imtiyaz Ahmad Wani, who owned a nearby house, was hit by a bullet in his leg during the gunfight. However, SSP Handwara Asheesh Mishra denied these reports and said the civilian was not injured by a bullet but had sustained minor injuries at his home for some other reason. While suspected militants hurled a grenade on police station Pattan area of Baramulla, however, no damage was caused.

Sep 12: Militants travelling in a Kashmir-bound truck fired upon a CRPF naka party on the Jammu-Srinagar I highway near Jajjar Kotli in Jammu district, after their truck was intercepted at the naka checkpoint. One civilian was injured in the militants' firing. The injured civilian has been identified as Ganesh Dass, 54. He was taken to GMC hospital Jammu for medical attention. Ganesh Dass works in the government's sericulture department, sources said. Later, the truck was apprehended but the militants travelling in it had escaped. While suspected militants hurled a grenade towards a joint camp of CRPF and army in Tahab village of Pulwama district. The grenade missed the intended targeted without causing any damage.

Sep 13: Two non-local JEM militants were killed in an encounter at Teliyan locality in Arampora area of Sopore town. The slain were identified as Ali alias Athar and Zia-ur-Rehman. In another encounter,

three unidentified militants were killed in Kakriyal area near Katra in Reasi, Jammu with armed forces. Twelve armed forces personnel including senior police officer, 5 CRPF men and 3 army soldiers were injured. While army claimed it had killed three unidentified militant (infiltrators) along the Line of Control (LoC) in Keran sector of north Kashmir's Kupwara district.

Sep 14: Amid shutdown over the killing of a Hurriyat activist by unidentified gunmen in Sopore clashes took place throughout the day in Sopore.

Sep 15: Five local HM militants were killed in an encounter with armed forces in Qazigund area of Kulgam district. A civilian, Rouf Ahmad Gania, 22, son of Saleem Ahmad of Achidora area of Anantnag, was also killed during clashes near encounter site, after he received bullet. The slain militants were identified as Gulzar Ahmad Paddar alias Saif, a resident of Adijan, Kulgam, Faisal Ahmad Rather alias Dawood (Yamrach, Kulgam), Zahid Ahmad Mir alias Hashim (Okey, Kulgam), Masroor Molvi alias Abu Darda (Fatehpura, Anantnag); and Zahoor Ahmad Lone alias Rehman Bhai (Kulgam). As many as 21 persons were injured in clashes. While an army soldier was injured in cross LOC shelling along LOC in Rajouri district.

Sep 16: Militants triggered IED blast to target army Casspir vehicle in Heff village of Shopian district. The blast was followed by a brief exchange of fire between militants and armed forces. However, no damage was reported on either side. While three CASO were launched in Bandipora district.

Sep 17: Suspected militants shot dead a Territorial army man and a former Ikhwan commander in his house in Surat village of Kulgam district. The slain soldier was identified as Mukhtyar Ahmad Malik of Kulgam. While a shutdown was observed across Kashmir valley over the killing of a civilian at the hands of armed forces on September 15.

Sep 18: A CRPF man was injured in a militant attack in Newa, Kakapora camp in Pulwama district. In another incident, a BSF soldier was killed in cross LOC shelling along LOC in Samba district. The Indian side accused the Pakistan rangers for unprovoked shelling.

Sep 19: Several mourning processions commemorating the sacrifice of Imam Hussain (RA) and his companions in Karbala were taken out by Shia Muslims in various parts of Srinagar on the 8th day of Muharram. However, government forces foiled similar Muharram processions in many other areas of the city. Although authorities had imposed strict restrictions in areas falling under more than ten police stations – of Shaheed Gunj, Maisuma, Kralkhud, Kothibagh, Batamaloo, Sherghari, Karan Nagar, Ram Munshi Bagh (partly), Nowhatta, Khanyar, Rainawari, Safakadal – mourning rituals of Muharram were witnessed in many of these areas. Meanwhile, a photojournalist performing his professional duties was allegedly thrashed by government forces while covering Muharram processions near Jahangir Chowk. Shah Jahangir, affiliated with a local news agency, said he was beaten up by government forces near Jahangir Chowk while he was covering a procession.

Sep 20: Two unidentified militants were killed in an ongoing encounter in a forest area of Sumular in Bandipora district. While restrictions were imposed in various parts of Srinagar district to prevent Ashura procession. A Panchayat Ghar was torched, police said by some miscreants, in Kultrech village in Chadoora, Budgam.

Sep 21: Militants abducted and killed three policemen in South Kashmir's Shopian district. The killings, reportedly, triggered wave of resignations from Special Police Officers (SPOs) in south Kashmir on social media. However, police chief denied that any policeman has resigned. A police official said a group of militants abducted three police men from two villages of Shopian early in the morning. He said police constable, Nisar Ahmad Dhobi and a civilian, Fayaz Ahmad, kin of a police cop was abducted by militants from Kapran village at around 6 am. The SPO Kulwant Singh and follower Firdous Ahmad Kuchay were abducted from Heepora Batagund village, a neighbouring village of Kapran at a distance of half kilometre, by the militants. The police official said Fayaz was set free by the militants. However, three policemen were shot dead by their abductors and their bullet-ridden bodies were recovered from Lam-Wangam village, about 4 kilometres from Kapran. In Bandipora encounter, three more militants, police said affiliated with LET, were killed in a forest area of Sumular Bandipora encounter that erupted on September 19.

Sep 22: An encounter started along LOC in Tangdar, Kupwara. While armed forces conducted CASO in eight villages of Pulwama and Shopian districts.

Sep 23: Two unidentified militants have been killed in Tangdar sector along the Line of Control in an encounter, army claimed. In another encounter, one non-local militant was killed in Aripal area of Tral in South Kashmir. The slain militant was identified as Adnan Bhai affiliated with JeM. During the encounter a civilian identified as Manzoor Ahmad Dar, 25, was injured, police said, in cross firing. According to health official Manzoor received bullet in the mouth. His jaw has been blown off by bullet that hit him. While five unidentified militants killed in Bandipora on September 21 were buried in Gantamulla, Baramulla.

Sep 24: The army claimed to have killed three more unidentified militants on the second day of its operation along the Line of Control (LoC) in Tangdar sector of Kupwara. An army soldier also lost his life during the gunfight with militants, Srinagar-based army spokesperson Colonel Rajash Kalia said. While bullet-riddled corpse, from an orchard in a nearby village, of a tailor who was abducted by unknown gunmen from his home in Harwan village of Sopore on Sep 22 night. The deceased was identified as, 45-year-old Mushtaq Ahmad Mir of Harwan, Sopore.

Sep 25: Two LET militants who were holed up in Tujjar village of Sopore were killed in a gun battle with armed forces. The slain militants were identified as Abdul Majeed Mir, 24, son of Bashir Ahmad Mir of Sopore and Abu Maaz (non-Kashmiri). While miscreants set a panchayat ghar on fire in Bandipora district of north Kashmir, taking the number of such government buildings being torched since the announcement of the local bodies polls in the state to eight, police said.

Sep 26: Shut down was observed in Pulwama as one of the militant killed in Bandipora encounter on September 21 belonged to the district.

Sep 27: A civilian was killed in Srinagar's Noorbagh area of Srinagar district during CASO. The slain was identified as 26-year-old Muhammad Saleem Malik, son of Muhammad Yaqoob Malik, resident of Magray Mohalla, Noorbagh. In another incident a labourer from Tamil Nadu working for Beacon division of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) was killed by the army during an ambush laid by the 3 JAKLI regiment in Doninar area of Rangwar in Kralpora Kupwara. Reports said the deceased was identified as Umesh from Tamil Nadu. While an army soldier and three militants, one of them a former policeman and another the brother of a serving policeman, were killed in two separate gunfights in Budgam and Anantnag districts. Two army soldiers were also wounded during the early morning gunfight that broke out in Gazigund village of Dooru in Anantnag district, where the army soldier and a Lashkar-e-Toiba militant were killed. Asif Malik, the slain Lashkar militant, was an engineer with a BTech degree. He was a resident of Khag area in Verinag in Anantnag district. In Panzan village of Budgam district, two Hizbul Mujahideen militants, one of them a local and the other from Pulwama district, were killed by government forces in a fierce gunfight that the militants engaged in from a newly constructed mosque. A former Special Police Officer (SPO) was among the two militants killed during the gunfight. Police in a statement identified the duo as Sheeraz Ahmad Bhat, resident of Kralwari Chadoora, and Irfan Ahmad Dar, resident of Kakapora Pulwama. "Both were affiliated with Hizb ul Mujahideen militant outfit," the police said in their statement. While as many as thirty youth were hit by pellets during protests in Srinagar and Budgam districts. A minor boy was injured in a mysterious explosion during playing in Yamran Bomia, Sopore. The injured was identified as Aqib Javaid son of Javaid Ahmad Wani of Yamran, Sopore.

Sep 28: A complete shutdown was observed across Kashmir Valley in response to the call given by the Joint Resistance Leadership (JRL) to protest against the killing of a civilian by government forces in Srinagar on September 27.

Sep 29: Heavy fire was exchanged by the forces of India and Pakistan along LOC in Sadpora area of Tangdar sector in Kupwara district.

Sep 30: A policeman was killed in a militant attack on a police station Shopian district of south Kashmir. While a BSF soldier committed suicide by shooting himself dead inside a camp in Rajouri district in Jammu division. In another incident, an army soldier was injured in a landmine explosion on the LOC in Gulpur sector of Poonch district.

3. Killings in September 2018

In the month of September 2018, at **54 killings** took place in different incidents of violence in Jammu and Kashmir among which **8 were civilians, 36 were militants and 10 were armed forces**. The day to break up of killings is given in the table below.

Date	Armed Forces	Militants	Civilians
Sep 01	1	3	-
Sep 02	-	-	-
Sep 03	-	-	1
Sep 04	-	-	-
Sep 05	-	-	1
Sep 06	-	-	-
Sep 07	-	-	-
Sep 08	1	2	1
Sep 09	-	-	-
Sep 10	-	-	1
Sep 11	-	2	-
Sep 12	-	-	-
Sep 13	-	8	-
Sep 14	-	-	-
Sep 15	-	5	1
Sep 16	-	-	-
Sep 17	1	-	-
Sep 18	1	-	-
Sep 19	-	-	-
Sep 20	-	2	-
Sep 21	3	3	-
Sep 22	-	-	-
Sep 23	-	3	-
Sep 24	-	3	1
Sep 25	-	2	-
Sep 26	-	-	-
Sep 27	1	3	2
Sep 28	-	-	-
Sep 29	-	-	-
Sep 30	2	-	-
Total	10	36	8
	Total Killings in September 2018	54 Killings	

4. Human Rights Stories

In custody tortured youth's throat slit, ripping his vocal cords

In Ward no 1 of SMHS hospital at Srinagar, Feroz, son of Ghulam Rasool Hajam, a resident of Khreti Iqbalpora, Kokernag was laying on one of the beds. He was being administered intense treatment for his serious throat injury inflicted upon him by the SOG personnel when he was in their custody. His throat was slit by some sharp edged weapon by the SOG personnel after being tortured by army and the SOG jointly in their camps. His throat has 25 stitches covered under heavy bandage.



Feroz lying on a hospital bed

He sees his survival not less than a miracle. To communicate with him, whatever

covertly.

little he did, one has to get his response in writing from him. According to the doctors, his vocal cords were gravely affected by the cut, and there are bleak chances of him talking again in his life. Feroz and his family members, present in the hospital, rejected the police claim of him being affiliated with Jaish-e-Mohammad militant outfit. Feroz runs a readymade garments manufacturing unit in his village and has nothing to do with militancy overtly or

Researchers of *The Informative Missive* visited the hospital to record the case details. Feroz was not in a position to speak for himself so he responds in writing. Feroz was kept under strict police surveillance. A policeman was deployed there to keep close watch on every visitor who comes to meet Feroz to enquire about his health.

critical care ambulance, which was called from the District Hospital, Janglat Mandi, Anantnag. He was taken to district hospital Anantnag from the longer, Qazigund route and not the normal, shorter route through Dooru. Tariq came to know about his condition on September 6 through a call from a CID official when Feroz was already in the hospital.

Feroz was not in a position to speak for himself so he responds in writing.

Feroz's brother who was there to help him, volunteered himself to share the case details.

Feroz's brother Tariq stated, "On September 5, Feroz was intercepted by the SOG personnel at Khanabal village of Anantnag when he was on his way to collect his money from a customer. The SOG men, some of whom were dressed in civvies, were from JIC-Khanabal where Feroz was first taken. Feroz was shocked as to why he was taken away by the SOG men."

In JIC Khanabal, Feroz was tortured. "In the custody, he was stripped naked, his hands and feet were tied behind with a rope, he was given roller treatment with eight men sitting on the roller to weigh it down, his feet and shoulders were burnt with cigarette butts," stated his brother while explaining the torture Feroz was subjected to.

Tariq further stated, "After being tortured, he was made to put on army fatigues in the JIC after which he was shifted to the Rashtriya Rifles (RR) Kapran Camp in Anantnag. From there he was shifted to 19 Rashtriya Rifles Nodura Camp in Anantnag. SOG personnel were also present in the camp and it was here that the SOG personnel slit his throat from behind on September 6."

After slitting Feroz's throat, they (SOG) called an ambulance from the district hospital Dooru in which he was taken to Halsidar village. He was referred to a

When Tariq reached the hospital, Feroz was being operated upon. There were two policemen present in the hospital for Feroz. He was shifted from the district hospital, Anantnag to Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) from where he was shifted to SMHS hospital.

He had two policemen accompanying him to the hospital and when the details of this case were being collected, one policeman was present with the family.

Tariq's elder brother, Mohammad Ashraf, had gone to the police station Larnoo to file an FIR in the case, but the SHO (Jasif Ahmad) denied and instead told them to get a "written permission" from the SSP Anantnag (Altaf Ahmad Khan).

"When Ashraf met the SSP, he was told that they will not file an FIR in the case but all the cost of the treatment will be taken care of. The SSP told Ashraf that Feroz is involved in some militant activities although Feroz has not been arrested or called to the police station before this event. We have not even seen any FIR filed against Feroz till date. Feroz's involvement in any militancy is out of question", stated Tariq.

Feroz's family is apprehensive ever since the police conveyed to them that Feroz might be arrested in a false case to divert attention from the persecution he was subjected to.

Youth shot dead in his house lawn by forces

Mohammed Saleem Malik, son of Mohammad Yaqoob of Bagwanpora in downtown Srinagar was killed by the armed forces in his house lawn. He had gone out to the lawn to check after he heard some disturbing noise. The moment the forces spotted him without verifying showered bullets on him, which resulted in his death.

A team of *The Informative Missive* visited Saleem's house to collect the incident details. The statement made by his family is incorporated herein below:

Since the time the grandfather of the victim died around 2 years back, the family refrains from watching television in the house. On the intervening night of 26th and 27th September 2018, the victim and his father, Mohammed Yaqoob Malik had been watching the



Photo taken from poorly printed I-card of Saleem

India and Pakistan Cricket match on television in the neighbor's house. The house of the victim and the neighbor, who also happens to be a relative, is not separated by a wall. The father and son returned to their home after the match ended at about 1.30 am.

As they lay down in their beds to retire, Mohammed Yaqoob Malik, the father of the victim heard some sounds of the tin gate being opened. Saleem used to tend sheep in his house and previously their sheep had been stolen. Fearing that something similar may happen, the father asked Saleem to check if everything was fine outside. He then went off to sleep, assuming that Saleem had returned since he slept in the ground floor and the father slept in the first floor of the house. Mohammed Yaqoob was shaken out of his sleep

There were blood spots from the doorstep of Mohammed Yaqoob's house to the spot where Saleem's dead body lay, indicating that he was dragged.

after about an hour-and-a-half when he heard gun shots. The firing went on continuously for about 5 minutes and the family stayed huddled in their beds.

At dawn, just before the morning *Azaan* (call for prayer) when the sounds of gunfire had stopped for almost an hour, Mohammed Yaqoob peeped through the window to look outside. He saw Saleem lying in the courtyard in a pool of blood. Military was present around the house. There were personnel of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and the Jammu & Kashmir Police (JKP).

Mohammed Yaqoob could not control himself and rushed out of his house demanding to know why his son was killed. The armed forces (CRPF & JKP) beat him up with rifle butts and injured him. He then demanded to be killed as well, causing the neighbors to join in the protest.

There were blood spots from the doorstep of Mohammed Yaqoob's house to the spot where Saleem's dead body lay, indicating that he was dragged. The neighbour's houses are damaged because of the bullets that pieced into the walls.

The neighbors later told the victim's family that the CRPF was stationed in the houses of Abdul Rashid Lone, Mohammed Yaqoob Malik (2) (a neighbour with the same name as Saleem's father) and Ali Mohammed Magray on inputs that there was militant activity in the area. They (the neighbours) tried to convince the forces that there were no militants in the area but they did not believe them. The CRPF and the police personnel had tea at around 12.30 am in the house

of Ali Mohammed Magray. The CRPF was stationed on the concrete slab of the house of Abdul Rashid Lone, from where the court yard of Mohammed Yaqoob Malik's house is clearly visible. After the firing in the night concluded and the CRPF and police realized that they had probably killed a civilian, they asked the family members of Ali Mohammed Magray to identify the person through his clothes. When it was confirmed that the person killed was not a militant but a civilian, the Deputy SP Noor Bagh Police Station, who was also present during the shootout, requested the neighbours to remain silent about his presence. The neighbour, Mohammed Yaqoob Malik (2) also told Saleem's father, Mohammed Yaqoob Malik that the CRPF was planning to blast the house of Saleem. The CRPF held the minor son of the neighbour, Mohammed Yaqoob Malik (2) on gunpoint when they were evacuating.

As the preparation for the funeral prayers were being made at around 9.30 am, the CRPF cordoned off the main road. The body was to be taken to Martyr's Graveyard, in Eidgah area of downtown Srinagar. Mohammed Yaqoob Malik requested the police forced to allow the funeral procession to pass and reach the graveyard, but the CRPF and police fired teargas shells and pellets at the procession. The crowd was scattered and the procession reached the graveyard at around 10.30 am amid tear gas shells and pellets.

The family has filed complaint to the Inspector General of Police, Kashmir and also before the Chief Judicial Magistrate of Srinagar on 29th September 2018.

Forces kill lab technician while walking on road People accuse forces of highhandedness and torture

Sep 03: A twenty-six-year-old, Fayaz Ahmad Wani, a young technician, was not protesting when he was fired and killed by the armed forces at Chewa Kalan main road in Pulwama. Son of a farmer Muhammad Ahsan Wani, resident of Chewa Kalan, Fayaz was returning home after taking his cow for grazing. The eyewitnesses to the incident shared shocking details with Fayaz's family. As per the witnesses, there was no reason whatsoever for the forces to open fire on a peacefully walking person. This incident has further created hysteria in the area. During collecting the details of the incident, villagers came up with shocking accounts of the forces' highhandedness and torture of youth in the area.

A researcher of *The Informative Missive* visited the house of Fayaz Ahmad to collect the incident details in which



Fayaz's photo shared by his family

She said, "On September 3, armed forces conducted a Cordon and Search Operation (CASO) in Goosu village of Pulwama district. The CASO had started early in the morning. The forces came from Zadoora army Camp. At around 11 am, army lifted the CASO and returned back to their camp."

She further stated, "Soon after the army left the area, Fayaz Ahmad Wani went to a nearby hill to graze his cow. The road to Goosu village passes through the Chewa Kalan village, the distance between the two villages is around 1 kilometer. He left his cow there and was returning back home. While walking on Chewa Kalan main road, two army vehicles from Zadoora camp were also plying on the same road. Suddenly, a trooper alighted

The people living around the spot of crime witnessed that the army personnel who were in two vehicles came to sudden halt at Chewa Kalan road. They saw one army man step down from the vehicle and shoot Fayaz.

Fayaz was shot and killed.

At the time of the researcher's visit, Fayaz's mother Zeba Begum and a few other family members were present at the house. Zeba volunteered herself to share the details of her son's case.

from a vehicle and fired bullets at Fayaz."

At the time of army firing, the area was completely calm and the firing was sudden without any reasoning.

“The bullet fired by the army was aimed at Fayaz’s head. The people living around the spot of crime witnessed that the army personnel who were in two vehicles came to a sudden halt at Chewa Kalan road. They saw one army man step down from the vehicle and shoot Fayaz.

While leaving the spot, the army man brazenly shouted loud “*hum ne aapke bande ko mara, jaake uthalo*”(we have killed your man, go and get his body). As the army vehicles disappeared from the scene, people rushed to take the victim to the District hospital Pulwama. As his condition was critical, he was referred to the SMHS hospital where he was declared brought dead.

While some youth were transporting Fayaz’s corpse back to his village, the police arrived and took the ambulance to police control room at Srinagar. The body was kept there for a couple of hours, forcing the people to protest and demand custody of the body. The relentlessness of the protest forced the police to hand over the body to the protesting youth for last rites. It was around 5:00 pm when Fayaz’s body reached at his native village and was later laid to rest.

While the researcher was collecting the Fayaz’s case details, the villagers of Chewa Kalan came up with serious allegations against the army. The people accused the army of harassment and torture. The locals alleged that this was not for the first time that the armed forces came and killed a youth. They quoted a recent incident of July, when forces from same camp laid a CASO on village Goosu. While returning back to their camp at Chewa Kalan village they took into their custody five young boys, who were playing in a field. Two of them were a 6th class students, Mohammad Burhan Dar, 12, Fayaz’s nephew and seventeen-year-old, Kamran, 11th class student. All the five were taken to Zadoora camp. When the parents of these kids approached the Zadoora camp, some 4 to 5 hours after their arrest, they were shocked to see the conditions of their kids. All had been tortured to the extent that they struggled to stand on their legs.

The army was seen by the parents from outside the camp boarding their children into a military truck.

When the families enquired from an army personnel guarding the camp, he told them they were being taken to the District Police Line Pulwama. The parents immediately rushed to District Police Line but there they were told that their children were not brought there. On the next day, at around 6 pm, the families were informed to take their children back from the District Police Line Pulwama.

The parents were shocked on receiving their children. All of them were in a bad condition. They were straightaway taken to the hospital for treatment of their torture wounds.

Burhan’s left arm was broken and he was not even able to sit. Burhan was not even able to open his eyes. His left arm was plastered in the hospital and for two weeks he was bed ridden. Later, he told his parents that they (boys) were tortured in the Zadoora camp. While talking about the torture, the boys told their parents that they were first made to drink salt water and then the army men trampled over their bellies. Their hands and feet were tied with the ropes tied to the roof. Then five soldiers beat them with sticks.

Kamran, another boys, told his family that his knees were beaten with a hammer. The boys were tortured for more than three hours in the Zadoora army camp. Then in the evening, when their families had seen them being taken in a truck to Newa army camp. They were kept there for a night but no torture was inflicted on them.

After the torture, Kamran lost the hearing of his left ear, as he was slapped by an army man multiple times. He also had a fracture in his neck and was wearing collars.

Besides, the army personnel of the Zadoora camp are often deployed in the Wahibug market. They stop buses there, ask boys to step down from the bus, check their identity cards and mobile phones. They took away the boys’ mobile phones and phone numbers and asked them to get their phones back from their camp. When the boys go to the camp, they are forced to work as the army informers. If the boys refuse to comply the army diktats, they would be beaten and kept in the camps.

Youth fired in neck and chest near encounter-site dies in hospital

Rouf Ahmad Ganai, a twenty-one-year-old, young man of Kotwala Chak, Anchidora, district Anantnag was killed by armed forces near an encounter site. Rouf was hit by two bullets fired by the forces and died *en route* to the hospital. The bullets hit his vital organs.

On September 15, an encounter broke out between militants and armed forces at Chowgam village of district Kulgam after the Police, CRPF and Army had jointly laid a Cordon and Search Operation (CASO) in the village. As the armed forces cornered the militants, the people, as usual, assembled around the encounter site

While talking to a visiting researcher of *The Informative Missive*, Rouf’s father Abdul Salaam stated, “As the news of the killing of five militants spread in the area, the already charged up youth resorted to protests. Some of them also pelted stones. The forces previously engaged in the encounter responded with teargas shells, pellets and bullets, and as many as twenty persons were injured. Rouf was one among them.”

Rouf was hit by two bullets: one hit him on his neck and the other on his chest. The people on the spot took him to the nearby Kulgam district hospital.

Rouf was hit with two bullets: one hit him on his neck and the other on his chest.

to protest. The encounter, which continued for a few hours, ended with the killing of five militants of Hizbul Mujahideen.

However, as his condition was critical, he was immediately referred to the SMHS hospital at Srinagar. While taking him to Srinagar, on the way, his condition further deteriorated, and he was taken to the sub-district

hospital Awantipora. There he succumbed to his injuries.

Early in the morning, Rouf had gone for his elder sister's house at Kelam, Kulgam. As the news of encounter spread, he headed towards the encounter site. At around 11 am, his elder brother Majid Ahmad called him on his mobile phone to ask about his wellbeing.

"When his brother called on his mobile phone, the boy on the other side was not Rouf but some other person who informed him about his injury. It was not possible for the family to find out which armed forces party shot him, as there were three forces agencies involved in the encounter. When his brother further enquired from the youth on the phone, he was told that he was taken to the hospital by some youth, who were also present on the encounter site," stated Abdul Salaam.

The same group of boys accompanied Rouf's body to his home in an ambulance. They (boys- also the witnesses) narrated to the family that forces fired upon the people protesting around the encounter site. When Rouf was hit, one boy tried to shift him to a safer place but the forces fired upon that boy as well, targeting his torso.

As the news of the killing spread, people came out on the road protesting over the killing of a civilian. At Anchidora village, the native village of Rouf, there were clashes between the forces and the protestors that continued for hours.

Since then, the armed forces have been conducting night raids, door-to-door searches and ransacked houses. Three boys have been picked by the police and were kept in detention.

The family has not filed the application for filing the FIR. Neither have they filed the case in any court. According to Abdul Salaam Ganai, "Even if we will file a case before the court, that will not get us justice. We are also fearful of the army as they can come anytime and can do anything to us if we start agitating the matter legally. This is what has happened to the families who take on the armed forces legally. Even for getting a death certificate from the police station, we had to go back and forth from the hospital to the police station multiple times and it was only then that we finally got it. This is how the system works here."

Rouf was a hardworking labourer doing shuttering work and helping in alleviating his father's responsibilities.

Tamil labourer for Beacon killed in army ambush

Sep 27: A labourer from Tamil Nadu working for Beacon division of the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) was killed by the army during an ambush laid by the 3 JAKLI regiment in Doninar area of Rangwar in Kralpora Kupwara Thursday morning.

Sources said that the slain was going somewhere on foot when army soldiers who had laid their ambush opened fire and killed him on the spot.

Sources identified the deceased as Umesh from Tamil Nadu.

Soon after the incident, a team of Kupwara police reached the spot and took the body into custody. The body was sent to a nearby hospital for legal formalities.

Senior Superintendent of Police Kupwara AS Dinkar told media that the non-local man was killed by army men during an ambush on Thursday morning. He said the police are investigating the incident and are trying to identify the slain person.

When asked if the police will register a case against the army, he said that for now the police are only trying to identify the slain person and will take further steps after that.

Another police officer said that no arms or ammunition or any other contraband was recovered from the possession of the slain person. He said that the man's clothes indicated that he was a non-local labourer and not a militant. The police are trying to identify the person through other sources, he said.

Girl dies as soldiers thrash her brother

Sep 19: A young girl Identified as Rifat Jan daughter of Abdul Hameed Rather died September 19, Wednesday, evening due to massive heart attack after she came to know about "ruthless" thrashing of her brother at the hands of the army soldiers at Ashmuji village of south Kashmir's Kulgam, sources said.

Local sources quoting the family members of 22 years old Rifat said her brother was caught by army soldiers and was "mercilessly" beaten. As Rifat came to

know that army soldiers were beating her brother, she collapsed and lost her life due to a massive heart attack.

SSP Kulgam Harmeet Singh told media that police were ascertaining the facts.

"Yes the girl has died and people are alleging that an army patrol was in the area. We are trying to ascertain the facts," SSP Harmeet said.

Police however strongly denied the reports that Rifat's brother was picked up by army.

Abducted from home by masked man, tailor's bullet-riddled body found in orchard

Sep 23: Sopore Police with the help of locals on early Monday morning recovered the bullet-riddled corpse, from an orchard in a nearby village, of a tailor who was abducted by suspected militants from his home in Harwan village of Sopore on Saturday night.

The body of 45-year-old Mushtaq Ahmad Mir was found in an orchard in Latishut village by locals who immediately contacted the police, a senior police official told Kashmir Reader. He said a police team was rushed to the spot early in the morning. The police team took the body into possession and, after conducting legal

formalities, the body was handed over to the tailor's family for last rites.

Habla Begum, wife of the slain Mushtaq, is unable to walk due to a physical disability. She told Kashmir Reader that on Saturday night she and her husband were in the kitchen when a masked man entered their house and then knocked on the door.

"When I crawled to the door, as my husband was busy with something, I saw a man with his face covered with a cloth. He told me that he needed to talk to my husband for ten minutes. I was shivering with fear, but he swore upon Allah that he only had to talk to my

husband. I started crying but the masked man assured me that he will not do anything wrong,” Habla Begum recounted.

“When my husband went out to the lawn to talk to this masked man, fearing for his life I started crying. But the man took my husband along with him. That last look which my husband gave me, before leaving with this masked man, it will haunt me my entire life. I tried my best to walk out to him but as I am handicapped, I was not able to do anything. I will curse myself for letting my husband step out of the house,” Habla Begum said.

“They took my husband away and killed him somewhere. I will never forgive them, nor will Allah. The man swore to me on Allah’s name that he will let my husband go after talking with him,” Habla Begum lamented.

“My husband was the only hope of my life. They took him away from us. Tell me, who will take care of us now? He was the sole bread-earner for his handicapped wife, his aged parents, and his two sons. Had he been a mukhbir (informer), then we would have

17-year-old labourer from UP killed in Pulwama shootout

Sep 05: A brief exchange of gunfire between militants and government forces, which ensued after militants attacked an army patrol, proved fatal for a 17-year-old labourer from Uttar Pradesh who was on his way to work at a brick kiln in Lassipora area of Pulwama district.

Identified as Arjun Kumar, son of Suresh Kumar, resident of Pilibhit area in Bareilly district of Uttar Pradesh, the teenage labourer was hit by a bullet in his head in the crossfire early Wednesday morning.

A police official from Pulwama confirmed that Kumar succumbed to his injuries at a hospital in Srinagar.

“He was shot in the head,” the official said.

The incident took place at about 10:00 AM in Hajidarpora village of Lassipora, where militants attacked a patrol of army’s 55 RR.

Unknown gunmen kill Hurriyat activist in Sopore

Sep 08: Unidentified gunmen shot dead a Hurriyat activist in Bomai village of north Kashmir’s Sopore town. Shakir-ul-Rehman Sultani, 45, son of late Mufti Nizamuddin Sultani, resident of Reshipora Bomai, joined Hurriyat (G) in 2010 and was working as a tehsil president of Hurriyat (G). He was also the Imam at a local mosque.

Sultani was shot dead a few meters away from the local martyrs’ graveyard where he lies buried now. He was known as an “ideologue” and as a good-natured man in his village.

Amid anti-India and pro-freedom slogans, thousands of mourners offered his funeral prayers at the ground of the higher secondary school in Bomai village.

According to reports, some unknown gunmen intercepted Sultani near the Boys Higher Secondary School and fired two shots from close range at his neck and chest. They left him lying in a pool of blood.

“We rushed him to Sopore hospital, where he was declared brought dead,” said Dr Syed Muntazir, cousin of the slain activist.

“During the uprising in 2016, police arrested him and slapped PSA against him for his pro-freedom activities. He was lodged in Kupwara jail. He was recently released on Eid-ul-Azha from the jail after

not have been so poor and living in this miserable condition,” Habla Begum said.

While Habla Begum was recounting her tragic story, she lapsed into unconsciousness many times. A woman sitting by her had to wake her every time by giving her water, while this reporter had to wait till she became stable enough to talk again.

Ghulam Rasool, the father of Mushtaq, was sitting before his son’s body, crying bitterly. He told Kashmir Reader that his family had never done anything against the resistance struggle of Kashmir.

“We were among those who were arrested and beaten up by government forces. I don’t know what made them (militants) kill my innocent son,” Ghulam Rasool said.

Hundreds of people from Harwan and adjacent villages participated in the last rites of Mushtaq, who was laid to rest at his ancestral graveyard in Harwan village.

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

“He was shot with three bullets,” the SSP said.

“The army men came under indiscriminate fire from militants, which they retaliated to, triggering a brief gunfight between the two,” the police official said.

He said while no one from either side got injured, Kumar who was walking to work was hit by a stray bullet.

“He was immediately rushed to Pulwama district hospital and from there to SKIMS Soura for specialised treatment,” the official said. “He succumbed at SKIMS later in the day.”

Following the shootout, a massive search operation was launched in Hajidarpora and adjoining areas to try and nab the militants, who had managed to flee by then.

spending almost 18 months there. Twelve FIRs were registered against him in Bomai police station,” Dr Muntazir said.

He said that in 2010, during a peaceful protest in Bomai the CRPF opened fire in which Sultani was hit by two bullets in his arm and thigh. He was treated at a Srinagar hospital for a month for the injuries, Dr Muntazir said.

In the past, Sultani ran a textile shop in his village for many years, but when he joined Hurriyat he left the business and started preaching at a local mosque.

The slain activist has left behind a wife and five unmarried daughters.

SSP Sopore Javid Iqbal told media that suspected militants shot dead the Hurriyat activist. He said the area has been cordoned off to nab the culprits.

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

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

This is the second killing of a Hurriyat (G) activist in Sopore area. On June 9, 2015, prominent Hurriyat activist Mohammad Altaf Sheikh, 45, who was

a pharmacist by profession, was killed by suspected militants near New Colony Sopore. Police then said he was killed by the Qayoom Najar-led militant group due

to some rivalry, but the slain's family blamed army and police for the killing.

Kupwara man shot dead in Khanyar

Sep 10: Unidentified gunmen shot dead a man from Kupwara at Khanyar here on Monday evening, police said. The deceased was identified as Abdul Ahad Ganie son of Ghulam Ahmad Ganie of Tewan Mohalla Lalpora Lolab Kupwara. "He was shot in the head while he was driving a car (No. DL 3C AY 6352)," a police official said.

Deputy inspector general of police central Kashmir Vidi Kumar Birdi told media that preliminary reports suggest that he was staying in Dargah Hazratbal area of Srinagar. "We are ascertaining more details about him," he added. A source said that the deceased was pursuing Ph D from Aligarh Muslim University and his in-laws stay in Khanyar area.

Pellet victim from Pulwama booked under PSA

Sep 18: Pellet victim and blind by one eye from Pulwama has been booked under public safety act over charges of stone pelting.

Suhail Ahmad Trambo son of Mohammad Ahsan, resident of Murran Pulwama has been booked under PSA and shifted to Kuthua Jail on September 18 morning.

Pertinently Suhail was arrested along with other local ten youth however all others have been released and Suhail has been booked under PSA.

According to his family Suhail received 5 pellets in his last year in Bellow Pulwama during clashes after funeral of a local militant.

Despite surgery he lost full sight of his left eye and has since then never pelted stones on forces, they said.

Suhail who left his studies in 8th due to poverty was helping his father by working as a labour however from last one year he wasn't able to do any kind of work properly, they said.

Suhail is lone brother of 3 sisters and belongs to a financially very weak family, a local said.

His mother Haleema said that today morning we got shocked after we heard about his booking under PSA and shifting to Kuthua Jail.

At least he should be lodged in local jail as we can afford to meet him in Kuthua Jail, she said.

In view of his health, family requested concerned authorities to release him as he is not stone pelted anymore.

Despite repeated attempts SSP Pulwama wasn't available to comment on the issue.

5. Attacks on Media

There is no let-up in curbing the media voice in Kashmir valley particularly in last few years. The journalists working in the field had to face a lot from the forces while covering the occurrences in the valley. There were reports where journalists were targeted and attacked by state forces to block media coverage. The unabated volatile situation makes it further worse for journalistic community to carry on smoothly their professional assignments. This month's arrest of a journalist in a 'militancy related case' is a chilling reminder of how difficult is to work as a journalist in a conflict torn state like Kashmir.

➤ Journalist charged with 'harbouring terrorists'

Sep 1: Six days after they took him into custody, police booked Kashmiri journalist Asif Sultan for "harbouring known terrorists" in his home in Batamaloo, where an encounter between militants and government forces took place last month. Asif's father Muhammad Sultan said that police arrested his son from their home on August 30 night and kept him at Batamaloo police station without producing him before a court, a mandatory procedure to be followed under law.

"They (police) came, searched my son's room, confiscated his books, laptop and phone, and took him away. They kept him in police station Batamaloo," said Sultan. "During these days we were told that he is being quizzed for a story he did for a magazine. We were also told that he was asked to reveal his political ideology."

On August 31 evening, Muhammad Sultan said, police station Batamaloo made him sign some papers for his son's release. He said the police told him

there was an issue with the papers and told him to come the next day to take his son. He said the papers were not given to him.

"On September 1 afternoon I received a call from the police station while I was preparing for prayers. I went there and was told to sign another bunch of papers. I refused because it was not what I had been told the previous day. I was not told anything when I asked why I was being asked to sign the arrest papers now when my son was taken away six days ago," Sultan told media.

Asif is an assistant editor with the monthly magazine Kashmir Narrator. In the magazine's last issue he had written a cover story on Burhan Wani, the popular Hizb commander killed in 2016.

SHO Batamaloo Parvez Ahmad told media that Asif was being formally arrested now over the incidents which took place in Batamaloo last month. He feigned ignorance about the investigation into those incidents. "Call the SP South. He is the investigation officer in the case," he said.

SP South GV Sundeep refused to comment.

A police spokesperson in a statement said that Asif has been arrested by Police Station Batamaloo in case FIR No: 173/2018.

"The initial questioning of the accused, subsequent searches and disclosures made in the case so far have led to seizure of incriminating materials from various locations. It also establishes his complicity for harbouring known terrorists involved in serious terror crimes," the statement said.

Media bodies demand immediate release

The Kashmir Working Journalist Association (KWJA) and the Kashmir Journalist Association (KJA) on Saturday said they were shocked and outraged to learn that Srinagar-based journalist Aasif Sultan was kept under illegal detention at Police Station Batamalo for the past six days.

"We demand his immediate release from illegal custody, and action against police officials in charge of the station and SP South Srinagar for keeping a journalist under illegal detention for a week," reads the joint statement issued by the two associations.

"We have learnt that Sultan is being questioned for his report on slain Hizbul Mujahideen commander Burhan Wani, published in a recent issue of Kashmir Narrator, and has been asked to report his sources to police. Apart from the mistreatment meted out to him in custody, he is also being asked questions about his 'political ideology'," the statement added.

Quoting the editor of Kashmir Narrator, Showkat Motta, the statement said that police had been delaying Sultan's release on hollow excuses. Rather than releasing Sultan at the earliest, SP South Srinagar GV Sundeeep Chakravarthy had questioned Sultan about his "political ideology", Motta said.

"I thought I will resolve the issue with them amicably and was trying to avoid confrontation but they (police) are prolonging his illegal detention," Motta said. "They are asking him who he has talked to, why he has done this and that story. They are discussing headlines with him in lock-up and pressurising him to become a police source."

The statement said that it is no secret that police and intelligence agencies have been trying their best to police the media in Kashmir, and harassing media organisations and journalists has been a routine.

"We are seeking release of Sultan at the earliest and ask the government and police chief to explain the laws and rules under which he has been kept in lock-up for the past six days," the journalists' associations said in their statement.

The associations also demanded disciplinary and legal action against police officials for violation of the fundamental rights of an individual.

Journalists detained in Kashmir for doing their job: AI

On September 11, the intimidation, harassment and detention of journalists in Jammu and Kashmir by the state threatens basic freedom of expression norms, Amnesty International India said.

"What we are witnessing in the valley is a new form of censorship where journalists are detained for doing their job. The recent arrest of Kashmir-based journalist Aasif Sultan and the subsequent suspension of the Twitter handle of his employer 'Kashmir Narrator' raises serious concerns about the deteriorating state of press freedom in Jammu and Kashmir," said Zahoor Wani, Senior Campaigner, Amnesty International India in a statement.

Quoting media reports, the AI statement said, Aasif Sultan, who works as an Assistant Editor at 'Kashmir Narrator', was picked up from his residence and detained by Jammu and Kashmir police on the night

of 27 August 2018. He was formally arrested on 1 September for his alleged involvement in an incident of gunfire between government forces and 'militants' in Batamalo area of Srinagar on 12 August 2018.

➤ PCI summons govt, CRPF, police over assault on photojournalist

Sep 09: In a case pertaining to alleged thrashing of a photojournalist by CRPF personnel, the Press Council of India (PCI) has served a summons to the Jammu and Kashmir Government, the CRPF, and the JK Police, asking them to appear before a committee.

A complaint regarding his beating by CRPF personnel – on October 9, 2017 – was lodged before the PCI by freelance photojournalist Asif Shafi, a resident of Seer Hamdan in Anantnag district.

"I was leaving to fulfil my professional duties during a shutdown when CRPF personnel intercepted me, thrashed me, and damaged my equipment, including the camera," Asif told Kashmir Reader.

He said that he registered a case with the PCI in the following days and since then has been receiving regular communication regarding the case from their side.

The PCI on September 5 issued a summons notice in this regard to Chief Secretary, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, the Secretary Home department, Government of J&K, Director General (DG) of CRPF based in New Delhi, the DG of Police J&K, the SSP Anantnag, and the Director Information and Public Relations, Kashmir, asking them to appear in person or be represented by a counsel.

They have been asked to appear before a committee of the PCI on September 25, 2018, at Sochna Bhavan, Lodhi Road, in New Delhi.

"You may appear before the committee in person or be represented by a counsel/representative, duly authorised in writing," the PCI notice reads.

The notice is signed by PCI Under-Secretary T Gou Khangin and is dated September 5.

➤ Journalist beaten

Sep 19: A photo journalist was beaten by forces while covering Moharram procession in Jehangir chowk area of Srinagar district.

The photojournalist while performing his professional duties was allegedly thrashed by government forces while covering Muharram processions near Jahangir Chowk. Shah Jahangir, affiliated with a local news agency, said he was beaten up by government forces near Jahangir Chowk while he was covering a procession.

"I was there to perform my professional duties but the men in uniform not only thrashed me but also stopped me from performing my duties," Shah told Kashmir Reader. He said he was let go only after a thorough beating by the forces.

Station House Officer (SHO) Kothibagh, Sajjad Hassan, told media that the situation was normal in the area and no one was injured.

Home on vacation, Budgam boy loses leg at Tosamadian

Sep 06: Shahena, 40, is using a hand-fan to comfort her son, Wasim Majeed Ganie, lying on a bed at his home in Zoogu, a remote tribal village in Budgam district.

Wasim, 14, a class-8 student, has been feeling dizzy since doctors amputated his right leg after he was grievously injured in an explosion at Tosamadian.

On August 12, an unexploded shell went off in Tosamaidan meadow in which a college student Wajid Ahmad Ahanger died and several others, including Wasim, were injured.

Wasim's father Abdul Majeed Ganie is a head constable with the Central Reserve Police Force. Wasim spends most of his time at his maternal uncle's home in Arunachal Pradesh.

Shaheena, his mother, hails from Arunachal Pradesh and had converted from Christianity to Islam to marry Majeed, who was posted in the region in 1990's.

Wasim is only of the four siblings who has lived with maternal grandparents in Arunachal since childhood, the rest stay here in Kashmir.

The family said, he had come home on August 7 during his school vacations to spend Eid with the family, and left for Tosamaidan on August 9.

"Everything was going fine. On August 9, they decided to go for a week long picnic at Tosamaidan, a famous tourist resort," Shaheena said.

"They took along everything they needed, and after spending three days there they met with an accident, which snatched our happiness."

Wasim, writhing in pain, suddenly, broke his silence: "We had minor injuries but when we were shifted to SKIMS Bemina for emergency treatment, they did not pay heed to us," Wasim said.

"We were kept outside, unattended for almost 12 hours that resulted in blood loss. Had they treated us in time, neither Wajid would have died nor I would have lost my leg," he added.

6. Sexual violence

This month, two incidents of sexual violence have been reported.

➤ Police man arrested for trespassing and attempt to molest

Sep 1: A police constable was arrested on allegations of house trespass and for gestures intending to outrage the modesty of a woman in Baramulla district of north Kashmir last night, police said.

A police statement said that during evening hours at about 2200 hours one Zameer Ahmad Dar son of Ghulam Mohammad Dar of Ushkara Baramulla was found in suspicious circumstances in a house in Qazi Hamam Baramulla.

The policeman is working in Armed Police as Selection grade Constable and was handed over to police by the locals of the area, police said.

A case under FIR No. 147/2018 under sections of 457,452,509 RPC was registered against him in Police Station Baramulla and he has been arrested in the said case.

➤ Sopore woman alleges rape by CRPF man; Police arrests accused

Sep 07: A woman from north Kashmir's Sopore has alleged that a CRPF man has been raping and

blackmailing her for last two years, reported the news portal the Kashmir Walla.

Before he could speak further, he cried out in pain. "*ba modus, ha ba modus* (I died, oh I died), "*khudayo mya kya gow* (oh God what happened to me)".

The pain intensified and he started crying loudly, the sobbing cries were followed by her mother and everyone who has come to see him.

The atmosphere changed and a grim silence hung in the room.

"He was shifted from JVC to Soura, where he had gone through multiple surgeries in his leg. He had injury in right lower limb," Shaheena said, interrupting the silence.

"The doctors tried their level best to save his leg but it was the providence of God that doctors had no option other than to amputate his leg," she said.

Tahir Bashir, a friend of Wasim, said that the total expenditure on his treatment was more than Rs 3.50 lakh. "Out of that Rs 1 lakh was compensated by the district administration and rest by the family."

Shaheena said that he was discharged from the hospital on Sep 1, but since then, "no one has slept ever".

"He is writhing in pain and is restless. We are in a mental trauma," Shaheena said.

"Why this innocent killing only happens in Kashmir? Why these bombs only explode in Kashmir?" Shaheena rued.

"Today it was my one son and tomorrow it may be other two sons. Who cares here, none?" She added. "It is the sheer negligence of the concerned authorities who claimed that they have sanitized the area but hundreds of unexploded shells are still present in the meadow."

blackmailing her for last two years, reported the news portal the Kashmir Walla.

A resident of Chinkipora Sopore, the woman (name withheld) alleged that a CRPF personnel has been torturing and raping her for last 2 years. "A CRPF man from the nearby camp on duty near my house entered forcedly in my house when I was alone at home and sprayed a chemical at me and molested me," she told The Kashmir Walla.

She also said that when she returned to her senses the CRPF man told her that he had made a video clip of the act. "If you convey this incident to anyone then I will make this video clip viral on social media," the woman quoted the CRPF man as warning her.

She identified the accused as Iqbal Ahmad son of Ab Rasheed Garkote Uri north Kashmir Baramulla District who is currently posting in 179 BN of CRPF Chinkipora Sopore

DSP Sopore Mashqoor Ahmad told media that the accused has been arrested and further investigations are on.

IUST students allege misbehaviour by Army

Sep 10: The 4th-semester civil engineering students of Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) alleged 'misbehaviour' by Army during their educational tour to SKUAST campus.

One of the 4th semester civil engineering students, who was the part of that trip said, "We were on

an educational trip to SKUAST campus near Malangpora as a part of their course. We parked our bus on the side of air force camp. And all of sudden army personnel started misbehaving and hurling abuses," he said.

He said that the faculty took the precautionary measures by calling off the trip and we all were asked to return.

Private Secretary to Vice-Chancellor (VC), Ajaz Qureshi said, "The civil engineering students had gone there to see the site, design and construction of the SKUAST building which is near the air force base in Malangpora."

He said without any provocation army personnel started questioning students. "Students

informed the forces that they are from IUST and have come for an educational purpose but they misbehaved with the students.

Soon after this incident, Qureshi said the students were called back to varsity where they expressed their resentments against the forces.

When contacted Army spokesperson Rajesh Kalia refused the allegations of students and said, "No army personnel misbehaved with the students".

New UN rights chief slams India for inaction on Kashmir report India regrets over the issue raised

Sep 10: In her first address to the United Nations Human Rights Council, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet praised the India's Supreme Court for decriminalising same-sex relations between consenting adults but slammed the country for lack of any "meaningful improvement" on addressing issues highlighted in the UN report on human rights violations in Kashmir, The Indian Express reported.

The former Chilean president succeeded Zeid Raad al Hussain as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights this month.

In her opening remarks at the 39th session of the UN Human Rights Council, Bachelet said the people of Kashmir had the same rights to justice and dignity as people all over the world. "The people of Kashmir have exactly the same rights to justice and dignity as people all over the world and we urge authorities to respect them," the report quoted her as saying.

Bachelet also reiterated the UNHRC's request for unconditional access to Kashmir on either side of the Line of Control. "The Office of the HRC continues to request permission to visit both sides of the LoC, and in the meantime, will continue its monitoring and reporting," she said.

In his report to the UN Human Rights Council in June, Bachelet's predecessor Zeid Hussain had sought an "establishment of a commission of inquiry to conduct a comprehensive independent international investigation into allegations of human rights violations in Kashmir" and asked the governments of India and Pakistan to "fully respect the right of self-determination of the people of Kashmir as protected under international law".

On September 12, India has voiced regret over the issue of Jammu and Kashmir being raised in the UNHRC after High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet made a reference to Kashmir during her opening statement to the Council.

Expressing regret over the remarks, Permanent Representative of India to the UN in Geneva Ambassador Rajiv Chander said India had made its views "abundantly clear" on this matter in the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC).

"Madam High Commissioner, there is no denying that these are challenging times including for this body. It is important, therefore, that human rights issues are addressed constructively with respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity in a transparent and credible manner.

"We regret that reference has been made to the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir. Our views on this matter have been made abundantly clear in the Council," Chander said.

Speaking at the 39th Session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, Chander said terrorism was the biggest scourge and the greatest violator of human rights and expressed hope that Bachelet would address this issue more emphatically in the coming years.

Bachelet also welcomed last week's decision by India's Supreme Court to decriminalise same-sex relations.

"Laws that criminalise consensual adult relationships are, as Chief Justice Misra said, manifestly arbitrary and a source of discrimination and harassment. I very much hope other countries around the world will look to India's example in this respect," she said, referring to the remarks by Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra.

Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva Farukh Amil also raised the Kashmir issue in his statement, saying Islamabad also shared Bachelet's "anguish" that the report on the human rights situation in Kashmir "has not been followed up". PTI

Alarming reprisals against HR activists in India, China: UN

Sep 14: India, China, Russia and Myanmar are among several countries named in a report by UN chief Antonio Guterres that details an "alarming" level of harsh reprisals and intimidation against those who cooperate with the United Nations on human rights issues.

The ninth annual report of the Secretary-General details the level of retaliation against human rights defenders on a country-by-country basis, including allegations of killing, torture, arbitrary arrests, and public stigmatisation campaigns, which also target victims of rights abuse.

The report documents allegations of reprisals and intimidation in 38 countries, some of which are members of the Human Rights Council.

Prior to officially presenting the Human Rights Council with the report next week, assistant rights chief Andrew Gilmour said the cases of reprisals and intimidation detailed in the report and its two annexes "represent the tip of the iceberg," adding that "many more are reported to us".

"We are also increasingly seeing legal, political and administrative hurdles used to intimidate - and silence -- civil society," he said.

The report points out that selective laws and new legislation are restricting and obstructing organisations from cooperating with the UN, including by limiting their funding capacity, especially from foreign donors.

The countries named in Annex 1 of the report, in which new cases are listed are Bahrain, Cameroon, China, Colombia, Cuba, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Mali, Morocco, Myanmar, Philippines, Russia, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, South Sudan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Venezuela.

Countries named in Annex 2, where the UN has been following up, and where cases are ongoing, are Algeria, Bahrain, Burundi, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Pakistan, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan and Venezuela.

In the context of India, the report states that in November 2017, two special procedures mandate holders expressed concern at the use of the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act of 2010 to restrict the work of non-governmental organisations who seek to cooperate with the United Nations, for example, by refusing to renew or grant licenses.

The report said that the special procedures mandate holders drew attention to the revocation of the license of the Centre for Promotion of Social Concern (also known as People's Watch) under the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act. In October 2016, the Ministry of Home Affairs had refused to renew the organization's license to receive foreign funding under and its bank accounts were frozen.

The report cited the cases of Henri Tiphagne, the Executive Director of the Centre for Promotion of

Social Concern (CPSC) and the Centre for Social Development and its Secretary Nobokishore Urikhimbam. The cases of Kartik Murukutla, a member of the Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society and Khurram Parvez, Chairperson of the Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances and Program Coordinator of the Central Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS), were also mentioned.

According to the report, the fear of reprisals is not only visible in the field, where UN personnel often encounter people who are too-frightened to speak with them, but also at what would perhaps be regarded as safe spaces such as UN Headquarters in New York, Geneva and elsewhere.

Against the backdrop of numerous non-governmental organizations, human rights defenders, activists and experts having been labelled "terrorists" by their governments, it highlights a "disturbing trend" of national security and counter-terrorism strategies used to block UN access to communities and civil society organizations.

"The real global threat of terrorism notwithstanding, this issue must be tackled without compromising respect for human rights," the report says.

The wide scope of reprisals greatly inhibits the UN's work, including in conflict settings, when delivering humanitarian assistance or in protecting civilians, it adds.

"Governments can do much more to stop reprisals, ensure that they do not recur, and hold those responsible to account for their actions," Gilmour said.

7. Vandalism

The reports of vandalism continue to pour in this month as well. From last many months people accused armed forces of vandalism and destruction of property mostly on south Kashmir. This month reported cases are being incorporated herein below:

➤ Govt. forces 'assault civilians, vandalise property' in Shopian

Sep 03: Government forces allegedly assaulted civilians and vandalised private property, including vehicles, at Kadgam village in Imamsahib hamlet of Shopian district on September 2 night.

Villagers told media that the forces arrived in the dead of night and assaulted people "without any provocation." They said that neither had there been any stone-pelting nor any protests on Sunday which could have provoked the government forces.

On September 2, there had been clashes in parts of Shopian district after an operation conducted in Laddi village where militants escaped after a brief exchange of gunfire.

Muhammed Ismail Dar and Sheeraz Ahmad Chopan were the persons "ruthlessly" beaten up by forces, residents of Kadgam village alleged.

Muhammed Ismail told media, "We were beaten without any reason. They (forces) barged into our house and beat us ruthlessly and damaged our property. There was no militant or any stranger in our house."

He added that the clashes on September 2 took place miles away from their village.

Many villagers said that they routinely become victims of the government forces' anger.

Senior Superintendent of Police Shopian Sandeep Choudhary told media that he will check the facts before commenting on the allegations.

Deputy Commissioner Shopian Owais Ahmad assured that he will look into the matter.

➤ Hizb militant's family alleges thrashing, vandalism by forces in Awantipora; police denies

Sep 05: The family members of Hizb ul Mujahideen militant Lateef Ahmad Dar alias Tiger on Wednesday alleged that the government forces vandalized their house and thrashed them during a search operation last night in Awantipora area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district.

They alleged that the forces barged inside their house in Dogripora village and ransacked the property. They also thrashed three brothers of Lateef Tiger, identified as Gulzar Ahmad Dar, Nadeem Ahmad Dar and Zubair Ahmad Dar, and three of his neighbours during the operation, said a family source.

One of his brothers, according to the source, suffered injuries due to thrashing and was shifted to a nearby hospital where he is undergoing treatment.

Reports said that several other houses were ransacked during the operation.

However, police denied the reports of vandalism.

SP Awantipora Mohammad Zahid Malik told media that the operation was conducted based on specific information about the presence of militants.

"No house was ransacked. Searches were conducted in a professional manner," he said, adding no incidents of thrashing were reported to the police.

Sep 27: Families of an active Lashkar militant and of slain Hizb commander Sameer Tiger alleged on **Thursday** that government forces set fire to their houses and property during the night.

The family of Sameer Tiger alleged that government forces set fire to their house, heaps of fodder, and four-hundred empty apple boxes in Drabgam village of Pulwama district.

Muhammad Maqbool, father of the slain Sameer Tiger, told media that government forces in the dead of night set fire to his house and property after sprinkling petrol on it.

“At about 2:45am, we heard noise of some persons moving outside the door of my house. I didn’t let any family members go out. In the meantime, the government forces’ personnel threw petrol on our front door and set fire to it. They also set ablaze our shed which contained 400 empty wooden apple boxes and 500 heaps of fodder for our animals,” Mohammad Maqbool said.

He added that his family found outside the house petrol bottles and masks that the government forces’ personnel had put on their faces.

Maqbool asked why he was being targeted even after the killing of his militant son. “Continued harassment and damaging our property has become routine for the government forces,” he said.

➤ **Houses of Sameer Tiger, Lashkar militant set ablaze at night**

Senior Superintendent of Police Pulwama, Chandan Kohli, did not respond to phone calls from this reporter.

In a similar incident at Maldair village of Shopian district, unknown persons on Wednesday night tried to set ablaze the house of an active militant. Locals alleged that the government forces had done so.

Locals told media that the incident took place at about 3am. “When flames appeared in the house of Ghulam Mohammad Paul, the father of (active militant) Adil Ahmad, we rushed there and doused the flames,” locals said.

Adil is an active Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) militant, they said. Witnesses said that the house had suffered partial damage in the arson.

Locals alleged that a vehicle of the government forces had arrived in the village some 10 minutes before the flames appeared at the house of Ghulam Muhammad.

Last month, two houses of active militants were set ablaze at night in Shopian district, allegedly by government forces, according to the families. The two houses belonged to cop-turned militant Syed Naveed of Nazneenpora village, and Shahjahan Ahmad Mir of Amshipora village.

A senior police officer told Kashmir Reader that police have taken cognizance of the incidents and started an investigation. “We have recorded their (families’) statement and we are investigating the case,” he said.

SPO resignations forces the jittery administration to shut the internet in parts of valley **MHA termed it false propaganda**

As militants up their ante against the in-service police officials particularly the SPO forcing many to resign from their jobs through social networking sites. The authorities to block the online resignation announcement suspended the internet facilities in Shopian and Pulwama district in south Kashmir. However, the DGP termed the mass resignation as militant propaganda.

The surge in the resignation came in the backdrop of killing of three SPOs in Shopian on September 21. On the same date reports of 10 resignations were announced through social media by SPOs.

After the killings of three abducted policemen, a number of videos and messages were circulated on social media in which at least 10 SPOs and constables from Shopian, Kulgam and Pulwama districts announced their resignations.

“My name is Irshad Ahmad Baba and I was working as a constable in the police. I have tendered my resignation,” said one of them in a video being widely circulated on social media here.

An SPO Tajalla Hussain Lone said he had resigned from the police department on September 17 and was issuing the video to put to rest any doubts that he had done so.

Many SPOs issued written statements about their resignations on social media.

Three cops—Nisar Ahmad Dhobi son of Abdul Rashid resident of Kapren, Shopian, Firdous Kuchay son of Abdul Gani resident of Batagund, Shopian and Kulwant Singh son of Dhoop Singh resident of

Batagund, Shopian were abducted from their homes by suspected militants in Shopian and later shot dead.

The purported resignation by SPOs post abduction-cum killings of three policemen has posed a challenge to the police.

On Sep 22, six SPOs announced that they have quit the force.

Those who resigned on September 22, Tariq Ahmad, Sikander Bhakt, Muzaffar Ahmad, Mohammad Asif, Ishfaq Ahmad and Sajad Ahmad—had written about their decision in a press release that was shared on social media.

On September 23, a lady SPO from Kulgam announces her resignation.

The SPO, identified as Rafeeqa Akhtar, wife of Ghulam Muhammad Thoker, resident of Bongam area in main town Kulgam, said in the video that she has been part of the police force for 15 years now and was now resigning out of her own free will, without any external pressure.

“I have been working for the police department for the last fifteen years but today I am announcing my resignation through this video,” Rafeeqa says in the video.

Few days later, another SPO on September 29, another SPO in Budgam district has announced his resignation from police job on social media.

Yasir Ahmad Mir, son of Abdul Hamid Mir, resident of Gundi-Maqsood in Chadoora said that he has been working as SPO in Budgam district for last one and a half year, but is resigning from the job “on my free will.”

The SPO has circulated copy of a signed affidavit announcing his resignation on social media platforms.

"I am resigning from 21 September. I will now stay home and earn my livelihood by working in agricultural fields and orchards," Mir said.

"Earlier I was posted in District Police Line (DPL) Budgam with belt no 951/BD. From now onwards, I have nothing to do with the police department as SPO," Mir added.

More than 20 such videos were circulated over social media, forcing the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to issue a statement calling these videos as "false propaganda". The Director General of Police (DGP), Dilbagh Singh, also refuted the "rumours".

On September 21, the Home Ministry said no policeman has resigned in Jammu and Kashmir following the killing of three police personnel by militants in south Kashmir's Shopian district and described such reports as "false propaganda" by "mischievous" elements.

In a statement, the ministry said reports have appeared in a section of the media that some special police officers (SPOs) in Jammu and Kashmir have resigned, but the state police has confirmed that these reports are "untrue and motivated".

"These reports are based on false propaganda by mischievous elements," it said.

A senior police official acknowledged to media that such a video has surfaced, but said that police have not received any official resignation from the lady.

The spate of resignations announced by SPOs, often on social media, came after militants stormed into

houses of three policemen in Shopian and later shot them dead on September 21. The killings happened days after Hizbul Mujahideen commander Riyaz Naikoo threatened the SPOs, an irregular police force drawing a consolidated wage amounting to Rs 6,000 per month, to quit or face death.

On Aug 31, militants set free all the abducted people, most of who were the family members of policemen and a few were serving policemen. The abduction came in the backdrop of arrest of militant commander Reyaz Naikoo's father and attack on the families of the dead and alive militants by forces.

A Police official said militants, who had abducted more nine people relatives of policemen and some policemen, have released them.

Pertinently, on September 28, a special police officer (SPO) guarding the residence of a PDP legislator in Jawahar Nagar area of Srinagar has fled with seven rifles and a pistol, media reported while quoting police.

"SPO Adil Bashir today (Friday) evening decamped with the service weapons including seven AK-rifles and one pistol from the guard room at J-11, Government Quarters Jawahar Nagar," GNS news agency quoted a senior police officer as having said.

The policemen, he said, were guarding the residential quarter of MLA Wachi, Aijaz Ahmad Mir.

"Adil Bashir Sheikh, 24, (Belt No. 488/SPO) originally belongs to Zainpora, Shopian district. A case has been registered in addition to the departmental inquiry," he added.

Court sends two Kashmiri youth to judicial custody

Sep 12: A court in Delhi sent two Kashmiri Youth, arrested last week from near the Red Fort, to a two-week judicial custody.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Deepak Sherawat sent Parvaiz Rashid Lone (24) and Jamsheed Zahoor Paul (19) to judicial custody after they were produced before him on the expiry of their five-day police custody.

The two were arrested from the Jama Masjid bus stop, near the Red Fort, as they were about to board a bus to return to Jammu and Kashmir, the police had said.

They were using Delhi as a transit point, they had said.

Lone, the elder brother of Firdous Rashid Lone, who, along with one Sameer Ahmed Lone, was killed by the armed in a gunfight in Jammu Kashmir on January 24, the police had said.

Lone was pursuing M. Tech from Gajrola in Uttar Pradesh after completing B. Tech from Amroha and had joined the IS-JK after his brother was killed by the armed forces, the police had added.

Paul is a final-year electrical engineering diploma student in Jammu and Kashmir.

Two 7.65 mm pistols and four mobile phones were seized from the duo, the police had said, adding that they had no plans to carry out terror activities in the national capital.

9 boys blinded in one eye by pellets fired in Kulgam

Sep 16: A dozen persons injured in firing of live ammunition and pellets by government forces in Kulgam on September 15 were admitted in hospitals in Srinagar. The victims have pellets and bullets injuries in vital organs, including their eyes.

According to doctors at SMHS hospital, media reported, nine boys have lost vision in one eye after being hit by pellets in Kulgam district on September 15.

18-year-old Nadeem Ahmad of Chowgam, who was hiding his face from visitors in the Ophthalmological ward at SMHS Hospital, said his right eye was hurting and doctors were unsure whether he would regain vision or not.

His face was swollen and his chest peppered with pellets.

"We have given him initial treatment and removed the pellets from his eye. But we can't say clearly whether he will regain vision or not," doctors at the ward said.

Suhail Ahmad, a Class 9 student from Kulgam, is also uncertain about regaining his vision. He said he was targeted by forces while he was part of a peaceful gathering.

"I was injured in intense pellet firing by police and paramilitary personnel near the encounter site. They targeted everyone who was on the roadside, during the encounter and afterwards," he said.

"I collapsed after the pain became unbearable due to the pellet injury. No one came to my help for almost an hour," he said.

An on-duty doctor at SMHS told Kashmir Reader that Suhail may need surgical intervention again if his condition does not improve.

Another injured, Adil (name changed), alleged that forces targeted him when he was sitting on the compound wall of his house after the conclusion of the encounter.

The 20-year-old survivor, who wished anonymity, has already seen several conflict-related causalities in his family. Now he himself has been blinded in one eye and has received multiple pellets on his head.

“They left me in pain and distress. I can’t see now,” he said. “I tried to run for my life when a policeman targeted me, but the pellets hit my left eye. I lost consciousness till I was operated on.”

There were six more pellet-hit youths admitted in ward 8 of SMHS Hospital who have lost eyesight in one eye. Doctors said that most of the injured have been asked to prepare themselves for multiple surgeries.

“His left eye is completely damaged and he may not recover eyesight. He might need multiple surgeries before we can say about him,” doctors said about Adil.

They said Adil had already undergone one surgery on Saturday and has been asked to wait at least a week for another surgery.

“Adil still has blurred vision. Doctors are hesitant to tell us about the status of his vision,” his brother said.

At SKIMS hospital, one youth was admitted in critical condition. He was in Intensive Care Unit (ICU) as his abdomen had been damaged after he was hit by a bullet, as per doctors.

He has undergone surgery to fix the laceration in the internal organs. However, doctors said, they are apprehensive about his condition.

At Bone and Joint Hospital Barzulla, another injured was treated for firearm injury, doctors said.

“He is stable but he will need hospital stay for some more days as his thigh bone is damaged,” they said.

8. Harassment of Kashmiris Living Outside

The Kashmiris, mostly students, continued to be targeted outside the state. This month’s incident reminds of the continuity of the violent incidents against Kashmiris. The assurances given by the various governments of curbing the harassment against the Kashmiris have so far proved to be a hoax. There seems to be no mechanism in place to ensure the safety of Kashmir, and there is every likelihood of its continuation in future.

Encounters, civilian deaths main cause of protests in Kashmir: Govt report

Sep 04: Surge in stone-throwing protests in Kashmir is directly proportional to the number of encounters and civilian deaths, the government has confided in a report.

The document, a copy of which a local daily Kashmir Reader claimed have accessed, showed April as having the highest count (above 90) of stone-throwing protests. The first day of April saw the biggest anti-militancy operation in a decade resulting in killing of 20 people including four civilians, 13 militants, and three army soldiers in multiple gunfights in the militant hotbed of southern Kashmir districts. The toll of civilian killings touched a dozen and more than a hundred were wounded by the end of the month.

The report says that protests against gunfights in Kulgam and Shopian districts and also subsequent civilian killings in “law and order” situations are the reason for sharp spikes in the protest graph that month. The protests, however, waned as soon as Kashmir entered into a month-long unilateral ceasefire, the report said.

The ceasefire or Non Initiation of Combat Operations (NICO) was announced by the Narendra Modi-led Indian government on May 17. It continued till June 16. Three days later, the unpopular PDP-BJP alliance in the state government ended.

The report pointed out that the ceasefire was the “major reason” for downfall in protests that had roiled the Valley.

The situation saw a turnaround, the report said, after Governor NN Vohra took over in June, with protests waning drastically compared to previous months.

The Vohra-led government’s three months saw only 125 protest incidents reported in Kashmir. The month of August, during which Vohra was replaced by Satya Pal Malik, saw protests coming down to as low as 34 incidents.

A comparative analysis of more than two months prior to Vohra’s assuming the gubernatorial assignment showed that above 320 protests occurred in the Valley during the Mehbooba Mufti-led government. More than 30 percent of these protests occurred in Srinagar alone.

➤ Assault on Kashmiri student in Mohali

Police files FIR; college orders internal inquiry

Sep 22: Punjab police has filed a case in connection with the assault of a Kashmiri student inside a college in Mohali Friday night.

Scores of Kashmiri students today staged protest in Mohali alleging that their colleague was assaulted by unknown persons inside the Adesh Institute of Technology and Management, Mohalli last night.

Amid heavy rains, Kashmir students staged the protest and blocked Chandigarh-Ludhiana highway. They were demanding action against the attackers.

The protesting students said that Masroor Ahmed, a resident of Adigam Kokarnag area of Anantnag district, was attacked by some unknown persons with a sharp-edged weapon last night.

“In the incident, Masroor suffered multiple injuries in his leg and chest,” they said.

Masroor, a 1st Semester student of BBA, had got admission in the college last week and had come out from the hostel to fetch drinking water when he was attacked.

Registrar, Adesh Institute of Technology and Management, M B Singh said the college has launched a probe and police has also registered FIR into the incident.

“A departmental inquiry has been initiated and an HOD has been appointed as inquiry officer. He has been asked to investigate the case and furnish the report to chairman within three days,” he said.

Singh said the student is undergoing treatment at Sarsvati hospital. "An MRI was conducted and the report is OK".

Incharge Officer Police Station Sadder Kharar, Assistant Sub Inspector (ASI) Bal Raj said the student was assaulted by some unknown persons last night and has been hospitalised".

He said the condition of the student is stated to be stable.

"A case under FIR number 140/2018 under section 323, 324 IPC has been registered in police station Sadder Kharar in Mohali and further investigations were taken up," the officer said.

"We are utilizing our all resources to identify the persons responsible for assaulting the student," he said adding strict action would be taken against the assailants. (GNS)

➤ **Delhi High Court grants bail to Anantnag youth**

Accused was arrested 4 months ago by Cyber Crime Special Cell Delhi Police

Sep 26: The Delhi High Court granted bail to a youth from southern Kashmir's Anantnag district who had been arrested by the Cyber Crime, Special Cell Delhi Police, in April 2018 for allegedly hacking websites and posting anti-national material on them.

The youth, Adil Hussain Teli son of Muhammad Yusuf Teli, a resident of Noonmai Yaripora, district Anantnag, was arrested in the last week of April from his rented room at 35-A, Bawa Khel Mithu Basti,

Families of 16 of the 22 killed in 'Gawkadal Massacre' untraced: police to SHRC

Sep 19: A police report submitted before the State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) on the Gawkadal Massacre of 1990 has said that the kin of six deceased persons have been granted relief out of the 22 persons who lost their lives, the kin of the rest being "untraced".

The police details received by the SHRC from Police Station Kralkhud state that 22 people were killed and 12 were injured in what is known as the Gawkadal Massacre of 1990. The police reply states that only six families were traced whose relatives were killed in that

Khanabal families of two men shot dead by a police officer in 2010 still await justice

Sep 18: Exactly eight years ago, on this very day of September 18, a police officer shot dead two young men, Bilal Ahmad Najar and Noor ul Amin, in Khanabal, Anantnag. Although the then government gave its consent to prosecute the officer, but until now the two families of the slain duo are still waiting for the day to see justice done.

The families of the deceased - Bilal Ahmad Najar of Khanabal and Noor ul Amin Dagga of Nai Basti Anantnag (Islamabad) town have been fighting a legal battle to get justice for the past eight years.

On September 18, 2010, Najar and Dagga were killed in police firing when they were waiting outside a mosque at Khanabal to take part in the funeral prayers of a student Maroof Ahmad Nath, who had drowned in the Jhelum River on September 13 after forces allegedly chased some boys in the area.

The victim families fought a long legal battle for the registration of an FIR against the accused deputy superintendent of police Noor-ul-Hassan Parray. The accused police officer was a probationary DySP in 2010.

Jalandhar, where he was pursuing BCA (Final Year) at St Soldiers Mgt & Tech Institute, Teli's counsel said.

The court directed the petitioner be released on bail on his furnishing a personal bond of Rs 25,000 with two surety bonds of the like amount.

According to the bail order, the petitioner would not leave the country without the prior permission of the court concerned and in case of change of residential address the same will be intimated to the court concerned.

"The petitioner and the sureties would also submit their mobile numbers which will be kept in active mode and in case of change of mobile numbers, the same will be also intimated to the court concerned," the order said, adding that the petitioner will not indulge in any other "similar activity nor tamper with the evidence or try to influence the witnesses."

The case was represented by advocates Warisha Farasat, Shahrukh Alam, Rudraski Deo and Hafsa Khan.

Adil was booked by Cyber Cell in case FIR 47/2018 registered at PS Special Cell, Lodhi Colony under Section 66 Information Technology Act and section 124A IPC.

The FIR was registered on the complaint of one Sachin Makhija, owner of Rajan Overseas Manufacturer & Exporter, who had complained that their website "rajanoverseas.co.in" was hacked in March, 2018 and unwanted contents and images "on home and pages of our websites have been uploaded".

incident, while the rest 16 families remained untraced as they had "perhaps changed their residence as more than 25 years have passed since then".

The police reply also states that records were not available as to whether any relief was provided to any of the 12 injured persons.

The police reply was given in response to a petition filed in 2012 by a human rights activist before the SHRC (number SHRC/112/2012).

The High Court had upheld the order of chief judicial magistrate, Anantnag (Islamabad) to register the FIR against the accused police officer. Later, the J&K government accorded the sanction for the prosecution of the accused DySP Noor-ul-Hassan Parray for killing the duo.

The two families and eyewitnesses maintain that they were killed in unprovoked police firing when the two were waiting outside Ahli Hadees Masjid at Khanabal to join the funeral prayers of Maroof Ahmad Nath.

The order issued by the Home Department vide order number Home/Pros/12/2016, said that during the course of investigation the Investigating Officer has established, prima facie, a case under section 304-11 of RPC against Parray. However, the challan has not been so far produced before the court.

"We express our dismay at the system for having a reputation of being expensive and prone to delays. We the victim families have spent over six lakh rupees on the litigations. However, the road to justice is still made to remain far from the reality," said

Muhammad Amin Najar, the elder brother of Bilal Ahmad Najar.

While referring to their long legal battle to get the justice, Amin said that with regard to the case, "police concocted a story that the duo were killed in firing incident near Delhi Darbar (Bus Yard), and a case FIR No. 355/2010 was registered in Police Station, Anantnag with distorted facts."

Subsequently the families of the deceased persons approached a court for the registration of a separate case, with the plea that the deceased persons were injured in the firing incident near Ahli Hadees Masjid, Khanabal, and not near Delhi Darbar.

"In this connection, a separate case FIR No.361/2012 under section 302 RPC was registered at Police Station, Anantnag, after judicial intervention with the further direction to constitute a Special Investigation Team, and as such investigation was initiated," he said.

9. Militarization

➤ **Barley a kilometer from existing camp, CRPF raises another camp in Shopian**

Sep 05: The Central Reserve Police Force has set up a new camp at Bapora village in Zainapora Sub-District of Shopian, barely a kilometre from an existing CRPF camp on Horticulture department's land.

The camp, according to Bapora residents, was re-established in last week of August almost two decades of its removal from the area. They said that the camp has been established in quarters of Irrigation and Flood Control Department situated in the Bapora village.

The raising of new camp has surprised many residents, as they said there is already a huge presence of forces in the area.

"They starting frisking here from first day when they established this camp here and mostly they do it in wee and late hours," Javid Ahmad (name changed), resident of a neighbouring village said.

The new camp comes up amid rise in militant activities and new militant recruits in Shopian district. Sources said that the camps are part of extending "operational requirements" and upping vigil on militant activities in the area.

After the 2016 uprising, at least six army camps have already been established in the district. These include camps at Pahnoo, Chilipora, Nagisharan and Dachoo villages.

In eight months of 2018, 24 civilians, 28 militants and five policemen have been killed in the district.

CRPF Rajesh Yadav spokesman and senior Superintendent of Police, Sandeep Choudary didn't respond to calls from media.

➤ **Forces establish camp in Panchayat Ghar in Kulgam**

Sep 28: A month before Panchayat elections are scheduled to start in Kashmir, government forces have occupied a Panchayat office building in Redwini Bala area of Kulgam district to establish their camp. The district administration says it was not even informed before the camp was established in the Panchayat Ghar.

He added that during the course of the investigation, conducted by Special Investigation Team (SIT) constituted in the matter, statement of witnesses was recorded and as many as 27 independent witnesses named DySP Noor-ul-Hassan Parray as accused in the case.

While quoting from the official order of the government wherein sanction was accorded for the prosecution of this accused police officer, he said: "During the course of the investigation, on the basis of the statements of witnesses, the seizure memos and other evidence, the Investigating Officer has established, prima facie, a case under section 304-11 of RPC against the accused."

"On 26 July 2017, the High Court at Srinagar directed the authorities to produce Challan before the court in this case. But the accused was given enough time to get the order stayed from the High Court at Jammu," said Amin.

This is the second Panchayat Ghar to have been occupied by the forces in the area. A few months ago, the army occupied a Panchayat Ghar in Jablipora area of Bijbehara, a few kilometers from Redwini Bala.

As per local sources, government forces moved into the Panchayat Ghar in Redwini Bala in the dead of night some four days ago. Personnel from the army, paramilitary CRPF, and police's Special Operations Group (SOG) have been stationed at the camp.

Since the camp was established, clashes have been erupting in the area on a daily basis, following alleged vandalism by the troops stationed there.

The reports said that the forces' personnel have been going out into the village every evening and have been vandalising parked cars and other private property.

"There is obviously fear, but also a lot of anger in the area. The youth, bristling at the high-handedness of the troops, assemble everyday and pelt the camp with stones. They face tear gas in return," reports said.

The villagers have also accused the troops of chopping down trees, which belong to the locals, to make bunkers out of them.

"They have overnight constructed washrooms and bunkers. Also, any construction material being ferried through the area is being forcibly unloaded at the camp," locals alleged.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Dr Shameem Ahmad, acknowledged to media that he was not taken into confidence before the camp was established.

"These are security related issues and it is the prerogative of the government to take decisions on that," Ahmad said.

He said that people had come to him to complain and he asked them to specify if any private property of theirs was taken away to be used for the camp.

"If anyone's property has been used, they should come forward and give me the details," he said. "I will take the complaint forward."

10. Armed Forces Suicide

➤ **Army man commits suicide in Samba**

Sep 08: An Army personnel allegedly committed suicide by shooting himself with his service rifle inside a camp in Samba district of Jammu Kashmir, police said.

Naik Jasvir Singh (34), posted with the Punjab regiment, shot himself with his service rifle while on sentry duty at Maheshwar camp on Friday, a police official said.

He said his colleagues rushed to the scene on hearing the gunshot and evacuated him to a nearby medical facility where he was declared brought dead.

The motive behind his taking such an extreme step was not known immediately, the official said, adding inquest proceedings have been initiated in connection with the incident.

➤ **BSF man commits suicide**

Sep 30: A BSF man allegedly committed suicide by shooting himself from his service rifle inside a camp in Rajouri district of Jammu Kashmir, officials said Sunday.

Head constable Ram Charan, posted with the 126th battalion, was on duty when he fatally shot himself in the neck at Sunderbani BSF headquarters late September 29 evening, the officials said.

On hearing the gunshot, his colleagues rushed him to a local hospital where he was declared brought dead, the officials said adding, the motive behind his taking such an extreme step was not known immediately.

Police have registered a case in this connection and handed over the body of the deceased to his unit after legal and medical formalities this morning, they said.

11. Official Statements

➤ **Number of listed militants crosses 300 in Kashmir for first time in 10 years: Report**

Sep 03: The number of listed militants in Kashmir has crossed 300 for the first time in nearly past ten years, a media report said.

According to The Tribune, the number of militants stayed close to 200 during past ten years, except in 2013 when it plunged to 78 - lowest since militancy erupted in the state in 1990.

Quoting a senior police officer, it said that there has been a significant increase in the number of militants.

"The main reason for the high number of militants has been local recruitment since 2017. Last year 126 Valley youths picked up guns- which was the highest number since 2010 and this year over 130 have been inducted into militancy," the report said while quoting the senior officer.

Quoting from a report compiled by the J&K Police in early August, it said that 327 militants are active of which 211 are locals and 116 are foreigners.

Of the listed militants, 181 are active in the volatile south Kashmir districts, which have been on the edge ever since the killing of militant commander Burhan Wani in July 2016.

➤ **Having a separate constitution for Jammu and Kashmir was an aberration: NSA Ajit Doval**

Sep 04: Having a separate constitution for Jammu and Kashmir was probably an "aberration", National Security Advisor Ajit Doval said as he stressed that sovereignty can never be compromised.

His remarks on Kashmir come at a time the Supreme Court is hearing pleas challenging the constitutional validity of Article 35-A of the Constitution, which provides special rights and privileges to permanent residents of Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking at the launch of a book on Vallabhbhai Patel, Doval also paid glowing tributes to the first home minister of India, saying he had made significant contributions in laying a strong foundation of the country.

Doval said sovereignty "cannot be diluted and ill-defined", and added that when the "British left,

probably they did not want to leave India as a strong sovereign state."

The former top spy said nation building is an "exothermic process" that generates a lot of heat.

Unless that heat is generated it is not able to have that melting point at which all the different identities can merge and become one identity.

"Probably the heat was not sufficiently generated during our Independence movement because of the route that was taken. I am not criticising that...The non-violence was the route in which the cost of Independence was not really understood by our people," Doval said.

➤ **Avoid reports undermining morale of cops: DGP Vaid**

Sep 05: Director General of Police SP Vaid said the police has been fighting a "proxy war for decades" and any speculative reporting, which can affect the morale of the cops, should be avoided.

"@JmuKmrPolice has been fighting a proxy war for decades which requires a lot of courage & determination of the men & officers of JKP. Speculative articles which undermine their morale should be avoided," he said in a tweet.

Vaid was responding to TV news channel reports that the Union home ministry was not "satisfied" with the state police and was looking for a replacement for Vaid.

"As regards to transfer, it's routine matter & prerogative of the govt," he added.

The home ministry also put the speculations to rest, saying it has commended the work done by the police on more than one occasion.

"MHA has denied reports that it is unhappy with Jammu & Kashmir police. On more than one occasion, MHA has commended the work done by J&K police and the valiant sacrifices made by the men & officers of J&K police. There is no question of any dissatisfaction," a spokesperson of the MHA said in a tweet.

➤ **Militants' shelf life reduced in Kashmir: CRPF DG**

- Over 360 killed in two years
- Pellet gun use a well laid out SOP

Sep 09: Back-to-back operations of the government forces in Kashmir have reduced the "shelf life" of militants and over 360 were killed in less than two years, CRPF Director General (DG) Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar said.

In an interview to PTI, he said as figures show an increase in the number of local youth joining militant groups in the Valley, the government forces were reaching out to young men through all possible ways to stop them from taking up arms.

"The militants in Jammu Kashmir... some of them are from outside and there are also the misguided youth (locals) who join militant groups. It is quite a mix. The numbers go up and down but if you were to look at the length, the time for which militants survive in J&K, then the signal is very clear that it (militant recruitment) is having no impact.

"The shelf life of militants, the time frame to survive, is very short. So, even if the numbers (of joining militant ranks) may be large, they may be more, but the consequence is limited," he said about the recruitment of local Kashmiri youth by militant groups which is rising and has become a cause of concern for the security establishment.

The chief of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), which has over 60 battalions deployed in the Kashmir valley (over 60,000 personnel), said his force, the J&K Police and the Army were operating in "very good synergy".

"We have worked as one unit. That has given us a lot of success. This year 142 militants have been neutralised. If you look at last year's figures, it was more than 220 militants, who were killed. There is excellent coordination between the government forces and they have the upper hand.

About the use of much-debated pellet guns and the damage rendered by them on locals, Bhatnagar said while such ammunition was not being discarded, its use was part of a well laid out standard operating procedure.

"The sequence in which we use force is well laid out. We fire and disperse them (protestors) by using tear smoke and other allied irritant kind of non-lethal gases...

"So our first effort is to disperse them by making a proper bandobast. Also, we have a large number of plastic bullets that are used," he said.

Pellet guns, the CRPF chief said, is used where we find that it is required to disperse the mob.

"We are taking precautions by using deflectors (on pellet guns) so that injuries are on lower part of the body. There is a graded use of force. Even when crowd tries to come very close, our boys have shown restraint. We have done our best to meet the objectives for which we have been deployed in J&K," he said.

➤ **SAC approves enhancement of ex-gratia for slain cops from Rs 48 lakh to Rs 70 Lakh**

Ex-gratia for kin of slain SPOs raised from Rs 14.50 to Rs 30 Lakh

Sep 12: The state administrative council (SAC), which met here today under the chairmanship of governor, Satya Pal Malik accorded sanction to the enhancement/grant of ex-gratia relief to the NoKs of J&K police personnel killed in course of performing duties attributed to act of violence/militancy related incidents.

The decision will enhance the existing cumulative ex-gratia relief admissible to the NoKs of J&K Police Personnel from Rs 48 lakh to Rs 70 Lakh and to NoKs of SPOs from Rs 14.5 Lakh to Rs 30 Lakh.

The ex-gratia relief has been enhanced from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 5 Lakh under SRE(R&R) to NoKs of the J&K Police Personnel/SPOs and CAPFs/Army personnel; from Rs 3 Lakh to Rs 7 Lakh to NoKs of J&K Police Personnel from the Police Welfare Fund (MHA); from Rs 18 Lakh to Rs 33 Lakh to the NoKs of J&K Police Personnel, out of State Resources and grant of additional amount of Rs 12.50 lakh to the NoKs of Special Police Officers (SPOs), out of state resources.

The SAC further approved that education of two children in private schools in the State upto class 12th of such personnel of Jammu & Kashmir Police as may be martyred in militancy related incidents/violence, shall be borne by the state education department.

➤ **Heads of Pakistani soldiers are being cut off, but not being displayed: Nirmala Sitharaman**

Sep 17: Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that the heads of Pakistani soldiers are being cut-off, however, are not being displayed. "*Kaat to Rahe Hain, Display Nahin Kar Rahen* (heads are being cut off, but are not being displayed)," she said.

Sitharaman made the remark during an interview on a television news channel.

Pointing that during election campaigns for 2014 Lok Sabha elections, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had said that if Pakistan cut off heads of two Indian soldiers, India in retaliation would behead 10 Pakistani rangers, the interviewer asked, "During election campaigns, it was being said that if they (Pakistan) cut off heads of two Indian soldiers, we will behead heads of 10. Is it really happening?"

➤ **Centre has done nothing for Kashmir: Omar Abdullah**

Sep 23: In his four-and-a-half years, Modi has done pretty much nothing on Kashmir. His Red Fort speech last year had the same promises on Kashmir which he repeated this year. Nothing has changed on the ground. There is no evidence that the new governor will operate in a political manner, expressed Omar Abdullah in interview with Hindustan Times.

While commenting on the current situation Omar said, "leave politics aside — see the growth in the number of militants, see the number of youngsters who are leaving well-paying jobs or good education and taking to arms. Look at the fact that the Anantnag parliamentary election is now the most delayed by-election in the country since 1995, and the fact that within hours of panchayat elections being announced, panchayat ghars are being set on fire.

➤ **Kin of slain policemen to get Rs 70 lakh ex-gratia relief**

Sep 25: The administration has decided to give an enhanced compensation to the next of kin of police men killed in line of duty while dealing with violence and militancy-related incidents, an official.

For police officers, the ex-gratia has been hiked to Rs 70 lakh from the existing Rs 48 lakh in case of death in militancy-related incidents, GAD Commissioner-Secretary Hilal Ahmad said in an order.

For Special Police Officers (SPOs), the ex-gratia has been increased to Rs 30 lakh from the existing Rs 14.50 lakh, he said.

In his order, Ahmad said the ex-gratia has been increased to Rs 5 lakh from Rs 2 lakh under the Security Related Expenditure (SRE), which will be payable to the next of kin of J&K police personnel, SPOs and CAPFs and Army personnel.

The ex-gratia has been increased from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 7 lakh to the next of kin of J&K police personnel from the Police Welfare Fund (MHA), he said.

Similarly, the ex-gratia has been increased from Rs 18 lakh to Rs 33 lakh, which will be payable to the next of kin of J&K police personnel, out of state resources, he said.

An additional amount of Rs 12.50 lakh will be given to the next of kin of special police officers, out of state resources.

➤ **40000 additional forces for 2018 civic polls**

Sep 25: As many as 40,000 additional paramilitary soldiers will be deployed during the urban local bodies' elections, which is a record in comparison to the 2011 polls when the state government requested for no additional forces.

Of the 40,000 soldiers, 20,300 personnel have been camping in Kashmir since last week of May when they arrived for Amarnath yatra security. The rest are on way to the state. They would be accommodated in about 300 hotels in Srinagar, chief secretary BVR Subramanyam said.

CRPF spokesman Sanjay Sharma said the additional 40,000 soldiers would be primarily deployed for "area domination", night patrolling and security for contestants if needed.

Already, as many as 50 battalions (each battalion is 1134 personnel) of CRPF are stationed in Kashmir region alone (60 in the state) for counterinsurgency operations and law and order maintenance. The total number of CRPF battalions in India is 239.

As many as 21 battalions are deployed in Srinagar alone for law and order duties, which will be augmented by 10000-15000 policemen.

"This is not for the first time additional troops have been sought for polls. Additional forces were called during 1996 and the 2008 assembly polls that took place after the unrest," said additional director general of police law and order Munir Khan.

In contrast, former director general of police Kuldeep Khoda said, no additional troops were sought from the Centre during 2011 panchayat elections.

He reiterated that multiple factors were responsible for the additional forces. "We have decided to go for the foolproof area dominations and for that we need extra forces," he said.

A source in the police said the request for additional forces was sent to Union home ministry after the majority of district police chiefs cited law and order and militancy as the major challenges.

He said the security cover for the upcoming civic polls is nearly similar to that of 2014 assembly polls when 50000 additional forces were brought in.

➤ **NC, PDP on same page with militants to sabotage civic polls: Madhav**

Sep 28: BJP national general secretary Ram Madhav said the two major mainstream parties of the Valley, National

Conference (NC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), are "on the same page with the militants to sabotage local bodies' elections in the state".

"Though they claim they are pro-India their only politics is to bow before the demands of militants. They are not concerned about welfare of the people in Kashmir, Jammu or Ladakh," Madhav told reporters at a press conference.

"In reality these parties do not want to empower the people at the grassroots level and strengthen democracy," he said.

Madhav, who had worked out the alliance agenda with PDP, said BJP walked out of the coalition government because "PDP was not in favor of holding panchayat elections".

He said it will be ensured that local bodies get direct funding.

"Like over ground workers of militants, the workers of NC and PDP are also threatening people to stay away from polls," he said.

"We have reports that the workers of these parties are threatening people who want to file their nominations as independent candidates," Madhav said.

He said that NC and PDP are fielding proxy candidates "but we still welcome that as it is healthy sign for democracy".

Madhav said there is no change in "the behavior of Pakistan even after the new Prime Minister took over the reins there".

➤ **SC remark has 'shaken' morale of armed forces, cops: GoI**

Sep 28: The Government of India (GoI) questioned the Supreme Court for its reported remark terming as "murderers" some Manipur Police personnel, chargesheeted in alleged fake encounter cases, saying it has "completely shaken" the morale of armed forces and security men operating in insurgency-hit areas.

The government told a bench of Justices Madan B Lokur and Deepak Gupta that they supported the applications filed by some Manipur Police personnel seeking recusal of the bench from hearing the Manipur fake encounters cases in which the CBI's special investigation team (SIT) is carrying out a probe.

The petitioners, however, challenged the government's contention, saying this was an attempt to "overawe" the court, which should not recuse from hearing the matter.

The court, which is hearing a PIL seeking a probe into as many as 1,528 cases of alleged extra-judicial killings in Manipur, had on July 14 last year constituted an SIT of the CBI and ordered lodging of FIRs and investigating them.

Besides the policemen, over 300 army personnel have also approached the top court challenging registration of FIRs against them for operations in Manipur and Jammu and Kashmir where the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) is in force.

"I have instructions from the Union of India that we are supporting these petitions (seeking recusal of bench). So far as armed forces in Manipur are concerned, they are having difficult time fighting insurgency," Attorney General (AG) K K Venugopal told the bench.

The AG also questioned the prosecution of personnel from the armed forces and the police for conducting operations in the areas where the Armed

Forces (Special Powers) Act is in force, saying “they cannot understand why they are asked to face the prosecution”.

He said the reported remarks by the bench that “murderers” were walking freely has “shaken” the morale of armed forces and police personnel as they were sacrificing their lives but facing the prospect of being awarded death penalty for the alleged offence of murder.

The bench, however, said the oral remarks by the bench during the hearing on July 30 was not “designed or directed” against any individual as it happened during the discussion in the court with the CBI Director.

➤ **UN Chief concerned over Kashmir situation**

United Nations Sep 30: UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has voiced concern over the situation in Jammu and Kashmir while encouraging “positive dialogue” to resolve the disagreements peacefully.

He also said the UN welcomes a greater role for India in addressing regional peace and security challenges.

“I remain concerned by the situation in Jammu and Kashmir I encourage positive dialogue for disagreements to be resolved peacefully,” he said.

➤ Cross-border firing claimed 109 lives since 2016
Among the dead include 56 force personnel, 53 civilians

Sep 29: At least 109 people have been killed and 565 injured in ceasefire violations and cross border firing at International border (IB) and Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir in less than three years, Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has revealed.

The MHA reply to an RTI query revealed that 109 civilians and force personnel were killed and over 565 civilians and security men injured in cross border firing from 2016 till July 2018.

The information was revealed by Kashmir desk of MHA vide letter no. 13030/2/2018-K.II dated 31/08/2018 in response to an RTI application filed by Raman Sharma of Jammu.

According to MHA, 2018 witnessed maximum number of ceasefire violation and cross border firing incidents both at IB and LoC as compared to 2016 and 2017.

“In 2018 till July, 1435 firing incidents were reported, which is higher than the data of 2016 and 2017,” it stated.

In 2016, 449 incidents (228 at LoC and 221 at IB) and in 2017, 971 incidents (860 at LoC and 111 at IB) were reported.

Those killed in cross border firing and shelling in last three years include 56 force personnel and 53 civilians.

Of them, 28 civilians were killed in 2018.

Of 565 injured in border hostility, 302 were civilians and 263 force men.

In last three years, 35 Army men were killed in border hostilities. Of them, eight army men were killed in 2016.

In 2017, 15 army men were killed and 12 died in 2018.

In 2018, 12 BSF men were killed and 47 others injured while nine BSF men were killed and 39 injured in cross border firing in 2016 and 2017.

