

A monthly newsletter of Public Commission on Human Rights

The Informative

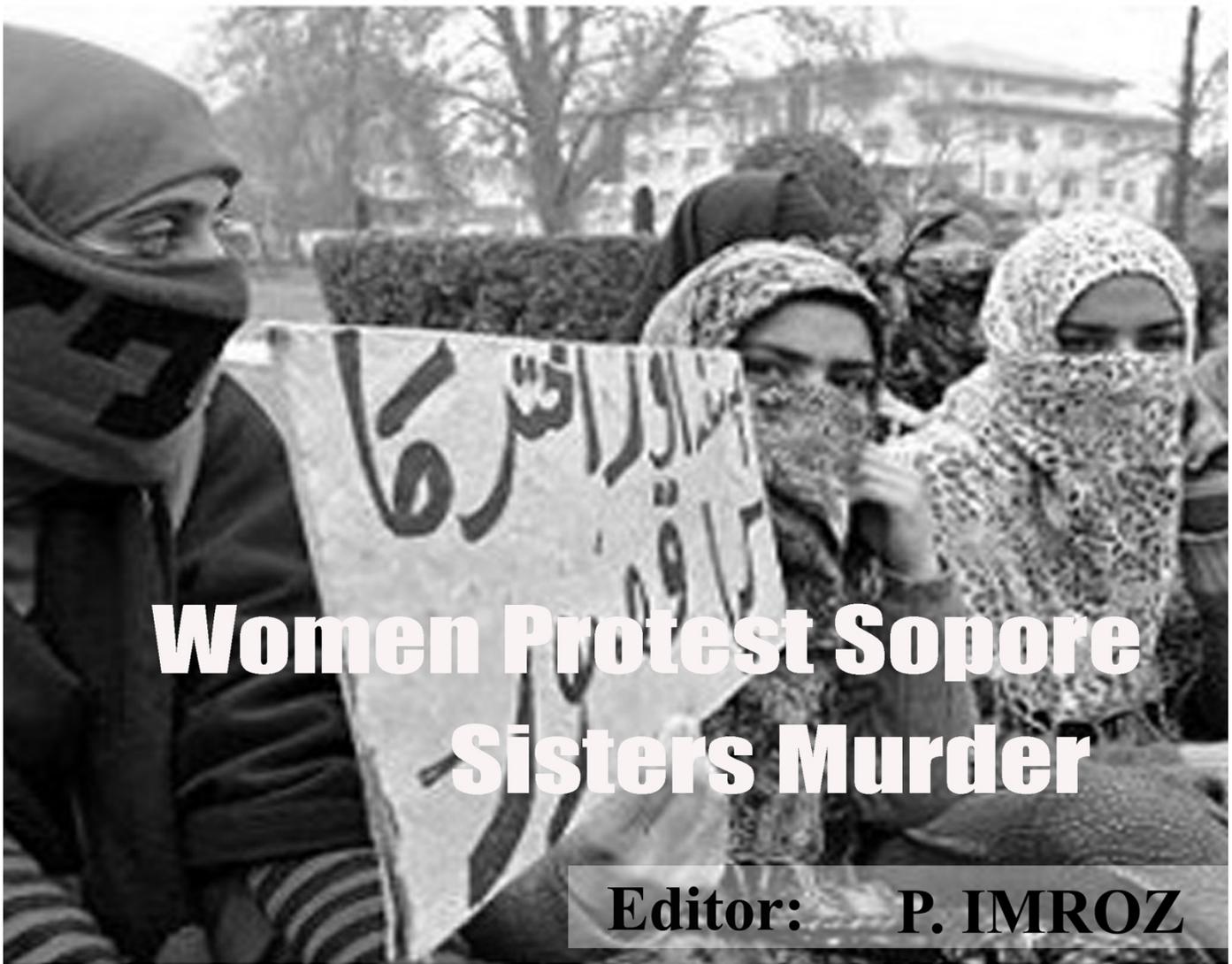


MISSIVE

(For Private Circulation)

VOL.163

January 2011



Women Protest Sopore Sisters Murder

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'PITY THE INTELLECTUAL'

We have seen that the sufferings of a nation bring out the best in its intellectuals. In Jammu and Kashmir, the opposite has happened; the role of intellectuals has remained bordering on criminal. The best intellectual talent seems to have been appropriated by state in lieu of privileges. Most intellectuals have chosen to live in these comfortable zones. In the beginning of the conflict the intellectuals have supported the resistance but with the passage of time they gradually withdrew. Most of them ended up becoming "intellectual renegades", in lieu of positions of power. Those who did not choose to follow this tide of renegade intellectualism, have resorted to issuing statements or writing columns. Many intellectuals attend seminars where they mostly blame one leader (usually the one out-of-power) for all the wrongs. It is ironic to note that during that politician's rule, most of them behaved as minions. It is the silence and blind following of the intellectuals, and obviously the civil society that allowed the politician to abuse power. In this scenario, it seems that the intelligentsia is willing to wound but afraid to strike at the right time. They are fence-sitters and continue discussing things which change nothing.

The best word in this chaotic melee of arguments and counter-arguments is "action." The reality is how to change the set-up, which forms the biggest challenge. Things can be changed, but it needs commitment, obsession and determination. As Henry Ford has said, "enthusiasm is at the bottom of the progress with it there is an accomplishment and without it there are only alibis".

From the last 20 years, in Kashmir the 4th largest army of the world has been busy in trying to break the will of the people; to humiliate and coerce them. However, the ordinary respectable Kashmiri have not succumbed. Yet the so-called *crème de la crème* of the society, the intellectuals have not taken any lead roles in inspiring and sustaining people's resistance. You will find not any dearth of *sarkari* intellectuals, who seem to be on sale to the highest bidder and that too on discount, dare I may add. They toe the stateline and dance to the tone of state. They seem to profit from the miseries and sufferings of the people. It is notable to see this class of collaborators swelling. Many of them post-retirement have joined the gold-rush of NGOs in Kashmir valley. We see these so-called intellectuals receiving awards and rewards for their collaboration with state. Only state and positions matter to them and we saw them in 2008 and 2010 brazenly oscillating according to the situation.

In an ideal world, the role of the intellectuals is to show grace under pressure, to speak the truth, expose the lies of state and to inspire and sustain resistance in oppression and suppression. History attests that nations where intellectual class has invested in posterity have prospered, but collaborators have come to harm themselves and have created problems for future generations. The omissions and commissions of this class cannot be ignored in a place where there are more than half-a-million torture survivors, over 8000 enforced disappearances and frequent custodial killings. It's a shame for them to ignore it and accept it.

The future generation will not pardon them. We are already shameful for the role of our predecessors who accepted everything and failed to do what was required to be done. We cannot blame Indian state for every wrong but we have to look at ourselves as well. The omissions on the part of the intellectual class are tantamount to being an accomplice to crime against humanity. They will be convicted by the history if not by the law of the land today.

Today the ideological drive is lacking as compared to the 50s and 60s when there were icons, ideologues and statesmen, who became an inspiration for the people in their struggles. We are living in an era where there is globalization of mediocrity. Mediocrity in every field is at its peak, be it politics or art - it has taken space everywhere. The ideologues and icons have become an extinct species and a vacuum has been created. Corporate interests have influenced the elite but there are places where people are fighting for their right, dignity and honour. There are people who are leading the political movements nevertheless the counter movements to corrupt them and neutralize them are in place. I wonder if it is a phase as we see in history, where there are different stages and the only permanent thing is truth and justice.

It is my belief that despite the intellectual apathy, the new generation who we call as the "conflict generation" will emerge like a phoenix and redeem people from the scourge of occupation. Endeavors have to be made to connect the concerned people and rope them in for collective actions. The investment in new generation has to be made. It must

be ensured that they are not obsessed with the follies of the past and blame-game like the so-called intellectuals but confident and optimistic and believe that “we can prevail, set things right, as we are alive not dead”.

PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED BOOKED UNDER PSA THRICE

Bashir Ahmad Dar, 27, son of Late Wahab Dar, a physically challenged boy, of Saidapora, Sopore was booked thrice under J&K Public Safety Act. Life has become horrendous for Bashir by his consecutive detentions under Public Safety Act (PSA). He is lame by his left leg and is suffering from multiple disorders, which he developed during his custodial tortures in different interrogation centers. Despite issuance of disability certificate by the CMO Baramulla, the youth has been repeatedly kept under detention and tortured severely.

According to Bashir's family, they are not only traumatized by Bashir's continuous detention under PSA but they are yet to come out of the shock they went in after Bashir's father's killing. His father was first tortured and later shot dead on May 29, 1995 in his house by one Major Chatterji of 9-Gorkha camped at Seelu, Sopore. The killing was witnessed by entire family including Bashir's elder brother Khursheed Ahmad.

Furthermore, Bashir's uncle Ghulam Mohammad Dar has been tortured many a times due to which he has developed many disorders and is suffering from different ailments. Even once Ghulam Mohammad was also shot by army troopers in his leg in mid 90's. The family has faced multiple tragedies since the inception of conflict in Kashmir.

A researcher of *The Informative Missive* on his visit to Saidapora village in the outskirts of Sopore talked to the victim family and also tried to talk to Bashir Ahmad. Initially hesitant, the family said that Bashir is in Srinagar with his brother but later admitted that he is hiding somewhere in the village after the researcher persuaded them that they won't be harmed.

Basher Ahmad stated, "First time in 2008 on November, 25 I was at my aunt's house. In the intervening night of November 25/26 at about 12:30am police and SOG raided their house and arrested me. I was taken to SOG camp Sopore, where I was severely tortured. I was beaten with bamboo sticks, given electric shock and my legs were rolled over. The SOG personnel during interrogation asked me to show weapons and booked me in a false and fabricated militancy case under FIR 61/2008. I continuously pleaded for my innocence and told them that I am handicapped by left leg as I met a road accident in 1998 which rendered me crippled. I further beseeched them as I am not in a position to walk how I can work with militants. They turned a deaf ear to all my pleas and keep on torturing me for the whole night. Next day I was shifted to the SOG's Air Cargo Interrogation Center, Srinagar. There I was again tortured severely as beating, giving electric shock, rolling legs, hanging upside down was a regular persecution up to 6th December. Then on 7th December I was shifted Police Station, Karanagar, where I was lodged up to December 29. Lastly, On December 29, I was bailed out from the same police station."

He added, "Second time on July 8, 2009, again the SOG personnel raided my house at 11:45 and arrested me. I was straightway taken to Air Cargo Interrogation Center, Srinagar. There I was beaten severely particularly on crippled leg, given electric shocks, rolled over on legs and body. This time they asked me same questions to show the weapons. I constantly pleaded for my innocence. I was continuously tortured for about one week. Then on July 15 I was handed over to Police Station, Maisuma, Srinagar. There I was

detained up to July 20. In the afternoon of July 20 I was shifted Central Jail, Srinagar. On August 31 first detention order under PSA was slapped against me vide order no. DMS/PSA/31/2009. For seven months I was detained in Central Jail. After months long legal process, my detention order was quashed on 1st March 2010. Even after the PSA was quashed I was not released. After one month, on March 31 CIK (Counter Intelligence Kashmir) personnel took me to the Police Station, Humhama from Central Jail, Srinagar, where I was again tortured severely. Subsequently, on April 7, I was moved to Police Station, Maisuma and shortly on the same day I was sent to the Air Cargo Interrogation Center, where I was questioned for three days. Afterwards on the night of April 10 I was handed back to police station, Maisuma."

"Even if my detention order was quashed, police and SOG did not release me. On April 19 from Maisuma, Police Station I was shifted to Central Jail on remand. The remand was brought from DC (Deputy Commissioner) Office, Hazratbal Srinagar. After one-day detention in Central Jail a fresh detention order vide No. DMS/PSA/02/2010 dated April 20, 2010 was imposed on me. Then on April 21 at about 2pm I was taken to Maisuma Police Station wherefrom I was shifted to Udhampur Jail.

Despite my first detention order was quashed by the court I was not set free. Instead, I was again booked under PSA. It is shocking that the CIK personnel filed a new FIR against me and stated that they had arrested me on 1st April 2010 and detained me in Police Station, Humhama. The police claims were absolutely false. They showed my release after the quashing of first detention order while in fact I was not released for a single moment. Soon after being booked under PSA I was lodged in Udhampur Jail," stated Basher Ahmad.

Basher further revealed, "My brother sought the help of Advocate Shafqat Hussain and challenged the second detention order under PSA in the J&K High Court on the grounds that the dossier was passed on the same grounds which had already been set aside by the High Court on March 25, 2009. In due course my second detention order was quashed on December 6, 2010.

Accordingly, on December 8 I was moved to JIC (Joint Interrogation Centre), Mira Sahab, Jammu. In JIC, Jammu I was held up to 5th January and then from JIC I was sent back to police station, Humhama on January 5. On January 6, I was shifted from PS Humhama to PS Maisuma. Finally on January, 12, 2011 I was granted bail and released at about 5:00pm from PS Maisuma. Soon before my release police authorities of PS Maisuma ordered me to appear in the police station after one week. After getting released I straightway went to home."

"Two days before I was about to appear in PS Maisuma, I came to know from one of my sources that police has prepared a new detention order against me. Due to the fear of further booking under PSA I did not visit police station. Now I am absconding because of the fear of further torture and persecution", concluded Bashir Ahmad.

The victim family asserted that Bashir is an innocent person and is a law-abiding citizen of the State. According to them he was never involved in militancy. He was arrested from his house without any justification.

ANOTHER PAINFUL SAGA OF FE KILLINGS COMES TO FORE YOUTH PASSED AS FOREIGN MILITANT

Features of Rafiq Ahmad Gania, 19, son of Abdul Gani of Awgan village of tehsil Kulgam, Anantnag, had made him a suitable catch for army to kill him in a fake encounter and passed him as foreign militant. Rafiq, a well-build over 6 feet, supported beard with fair complexion, somewhat look alike an Afghani national. It also appeared that one of the reasons of Rafiq's killing would be his father's allegiance with *Jamaat-e-Islami* (JeI), a politico-religious organization, whose cadres were prime targets of state particularly in Kulgam area since outbreak of militancy in 1989.

Army in its FIR No. 26/05 U/S 307 RPC 7/27 I.A. Act filed with Shopian police station claimed that they have killed two militants at Shuratpora, Shopian when they were moving suspiciously. The army also claimed the duo came into ambush site, one of them was walking in front carrying a stick in hand while as the other was walking 8-10 steps behind the former, with both hand inside *Pheran* (a Kashmiri cultural gown wear to protect from chill). The army claim further read, on being challenged one of the individuals walking behind fired from inside his *Pheran* and both turned back and ran. In self-defense army claimed its men fired. The person on the front lobbed a grenade and fired upon army men. In the encounter both militants of Hizbul Mujahideen were killed. The army identified Mukhtiyar as, Mashooq Ahmad Chopan s/o Assadullah of Chaterpora while Rafiq as Mohammad Iqbal was shown as a foreign mercenary. Also recovery of arms and ammunition viz. one A.K. Rifle 1, Magazine 3, Ammunition 63 Rds., Pistol Chinese 1 and Magazine 1 were claimed.

Both Rafiq and Mukhtiyar Ahmad Bhat s/o Abdul Gani Bhat were arrested by 1 Rashtriya Rifles (RR) stationed at Machua and subsequently killed in a stage-managed encounter. There were no traces of boys for 17 days. Eventually, in Shopian police station families of disappeared were shown their photographs. Both were branded as militants. Rafiq was identified as Mohammad Iqbal, district commander of Hizbul Mujahideen, a foreign mercenary of Pakistan while Mukhtiyar was identified as, Masooq Chopan (still an active known militant). Even the family of Masooq Chopan, who has some resemblance with Mukhtiyar, accepted the army lie in order to avoid further army harassment.

Fake encounter killings of boys' triggered protests, however mild, and 17 day sit in. Police when approached by the families of the deceased refused to file FIR against the army. District Magistrate Pulwama vide order No. 01/DMP/05 Dated 2/3/2005 ordered an enquiry into the matter and appointed SDM Shopian as enquiry officer.

Rafiq and Mukhtiyar Ahmad Bhat were relatives and close friends since they were in same profession for years together. On February 16-2005, while the duo was on way to a market in a Sumo vehicle to purchase material for their, yet to start, *Nanwai* (Baker) Shop were de-boarded at a 1 RR check post at Machua. Immediately, both were taken to Machua Camp and later killed in a fake encounter. Later, army claimed that they have killed two militants identified as Mashooq Ahmad Chopan s/o Assadullah of Chaterpora while Rafiq identified as Mohammad Iqbal of Pakistan both cadres of Hizbul Mujahideen and huge cache of arms and ammunition was claimed to be recovered from their

possession. The army claim was strongly contested by families of the killed. None of the boys were ever remotely connected with any militant outfit.

According to Abdul Gani, 65, a carpenter, father of Rafiq while talking to *The Informative Missive* that both boys Rafiq and Mukhtiyar were working under his supervision as carpenters and were on learning curve of the art. "Unfortunately, in the mid 2004, I met with an accident while on an assignment in Srinagar. I got badly injured with multiple fractures at my back and hip bone, and was operated at Bone and Joint Hospital, Srinagar. I remained bed ridden for months together and was unable to do any sort of work for couple of years. Since both boys hadn't learned the art fully and were sitting ideal, I suggested them to take on some other profession, which they can do better. Both agreed to start a venture of *Nanwai* (baker) shop in their native place", Abdul Gani said.

While collecting bits and pieces to establish the *Nanwai* shop both boys were working hard and went to Kulgam Market for purchase. "On February 16, 2005 at around 12 noon the boys left for market. *En route* at Machua, where an army check post was set up by 1 RR, both were asked to step down from the vehicle they were on board. The duo was taken into nearby 1 RR camp Machua. Soon the news reached us; we sat on a *dharna* (sit in) outside Machua camp including family of Mukhtiyar Ahmad Bhat. We were around 30 persons who sat on *dharna* for 17 days consecutive days till March 3. Eventually, an army official at Machua camp told us to contact police station Shopian, as they have information about our children", Abdul Gani said while pain was palpable on his wrinkle face.

Both the families on March 3 went straightaway to Shopian police station where the photographs of both boys were presented before them Abdul. Gani said, "Everybody was shell-shocked on seeing the photographs, who army claimed were militants killed in encounter with them. More shocking was that my son Rafiq was labeled as foreign militant, a Pakistani national. And for 6 days they were laid buried in graveyards in Shopian. Rafiq was buried at Lantore graveyard while Mukhtiyar was laid buried at Nowgam Chatterpora graveyard."

On the same day, holding their nerves, both families filed an application before Deputy Commission, Pulwama for exhumation of bodies. "It took four days to get approval from DC office for exhumation. Amidst pain and cries, the graves were opened and bodies were taken out. At the first glance, I recognized my son. His face was quite shining and bore smiling look. He was fired on back side of his head. On the exhumation site besides relatives and friends of deceased SDM, SDPO, SHO Shopian and Deputy CMO Pulwama were present", Gani said while struggle to hold his tears back.

Later both bodies were taken to their ancestral graveyards where they were laid to eternal rest and other rituals were performed. Abdul Gani further said, "On Rafiq's *Charum* (a fourth day ritual), a team of doctors along with some policemen came to my residence and took blood sample of one of my sons Sheraz Ahmad Gania. Few days later, I went to DC office Pulwama to inquire about the status of DNA test. I was shocked to hear that officials there told me that the sample got spoiled in fact it was tempered.

Disappointed by this administrative waywardness I discontinue to follow the case. I felt army and administration were in hand in glove and there is no point in hoping for justice," Gani lamented

The SHRC took cognizance of the incident and asked Director General of Police to conduct an enquiry and filed its report. The conclusion made in the investigation conducted by DG had corroborated claims made by families that none of them was militant. In reply to SHRC letter, the Director General of Police letter dated 15-12-2009 wrote to SHRC that the youth were innocent.

Few years later Gani approached then Deputy Commission, Srinagar for its intervention into his case. The DC Srinagar called on SP Pulwama and asked him to furnish the details of so-called encounter. Before something happen DC was transferred.

In the same year September 2005, a contingent of Special Operation Group (SOG) Kulgam apprehended Abdul Gani and was detained for 25 days. Abdul Gani was caught hold by his collar from back by SOG while he was walking through Kulgam and was taken to STF camp. "SOG took me to their camp at Kulgam. There an officer asked me to produce my another son Naushad, then 18. When I asked him (officer) for what I have to produce him before you. The officer told me that he is working with militants and is wanted. I was shocked to hear this. Subsequently, the STF

handed me over to police station Kulgam, where the police asked me the same question. I confidently told them he was merely a carpenter and not a militant. Irked by me reply, they detained me there for 25 days and every time asked me to produce my son. For 25 days, none of my family member was allowed to meet me. One day when I told the police to let me go and I will bring my son to police station to clear your doubts, as it is not possible that my son could come of his own unless asked to do so. But they refused. Eventually, after 25 days I was released", Gani said.

After my release police arrested Naushad and he was taken to Kulgam police station. The SHO Kulgam took Naushad to SP Pulwama. The SP Pulwama took him to IGP office where the IGP told Abdul Gani that his son is involved in militancy. Abdul Gani stated, "My son Naushad was booked under various offences, which he never did. He was falsely implicated. He served 2 ½ year in jails. He was lodged in Kot Bhalwal, Central Jail and CIK Humhama. Naushad has to produce before court district Court Kulgam for hearing in offences in which he was falsely implicated".

Rafiq's killing rattled his family. His mother has turned mental wreck and have developed multiple ailments. She had developed serious heart problems and is living with the support of medicines. Two of his brothers discontinued their education.

BULLET RUINED FUTURE OF A BUDDING STUDENT

Medical examinations have established that Ishtiyaqul Hassan Shah, 35, is disabled forever by his legs. Once agile, Ishtiyaqul has now to take support of crutches to walk, making his mere survival a gigantic task for him.

In August 1996, Ishtiyaqul was shot at left side of his abdomen by a military officer in civvies during a raid at his maternal uncle's house at Chogal, Handwara. The bullet fired by the officer ripped through his intestines, caused serious damage to his intestines, severe damage in thorax and fractures of body lumber vertebra and damaged his testicals, therefore, rendering impotent.

Like many other youth of his epoch, his aims were high but destiny has something else in store for him. Ishtiyaqul used to spend most of his time in studies till life took an ugly turn for him on August 6, 1996.

Ishtiyaqul while sharing his painful anecdote to *The Informative Missive* said, "That horrible night is still haunting me. Recalling it is torturous. I starkly remember that I had gone to my maternal uncle's house at Chogal, Handwara, 15 kms from my home after a long time. It was around 11:30 pm; I had just finished revision of my studies and offered prayers. I was preparing myself for sleep; meanwhile, I heard a big bang at the main door of the house. Before I could understand what was happening around, scores of personnel from 21 Rashtriya Rifles, Special Task Force and E Coy 72 BN CRPF broke open the main door of the house. They had also laid a siege around the house. They were around 100 personnel in strength. Half of them forced their entry inside the house while rest cordoned the house."

The troops after storming the house indiscriminately beat up women folk who were sleeping on the ground floor with gun butts and kicked them with their boots. They also beat ruthlessly Shabir Ahmad, Ishtiyaqul younger maternal uncle, who was also sleeping in the same floor.

"The troops beat up my mentally unstable mother Haleema, 40, grandmother Attiqa, 70, Muneera and Shameema, 30, my maternal aunts and also Shabir sleeping in the same room. Shabir's nose was fist punched caused enormous bleeding from his nose and also he was beaten badly at his back. Every soldier was crying 'where the militant is'," Ishtiyaqul said.

According to Ishtiyaqul, while beating the women folk at the ground floor, a dozen of troopers went upstairs into first floor where they beat up Ishtiyaqul and his another maternal uncle Bilal Ahmad, then 20, who were in the same room.

"Both of us were taken out into a corridor where they asked for a militant. They accused us of giving shelter to a militant and helped him to escape on their arrival. We had no idea what they were asking for. We were trying to convince them that there was no militant ever present there. Meanwhile, some of the troops entered into another room, on the first floor, where they beat up my elder maternal uncle Mushtaq Ahmad Shah and his wife Haleema, then 33, and their minor daughters. They also beat up Reyaz Ahmad Shah, 27, another uncle and Ali Mohammad, 20, a family servant with gun butts and fist punch, who were sleeping in another room in first floor," Ishtiyaqul said.

"I and Bilal Ahmad both made every attempt to convince them but they refused to listen. Meanwhile, an officer in civvies, perhaps supervising the raid, accused me of being a militant of Hizbul Mujahideen and asked for arms. I pleaded for my innocence but that didn't change his mind at all. He poked deep his pistol into left side of my abdomen. Before I could understand his intentions he pumped a bullet. The bullet ripped through my abdomen and blood started oozing out. In the same state, they dragged me out in the lawn. There, I spotted Bilal Ahmad flat on the ground, whom

I presumed might have been killed by troops. In the lawn I lost my consciousness," Ishtiyaqul said while pointing towards his abdomen scar which depicts the seriousness of his injury.

After 4 hours Ishtiyaqul regained his conscious. Surprised and shocked to see himself in Drugmulla army camp where army took him for first aid. A little later he was handed over to police with his conditions deteriorating.

"At 4:00 am, I regained my conscious at Drugmulla camp, where an army doctor administered superficial treatment on my bullet injury. In early morning of 6.8.1996, I was handed over to police who took me to SMHS hospital at Srinagar. In SMHS, I was operated on emergency basis. The doctors established that the injury was serious and caused by fire arm. The medical report also established that damage in thorax, fractures of body lumber vertebra and serious damage of intestines. On 6.08.1996 I was referred to Sher Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) Soura," Ishtiyaqul said while showing the medical records, which he normally hates to show to the people.

To his great shock at SKIMS after medical examination doctors declared that his physical damages were beyond cure. He remained admit in SKIMS from 1-11-1996 to 08-11-96. Doctors had established that Ishtiyaqul has developed weakness of both lower limbs and could not walk for his entire life.

As pain was quite palpable on his face Ishtiyaqul further said, "The bullet injury has rendered my genitals dysfunctional and doctors had nothing to offer as far my damage was concerned. Doctors at SKIMS refused to admit me. Instead they advised me to come after every fortnight for medical checkup. In December 1996, I had a pain on left-side of my abdomen since the bullet was logged in my body. And on the advice of SKIMS doctors I was asked to inject out Chandigarh hospital for Cerebrospinal Fluid (CSF) as the hospital lacks that technology".

"I rushed to Chandigarh for CSF but that couldn't change my fortune. Doctors there corroborated the medical examination of Kashmiri counterparts that my damage was beyond cure Disappointed, I returned back. It not only rendered me physically incapacitated but laid a great impact on my mental state as well. I am not less than a liability to my family and relatives. My younger brother Irshad Ahmad has lost his mental balance. He is suffering from manifold traumas," Ishtiyaqul said.

Since the life holds no future for him but braving all odds he started to give some financial support to his much needy family. "Since sitting idle only contributes to my mental pain, I started a grocery shop in my native village, with the aim to contribute financially to my family and also for getting engaged with some work. But my younger brother Irshad every morning stopped me from going out telling that army will kill me. My tragedy had a great adverse affect on Irshad. He preferred to sit in isolation. Seldom he washes his face and remains shabby and rebuked everyone asked him to bath or stay clean. My mother has now turned completely insane. My family is in complete disarray," Ishtiyaqul rued while highlighting some of his problems he confronts on daily basis.

In August 2000, Deputy Commission Office Kupwara distributed relief to conflict-hit victims and by virtue of that an amount to the tune of Rs. 25,000 was paid to Ishtiyaqul.

Again he was arrested in February 2002 by army camped at Gushe. "I was re-arrested by army and was detained for a day. The army accused me of faking my pain and threatened me not to speak of army atrocities inflicted upon me. During detention they pulled my beard, kept me under open sky till late in chilly evening and canned my entire body. They repeatedly accused me of being a militant. The intimidation was to force my family to migrate. Finally, they openly told me to migrate. The army fear triggered migration of entire Bubernag hamlet comprised of 20 families. All the families get settled at Hatmulla in a clutch later christened as Bubernag," traumatic Ishtiyaqul said.

With a hope that some relief would be sanctioned in his favour Ishtiyaqul's brother Showkat Ali Shah moved to State Human Rights Commission (SHRC). "My brother Showkat filed a complaint before SHRC on August 19, 2003 demanding *ex gratia* relief and for appointment under SRO 43. The police in its investigation have established that I was not involved in any subversive activity or had any association with militancy. The SHRC after submission of police verification passed a judgement recommended state government for payment of relief at the enhanced rates and appointment under SRO 43. But so far I am yet to receive any grant or appointment," Ishtiyaqul said while holding the copy of SHRC judgement.

SAILAN MASSACRE: AN UNDYING TRAUMA

13 years ago, in August 1998, - 19 members of three families, sharing close relation, were massacred by the army and Special Operation Group (SOG) at Sailan, Surankote, Poonch. Majority of the killed were below 12 years of age. One of the survivors of the massacre Latief Ahmad, who works in Suadi Arabia as labourer, visited recently the valley to see his family and meanwhile approached the office of PCHR to share post-massacre experiences.

The State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) conducted an enquiry indicted army and SOG, but no action has been ever initiated against the personnel who orchestrated the massacre. Compensation to the tune of Rs. 1 lac were paid per death and a government job to one survivor of each family. The massacre then hit the headlines, got widely covered in local media but the coverage didn't

sustain for long and the dead made mere addition to the statistics. Various human rights groups from J&K and India thronged the spot and left with mere promises of justice and punishment to the perpetrators. But nothing of that sort happened ever.

While sharing his experiences to *The Informative Missive* Latief Ahmad, who was away from the home that night, said, "I would be surely among the dead, if I hadn't listened to my mother's prudent advice. I am a labourer in Saudi Arab and on leaves used to visit home to see my family. That year also I kept the routine to visit my hometown after over a gap of a year. I found the situation precarious. The unbridled forces has caused havoc in the area. Human rights violations were rampant. Youth fearful. Fearing for my welfare my mother insisted me not to stay at home instead advised me to spend at least a week with my cousin at Surankote town, where the situation was relatively better. I acted upon her advice and moved to my cousin's house. But before the week ends on August 3 / 4, 1998 army struck, in the dead of night, killing nineteen of my relatives."

"Nineteen of my relatives were butchered by 9 Para army and Special Operation Group (SOG). All the nineteen members mostly children, below 12 years, were huddled into a single room at the house of Lassa Sheikh, my uncle, and bullets were showered upon them indiscriminately. All of them were left dying with door bolted from outside. No water was offered to them and they all died thirsty. Their painful screams and alarm couldn't prove of any help to them." Latief said while recollecting the painful memories of that day.

The victims were identified as, Ahmad Din and his wife Sara Begam, Zarina Akthar, who was pregnant at the time of her killing, Yasmin Akthar, Javaida Akthar, Shagufta Akthar, Hassan Mohammad Sheikh, Zaitoona Akthar, Showkat, Akhraaz Ahmad, Shaheena Akthar, Tahira Akthar, Lassa Sheikh and his wife Zaina Begum and their son Mohammad Iqbal and daughter Shaheena Akthar, Jabeena Akthar, Tahira Parveen and Shaheena.

The wanton massacre shell-shocked the entire Surankote. Latief said, the already fearful and vulnerable populace of Sailan Surankote, living on the mercy of army and SOG, left behind their home and hearth and fled to Tehsil Complex at Surankote. The migration wasn't only confined to the Sailan also one of its adjoining villages namely Bunikathe population migrated. Latief added, as many as 200 families took refuge in Tehsil Complex.

"For about two months people took refuge in the Complex. The migration embarrassed the then state government, which pressed into services its administration at Surankote to persuade the migrated families. After repeated assurances by state administration, people returned back to their homes, but we refused as army could avenge the migration. We (the remaining members) wondered from place to place for about two years, which drained our savings. We live with our relatives for sometime but finally rented rooms at many places. Finally, our entire money exhausted and we returned back," Latief said while revealing the hardships they had gone through after the massacre.

Latief said, the survivors of the families refused to take state security when offered on recommendations of SHRC and the blamed the state agencies for massacre. "How could we take the so-called security, as the same forces killed my relatives brutally and got away with it with incredible ease? In case we accept that so-called security, it could prove as an *alibi* to the state which is shielding the real culprits responsible for the crime," Latief made it clear.

On their return the victim families found their houses in dilapidated conditions and extensively damaged. "No care was taken of our houses. People fear even to get

closer to those houses. No one muster courage to get the damages repaired and close vigil was maintained by the army," Latief said.

"On our return back to houses, we have to first made mandatory repairs of them in order to make them accommodative. After two years the room (15/15), where my innocent relatives, young children were bundled and fired indiscriminately, was opened. The bloodstains all over the room bore the testament of the

brutalities of the forces. We have dug a meter deep the soil to clean the room, as the blood was soaked down deep. To keep the painful memories of that day alive, as a protest, we every year organize massacre anniversary. Quranic recitation was made and on the commemoration people in unison visited the graveyard where in same queue my relatives laid buried. We have also raised an epitaph there with a couplet engraved on it reminding every visitor to the graveyard about the massacre," Latief said while mourning for the relatives.

The State Human Rights Commission or SHRC conducted an on spot enquiry and indicted army personnel of 9 Para Army and the Special Police Officers (SPO) operating under them. "SHRC conducted an enquiry found army of 9 Para and SOG guilty of massacre but no action was ever initiated against the perpetrators. The SHRC submitted its report to the then government but there was no word from the government side since then. The massacre was never became the part of official police record. No FIR was filed. Even the politicians chose not to speak over the incident," Latief lamented while describing the role of state agencies.

Shortly after the massacre one SPO - one of the perpetrators - was fired and killed while commuting in a local bus. Later people learnt that he had revealed the facts about the massacre before a local politician. "One of the co-perpetrators, an SPO, was shot dead by the army in Mendhar while he was on travel elsewhere. The SPO we came to know later broken down before a politician and spelt beans against forces responsible for the massacre. He had revealed before the politician about the conspiracy hatched before the massacre. Before his killing he (SPO) was enjoined to shut his mouth or face consequences. Ironically, the blame of his killing was fixed on militants. We also learnt the politician had hobnobbed with army and got him killed," Latief said

- 13 years before, 19 members of three families huddled and massacred.
- In the backdrop of massacre 200 families, take refuge in Tehsil Complex, Surankote for two months.
- SHRC conducted an enquiry indicted army and SOG for the massacre, but no action has been ever initiated against the personnel responsible.
- Perpetrator have prospered, victim families suffering seems endless.
- Every year commemoration day is being observed.
- The new grown children of the families are the victims of trans-generational trauma and fear.

while revealing the horrible aftermath of the massacre and the army threat which is still prevailing in the area.

The impact of massacre had not even spared the generation came after years of massacre. Latief further said, his children were told by the people about the killings of his relatives. The new grown children of the families are the victims of trans-generational trauma and fear. Latief who spend most of his time at Saudi Arab after the massacre said, "Without witnessing the massacre our children behave like as if they had witnessed the massacre, since the massacre is being discussed time and again particularly on anniversaries and festivals. The frequent discussions over massacre leave a serious impact on their psyche."

One of the parental cousins of Latief, Asha Begam, now 45, who luckily escaped the massacre, Latief said, got

paralyses after 3-4 months after the bloodbath. Latief added she went into shock immediately after the incident and numbers of specialist doctors were consulted but no remedy was available with them. Shabir another survivor, a teacher is married for 10 years now is childless.

The family is contemplating to take judicial recourse with the support from a local Human Rights group. The families, no matter late, have decided to fight for justice and to book the perpetrators who roam free. "If things goes well, we will surely take legal recourse against the perpetrators, as we can't tolerate their freedom," Latief asserted.

Latief Ahmad grumbles, the criminals had prospered, own huge houses and are roaming free with full state patronage. Victim families alleged that justice was never delivered to them.

TEENAGED SISTERS SHOT DEAD IN SOPORE

January 31: Two teenaged sisters were allegedly killed by some unidentified gunmen at Sopore late this evening.

The deceased were identified as 19 year old Kulsoom and 17 year old Rehana, daughters of Ghulam Qadir Dar of Muslim Peer area. Both of them were students of a local school.

Police said they were kidnapped from their house and taken towards the neighbouring Rahim Shah shrine Mohalla, where they were shot dead.

Both the girls died on the spot. The gun men fled from the scene after killing them. On hearing the gun shots people ran helter skelter. Amid panic some rushed towards the spot and founds the girls lying in pool of blood. But they had died.

The girls were taken to local hospital, where doctors declared them brought dead. "We have recovered the bodies

and would hand over those to the affected family after completing the legal formalities," said a police official.

He added that investigations have started into the incident.

Police said they do not yet know as to why the two girls were killed. Their house is located near the police station Sopore.

The two girls were killed on the last day of the first month of this year. The month had witnessed calm on security front. The killings marked the beginning of the such incidents in Valley. Last year Sopore had witnessed number of attacks. The residence of local MLA was attacked a number of times and so was the residence of senior police officer.

MAN SHOT DEAD IN KUPWARA

January 5: Army soldiers allegedly shot dead an unidentified man in district Kupwara on Tuesday night.

"Soldiers asked a man to stop near Rangwarnav Lolab last night. However, he evaded the signal and ran away following which soldiers opened fire killing the man on the spot," a police official said.

When the identity of the killed person couldn't be ascertained he was buried in the afternoon. Locals said that the person offered Isha prayer at the local Masjid of Rangwarnav and later left with a torch. Later some gun shots were heard as the area was cordoned off by personnel of 18 RR. In the morning a body was found some 200 yards away from the Masjid.

Locals who buried the body at Kuligam martyrs graveyard said that the killed person was aged around 45 years having a beard and wore a Khan suit. He seemed to be a mentally unsound person, they said.

SSP Kupwara V. K Birdhi told media that as per the army's version 18 RR got some inputs about the movement of militants in the village and its troops laid an ambush. "At

around 10 PM they detected some suspicious movement and challenged a person. When he didn't stop despite repeated warnings and ran towards the forest area, he was shot dead. Case is under investigation," he said.

When asked whether it was a joint operation of police and 18 RR, SSP said that police was not part of it. Defense authorities claimed that an encounter took place in the area and the person was killed in the exchange of fire.

A defense spokesman told media that after specific inputs about the movement of militants 18 RR and local SOG jointly laid an ambush yesterday night and noticed some movement in the forest area. "The suspected militants opened fire on the troops which was retaliated triggering a brief encounter. Early in the wee hours troops found a body at the spot which was handed over to police for identification. It is the job of the police to ascertain who was he," he said.

"We have registered an FIR under Section 304 and are investigating the matter," In-charge SHO Quligam Police Station, Muhammad Jaffar told a news agency.

2 VALLEY YOUTH ARRESTED IN MADHYA PRADESH

'OUR SONS ARE NOT MILITANTS'

January 1: While Madhya Pradesh police arrested two Kashmiri youth in Bhopal labelling them as militants, the families while denying the police allegations, said they were innocent.

Bhopal police said it arrested two suspected militants belonging to Kashmir. "The two were held on New Year's eve Friday night from Tailaya police station area of

Bhopal. Both were wanted in Kashmir and were involved in militant activities in Bandipora in Jammu and Kashmir. We have contacted Jammu and Kashmir Police, who will soon reach Bhopal,' Director General of Police SK Rawat told reporters at Bhopal.

The two arrested have been identified as Shaukat Ahmad Hakim and Mehrajuddin Shergujari, both hailing from Bandipora.

But the family members of Shaukat and Merajuddin said they had left home with local *Tabligi Jamaat* (religious propagating group) and were on four months reformatory programme with the *Jamaat*. "They were not associated with any militant outfit," they said.

Merajuddin resides in Hajin while Shukat at Rakhi Hajan. Both the youth were businessmen. Mehraj runs a shop

in main market Hajin while Shuakat looks after a band saw machine in his home. Fathers of the two youth denied they were militants. "I fail to understand why my son has been dubbed as militant when he is a responsible citizen," said Ghulam Qadir, father of Meraj-ud-Din.

Shaukat's father Ghulam Muhammad Hakeem said it is unfortunate that his son has been labeled as a militant.

"My son was working with Hurriyat conference, but he is not a militant," he said.

"The police allegations are baseless."

POLICE MAKING PROFILES OF VALLEY YOUTH

YOUTH ALLEGE HARASSMENT, POLICE DENIES

January 28: The police across the valley have started making the profile of youth who were arrested for alleged stone pelting and street protests against the killing of civilians by the men in uniform.

Police terms it a routine exercise and added that it will help them in future to "nab the involved".

The youth who were arrested and later released are being asked by the police to bring their photographs to respective police stations across the valley. The exercise has started to bring miseries to parents of the youth.

The parents alleged that police is pressurising them to bring the photographs of their wards. A Bemina Srinagar resident said that police visited his house thrice to get the photograph of his son. "My son was arrested earlier. Like the other youth, he too participated in protests once," he said adding that police thrice came to his house to get the photograph of his son. "Even the police threatened me of dire consequences in case the photograph did not reach the police station," alleged the Bemina resident.

Not only the parents, the exercise has infuriated the youth who allege that they are being called to police stations for verification of their particulars and are being harassed. The youth alleged that they are even being asked to furnish the addresses of friends and relatives.

"They harass us," alleged a youth of Babadam Srinagar.

Furqan Ahmad, a resident of Khanyar, said that the police are treating the youth as thieves. "Earlier police used to take photographs of thieves. Now the same is being done with us people," he said.

A report from Anantnag town said that police is making calls to the parents and youths to bring the photographs to police station. "I was called eight times on phone to bring the photograph of my son," said Muhammad Iftaq of Anantnag town. "I am unable to understand the sin of my son. Like thousands of youth he might have participated in protests against the civilian killings," he added.

"We are making the profiles of the youth freshly arrested in my district," SSP Anantnag Ramesh Kumar Jalla told Kashmir Times adding that this is routine exercise. "Anybody who commits a crime, his record is maintained in the police station," added SSP.

SSP Budgam, SP Sopore and SSP Kupwara confirmed that police in their districts is making the profile of youth, who they alleged were pelting stones. "They are criminals and we maintaining their profile," said SP Sopore Muhammad Altaf Khan.

However, the police sources said that exercise is only meant to stop the protests and stone throwing in future. "Once the problem erupts in any locality in future, the photograph will help us to locate the trouble makers," said senior police officer. He added that the exercise will help them in keeping a tight vigil on the activities of "miscreants and stone throwing youth".

"The process will not only help in curbing future protests, it will also be easy to identify the youth involved in stone pelting," said the senior police officer. However, he denied the harassment of youth in police stations. "Nobody is harassing the youth," he added.

SHOPIAN MINOR BOOKED UNDER PSA

LODGED IN DISTRICT JAIL KATHUA

Jan 7: Jammu and Kashmir Government has slapped Public Safety Act on a 15-year-old boy from south Kashmir Shopian district for "being threat to the security and sovereignty of the State."

Just 15 days after finishing his class 10th examination, Towseef Hussain Bhat son of Ghulam Muhammad Bhat of Baba Mohalla Shopian was arrested in December 2010 by Shopian police on charges of stone pelting.

Subsequently, the District Magistrate Shopian detained him under PSA after going through the material produced by the Superintendent of Police (Shopian) against Towseef.

Though family members and school date of birth certificate mentions Towseef's age as 15 years, the detention order puts it at 19 years. Towseef is a student of Muhamadia Institute Shopian.

According to the order, Towseef has been detained under PSA for "hijacking the sentiments of the locals and exploiting the youth for instigating violence."

"You are instrumental in challenging the sovereignty and integrity of the State and have links with anti-national elements," the order reads. "You have destructive mind and were arranging public gatherings and staging demonstrations against the state government." The detaining authority has accused Towseef of having affiliation with Hurriyat Conference (G), saying the ordinary law would not be sufficient to curb his activities.

"In order to curb your activities, your detention under the PSA becomes imperative. It is prudent and legally desirable to detain you under section 8 (3-b) of the Act so that you are restrained from further indulging in anti-social activities."

On the basis of dossier from SP Shopian, the detaining authority said: "I am satisfied to detain him under PSA." Towseef has been lodged at District Jail Kathua.

His family members have filed a writ petition through Advocate Mir Shafaqat Hussain before the High Court seeking quashment of the detention.

Towseef's counsel Shafaqat questioned the detaining authority on the grounds prepared against the minor.

He said: "I fail to understand on what grounds the detaining authority determines the age of the minors."

He has sought Rs 10 lakh compensation from the state government for detaining Towseef on "malafide and baseless grounds".

GIRL'S RELEASED AFTER PROTEST

January 08: Under pressure from intense protests and strike police released a girl who they claimed was a *hawala* operative.

On January 7, Suraya alias Soni, 24, was arrested after police raided her residence at Pinglish, Tral in Pulwama district on a tip off. Nothing was recovered from her procession. She was released on bail on next day following massive protests and strike. Superintendent of Police (Awantipora) Mohammad Irshaf told media, "We have released her after a court granted her bail".

AFZAL GURU MOVES SC FOR TRANSFER TO J&K JAIL FROM TIHAR

January 27: Mohammad Afzal Guru, awaiting death penalty in Tihar Jail following his conviction for plotting terror attack on Parliament in 2001, has moved the Supreme Court for shifting him to a jail in Jammu and Kashmir.

In his petition, filed through advocate Kamakhya Singh Mahilwal, Guru has pleaded to apex court for a direction to the Delhi government to shift him to a jail in his native state on the ground of convenience to his family members.

In his petition, Guru sought his shifting out from Tihar Jail saying his stay in a jail in his native state would be

COI REJECTS CRPF PLEA SEEKING WITNESSES' RECORD

Jan 11: The Commission of Inquiry (CoI) appointed by the government to probe the killing of 17 civilians from June 11 to July 19 last year, rejected the CRPF's application seeking copies of statements by witnesses who deposed before CoI into the killings.

IG CRPF (Operations) Kashmir, BN Ramesh was present during the hearing held by the two-member commission, comprising State Human Rights Commission chairman, Justice (Retd) Syed Bashir-ud-Din and Justice (Retd) Y P Nargotra at the SHRC's Jammu office, while as President Bar Association Jammu, senior advocate BS Slathia along with a battery of lawyers represented the CRPF officials accused in the killings.

Slathia told Kashmir Dispatch that the CoI while rejecting the CRPF's plea for copies of statements indicating alleged CRPF involvement in the killings said the CRPF could "only inspect

PANEL PROBING CIVILIAN KILLINGS SET TO GET ANOTHER EXTENSION

January 28: The judicial commission probing the 17 civilian killings during last year's summer unrest in the Kashmir Valley is all set to get another extension as the high court has asked it not to submit the report without its permission.

Shafaqat said the detaining authorities were spoiling the career of the students by lodging them with hardcore criminals and booking them under harsh Acts.

MINOR RELEASED

Meanwhile, another minor Basharat Yaqoob Beigh son of Muhammad Yaqoob of Shopian has been released from Kathua Jail.

The 14-year-old Basharat, an 8th class student of Shahi-i-Hamadan Memorial Institute Shopian, was booked under Public Safety Act for being "threat to the security, sovereignty, integrity and peace of state." He was released after state government revoked his PSA.

Soni's arrest sparked protests and shutdown in Tral area. People in large numbers irrespective of age and sex took to roads and staged anti-police demonstrations. Chanting pro-freedom and anti-police slogans, the protestors blocked vehicular movement on the road.

Locals said, she is innocent and police is framing her in false charges, because of being her brother a militant of Hizbul Mujahideen.

SHO Police station Tral told the media that, "an FIR No 5 of 2011 under sections 17, 21, 40 of Unlawful Activities Act has been registered against her."

more convenient for his family members, who cannot come all the way to Delhi every now and then to meet him.

The court was slated to hear Afzal Guru plea on January 28, but Mahilwal told PTI that she has requested the court to adjourn the hearing to next week.

Accordingly, the matter is likely to be adjourned tomorrow, she added.

Guru was convicted on terror charges by an anti-terror court in December 2002.

the statements on spot." The CoI also listed the next hearing on January 24.

The COI was constituted on July 27 last to probe circumstances leading to the death of 17 civilians across the Valley from June 11 to July 17 in government forces action. It will also fix the responsibility where excessive force had been used, suggest measures to stop such incidents in future and recommend punishment to those found guilty. Already, the two-member panel has booked a number of CRPF officials from different battalions for the excessive use of force that led to deaths of 'innocent' civilians in Kashmir Valley.

On December 21, the COI said some officers of the paramilitary force had been prima facie found involved in killing of civilians, and issued a notice to IG CRPF (Operations) asking him to file a reply by December 30.

"We will put forth the proposal for extension to the state government as soon as we receive it from the commission," State Law Secretary G.H. Tantray told PTI.

The term of the Commission ends on January 28 but it has not been able to complete its probe so far.

Appointed on July 27, the two-member commission was initially given three months to complete the probe but deteriorating law and order situation forced two extensions.

State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) Chairman Justice (Retd) Syed Bashiruddin Ahmad, who is heading the

DGP ASKED TO FILE REPORT IN INVESTIGATIONS ON 37 KILLINGS

HC SEEKS REASONS FOR LEFT-OUT CASES

January 31: The High Court today asked Director General of Police (DGP) that why cases were not registered by police in majority of deaths incidents during last summer agitation. The DGP has been also directed to file a detailed report about the present stage of investigation in 37 cases of deaths where police lodged First Information Reports during the same period.

The court direction came in a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) chairman Mohammad Yasin Malik on January 14, in which he had sought judicial supervision of the investigation into 117 killings that took place in Kashmir during last summer agitation.

Noted lawyer, Zafar Shah had filed the petition on behalf of Malik. In his petition the JKLF chairman had also

CRPF TO GET TAVOR GUNS 'TO COMBAT MILITANCY'

January 28: Paramilitary CRPF at Sopore in north Kashmir are in the process of procuring TAVOR assault rifles made in Israel "to counter the militancy in the area," media quoting its sources.

They said the guns have already been handed over to the CRPF men of 179 Battalion in Sopore town.

Similar guns were reportedly procured by Army's Special Para forces in 2009 after the approval of Defence Ministry.

In the first phase, the sources said, the guns would be introduced in north Kashmir's Sopore town after which they shall be used in other districts also, as and when the need arises.

The 4 kilogram assault rifle uses 5.56 mm NATO ammunition, originally developed in the United States for use in the M16 rifle. The Tavor has a selective fire system – semi-automatic mode, burst mode and full automatic.

GOC OFFERS ARMY HELP TO TRACE MISSING

Jan 19: In an unprecedented statement boding significant change if carried through, the chief of the army's 15th Corps, Lt Gen Atta Hasnain, offered the army's cooperation to the police and the civil administration in tracing Kashmiris subjected to disappearances over the past two decades of turmoil, and said that the final call on troop reduction would be taken shortly in a high level meeting of state and central security authorities.

The general was speaking at a function organised by the 44 RR in Shopian where students and prominent residents of the area were present along with officers of the police and the civil administration.

Talking to the media, Gen Hasnain said that agreed on the need of all "possible steps" to trace the fate and whereabouts of Kashmiris who have gone missing over the past 20 years.

ARMY SOLDIERS UNDER SCANNER

'FAKE' IEDS IN JK

January 2: Planting of "fake" improvised explosive devices by some people allegedly in connivance with certain middle-

commission, said since the matter was *sub judice*, he would not like to comment on the issue.

"The probe (into the killings) had reached an advanced stage but is now held up due to the pending writ petition filed by the CRPF in the state high court," Justice Ahmad said.

sought directions from Court to the government to register cases in left-out death incidents that took place during last year's agitation.

On January 31, as the matter came up for hearing, a division bench comprising Justices Hakim Imtiaz Hussain and Mohammad Yaqoob Mir, issued notice to the government to file reply to Malik's PIL within two weeks.

The DGP was also directed to file a detailed status report about the steps taken by police during the investigation into 37 death cases registered by it, within two weeks. The DGP was also directed to report to the court about reasons why police did not register FIRs in left-out cases of same nature during last year.

Sources revealed that the AK-47 or 7.62 mm SLR used by the CRPF so far have not proved too effective in close quarter battles (CQB).

"Therefore TAVOR has been introduced to combat militancy," they said. "The AK-47s are easier to carry, but are not accurate enough. The weapons imported from Israel are not only accurate and lightweight, but also have a rate of fire to match the AK-47s," said a CRPF official, insisting not to be named.

The guns are fitted with special sights.

Talking to media Commanding Officer of 179 Battalion V.K Singh said: "We are in the process of receiving the TAVOR guns. Other battalions may have received these."

The CRPF Public Relations Officer Prabhkar Tripathi said: "We going to modernize our forces with latest guns and ammunitions and TAVOR usage is part of this modernization."

The general announced that the army was prepared to extend all cooperation to the police and the civil administration in this context, and asked people to register complaints in police stations to put the record straight.

"I will personally talk to the director general and the inspectors general of the police," the military commander said.

Stressing that the issue would not be resolved overnight but might take years, the general said that it needed joint effort by all concerned to bear fruit.

To a question on troop reduction, Gen Hasnain said that the state's unified command would hold a meeting shortly with central authorities to take the final decision on the matter.

ring Army officials is becoming a new way in Jammu and Kashmir to earn hefty cash rewards.

Certain individuals, including ex-servicemen, allegedly in connivance with some officials of Northern and Western Commands are engaged in "planting black sand" and passing them on as RDX-laden IEDs to earn award money, highly-placed sources in the government told media.

The interrogation report of some of the accused including Mehboob Dar and an ex-serviceman Ram Prasad show a deep-rooted "nexus" between the ex-servicemen and some serving officials especially working in the military intelligence in allegedly hatching a conspiracy and planting "fake" IEDs, they said.

The nexus emerged when police recovered a consignment of apple boxes on October eight near MLAs' hostel in Jammu in which a cavity had been created to store a black material which was being passed off as explosive. The boxes had detonators attached to them, triggering panic.

After a detailed forensic analysis, the explosive material turned out to be sand which was attached to wires and detonators that were brought from stone quarries to give a realistic look of an IED, the sources said.

For instance, Dar said during his interrogation that he used to get Rs 30,000 to Rs 50,000 for planting these "fake" IEDs and he had done this at least 50 times between February 2009 and October 2010, when he was arrested.

2010 SAW MORE PROTESTS LESS MILITANCY

'134 DEMONSTRATIONS, 131 STRIKES OBSERVED'

Jan 6: The militancy related incidents, infiltration attempts and killings witnessed a decline in the State in 2010 while 143 demonstrations and 131 strikes were observed in the Valley during the previous year.

"Infiltration attempts and militancy-related incidents were down to 459 and 474 till December 15, 2010 as compared to 485 and 499 respectively in 2009," revealed a report on security and militancy compiled by the Home Department.

The statistics revealed that 708 militancy related incidents were reported in 2008, 1092 in 2007, 1667 in 2006, 1990 in 2005, 2565 in 2004, 3401 in 2003, 4038 in 2002, 4536 in 2001. "The highest number of 5946 militancy-related incidents took place in 1995. The lowest in past two decades was reported in 2010," it said.

The police statistics revealed that the violent incidents directed against the troops also witnessed a decline. "There were 75 such incidents reported in 2010 till December 15 as against 89 in 2009, 128 in 2008, 217 in 2007 and the highest 2675 in 1994".

"There was also a fall in the killing of troops and policemen. 68 policemen were killed in gun battles with

MORE CRPF MEN FOR BARAMULLA, SOPORE

'PERSONNEL BEING REALIGNED, NOT WITHDRAWN'

January 5: Amid buzz over demilitarization in Kashmir, three more companies of paramilitary Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) have been deployed in north Kashmir's Baramulla district.

Sources told media that the companies, pulled out from Srinagar, have been deployed in Baramulla district. "Out of the three companies, each having 100 personnel, two were deployed in Baramulla and one in Sopore," they disclosed.

Sources said it was the part of the rationalization process, according to which, the forces would be readjusted without actually withdrawing them from the state.

The modus operandi was an eye-opener for the investigators as the details of the planting of fake IEDs as pointed out by Dar and his accomplice Krishen matched with the official records. In all such cases, it was found that such explosives were shown as "destroyed insitu" (destroyed on spot) by the Army which unearthed IEDs.

According to defence spokesperson in Jammu Lieutenant Colonel Biplab Nath, "Preliminary investigation was carried out the moment initial media reports appeared ten days ago.

"No involvement of military intelligence or Army soldiers has come to light. The role of military intelligence soldiers, in this case, was limited to providing timely inputs to police authorities," Nath said.

Notwithstanding the statement of the defence spokesman, investigators from both state and central security agencies said the role of Dar and Krishen was limited at planting of explosives.

"Someone in the Command is for sure involved in hatching and executing the conspiracy," a senior official said, adding the probe was still on and some personnel of Army will be questioned soon.

militants in 2010 as against 79 in 2009, 85 in 2008 and 122 in 2007. At least 237 militants were killed and 19 surrendered in 2010 compared to the figures of 239 and 15 in 2009," it said.

The civilian killings in firing and explosions, according to the statistics, were down to 33 as against 63 in 2009. "The civilian deaths due to firing and law and order problem increased to 127 in 2010 from 20 in 2009," the report said.

It attributed the increase in civilian deaths to the violent protests and agitations, which rocked valley last year.

The statistics revealed that there was increase in demonstrations and processions and strikes sponsored by separatists. "134 demonstrations and processions and 131 hartals were witnessed in the State in 2010 as against 45 demonstrations and processions and 35 hartals in 2009," it said.

"The figure of political and public rallies went down too. 1420 such meetings were held in 2010 as against 3,021 in 2009 and 6783 in 2008," the report added.

"The forces are being deployed as per the requirement without thinning them," they said, adding that the re-alignment of few more companies in on cards.

The re-deployment comes at a time when the state government is planning to set-up five more police stations and seven police posts in north Kashmir.

"The district has more than six battalions of CRPF with three deployed in Sopore and adjoining areas, hundreds of personnel on the Line of Control in Gulmarg and Uri sectors, and six battalions of Rashtriya Rifles," the sources said.

Pertinently, the state government has reportedly ruled out withdrawal of paramilitary CRPF from the state

after the Home Ministry sought some battalions for deploying them in Naxal-affected areas.

SUICIDES AND FRATRICIDES IN TROOPS

➤ ARMY JAWAN COMMITS SUICIDE

Jan 27: An Army jawan allegedly committed suicide by shooting himself with his service weapon at Nagrota, Jammu.

Police said Saji Kumar (belt number 15313681), son of Sadha Shivan Pilay resident of Kerala posted of 651 Engineers at Nagrota, shot himself with his service weapon inside the army camp, last night.

The body after autopsy was handed over to the authorities while police initiated inquest proceedings under section 174 CrPc in this connection.

ARMY MAN INJURED IN LANDMINE EXPLOSION

Jan 22: An army man was injured seriously in a mine blast when he inadvertently stepped over a landmine in Krishna Ghati Sector along LOC in Poonch district.

According to officials reports, that an army jawan of 17 Mahar got critically injured in a landmine explosion as he

Jammu and Kashmir has highest concentration of paramilitary forces with 60 battalions of CRPF out of 210.

Defence spokesman, confirming the incident, said that a court of inquiry has been ordered into the incident.

➤ CRPF TROOPER ENDS LIFE

Jan 11: A Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) trooper ended his life by shooting himself with his service rifle in Sopore town.

The deceased trooper was identified as RK Mehndi of CRPF's 177 BN.

POLITICAL STATEMENTS

➤ 'NO TROOP-CUT IN JK'

2-PRONGED STRATEGY TO CHECK INFILTRATION, CONTROL CROWD

Jan 2: Despite strong pleas by the political groups in Jammu and Kashmir, there is little likelihood of the thinning of security forces in the State, government sources said.

"There is no question of taking any chances at this stage; we will have to go by security considerations and not by the political thinking of the groups," a senior officer who attended a meeting of the union home ministry in New Delhi, told a wire news agency.

According to a senior government official, "In the given situation, security forces are required in substantive numbers and any reduction will have serious repercussions."

➤ 4812 CIVILIANS, 2219 TROOPERS KILLED IN 10 YEARS

Jan 2: At least 7,031 persons including 4812 civilians were killed in militancy related incidents in Jammu and Kashmir during last 10 years.

"4,812 civilians and 2,219 force personnel have lost their lives since 2001 to August 2010 in Jammu and Kashmir," the Home Ministry said in reply to an RTI query.

The ministry said many areas of the State witnessed several incidents of violence in terms of stone pelting, violent protests, encounters with armed militants and terror attacks in the recent past resulting in death of and injuries to civilians and securitymen.

Law and order is a State subject and measures are taken by the Jammu and Kashmir Government to maintain peace and public order,' the Home Ministry said. Exercising his Right to Information, Ashwini Shrivastava had asked the Ministry to give details of casualties due to stone pelting and terror or infiltration attempts by the militants since 2001 to till date.

➤ 'MACHIL FAKE ENCOUNTER TRIGGERED STIR'

Jan 3: Stating that Valley's summer agitation was the fallout of Machil fake encounter, Director General of Police Kuldeep Khoda Monday said the situation in Kashmir was in total control and 207 stone pelters were in police custody and 155 of them have been booked under Public Safety Act (PSA).]

"The summer's agitation in Valley was the fall-out of killing of three civilians in a fake encounter in Machil. Immediately, after the fake encounter was exposed, protest demonstrations started. Unfortunately, a 12 year old boy, who was part of one such demonstration, fell to police bullets on June 11, which triggered further demonstrations with greater proportions. The agitation continued for about six months but the law and order situation is under control by now," Khoda told media persons.

inadvertently stepped over it while patrolling along with his colleague at Kirpan-II forward Post in Ghati Sector. He was identified as Sepoy RK Sahoo, he received injury in his knee and after first aid by the unit doctors, he was immediately shifted to army hospital Poonch.

He said 207 stone-pelters were in police custody at present. "Out of them, 155 were detained under PSA," he said.

DGP claimed that the summer agitation was later driven by external forces as well. "We have intercepts which prove that Pakistan and separatists pumped money into the agitation."

He said as per police record only 91 civilians were killed and 545 civilians injured in police and CRPF firing during the unrest.

He, however, contradicted himself in later part of the press briefing saying that more than 100 civilians were killed in police and CRPF firing during the summer agitation.

Khoda said a cop was killed and 2828 policemen injured during the agitation. "1351 CRPF men were also injured and 59 of them have been rendered disabled," he said.

➤ SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN JK SITUATION: PC

Jan 4: Home Minister P Chidambaram said there has been a significant improvement in the law and order situation in Jammu and Kashmir as the government-appointed interlocutors have been able to "change the discourse" in the troubled valley.

"The three-month period of agitation was an unfortunate and deeply regrettable chapter. However, after the visit of the all-party parliamentary delegation and the appointment of interlocutors, there has been a significant improvement in the law and order situation," Chidambaram said while presenting the Report Card of the Ministry of Home Affairs for the last month.

➤ 2 TOP MILITANTS KILLED IN 2010: POLICE

January 8: Targeting the leadership of militant outfits in Jammu and Kashmir, police and security forces have shot dead 22 top 'commanders' of these groups in the state last year, police claimed.

"Police and security forces have killed 22 top commanders, including eight foreign terrorists, in J&K in 2010," Director General of Police Kuldeep Khoda said. In 2009, police and security forces killed 51 'commanders'. Out of the 51, 27 belonged to Hizb-ul-Mujahideen followed by Lashker-e-Toiba, he said, adding there are 450 to 500 militants operating in the state and 45 to 50 per cent of them are foreign militants. He said security situation is now under control and incidents of militancy are also low in the state

➤ '40 KILLED IN BANDIPORA IN 2010'

Jan 10: Nearly 40 persons, including 33 militants, five force personnel and two civilians were killed in this north Kashmir Bandipora district in various militancy related incidents in 2010, while two persons were killed and 169 were injured in the 4-month summer agitation.

According to the officials records 35 encounters took place in different areas of Bandipora while six infiltration bids were foiled near the Line of Control (LoC) in which 13 militants and four soldiers were killed.

Two civilians were killed in 2010. One was killed during an ambush in Paswal Patti Sumlar and another in a gunfight at Dardpora Arin village, records state.

"Out of 35 encounters three gun battles broke out in tehsil Sumbal, 24 in various hamlets of Bandipora district and rest of the encounters broke out near LoC. No encounter was reported from Hajjan Township, erstwhile bastion of militants," the record adds.

It states that two youth, one in Ajas and another in Naidkhi, were killed and 169, including 23 policemen, sustained injuries during the 2010 agitation.

➤ **LOCAL MILITANTS OUR OWN PEOPLE: GOC**

Jan 13: The General Officer Commanding (GOC)--15 Corps--Lieutenant General Syed Ata Hasnain, on Thursday invited local militants to meet him and sort out their grievances.

"Local militants are not enemies of army. People who exploit the youth and thrust weapons in their hands are the real enemies of army," General Hasnain told reporters at a sidelines of a function at Sopore in north Kashmir.

"Local militants are our own people. If they have some complaints, they can come and ask army. We together can sort out problems. They should work shoulder to shoulder with army to lead Kashmir towards progress and prosperity," the GOC added.

➤ **DELHI WILL CUT TROOPS, ARMY SAYS NO**

Jan 14: A quarter of the security forces in Jammu and Kashmir will be cut in the next 12 months, Home Secretary G.K. Pillai said in what was seen as a major confidence-building measure towards the people of the conflict-scarred state as well as Pakistan. The Army, however, ruled out any reductions in the number of military personnel.

"There will be a 25 percent reduction of security forces in Jammu and Kashmir, especially from populated areas, in the next 12 months," Pillai said at a symposium on 'What is the way forward in Jammu and Kashmir' organised by the Jamia Millia Islamia. While Army Chief General VK Singh on Friday said they do not feel the need to "cut down" their forces in the state. He also said it will be ensured that "extra pressure" is not put on his "already-stretched" deployments. "We have not yet felt that we have to cut down our forces. If they want to cut down para-military and police forces, I won't say anything... "So when that is done, it will be ensured that extra pressure is not brought on our already-stretched deployments there," Singh told a press conference

➤ **OMAR HOPES TOUGH LAWS WILL GO**

TROOPS GUILTY OF PATHRIBAL KILLINGS WOULD BE PUNISHED'

Jan 19: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah voiced hope that efforts to revoke the operation of Disturbed Areas Act (DAA) from some urban areas in the State will gain momentum, besides a reduction in the presence of security forces in the near future.

Omar said late last year he had set up two groups comprising Army Corps Commanders of Srinagar and Nagrota, Director General of Police and Home Secretary to examine areas where the Disturbed Areas Act, which gives special powers to the armed forces, was not needed.

Asked about his Government's stand on controversial Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), Omar said, "It is not a mere political cry for my government. It is a reflection of the sentiments of people who want to get rid of the laws that were imposed two decades back when the situation was abnormal".

On the possibility of reopening probe of the 2000 Pathribal incident, where three civilians were killed by Army men and labeled as militants, the Chief Minister said there was no such demand and action would be taken against the guilty on the basis of the CBI investigation.

"The investigation was concluded. The CBI findings are there. Action has to be taken on the basis of those findings. I don't think there is any demand to reopen the case," he said.

➤ **NO TROOP CUT TILL LAUNCHING PADS, CAMPS DISMANTLED: GOC**

Shopian, Jan 19: The General Officer Commanding (GoC) of Srinagar-based 15 Corps, Lieutenant General S A Hasnain said that no troop-cut would take place until all "terror camps and launching pads" are dismantled in Pakistan administered Kashmir (PaK).

Speaking to media persons, during his ongoing 'people-to-people' contact at 44-RR camp in Balapora, in this south Kashmir district, Hasnain said, "Though the graph of militancy has considerably come down but no troop-cut will take place in Kashmir unless Pakistan dismantles all terror camps in PaK. Terror camps continue to pose a big threat to us and there might be infiltration attempts. There is no question of going for any kind of troop-cut until all launching pads of militants are closed forever," he said.

➤ **PARAMILITARY NOT ARMY WILL BE REDUCED IN KASHMIR: ANTONY**

Jan 21: Defence minister A K Antony said if there was any reduction of security forces in Jammu and Kashmir it would be of paramilitary troopers as there was no proposal from "people who work on the ground" to reduce military personnel in the troubled State.

"There was some confusion. The troop-cut announcement that was made was about paramilitary forces," Antony told reporters onboard INS Deepak, a fleet tanker he commissioned earlier in the day.

He said the defence ministry has received no proposal for reduction in military personnel in the state. "At the present we don't have any such proposal. People who are working on the ground, they will recommend (such proposals)," he said.

Antony said there was no contradiction in this regard between the defence ministry and the home ministry that had earlier this month announced a 25% cut in security forces in Jammu and Kashmir.

➤ **HASNAIN SAID THAT MILITANCY HAD NOT ENDED: GOC**

Jan 27: The General Officer Commanding (15 Corps), Lieutenant General Syed Ata Hasnain said that infiltration is an ongoing process.

"The infiltration is an ongoing process and militants will make consistent efforts to cross the LoC," a local news agency KMN quoted Hasnain as having said.

The GOC said the infrastructure across the border was intact and efforts were on to push militants into Jammu and Kashmir. "Army cannot sit idle as there has been a temporary period of peace prevailing in valley," he added.

Hasnain said that militancy had not ended. "Army is ready to deal with the any situation," the GOC said.

The KMN said the GOC earlier inaugurated a bridge at WaterGam area in north Kashmir's Baramulla area. The bridge has been constructed by Border Roads Organization.

➤ **TROOP-CUT NOT AN OPTION FOR NOW : ARMY CHIEF**

Jan 29: Calling for a long-term vision with regards to the problem of Jammu and Kashmir, Chief of Army Staff General V K Singh Saturday said a holistic view with focus and resolve were key to the issue and troop reduction was not an option as of now.

"Jammu and Kashmir is a complicated set of things. There has to be a holistic view on what we do there. We have to take a very different view for the long term. Don't take decisions for the sake of expediency for a certain purpose. You have to have focus and resolve, and the government should put some people on the job," he told a news channel.

Reiterating the Army's stand, he said, "Troop withdrawal was not an option at this time. The day 42 camps on the other side are wound up and Pakistan stops its proxy war that would be the time to withdraw our troops. Until that time, it is not possible. J&K is not about mathematics. We have to be pragmatic about troop reductions."

WOMEN – CHILDREN KILLED

Jan 31: Two women, sisters in relation, were first kidnapped and later killed by unknown gunmen in Sopore area of Baramulla district. The deceased were identified as 19 year old Kulsoom and 17 year old Rehana, daughters of Ghulam Qadir Dar of Muslim Peer area. Both of them were students of a local school.

DATE	TROOPS	MILITANTS	CIVILIANS	OTHERS
January1	2	-	-	-
January2	-	-	-	-
January3	-	-	-	-
January4	-	-	-	-
January5	1	-	-	-
January6	-	-	-	-
January7	-	-	-	-
January8	-	-	-	-
January9	-	-	-	-
January10	-	-	-	-
January11	1	-	-	-
January12	-	-	-	-
January13	-	-	-	-
January14	-	-	-	-
January15	-	-	-	-
January16	-	-	-	-
January17	-	-	-	-
January18	-	-	-	-
January19	-	-	-	-
January20	-	-	-	-
January21	-	-	-	-
January22	-	-	-	-
January23	-	-	-	-
January24	-	-	-	-
January25	-	-	-	-
January26	-	-	-	-
January27	1	-	-	-
January28	-	-	-	-
January29	-	-	-	-
January30	-	-	-	-
January31	-	-	2	-
IN TOTO	5	0	2	0

CHRONOLOGY OF INCIDENTS

Jan 1: Two army soldiers of 163 Territorial Army were reportedly kidnapped and the killed by militants in Ramvhan district of Jammu province.

Jan 2: No incident of violence was reported from any part of the state.

Jan 3: No incident of violence was reported from any part of the state.

Jan 4: Suspected militants shot at and injured SHO Batmaloo and his bodyguard at Dhobi Mohalla Batamaloo.

Jan 5: Army soldiers allegedly shot dead an unidentified man near Rangwarnav Lolab in district Kupwara. However, the identity of the deceased was not ascertained.

Jan 6: No incident of violence was reported from any part of the state.

Jan 7: No incident of violence was reported from any part of the state.

Jan 8: No incident of violence was reported from any part of the state.

Jan 9: No incident of violence was reported from any part of the state.

Jan 10: No incident of violence was reported from any part of the state.

Jan 11: A Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) trooper ended his life by shooting himself with his service rifle in Sopore town. The deceased trooper was identified as RK Mehndi of CRPF's 177 BN.

Jan 12: No incident of violence was reported from any part of the state.

Jan 13: No incident of violence was reported from any part of the state.

Jan 14: No incident of violence was reported from any part of the state.

Jan 15: No incident of violence was reported from any part of the state.

Jan 16: No incident of violence was reported from any part of the state.

Jan 17: No incident of violence was reported from any part of the state.

Jan 18: No incident of violence was reported from any part of the state.

Jan 19: No incident of violence was reported from any part of the state.

Jan 20: No incident of violence was reported from any part of the state.

Jan 21: No incident of violence was reported from any part of the state.

Jan 22: An army man was injured seriously in a mine blast when he inadvertently stepped over a landmine in Krishna Ghati Sector along LOC in Poonch district.

Jan 23: No incident of violence reported from any part of the state.

Jan 24: Suspected militants attacked a joint patrol part of police and paramilitary forces in Sopore town, however, no damage was occur on either side.

Jan 25: **No incident of** violence reported from any part of the state.

Jan 26: No incident of violence was reported from any part of the state.

Jan 27: An Army jawan allegedly committed suicide by shooting himself with his service weapon at Nagrota in Jammu province. The deceased was identified as Saji Kumar (belt number 15313681), son of Sadha Shivan Pilay resident of Kerala posted of 651 Engineers at Nagrota.

Jan 28: **No incident of** violence reported from any part of the state.

Jan 29: No incident of violence reported from any part of the state.

Jan 30: No incident of violence reported.

Jan 31: Two women, sisters in relation, were first kidnapped and later killed by unknown gunmen in Sopore area of Baramulla district. The deceased were identified as 19 year old Kulsoom and 17 year old Rehana, daughters of Ghulam Qadir Dar of Muslim Peer area. Both of them were students of a local school.

Published by:

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