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Wanted in Jaleel's Murder

Major Avtaar Singh Kills self, family...



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## HIGH PROFILE SUICIDE

On June 11, the Editor received a call from slain Jaleel Andrabi's counsel, who wants to confirm the news he had received that Major Avtaar Singh, wanted in Jaleel's murder, had committed suicide in California. Shortly, another phone call from a Kashmiri journalist based in Delhi, confirmed the suicide news to the Editor. Major Avtaar shot dead his wife and two children before ends his life. It was chilling news.

Major Avtaar Singh had succeeded in leaving his country to Canada despite the court orders preventing him to do so. According to Jaleels's counsel, Advocate Hafeez-ullah Mir, the Canadian Centre for International Justice (CCIJ) was lobbying with the War Crime Unit (WCU) of Canadian Govt. The CCIJ director, Jayne Stoyles had three meetings with the WCU but due to the intervention of Indian Mission that against him (Major) a case is pending in Kashmir, where he will be tried so the WCU need not to proceed further. The assurance was given to Ministry of Immigration of Canada but in fact it was to obstruct the proceedings against him before the WCU. The mission, in the meanwhile, facilitated his entry to California.

Even CCIJ which was perusing his case, send information to the Home Land Security of California, US where thereafter he was put on the watch list. Immigration Ministry of US was informed. Major Avtaar applied for asylum in US on the plea that in India he is facing harassment from Kashmir police, where he had fought terrorism. His asylum application was rejected due to CCIJ's intervention. Thereafter his wife and mother filed another application for asylum which is pending.

Finally, he committed suicide and obliged the Indian govt., as after his suicide the constant embarrassment GOI was facing locally and outside will come to an end. For a state everybody is dispensable.

There are similarities between the suicide of Major Avtaar and one high rank police official in Punjab. It is not for the first time that in high-profile case, in a conflict where officials while 'serving' the state has finally ended their lives.

If we recall, way back in 1995, Jeswant Singh Khalra, General Secretary of Akali Dal, Human Rights Wing had released copies of official documents about secretly cremated thousands of bodies after labeling them as unidentified / unclaimed in Punjab and filed petitions in Punjab and Haryana High Courts asking for investigation into the disappearance. Jeswant while highlighting the issue apprehended during a press conference that one SSP Ajit Singh Sadhu, responsible for arbitrarily eliminating hundreds of persons in police district Tarntarn, is after his life. On September 6-1995 Jeswant worst fears came true as he was abducted and killed by the police officer.

In his case the Supreme Court ordered a CBI investigation, which indicted SSP Ajit Singh Sadhu for killing Jeswant. Like Major Avtaar, SSP Sadhu committed suicide. High profile police officials like KPS Gill called a press conference on next day calling to discuss the larger political policy issues that arouse from Sadhu's suicide.

Sadhu was praised as a hero who prevented the loss of Kashmir, Punjab and balkanization of India. Even the journalist expressed dismay over Sadhu's suicide. One of the journalists accused human rights wallas as the murderers of Sadhu. The journalist justified that if while fighting militancy Sadhu broke few rules it was justified as there was no other way.

Sadhu like Avtaar Singh after indictment was disowned by his colleagues, as it becomes a private affair and meets an ignominious end. No such thing happens in Avtaar Singh's case. Nobody had shed tears for him. Though his suicide was widely covered by the media and Avtaar Singh's end was more grotesque than Sadhu, as rightly pointed out by the brother of Jaleel Andrabi that Govt. of India (GOI) is responsible for the Major's suicide and killing of his family members. Had the maniac Major had been put on trial he would not have committed murder of his innocent family members.

The fallout of Avtaar suicide is well-understood. His end has sent strong message to the perpetrators, who are convinced that they can get away with everything as state is at their back. There are hundreds of perpetrators in Kashmir, who have committed more heinous crimes than Avtaar Singh. Major Avtaar will be an angel for them but most of them were awarded and rewarded by the state and not a single FIR has been filed against them. After retirement these perpetrators have been rewarded with post-retirement jobs. They have become members of the elite Golf Course and like Nazi war criminals are secretly enjoying the dividends of their past. Some of them are known and most unknown.

This suicide may have perturbed them, but it is not going to disturb them unless there is not an investigation like what Jews have done to identify the perpetrators of Holocaust. It is not a difficult task. The perpetrators having cover of legal impunity and moral impunity from state and Indian civil society, therefore, feel comfortable. The other confidence they have, that in Punjab they committed crimes against humanity and got away with it with ease, because mostly media was on their side. Unfortunately, the *modos operandi* and the 'successes' in Punjab, which they want to implant in Kashmir are continuing, and there lies a challenge before Kashmir civil society to make efforts to identify the perpetrators. The task is risky but doable. What it requires is will and determination and co-operation from the victims.

Fortunately, we are living in an era where crimes against humanity condone by the states is a matter of concern for the international community. R2P or Responsibility to Protect is a universal concept. There are many countries like Canada which have commitment against these perpetrators, and also there are international organizations campaigning against the perpetrators seeking refuge in other countries. What is lacking, in our view, is an internationally coordinated body of global civil society activists, which can identify the war criminals and campaign for justice. We have the ICC but it is a formal body and most of the powerful governments are not signatory to it. It has shortcomings and the idea of global war crimes body would be very effective in declaring the war criminals and lobbying and influencing states (who are mostly preferred trade relations) to do the needful according to the Geneva Conventions and International Humanitarian Laws.

## EX-ARMY OFFICER, WANTED FOR MURDER OF HR LAWYER, KILLS FAMILY, SELF IN U.S.

**June 10:** A former Indian Army officer wanted in the 1996 killing of a human rights lawyer shot and killed his wife and two of their children in their California home before apparently committing suicide, authorities said.

A 17-year-old believed to be the man's son also was shot on June 9 morning attack and was "barely alive," Fresno County Sheriff's Deputy Chris Curtice said.

The ex-officer, Maj. Avtar Singh, had been arrested in the central California city last year after his wife said he choked her, and the Indian government sought his extradition days after that in the 1996 death of Jalil Andrabi.

But he remained free, for reasons that were not clear. Andrabi's brother and lawyer blamed New Delhi, saying Maj. Singh's family would still be alive if the government had tried harder to bring him to justice.

The 17-year-old suffered severe head trauma and underwent surgery at a hospital where he remained in intensive care, Mr. Curtice said.

Maj. Singh, 47, was arrested by Selma police in February 2011 when his wife reported that he had choked her, Selma Police Chief Myron Dyck said shortly after that arrest. Police then discovered that he was being sought in India, but Mr. Dyck said at the time that he could not keep Maj. Singh in custody on the murder charge without a warrant from international authorities.

Several days later, India requested that the United States arrest and extradite him. It wasn't clear why Maj. Singh had remained free since the request. A request for comment from the Consulate-General of India in San Francisco was not immediately returned.

Mr. Dyck didn't immediately return a call seeking comment about the 2011 arrest, and Selma

### AVTAR STAYED ILLEGALLY: US

**June 13:** An ex-Indian army officer, who killed his wife, two children and himself in their home, was illegally staying in the US and a deportation procedure was ongoing against him, federal immigration officers said today.

"Avtar Singh was arrested by ICE Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) for unlawful presence in the United States in July 2007, and subsequently placed in removal proceedings," Lori Haley, spokesperson of US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Western Region, California, told PTI.

Haley said at the time of his death, HSI was continuing to investigate his case.

'Failure of justice'

"These lives could have been saved if a trial of Maj. Avtar Singh was conducted on time," said Andrabi's brother, Arshad. "We have lost that chance now. He was a known murderer and we are appalled that he was even shielded in the United States. It's a failure of justice at all levels."

Maj. Singh, who owned a trucking company in Selma, called police around 6.15 a.m. on June 9 and told them that he had just killed four people, Mr. Curtice said. He added that a sheriff's SWAT (Special Weapons And Tactics) team was called in to assist because of Maj. Singh's military background and the charges against him.

When the SWAT team entered the home they found the bodies of Maj. Singh, a woman believed to be his wife and two children, aged 3 and 15, Mr. Curtice said. All appeared to have died from gunshot wounds.

police referred questions about the apparent murder-suicide to Fresno County Sheriff's officials.

Jalil Andrabi was killed at the height of protests in Kashmir. Andrabi disappeared in March 1996 in Srinagar. His body was recovered 19 days later in a river. He had been shot in the head, and his eyes were gouged out.

A police investigation blamed Maj. Singh and his men for that killing and also accused Maj. Singh of involvement in the killings of six other Kashmiri men.

He had been charged in Kashmir only with Andrabi's killing. Kashmir police had sought permission from the Centre for Maj. Singh's prosecution in the six other killings.

Maj. Singh fled India after he was accused of killing Andrabi. Hafizullah Mir, the human rights lawyer, said he was tracked to California in 2009 with the help of the Canadian Centre for International Justice, a human rights advocacy group, but New Delhi did not pursue extradition until after his 2011 arrest.

### JALEEL'S FAMILY CONTINUE WITH THE CASE

#### THERE ARE OTHER ACCUSED IN MURDER

**June 10:** The family of Jaleel Andrabi, allegedly killed by Major Avtar Singh in 1996, said they will continue to strive for justice as Major Singh alone was not responsible for killing of Andrabi.

"He (Major Avtar) killed an innocent and then fled to California to evade trial he was to face here for

the murder," Advocate Arshad Andrabi, brother of Jaleel Andrabi told media.

"He was a killer but had he been arrested on time and produced before the court, situation would have been different" Arshad said and added that they were pained to learn about another heinous crime

committed by Major Avtar Singh by murdering his innocent family members including children back in California. "This reflects the savage mentality of the Major Singh," he said.

Arshad said the USA government, Interpol, and government of Indian and Jammu and Kashmir government are responsible for the killings of the family members of Major Avtar Singh as nothing was done to extradite him to face trial here.

"Orders passed by the courts were not complied with by the government and the law enforcing agencies acted in a dilatory way to carry out the investigation which deprived us of justice," Andrabi added.

He said his family would continue to fight for justice as Avtar Singh was not alone responsible for the killing of his brother - Jaleel Andrabi.

"We have already moved an application before the trial court seeking further investigation into the matter as the main accused was accompanied by others who all are accused of committing the heinous crime. We will challenge dismissal of the application in High Court," he said.

Senior Advocate and High Court Bar Association President, Mian Abdul Qayoom said Avtar

#### **CRIMES BY AVTAR SINGH AND CULPABILITY OF INDIAN STATE**

**June 11:** In view of the suicide by an absconding army Major Avtar Singh, the main accused in abduction and murder of renowned Kashmiri rights defender Jaleel Andrabi in 1996 the Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS) made its response public. As reported, Major Avtar Singh first killed his family members and later shot himself dead in Selma, California, US. JKCCS put under severe scrutiny the role of Indian state and its institutions including judiciary in facilitating him in evading justice.

According to the statement issued by JKCCS the death of Major Avtar Singh, who has evaded the judicial process for around sixteen years, serves as an indictment of the Indian State, including its functionaries such as the judiciary.

The release further read, advocate Jaleel Andrabi, was abducted, tortured and killed in March 1996. Major Avtar Singh was the prime accused in this case, as well as four other related cases which involved the disappearance/killing of persons such as Imtiyaz Ahmad Wani (Ikhraj Pora, Srinagar), Sikandar Ganai, Mohammad Ramzan, Mushtaq Ahmad Hajam (Sumbal), Mohammad Ahsan Lone (Pulwama), Mohammad Afzal Malik (Budgam), Balbir Singh (Mehjoor Nagar, Srinagar) and others. In all these cases, Major Avtar Singh was found to have been involved by the police authorities.

Suspecting there was strong state backing to Major, the JKCCS release said, despite evidence to suggest the integral role of Major Avtar Singh in the cases against him, the manner in which he has been able to evade justice for these sixteen years suggests a larger institutional impunity at work.

Singh had killed Jaleel Andrabi and was culpable of a murder but the criminal justice system failed to deliver justice to the victim family.

"With his death, his trial is over but trial of other accused could be held if the court directs for further investigation into the case," Qayoom said.

Counsel for Jaleel Andrabi family, Mir Hafeezullah said the family never wanted death of the accused in such circumstances but wanted him to be punished through criminal justice system.

Mir, however, said the family would file a revision petition before the High Court against the trial court order dismissing the application filed by it seeking further probe into the matter.

"There are others who have helped Avtar Singh in committing the murder of Jaleel Andrabi and all of them need to be brought to justice," he said.

A murder case was registered against Major Avtar Singh and others after the victim's family pursued the matter in the High Court and alleged that the Government was covering up the murder. The case is, however, pending trial before the court of CJM Srinagar for over a decade. The Court had directed extradition of the accused Major from USA.

JKCCS quoted a media report, which said Major Avtar Singh has spoken of the impossibility of him being taken to India alive as he knew too much and would not keep quiet (Courtesy: Open Magazine, 25<sup>th</sup> June 2011). Further, as also reported in the media, Justice Bilal Nazki, responsible for the setting up of a Special Investigation Team to enquire into the killing of Jaleel Andrabi, has spoken of being immediately transferred from the Jammu and Kashmir High Court after issuing the orders on the Special Investigation Team (Courtesy: Open Magazine, 25<sup>th</sup> June 2011). Further, despite evidence, and the courts in Jammu and Kashmir seeking the extradition of Major Avtar Singh to India, no action has been taken. In fact, until his death, Major Avtar Singh was running a trucking company in California, and it was only a phone call from his wife to the Californian police authorities in February 2011 alleging domestic violence that brought his presence in the United States to the public attention.

The death of Major Avtar, and the brutal killing of his family members, is an indictment of the Indian State. Over sixteen years, Major Avtar Singh has been allowed to leave the country, avoid extradition proceedings and run a business. The Indian State has effectively allowed for Major Avtar Singh to escape the rule of law, and in the process further innocent lives have been lost. A fair and impartial trial of Major Avtar Singh could have led to the unearthing of the truth behind the various killings, including perhaps the involvement of the highest levels of military/civilian authority, JKCCS statement said.

Individual perpetrators of crimes [in places such as Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir] have taken their own lives, either out of fear, guilt or otherwise.

But where is the guilt and conscience of the Indian State for the institutional impunity that it perpetuates? Where is the accountability?, the statement questioned.

The investigations regarding the killings/disappearance of Jaleel Andrabi, Imtiyaz Ahmed Wani, Balbir Singh, Sikander Ganai and others should not end with the death of Major Avtar Singh, as he could not have carried out these crimes alone and flee to the United States without the institutional support of the Indian State.

JKCCS demanded an impartial investigation into the crimes perpetrated here in Jammu and Kashmir

#### **BHADERWAH TRIPLE MURDER CASE**

**June 25:** In the Division Bench of the State Human Rights Commission (SHRC), the infamous triple murder case of Bhaderwah was listed. The petition was filed by Yasir Irfat Dar son of the deceased Fazal Hussain Dar and brother of Fareed Hussain Dar, the two amongst the three killed in Bhaderwah on 3 January 1996.

The ex-Director General of Jammu and Kashmir Police, Kuldeep Khoda was implicated in the case by a Crime Branch progress report that came to light through the media on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2011.

In the last hearing on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2011, the Division Bench of the State Human Rights Commission ordered the Chief Prosecuting Officer (CPO) to furnish the Crime Branch final report within 7 days, so that SHRC can peruse the documents for taking the necessary action.

Yasir Irfat on June 25 in written requested the Division Bench of SHRC to allow Adv. Parvez Imroz to represent him, as he was unable to attend the hearing in person.

The Police headquarters on June 25 submitted the Crime Branch final report, according to which it is claimed by the State that the case is not admissible. The final report has been submitted in a sealed envelope and the Police Headquarters has requested for treating this document as privileged and thus not accessible to the complainant and general public. This is tragically untenable argument, as all investigation reports are public documents and cannot be classified as privileged and thus threat to 'national security'.

The SHRC has listed the case next on 3<sup>rd</sup> July and on the same date of hearing SHRC will decide whether sealed Crime Branch report is a classified document or they will order making this document public.

The CPO of SHRC has been persistently arguing that the families have not for 11 years filed an

#### **RTI AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN KASHMIR**

##### **> 2683 FIRS REGISTERED FOR UNMARKED GRAVES IPTK APPROACHES SHRC, DEMANDS RE-INVESTIGATION**

**June 1:** The state police has for the first time admitted registration of 2683 FIRs related in cases of unmarked graves in three districts of North Kashmir. The International Peoples Tribunal Kashmir (IPTK) has

by Major Avtar Singh and his colleagues, the circumstances under which he was allowed to leave the country, persons or institutions who may have supported him to escape the legal process, and persons or institutions responsible for delay in extraditing him.

JKCCS also urged the United States Government to investigate why and how the institutions there did not arrest him despite the Interpol Warrant against him and the reasons behind him not being extradited.

appeal against the Bhaderwah trial court order, which had bailed out the main accused Mohammad Ashraf, Tariq Hussain and Abdul Sattar for lack of evidence as the witnesses according to the trial court had turned hostile. Unfortunately this is exactly the view which was taken by the Advocate General in the High Court case in the same matter, which finally was dismissed in haste and without hearing the complainants by Justice Hasnain Masoodi on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2012. It is deliberate obfuscation of facts, as the trial court case was filed by the State itself and when the accused were acquitted by the trial court, it was incumbent on the state government to file the appeal in the High Court. How can State justify not filing the appeal when even the trial court in its judgment has expressed surprise how prosecution has failed to produce evidence against Mohammad Ashraf the main accused and a known anti-social person.

It is strange that neither the High Court in its judgment nor in the present case at SHRC the factor of fear against the families of the victims is been considered for turning hostile during the trial court case.

It is for the first time that the State Government has come up with the final report of the Crime Branch investigation. The Crime Branch investigation has never become part of the trial court and neither did the High Court, even after ordering the State Government to produce the Crime Branch investigations on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011, examine the Crime Branch investigations to conclude its judgment. Now that this Crime Branch investigation report is being submitted to the SHRC, it is very crucial for the case that these documents be examined and allowed to be accessed by the complainant which is a requirement for deliverance of justice.

approached State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) in this regard. On 17 October 2011, IPTK had applied for information under RTI Act, regarding the unmarked and other graves across all the districts of Jammu and Kashmir which after initial denial from the CID has now revealed that 2683 FIR from 3 districts of North Kashmir--Baramulla, Kupwara, and Bandipora stand registered.

According to a statement issued here, the IPTK have said that they are pursuing the matter to secure more information about similar FIRs from the remaining 17 districts of Jammu and Kashmir. In this regard, the two groups have approached SHRC which is already seized of the matter. Their petition is based on 2683 FIRs which pertain to the unidentified bodies being buried in unmarked graves in Kupwara, Baramulla and Bandipora. The case is listed before the Division Bench of SHRC on 6th June.

The petitioners have asked for re-investigation into these 2683 FIRs besides ascertaining how many dead bodies have been registered in these 2683 FIRs. The petition has further sought identification of the places of burial of these unidentified people registered in these 2683 FIRs, besides ascertaining what procedures have been followed for the burial of these unidentified persons in these 2683 FIRs. The petitioners have also prayed for investigation into what identification profile has been maintained for these unidentified persons registered in these 2683 FIRs besides inquiring how many such FIRs have been lodged in remaining 17 districts of Jammu and Kashmir.

The two groups have sought SHRC directions for DNA tests of all these graves which are related to these 2683 FIRs. IPTK in its 2009 report, "Buried Evidence," had conducted the research in 62 sites across 3 districts of Bandipora, Baramulla, and Kupwara, while the Police Investigation Wing of SHRC visited 38 graveyards in the same districts. In 62 graveyards investigated by IPTK, we had documented 2700 unknown, unmarked, and mass graves, containing 2943 bodies, out of which 2373 were unmarked graves, and 177 graves contained two or more bodies.

The Police Investigation Wing of SHRC in the 38 graveyards, which they have investigated, have documented 2730 graves, out of which 2156 graves are still unidentified graves, and 574 persons were, after first being buried as foreign militants, later identified as local residents of Jammu and Kashmir.

On 16 September 2011, the Division Bench of the SHRC consisting of Justice Bashir-ud-Din and Justice J. A. Kawoos passed a judgment regarding the existence of unmarked and other graves in 3 districts of North Kashmir - Baramulla, Kupwara, and Bandipora. While confirming their existence, the SHRC recommended the creation of "an independent duly representative structured body having due credibility/weight fully empowered to go in all questions/aspects regarding unmarked graves, disappeared persons, identification of buried/dead bodies etc., and queries raised thereto and to pronounce authoritatively in all matters inert-alia, the recommendation made hereto to be constituted and put in place in time."

**> WITHHOLDING INFO UNDER RTI ACT  
VIOLATION OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT: CIC  
'DISPOSE OF PSA APPLICATION WITHIN 30 DAYS'**

**June 14:** In a significant judgment, the Chief Information Commissioner of Jammu & Kashmir GR Sufi has ruled that prohibiting disclosure of any information under the Right to Information Act-2009 without any justification is a violation of a fundamental right. The CIC asked the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar to dispose of an appeal filed by an applicant seeking information about Public Safety Act (PSA) detentions within 30 days.

Khurram Parvez of Jammu & Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS) had filed an application under RTI Act - 2009 in the office of Divisional Commissioner Kashmir seeking information about detentions under PSA in the Valley during the past two decades. Later the Public Information Officer of Divisional Commissioner Kashmir forwarded the application to DC office Srinagar on January 20 this year.

However, the Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, then PIO, refused to disclose the information invoking Section 8 of the Act. The Deputy Commissioner, who happens to be First Appellate Authority, also rejected the application citing same grounds.

After hearing both sides, the State Information Commission said that the "FAA was duty bound to pass well-reasoned order which will be justifiable." "(But) no such attempt has been made," the judgment reads.

It reads that PIO and FAA cannot summarily reject the application by invoking section 8 of the RTI Act, without citing solid reasons.

"The PIO and for that matter the FAA under the State RTI Act have to act not in an executive manner and thus summarily reject the appellant's request for information - the right which has been given to the residents of the State under Section 3 of the Act," it reads.

The judgment says that the right of getting information has been equated with the fundamental right as enshrined in the Constitution of India which has been adopted by the State Legislature in its constitution promulgated in 1957.

"Therefore, denying the information under Section 8 without assigning the justifiable reasons is denial of fundamental right," the judgment reads.

The CIC has referred the appeal back to FAA asking him to dispose of it within period of 30 days.

"The Commission considers it proper and just to restore back the 1st appeal to the FAA with the direction that he has to pass an order after giving due opportunity of being heard to the appellant and after duly taking into consideration whether the disclosure of information with regard to arrest of any citizen and his subsequent detention under an Act is so dangerous that it will affect national security. The appeal has to be disposed of within 30 days from the receipt of this order," the order reads.

"The appellant has also brought to the notice of this commission that 9 other districts from whom the

information was sought on the same issue have provided full/part information," it further reads.

#### ➤ **RTI ON AWARDS FOR ANTI-MILITANCY OPERATIONS TURNED DOWN**

**June 15:** An RTI application, seeking information regarding the awards and promotions given to the police personnel for anti-militancy operations in Jammu and Kashmir, was turned down by the state government saying such a disclosure could be a "threat" to the state's interest.

"The information pertaining to awards and promotions to the state police personnel for anti-militancy operations from 1989 to 2012 was denied by invoking section 8 of the J&K RTI act 2009," said a release issued by Khurram Parvez of Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS), a human rights group, said.

The JKCCS had applied for the information from the department of Home on April 26.

The rights group claimed that the department after a delay of 40 days, on June 6, transferred the RTI application to the Public Information Officer of the Police Headquarters, which rejected the information on June 11 citing Section 8 of the J&K RTI Act 2009.

According to the section, the disclosure of the information related to awards and promotions for anti-militancy operations would be "prejudicial to the sovereignty and integrity of the country, besides being a threat to the security, strategic interests of the state."

"This denial is an admission by the Jammu and Kashmir Police that the state does have a policy of incentivising the arrests and killings of militants," JKCCS alleged.

#### ➤ **3400 DETAINED UNDER PUBLIC SAFETY ACT IN 7 DISTRICTS**

IT'S PARTIAL INFORMATION, ACTUAL FIGURE AROUND 20000: CCS

**June 21:** What could give an idea about the arbitrary use of Public Safety Act (PSA) in Jammu and Kashmir, partial information gathered from seven districts of the Valley including three newly carved out districts reveals that 3400 persons were booked under the controversial law during the past two decades.

The information was furnished by the state government in response to an application filed under Right to Information Act by Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society through its programme coordinator Khurram Parvez.

As per the official information, 1886 persons were booked in south Kashmir's Pulwama district since 1989 under the PSA - which earlier allowed two year and one year detention without any trial.

Pertinent to mention here that PSA was amended recently by the State Government reducing the period of detention to six and three months.

In South Kashmir's Islamabad (Anantnag) district 1066 persons have served detention under the Act. However, the information about Islamabad (Anantnag) excludes the period between 1989-1993 and

2000-2003. While in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, which is considered high conflict hit district, government has given partial information about the arrests under the Act. Around 239 persons have been put behind the bars in Baramulla since 2009 under PSA. More than 200 persons have been booked in newly carved districts of Shopian, Kulgam, Ganderbal and Bandipora districts. Since 2007, 87 PSA detentions have taken place in Shopian, 74 in Kulgam and 41 in Bandipora.

Around 23 persons have been detained under PSA in Ganderbal district comprising of two assembly segments. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah represents Ganderbal constituency in the state legislature.

While Deputy Commissioner Srinagar has refused to disclose the information citing section 8 of the RTI Act, the information from Kupwara and Budgam districts is awaited.

JKCCS termed the information gathered on PSA a tip of ice-berg, as the Act was wildly used by the authorities to crush the dissent. JKCCS said more than 20000 persons have been booked under the Act by authorities during last two decades on baseless charges. "The quashing of detentions by the Court has proven that government is holding persons on flimsy grounds under the Act," Khurram said, adding that this is a big human rights issue.

PSA dates back to 70s in the state and its first victim was the then president of Kashmir Motor Drivers Association (KMDA), Ghulam Nabi. During 1977 polls Ghulam Nabi contested on Janta Party ticket against Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah. Soon after the elections the government introduced the Public Safety Ordinance, and on 8 April 1978 it became an Act after it was passed by the state legislature. Ghulam Nabi was its first victim. But in 1978 Justice MRA Ansari Chief Justice of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court revoked PSA of Ghulam Nabi.

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#### ➤ **LAW DEPARTMENT ORDERS 21 INQUIRIES IN TWO DECADES**

**GOVERNMENT BLAMES INQUIRY OFFICER FOR ENDING PROBE IN 1993 SOPORE MASSACRE**

**June 22:** Jammu and Kashmir Government has revealed that 21 inquiries, which include 17 under Commission of inquiry Act-1962, were ordered in the state during past two decades.

According to the information furnished by Law Department in response to an application filed by Khurram Parvez of Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS) under Right to Information Act 2009, JK Government has disclosed that 17 COIs and four judicial inquiries have been ordered since 90.

The information reveals that first inquiry was ordered in Sopore massacre of 1993. In 1995, three probes were ordered to investigate three separate cases including assault on Dr Farooq Abdullah at Rajouri and

death of persons due to bomb explosion at Purani Mandi Jammu.

In 1996 and 1998, two inquiries were respectively ordered to investigate the assault on Dr Bharat Bushan and death of Bakhti at Bandipora.

In 1998, government appointed Sain Dass, research officer Law department to probe into the entry alleged use of force by police in the civil secretariat. However, Justice A Q Parray replaced Dass eight days later and the report was submitted four years later.

In 1999, two member Commission of Inquiry comprising Justice A Q Parray (former judge of Jammu and Kashmir High Court ) as chairman and Pavittar Singh as member was constituted to inquire into the issuance of Permanent Residence Certificate in contravention of the Jammu and Kashmir Grant of Permanent Resident Certificates Procedure Act, 1963.

Two years later, one man CoI vide SRO-04 dated February 1, 2000, comprising Justice K K Gupta was set up to inquire into the allegations arising out of scheme to seek finance from private financial institutions for development of housing colony at Sidhra Jammu.

Following the massive protests, the government instituted inquiry vide SRO number 99 dated April 17, 2000 under Justice SR Pandian to enquire into the causes and circumstances leading to the event of firing at Brakpora/ Bulbul Nowgam Islamabad (Anantnag).

The report was submitted in 2000. In 2001, Government vide SRO-63 dated April 17, 2001 ordered an inquiry to probe into the causes and circumstances which led to firing on a procession at Haigam Sopore and Maisuma Srinagar. Justice O P Shrama who headed the probe submitted his report in 2002.

A year later, Justice G A Kuchhai, retired High Court judge was appointed as the head of one man commission to inquire into whether the samples of those killed in Pathribal Islamabad (Anantnag), which were sent for DNA test to Kolkata were fake. It completed its findings within nine months.

The Law department, in 2002, vide order number 2396-LD (A) ordered an inquiry to look into the causes and circumstances leading to gruesome murder of retired Deputy Superintendent of Police and his family.

In 2006 government vide order number 1973-LD(A) of 2006 appointed Justice Tariq Ahmad Naqashbandi to conduct inquiry into the drowning of 22 students/staff / staff of Burning Candle School in Handwara in Wular lake on May 30, 2006.

The then government led by Ghulam Nabi Azad appointed Justice (retd) M L Koul to enquire into the causes, circumstances and conspiracy, if any, in Ganderbal fake encounter killings of 2008.

During 2008, two inquiries were instituted to probe into the separate mysterious deaths in Samba and Sopore. In 2008 an inquiry was ordered to probe the "alleged suicide" by Kuldeep Kumar. However, the appointment of commission is sub-judice.

In 2009, vide SRO number 160, State Home department ordered an inquiry into an alleged rape and murder of Neelofar Jan and Asiya Jan of Shopian on the intervening night of May 29 and 30 that year.

The inquiry report was submitted by Justice (retired) Muzaffar Jan. However, the case was subsequently handed over to Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) by Omar Abdullah government.

About the COI constituted to probe the 17 killings during last year's summer unrest, the reply states that High Court has restrained the commission from finalizing the report. However, it adds that case is being contested through senior law officers in the court. Pertinently, Justice (retired) Syed Bashir-ud-Din and Justice (retired) Y P Nagrota were appointed to probe 17 killings allegedly by police and CRPF in 2010.

According to the information, the report of the inquiry ordered to look into the causes and circumstances leading to the death of Syed Muhammad Yusuf is still pending.

#### **SENSATIONAL DISCLOSURE**

The State Government has blamed the inquiry officer investigating the Sopore massacre of 1993 for putting an end to the probe ordered by it.

The documents reveal that Jammu and Kashmir Government has blamed Justice Amarjeet Singh for putting an end to the inquiry.

"Justice Amarjeet was time and again requested to complete the inquiry but without any positive response. Since March 1993 we have been requesting him to visit the state particularly Srinagar during summer so that he could examine the witnesses including the senior officer. (But) he has been avoiding visiting Srinagar," the letter by the advisor of Governor B K Goswami to the then Union Home Secretary K Padmanabiah states.

"The failure of inquiry officer to conduct proceedings has shaken the credibility of Government among the public," the letter states.

The Commission of Inquiry ordered by Government in the wake of Ganderbal fake encounter killings has failed to formulate any public opinion, the information reveals.

"However, the commission while parting with the reference feels that for many years the investigation is not completed by the police in the matters which assume public importance, the emotions and sentiments of the parents and relatives of the victims and the public at large get badly injured and once this lava of public resentment lubricates it gives birth to sea of disbelief and resentment against the police functioning," the report submitted by government by Justice M L Koul reads.

Meanwhile, Khurram Parvez said that RTI revelation has given credence to the assumption that inquiries are only ordered to buy time and to pacify masses.

"Had government been sincere in providing justice to the victims then it would have ordered

inquiry by separate judges in Sopore massacre and Ganderbal fake encounter," he said.

#### **> 24 SOLDIERS TERMINATED FOR HR ABUSES**

**June 23:** Government of India has revealed that 24 army personnel were terminated from the service for committing human rights violations in JK during past 18-years.

In a reply to an RTI query filed by Khurram Parvez of Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society, Army has disclosed that 24 soldiers were dismissed from services in JK since 1994, for committing crimes like "rape, molestation, deaths."

According to the information furnished by the Army, at least 12 soldiers were dismissed on rape charges, three for molestation and an equal number for deaths and five others were dismissed for harassment. Surprisingly, a soldier was also terminated on the charges of robbery.

However, the Army has refused to reveal the names of soldiers dismissed from the services, saying it would cause undue invasion into the privacy of individuals.

"Information sought by you is a third party personal information, disclosure of which would cause undue invasion into the privacy of the individual concerned and does not serve any public activity or interest and is therefore, exempted from disclosure under provisions of section 8(i) (j) of RTI Act 2005," Rajesh Raghav, Central Public Information Officer (CPIO) of Indian Army has said.

While queries like number of soldiers reinstated after suspension, investigation reports of the suspension / termination cases were referred to Public Information Officer of Northern Command.

Although the cases of termination/suspension of Army personnel who are involved in rights abuses is never made public by Government of India, but action regarding a few high profile cases has come in public domain.

Major Rehman of 30-RR accused of raping a woman of Badrapayeen Handwara on September 7, 2004 was terminated from the service.

Similarly one Major Tewatia of 12 RR was, terminated from the service and awarded 10 years of rigorous imprisonment. However, Tewatia challenged the court martial verdict and was reinstated by the order of Jammu High Court.

In 2010, Army had claimed 1514 FIRs were registered against its men in cases related to human rights violations in Jammu and Kashmir over the last two decades,

The Army had said that out of these 1,508 cases were investigated while probe is continuing in the remaining six cases.

Earlier both, Union Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Defence had not given a single prosecution sanction under Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) in any of the human rights cases since the 1990 until 2011. While Army works under the

command of MoD, paramilitary forces including CRPF worked under the command of MHA.

Meanwhile, Khurram Parvez, of JKCCS said that response of Army is inadequate and evasive. "The MoD seems concerned about the identity of those

### **HIT BY PELLET GUNSHOTS IN 2010, PATTAN BOY DIES UNHEARD**

NO POLITICIAN, NO HURRIYAT LEADER VISITED FAMILY IN 2 YEARS

**June 5:** Saleem Banu is lost in silence in a small dimly lit room of her modest home at village Babateng in Pattan. Her 13-year-old son died on May 19, around two years after being hit in his right hand by pellet gunshots during a protest in 2010. He was unsuccessfully treated for two years at various Kashmir hospitals and ultimately succumbed to his injuries at Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences.

Banu is not able to come to terms with the reality. Just before his death, her son Sajad Ahmad Darzi had asked her for an ice-cream and strawberries. She had arranged the money with difficulty to fulfil her son's last wish.

The family's tragedy unfolded on August 13, 2010 when Sajad went to buy some bread for her mother. With no money at their home, he broke his piggy bank to buy bread and some food items. "I have money in my piggy bank and will return with the bread soon," Sajad had told his mother before rushing to Mian Mall, a nearby market.

Sajad soon found himself caught in a protest and was about to find his way out when paramilitary CRPF and police reached the spot and fired indiscriminately at the protesters. Sajad received pellet injury in his right hand.

From thereon, the lack of proper medical attention made things worse for the family. Sajad was immediately rushed to a hospital in Srinagar where he was treated and discharged on the same day.

"At first we thought that it is a minor injury. But ten or twelve days after, his right hand swelled and we shifted him to Bone and Joints Hospital Srinagar. Doctors deceived us as they took my son's injury lightly, which ultimately proved fatal for him," says Sajad's father Ali Mohammad Darzi.

The infection in the hand spread to upper area forcing the doctors at the hospital to amputate it. But this didn't help. The infection spread further. The doctors amputated his forearm and then his upper arm.

For complete two years, Banu was by the side of his ailing son at various Srinagar hospitals.

"We shifted him from one hospital to another. We even took him to Kolkata for treatment. We had

### **KASHMIR BOY'S DREAM TO PURSUE MBBS IN IRAN SHATTERED**

'DENIED PASSPORT ON THE PRETEXT THAT MY UNCLE WAS A MILITANT'

**June 1:** A student from Central Kashmir's Wadwan village, who had to go to Iran for pursuing MBBS, Friday said he has been denied passport on the pretext that his uncle was a militant during '90s.

Zial-ul-Islam son of Abdul Khaliq Bhat had applied for passport in March 10, 2010. "I got selected for the MBBS in Iran and had to leave soon after the passport would come. But unfortunately the CID

people who have been charged with serious offences thereby denying information about the personnel. It is totally against the values of transparency and accountability," he said.

little money but we made all possible attempts to save our son's life," says Banu.

Darzi says he begged of everybody to save his son's life. "No political party, no Hurriyat leader ever visited us in these two years," he says. "When I first took him to a private clinic at Karan Nagar, Srinagar, the doctor told me to do an MRI of Sajad. I had no money. So I begged on the street to collect money."

At that desperate time, his neighbours and locality's Baitul Maal (Central Treasury) lent a helping hand.

Darzi is a labourer and the only bread-winner for his family. He owns no land. And with the death of his son, he has lost all the strength to earn a living for his family.

"I am now ailing and worried about my daughters. How long will my neighbours help me out? I don't know what to do," says Darzi.

As Darzi's parents narrate their story, his four daughters squeeze themselves in a dark corner of the room, their eyes moist. They look at a bleak future. They may have to stop their education and help their parents to make the both ends meet.

Outside, Darzi's only remaining son Faisal is playing. He seems unmindful of what is going on inside the house. In Sajad's death he has lost his playing-partner.

At the beginning of this month Banu knew that her son is going to die soon. "There was a swelling in the upper rib cage of Sajad and it increased in size by the day. The doctors at SKIMS would drain a lot of fluid from his body. And I knew that there is no chance of survival for my son. The infection ultimately spread to his lungs," says Banu.

In Sajad's last days, Banu had to lower her ear close to his mouth to hear him speak. Clutching his hands, Banu would ask Sajad what he wanted her to get. Sajad asked for ice-cream.

"I told him that my son tell me what you want. He asked for an ice-cream and strawberries. I arranged some money and told his cousin to buy it for him."

officials wrote 'adverse' remarks in the passport verification. So I couldn't join the course," he told media.

"My uncle, who is presently a tailor, was a militant during '90s but that does not mean they [officials] will block my ways for higher education. Even the Chief Minister had called for issuance of

passports to the people whose kiths and kin were involved in militancy."

A BBA student at Barkatullah University, Zia said passport authorities could not show any substantial reason to deny him the passport. "There is nothing written in the report than a mere 'adverse' word and they have not defined its meaning. The fact of the matter is that it is illogical and atrocious at the same time," he said.

The 22-year old Zia, after completing his plus two exams in 2008, planned to do his MBBS in Iran. "It was decided and my family members were positive in sending me to Iran for MBBS. Then after a year I was selected and the procedure for passport and visa had to

take a year or so. I applied for it in 2010 but was dejected," he said.

"My passport key number is 6500979010 and it is my right to have one in a democratic country. I do not know why they are doing it to someone who has dreams of studying and contributing something."

When contacted, the Passport Officer, Regional Passport Office Srinagar, Firdous Iqbal said if the investigation report of Zia is showing 'Adverse', then there is no chance of him getting the passport. "Adverse means that he is not recommended for the passport," he said.

Asked what the word 'adverse' signified in this particular case, he said applicant must come to the passport office. "We will look into the matter."

### UNDER TRIAL DIES IN CENTRAL JAIL

**June 18:** A detainee, who was lodged in Central Jail Srinagar, died in Rainawari hospital on June 18 after he was shifted to the hospital by the jail authorities.

A police spokesman said Ajaz Ahmad Malik, 27 son of Ghulam Qadir of Urwan Nawa, Pulwama was brought to Rainawari Hospital by Central Jail authorities for treatment, where doctors declared him dead.

He said the deceased was in judicial custody since May 5 in Central Jail Srinagar in case of FIR No. 211/2011 under section 15/18 NDPS Act of police station Pulwama. "The detainee was presently facing trial in the Court of Additional Session Judge, Pulwama," he said.

He said police has initiated inquest proceedings under section 174 Cr PC in this regard.

### KPSS QUESTIONS GOVT. SILENCE OVER PANDIT KILLINGS

#### NOW MOVE TO COURT FOR JUSTICE

**June 14:** Kashmiri Pandit Sangharsh Samiti (KPSS), an organisation of Valley-based Kashmiri Pandits, who have not migrated, said it will approach the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir to seek prosecution of the persons responsible for the killing of 209 Kashmiri Pandits since 1990. KPSS questions the silence and failure of the successive governments to take to task the persons responsible of killings Kashmiri pandits.

KPSS president Sanjay Tikoo while talking to *The Informative Missive* said, "We dispute the figure of 209 presented by the government. Still, we would approach the high court with the government's figures and seek prosecution of all those responsible for the killings."

Tikoo said charge-sheets have been presented in 12 cases. "But no one has been convicted. All other cases have been shown as untraced," he said.

"For past two decades the government has failed to bring even a single accused to justice. Instead of following each case meticulously, Jammu and Kashmir police have described them untraced. We will seek reopening of all the cases, we will call for their reinvestigation and we will seek action against all those police officials who ordered closure of the cases as untraced."

In 2010, the state government had disclosed in the assembly that 209 Kashmiri Pandits were killed in the past two decades. The figures revealed that 82 Kashmiri Pandits were killed in Srinagar, 16 in Budgam, 28 in Ganderbal, 11 in Baramulla, four in Kupwara, 28 in Anantang, four in Handwara, 17 in Kulgam and three in Awantipora.

Tikoo said that for years together after migration from the Valley, the victims and witnesses of the cases were putting up in Jammu. "But the police did not approach any of the relatives of the victims in the past two decades and allowed these cases to remain untraced," he said.

He added that families of the killed were not given any benefit under SRO 43, under which if a civilian dies as a result of militancy-related incident a member of his family is given a job on compassionate grounds.

Tikoo said his organisation would take the case to the state human rights commission (SHRC) as well. "We will not allow the state government or Jammu and Kashmir police to bury these killings under the pretext of untraced," he said.

### KASHMIRI STUDENTS BEATEN IN HARYANA

**June 30:** The thrashing of Kashmiri students by 'hooligans' in northern state of Haryana June 29 has triggered panic among the Valleyties undergoing studies at several educational institutions there.

Students undergoing engineering courses at Swami Devi Dayal College of Engineering and Technology (Professional) at Golpura Barwalla in Haryana told media over phone that a group of the

local youth and hooligans, without any provocation, roughed up them mercilessly last night in the college hostel.

"Last night at around 10:30 pm, we were studying in two hostel rooms and suddenly the hooligans bolted one room where five students were sitting and then barged into another room, where two others were studying. Without asking for anything,

they started abusing and harassing us," said a student Nazir Ahmed (name changed).

"And they went on beating us and Nazar Muhammad of Dailgam Islamabad (Anantnag) fell unconscious after he was hit with a rod. His colleague Muntazir Ahmed Bhat tried to save him but he was also assaulted and he received six stitches in leg," Mudasir said.

"Another student, Amir Majid, who was unaware of the attack and was on way to his hostel, was caught by hooligans and beaten up mercilessly," he added.

"Why do you people come here? This is not Kashmir it is India. You are terrorists we will teach you a lesson," students quoted assailants as having said.

According to Kashmiri students, the attack was pre-planned and the security guards, entrusted with security of college and students, arrived late on the scene.

"We took the injured to the college hospital, but the paramedics, on duty there, refused to provide first aid to them saying that it is a police case. As suggested by the paramedical staff, we rang up the police, but we were shocked by the attitude of the cops. Instead of nabbing culprits, they hurled abuses on us and threatened us of dire consequences if we lodged an FIR," they said.

"Even, they bundled two of our injured colleagues in Police Gypsy and we left only after we pleaded with them like beggars," they said.

"We are living under constant fear and pressure and we appeal JK Kashmir Government to intervene," the students added.

When contacted, Police Commissioner (Panchkula- Ambala range) K K Sharma said that the matter is non-cognizable. "There was a fight between

### **CRPF MEN BEAT CAB DRIVERS, 15 INJURED**

**BATTALION SHIFTED, MATTER SORTED OUT: DC**

**June 30:** At least 15 Sumo drivers were injured, three of them critically, when the paramilitary CRPF men beat them up in Chandanwari area of this south Kashmir tourist resort. About 70 Sumo vehicles were also damaged by the CRPF men, locals alleged.

"The CRPF men prevented the local Sumo drivers ferrying Yatris to park their vehicles in the Chandanwari stand," said Ghulam Nabi, President Taxi Stand Pahalgam.

He said that as they refused to follow their diktat huge contingent of paramilitary forces reached the spot and mercilessly beat up the drivers injuring fifteen of them.

The injured were immediately rushed to the hospital. Some of the critically injured drivers who were identified as Tariq Hussain Wagay, Abid Hussain Magray and Shabir Hussain Wani are undergoing treatment in District hospital, Islamabad (Anantnag).

"The CRPF men pounced on us, dragged us and beat up with gun butts and batons," said the injured drivers.

two groups of students and nothing else," Sharma said, adding that Director General of Jammu & Kashmir Police had also spoken to him over the incident.

Meanwhile, the act has triggered strong resentment in Valley, with Member Parliament from South Kashmir Dr Mehboob Beg saying that he will write to Union Home P. Chidambaram to ensure safety of Kashmiri students and businessmen outside the state.

"I am writing a letter to Home Minister over the matter," Beg said, adding that these incidents only increase alienation among the Kashmiris.

### **COLLEGE AUTHORITIES SPEAK**

Meanwhile, the management of Swami Devi Dayal College of Engineering and Technology (Professional) rebutted the allegations and said that the issue was being blow out of the proportion by rival colleges.

"Students were not beaten up by hooligans and actually there was heated exchange of words between a few students yesterday in the college mess," Amit Jindal, general secretary of Swami Devi Dayal Group of Professional institutions told media.

Amit said that they have handed over the names of students to police, who had misbehaved with Kashmiri students. "There has been no such incident in the past in our college," Amit said. "We will take stern action against the culprits and we have assured the Kashmiri students that they will be provided the security."

Meanwhile, Hurriyat (M) chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq has strongly condemned the harassment of Kashmiri students in Haryana.

"GOI should ensure the security of Kashmiris studying outside Kashmir," Mirwaiz said.

They said that about seventy vehicles were damaged by the forces by hurling rocks on them.

"The parking place meant for the Sumos and Tata Mini buses has been occupied by the Shrine Board authorities and only those bearing Shrine Board Identity card are allowed to proceed further while the others are forced to return without ferrying the Yatris back to Pahalgam," said the Sumo drivers.

They said that after performing the pilgrimage the Yatris are ferried mostly in the vehicles of paramilitary forces or government buses.

As the word about the incident spread in Pahalgam shopkeepers downed their shutters and traffic went off the roads. The locals also held a protest demonstration and demanded stringent action against the erring CRPF men.

"We should be allowed to park our vehicles in Chandanwari parking stand," said Sumo drivers adding that a case should be registered against the CRPF persons.

An official spokesman said that soon after the incident the Deputy Commissioner, Islamabad

(Anantnag) Farooq Ahmad Shah and SSP rushed to the spot and convened meeting with all the concerned following which the contingent of CRPF posted there was removed with immediate effect.

## MILITARIZATION

### ➤ CENTRE ASKS CRPF TO VACATE BOULEVARD HOTELS

6000 ROOMS OCCUPIED BY GOVT, FORCES: POLICE

**June 18:** With Srinagar and other tourist resorts of the Valley witnessing heavy tourist rush, Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has directed Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) to vacate the hotels they have occupied on the Boulevard Road, Srinagar.

In the Boulevard-Dalgate belt, the CRPF occupy Hotel Kehkashaan, Hotel Ethena, Hotel Boulevard, Hotel Pakhtoon, Hotel Vikram, Hotel Leeward, Hotel Metro, Hotel Greenworld and Hotel Hill Star.

According to reliable sources, the directions have been passed by MHA after a police report wherein they have mentioned that tourists face accommodation problem in Srinagar and other tourist resorts. The report has said that most of the hotels in Srinagar and other tourist resorts are booked till October.

Sources said that in their report, police have mentioned that around 35 per cent of tourist accommodations are still under the occupation of forces and at some Government offices are housed in the buildings meant for tourists.

"The Valley is getting good response from tourists this year. We believe if everything goes well, the influx of tourists may double. The Government should vacate all the hotels occupied by security agencies," the police report said.

The report says that till now more than 5, 50,000 tourists have visited the Valley this year. "In case the details about the unregistered tourists are gathered, the number would be quite high," says the report adding that most of pilgrims who visit Amaranth Cave, later visit the tourist resorts of valley. "Soon after the start of Yatra, accommodation issue will get further complicated."

The report says that around 6000 hotel rooms in the Valley are under the use of Government offices and security agencies. "If these are vacated, then Kashmir would be having no shortage of hotel accommodation for tourists this year," the report mentions. "A bumper tourist season is expected this year. The people who are putting up in the occupied hotels should be shifted to other places on war-footing basis," the report says.

Officiating Public Relations Officer, CRPF, said, "I do not know anything about such directive. Once we vacate, alternate accommodation has to be provided by the state Government. Once we are given the alternate accommodation by state Government we are ready to leave."

He said that five hotels on the Boulevard are under the occupation of the force.

"We have sorted out the matter and Yatra is going on smoothly," the Deputy Commissioner told media.

There are 46 hotels and guest houses under the occupation of CRPF across Srinagar.

### ➤ FORCES IN VALLEY HOTELS SET TO MAKE WAY FOR TOURISTS

**June 22:** To avoid the space crunch and accommodate more tourists in the Valley, the Jammu & Kashmir Government is considering removal of security forces from hotels in Srinagar and other tourist locations.

Dozens of hotels and guesthouses are under occupation of security forces, especially the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), for the past two decades.

"By the end of this tourist season, we will ensure that CRPF vacates the hotels from tourist areas," Minister of State for Home Affairs and Tourism Nasir Aslam Wani said on the sidelines of a function to introduce aero-ballooning.

"The Government is making alternate arrangements for the forces," he added.

On the Boulevard Road, the tourist hub around the famed Dal Lake, nine hotels with around 450 bed capacity are under the occupation of Central forces.

Sources said the government has already approached the Union Home Ministry to take measures to relocate or thin out the security presence in Kashmir, in the backdrop of improved security situation.

Around 6 lakh tourists have visited Kashmir and each day, thousands are arriving. "The hotels are booked up to October. We are facing a lot of space problems. The situation would be tougher after the commencement of Amarnath yatra beginning June 25", said a senior official of the tourism department.

Many tourists are hiring tents specially erected in the lawns of hotels and guest-houses. The department of tourism has also renewed its incentive scheme for the private sector to encourage transformation of homes into guesthouses. "We have increased the amount given to house owners, to Rs 2 lakh, for refurbishing houses," Commissioner of Tourism Atal Duloo told The Pioneer.

He said many new areas have been included in the scheme to increase the space availability. Wani said the Government has taken several measures to upgrade tourism infrastructure.

### ➤ LANDMINES EXPLODE IN FOREST FIRE

**Jun 20:** Panic gripped the bordering belt of Mendhar in Poonch district after several mines started exploding due to forest fire that wildly spread along the Line of Control (LoC).

"The fire which started near the fence on June 19 reached on this side of the LoC," sources said, adding that it wildly spread in Dehri and Langiot areas near LoC. Several mines exploded due to fire while the

Army rushed to the spot with fire fighters to control the devastating fire," they added.

Local forest authorities were also informed while residents from local villages also assisted the Army in containing the fire, which had engulfed about 3 to 4 square-kilometres of area, they added.

Valuable forest produce worth lakhs was destroyed in fire near the Line of Control (LoC) in Phagwari Gali area of Dehri Dabsi Top in Mendhar tehsil of Poonch district today.

Official sources said that fire broke out at LoC in Phagwari Gali area of Dehri Dabsi Top in Mendhar tehsil in the wee hours, yesterday. The fire spread to LoC and it destroyed the forest wealth worth lakhs. Several land mines exploded while the cables installed near LoC by the army for communication, power supply and other purposes were also damaged.

#### ➤ **FOREST FIRE ALONG LOC TRIGGERS MINE BLASTS**

**June 22:** A massive forest fire which has erupted several kilometers along the Indo-Pak border has triggered mine explosions in the area and damaged some communication lines in district Poonch of Jammu and Kashmir.

#### ➤ **SOLDIER KILLS SELF**

**June 8:** An Army jawan allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself at his native village in Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said.

"The jawan identified as Rakesh Kumar(28), of 17 Punjab Regiment, ended his life by hanging himself at his native place in village Yogpur, tehsil Vijaypur," police said, adding that he was shifted to the hospital where he was declared brought dead.

The jawan was on leave and reportedly suffering from mental stress and was undergoing a treatment.

#### ➤ **CRPF JAWAN SHOOTS SELF INSIDE CAMP**

**June 14:** Panic gripped heavily fortified battalion headquarters of 61st battalion of the Central Reserve

The fire erupted from Pakistan administered Kashmir's Dara Sheirkhan and spread to the side of the Line of Control (LoC) in Deri Dakhi belt of Mendhar sector last evening, officials said.

The fire spread 3 to 4 kms along the border belt upto lower Krishangati belt triggering several mine explosions planted by security troops as part of anti-infiltration measures, they said.

There has been no loss of life or injury to anyone in the fire, a senior army officer at 16 Corps told PTI.

There was no damage caused to any forward post along the LoC in fire. However, there have been mine-field explosions and some damage to communication cables along the LoC and these are being repaired, the officer said.

Troops, forest officials and locals extinguished the fire this morning, they said.

In another such incident, a forest fire has erupted in Bandi Abbaspura in PaK on the other side of the LoC in Poonch on June 22 morning, officials said, adding that the blaze is fast spreading towards the Jammu side of the border to Khadi Karmara belt in Poonch sector.

### **SUICIDES**

Police Force at Shivpora when firing shots were heard there.

It was later found that a constable had committed suicide by shooting himself with his rifle there.

"A CRPF constable Santosh Kumar, of 61 battalion, committed suicide inside the battalion headquarters at Shivpora, Srinagar, under the jurisdiction of police station R.M. Bagh, by shooting himself with his service rifle," a police statement said.

It said Kumar was taken to SMHS Hospital, where he was declared brought dead. A case has been registered.

The reason behind the suicide was not known.

### **OFFICIAL STATEMENTS**

#### ➤ **INFILTRATION CONTINUES: DEF MINISTRY '16 INFILTRATION ATTEMPTS FOILED IN 2011, 15 MILITANTS KILLED'**

**June 01:** Admitting that infiltration still continues despite strengthening of counter infiltration measures, Defence Ministry has said army foiled 16 infiltration attempts in 2011 and killed 15 militants.

"Army has killed 95 militants and arrested 35 militants in 2011. Army suffered 15 casualties during the year. The militant leadership was targeted and 21 militant leaders were killed," defense ministry said in its annual report of 2011-12.

It said even though the security grid at Line of Control has been strengthened with counter infiltration measures adopted, infiltration still continues.

"In 2011, 16 infiltration bids were foiled and 15 militants killed. The anti infiltration infrastructure on

LoC has been further strengthened but infiltration bids continue to take place," the report discloses.

#### ➤ **6 CIVILIANS, 3 TROOPERS AMONG 35 KILLED IN 2012: MHA**

**June 18:** The Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, has disclosed that 35 persons including six civilians and three troopers were killed in different militancy related incidents in first five months of Jammu and Kashmir in 2012.

Reacting to a news story, "Accidents claim more lives than militancy" published in media on June 16, MHA Director (M) Dr Sanjay Roy said number of civilian casualties in militancy related activities in first five months of 2012 were only 6. "During the period, 3 security men also lost their lives. Besides, 26 militants were also killed during the same period," he said.

He said during the same period last year, 21 civilians, 12 security men and 35 militants were killed.

➤ **REMARKABLE REDUCTION IN MILITANCY RELATED INCIDENTS IN JK: CM**

June 21: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said there has been a discernible improvement in the overall security situation in the State.

“There has been remarkable reduction in militancy related incidents which has resulted in the

reduction of security forces and removal of 40 bunkers from Srinagar city. Time has come to rebuild the bridges by wiping out the scars of violence and create an atmosphere of peace and amity with equal opportunity of progress to all”, he said addressing Civil Service Officers at Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration at Mussorie.

DATE	TROOPERS	MILITANTS	CIVILIANS	OTHER
June 01	-	-	-	-
June 02	-	-	-	-
June 03	-	-	-	-
June 04	-	-	-	-
June 05	-	-	-	-
June 06	-	-	-	-
June 07	-	-	-	-
June 08	1	-	-	-
June 09	-	-	-	-
June 10	-	-	-	-
June 11	-	-	-	-
June 12	-	-	-	-
June 13	-	-	-	-
June 14	1	-	-	-
June 15	-	-	1 NC block president	-
June 16	-	-	-	-
June 17	-	-	-	-
June 18	-	-	-	-
June 19	1	-	-	-
June 20	-	-	-	-
June 21	-	-	-	-
June 22	-	-	-	-
June 23	-	-	-	-
June 24	-	-	-	-
June 25	-	-	-	-
June 26	-	-	-	-
June 27	-	-	-	-
June 28	-	-	-	-
June 29	-	-	-	-
June 30	-	1	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>IN TOTO</b>			<b>5</b>	

## CHRONOLOGY OF INCIDENT JUNE 2012

**June 1:** A *Panch* affiliated with ruling National Conference was shot at his home in south Kashmir's Shopian district. The injured police identified as Ishtiqa Poswal s/o Ghulam Qadir of Zarkan, Kella was shot at by unidentified gunmen at his right thigh.

**June 2:** No incident of violence reported from any part of the state.

**June 3:** Suspected militants shot and injured a 70-year-old man in south Kashmir's Pulwama district, police said. Abdul Gani Digoon, a resident of Arigi-Check village in Pulwama, suffered injuries in his right leg when unidentified militants fired at him last night, a police spokesman said.

**June 4:** No incident of violence reported from any part of the state.

**June 5:** No incident of violence reported from any part of the state.

**June 6:** No incident of violence reported from any part of the state.

**June 7:** No incident of violence reported from any part of the state.

**June 8:** An Army soldier allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself at his native village in Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said.

**June 9:** No incident of violence reported from any part of the state.

**June 10:** No incident of violence reported from any part of the state.

**June 11:** Pakistani troops allegedly resorted to unprovoked firing along the LoC in Krishna Ghati sector in Poonch district, injuring a Border Security Force (BSF) personnel.

**June 12:** No incident of violence reported from any part of the state.

**June 13:** No incident of violence reported from any part of the state.

**June 14:** A CRPF constable Santosh Kumar, of 61 battalion, committed suicide inside the battalion headquarters at Shivpora, Srinagar, under the jurisdiction of police station R.M. Bagh, by shooting himself with his service rifle.

**June 15:** Suspected militants shot dead a veteran worker and block president of ruling National Conference in Natipora, Srinagar. The deceased was identified as 70-year-old Abdul Rehman Ganai.

**June 16:** No incident of violence reported from any part of the state.

**June 17:** Five Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel were wounded after suspected militants lobbed a grenade at their post in Sopore town of Baramulla district in north Kashmir.

**June 18:** A minor sustained injuries in an explosion in Bajalta area, police sources said. The victim has been identified as Bharat Kumar (10) son of Sushil Kumar resident of Bilaspur at present resident of Bajalta. Sources said that the boy was injured when the scrap piece, he was fiddling with, exploded in his hand. He was shifted to Government Medical College and Hospital and his condition was stated to be normal.

**June 19:** An army soldier was killed in militant firing on an army picket in Rani Post, Handwara, district Kupwara.

**June 20:** No incident of violence reported from any part of the state.

**June 21:** No incident of violence reported from any part of the state.

**June 22:** No incident of violence reported from any part of the state.

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

**June 24:** No incident of violence reported from any part of the state.

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

**June 26:** A couple and a paramilitary trooper were injured in a grenade explosion triggered by suspected militants in Sopore town of Baramulla district. The injured were identified as Bashir Ahmed Badu and his wife Sanjeeda of Sopore and CRPF constable Kashab Sergary on 179 Bn.

**June 27:** Four persons were injured in clashes between protesters and police in Anantnag district.

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

**June 29:** Reports of protesters and clashes, however mild in nature, were reported from different parts of Srinagar district. A woman got injured in clashes between police and protesters in Bemina area of Srinagar district.

**June 30:** An unidentified militant was killed and a soldier was injured in an encounter between 21 RR along with SOG and militants in Handwara area of Kupwara district in north Kashmir, Army said.

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