

FOOTNOTES OF THE FOOTNOTES

In the conflict-hit Kashmir region, women have suffered a great deal over the last 17 years. There are countless households in Kashmir where women happen to be the sole bread earners for the family. The turmoil in the valley has devoured thousands of male bread earners for their respective families.

A number of NGO's have so far claimed that they have been doing a lot to rehabilitate the families where women happen to be the sole bread earners but nothing appears on ground. Many people come to them and promise each kind of support. The philanthropic sentiment remains there for a while after the tragedy befalls them, but ultimately the victims are left to fend for themselves. The entire burden has to be shared by the women and their children themselves. There are thousands of cases in Kashmir where women are playing dual role. They have to manage household chores as well as support their family emotionally as well as financially.

This sort of situation gives rise to a number of problems, which these ill-fated women and their children suffer later. The first manifestation of this syndrome is the increased women labour force. Almost every woman who goes through such a tragic experience decides to go out for seeking work opportunities. They are exploited and are paid minimum wages compared to their male counter-parts.

Not only this, the children whose mothers regularly move out to earn two square meals for the family, receive no attention at home and apart from suffering on educational front, they also remain far away from social etiquettes. Mothers are supposed to be the first and foremost trainers of their children, but when they happen to be away from their homes all through the day, the conditions of their children can only be imagined. No wonder if some of these children resort to some socially unacceptable acts. The children also go out and seek working opportunities in order to support their families. They are exploited by the cruel element in the society like anything. Hardly any body tries to help such needy souls out, though the government and NGO's constantly make hollow claims. At the same time rights of women are not enforced. They are exploited at home as well as at work places. It is a high time for women organizations and groups that they should take initiatives in this direction and make them aware of their rights.

Those women who shift to their parental house, in order to recover from the tragedy most often end up as dejected souls. Though they are welcomed to begin with, but ultimately the families of their siblings at parental home search for excuse in order to get away from the responsibility which leaves no option with such women but prompts them to look around for the alternative source. All this leads to a number of problems for the women. They suffer on health and social grounds, which sometimes forces them to commit suicides. According to the doctors at Government Psychiatry Diseases Hospital, women constitute 65 percent of the patients. 17 years before average number of women patients visiting hospital were 1 to 2 percent.

The media has also remained silent on issues related to women. They are following their own agenda and do not want to annoy the government. Even International and Indian Civil Society concern over such issues are derisory in Kashmir.

In Kashmir each passing day brings death, destruction, mourning, uncertainty, mistrust and fear of what next?

The unabated violence has left grievous effects on Kashmiri's especially on women as the basic nature of women is peaceful but at the same time she will not give up fighting for justices. There are many historical accounts of women warriors, and women often fought to defend their homes, their people and their country. Women have and are challenged oppression they are not even afraid to lay their life in this direction. But the irony is that Women are being neglected by the society. They have often been relegated to the footnotes of history, and even those are highly selective. As Sandra Cisneros wrote "*We are the footnotes of the footnotes.*"

A minor 8th standard student Shaheena Jan daughter of Mohd Maqbool Wani resident of Balapora Tehshil Shopian was enticed by an intelligence Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) namely Deepak Kumar Mahadeo Prased Trivadi of 31 CIU at 4 detachment of 44RR (Rashtriya Rifles) on the promise of getting her attractive job in Srinagar and was subsequently taken to Jammu on 19-12-03. Being poor, she thought it is better to get a job and therefore lied to her parents that she was going to Karela Wudur but accompanied the JCO in a Tata sumo. Shocked at the news of their daughter having been picked up by Jammu police, Shaheena's parents expressed complete ignorance about any plan on the part of their daughter to accompany the accused. Instead, they sought help from Shopian police in retrieving their daughter.

However instead of Srinagar, the accused took her to Jammu. While leaving his station, DKMP Trivadi came across Naik Ganesh Singh of 6 KUMAON and driver of ALS vehicle whom he told had taken permission from his officer to travel in his vehicle till Khannabal. After checking his identity card, the driver allowed Trivadi along with the girl to sit at the co-driver seat. At Khannabal, Trivadi along with the girl got down of the vehicle outside the Transit camp where all vehicles were lined up to enter into the camp with an excuse that he had to go to JCO's mess. From there he boarded another vehicle and proceeded to Jammu. Though Trivadi was at duty at Chowgam, Balapor Shopian, he didn't report at any transit camp. Reaching Jammu, taking advantage of Shaheena's tired self, Trivadi went into a hotel Verma on 19-12-03.

On being questioned by the hotel receptionist regarding the girl, Trivadi misled him by telling that the girl was his daughter. After having his dinner, Trivadi went into the girl's room when she was about to sleep. Trivadi bolted the room from inside and raped the girl. As the girl shouted and banged the door, Trivadi slapped the helpless girl and covered his mouth with his hand. For two days, Trivadi raped the girl and consistently threatened her of dire consequences if she dared to reveal it. After a few days, a police party came to the hotel. The police asked Trivadi about the girl whom he replied was his friend's daughter. The police arrested Trivadi and the girl who being the only witness in the act divulged all the details before the police. Trivadi was detained at

The officer was trailed by SGCM conveyed by General Officer Commanding for offences under section 69 of the army act for committing rape under section 376 of RPC and 363 RPC for kidnapping the minor girl from the lawful guardian of her parents and also under section 39 (a) army act for absenting himself without leave.

Nowabad Jammu while the girl was lodged at women cell, Kanal road Jammu. Thereafter, Trivadi was handed over to army at 11 Dogra at Sunjwa Jammu and later on attached to 44RR. The girl was later examined by Dr Nusrat Jabeen Sub-district hospital Shopian. Medical evidence found that the girl was not habitual of sex and the act of December 19 and 20 were the first act of sex for her.

The defense counsel challenged the testimony of Shaheena on the ground that she first lied to her parents, then to the police, the CJM and was now stating a falsehood before the court. During trail 19 witnesses were examined and the court after thoughtful deliberation came to the conclusion that the accused had right from the beginning maintained a relationship of dominance vis-à-vis Shaheena. Coupled with a promise of better life out side her village, Shaheena relented to the act of the accused against her will. Though there was no tangible evidence on record to show resistance on the part of Shaheena, the circumstantial evidence of involuntary submission of her is enough to support a view that the consent of Shaheena is out of compulsion and helplessness, hence is not valid consent for sexual act on 19 as well as 20th December 2003. The defense counsel challenged this testimony on the ground that since the accused was present throughout the day within the army camp at Balapur on 18th December 2003, he could not have gone and enticed Shaheena as alleged by her. The defense further contended that Shaheena eloped with a boyfriend of her whom she met co-incidentally at Jammu.

After a careful consideration of the evidence on record the court came to the conclusion that on the date of occurrence i.e. 19 December 2003, Shaheena was less then 18 years of age. On 23 July 2004, Trivadi was found guilty of all charges by SGCM and was awarded dismissal from service and 7 years imprisonment.

After sentence the accused has challenged the dismissal order and imprisonment before the High Court of J&K under writ petition number 593/04 dated 25-01-06 which is *sub-judice*.

Srinagar, Mar 25: The Association of Parents of Disappeared (APDP) resumed its monthly sit in held on 25 day of every month after 10 months of suspension. The APDP suspended its monthly sit ins after an abortive attempt was made on its patron Parvez Imroz on 30 April 2005, after the association laid foundation stone of the monument to be build in the memory of disappeared persons.

“We shall never allow the past to be forgotten and we shall never allow it to happen again to future generations. The peace we seek should be based on truth and justice, and justice we seek lies not in forgetting the past but remembering those who should never be forgotten,” read one of the placards displayed by one of the relatives of victim of enforced disappearance on the resumption of monthly sit in held at Sher-I- Kashmir Park, Srinagar.

“Successive governments in the state have been trying to use enforced or involuntary disappearances (EID) and human rights violations as a whip against each other, but it happened in all governments form National Conference to Peoples Democratic Party and now Congress,” Imroz said.

“How can leaders of these parties talk about peace when crimes against humanity happened in their rule. Their participation in recently held Pugwash Conference in Islamabad amounts to rubbing salt on the wounds of families of the victims,” he said.

“Our objective is that an independent probe into disappearances be ordered, perpetrators be brought to justice, stopping further disappearances and repealing all laws giving impunity for troops,” APDP patron added. Mugli, a widow whose only son Nazir Ahmad Teli disappeared in custody 15 years back, said, “What peace process? It means nothing for us. If India and Pakistan is talking about Kashmir, they should talk about our miseries first”.

“He (Nazir) was my only hope. From interrogation centers and jails to shrines I went everywhere and pleaded before everybody, but alas,” Mugli told *Voices Unheard*.

Mugli has lost her eyesight and hope that his son is alive. “My heart says he has been killed, but at least it would give me solace if I get the clue where his body is. I can go anywhere and for that I am ready to beg. I have nothing except Allah’s name,” wailing Mugli said.

“Nobody is bothered about our plight and everyone is playing politics. They who are talking on Kashmir have nothing at stake. We are living corpses. My heart weeps 100 times a day for my disappeared son,” she added. Wali Muhammad Khan, whose son Farooq Ahmad disappeared in custody three years back is perturbed as why the government wants to continue his miseries. Last year in April on court direction body of his son was exhumed from Rambagh area of Srinagar and later sent for DNA test.

“Our ordeal hasn’t ended. I know that body was of my son Farooq, but police said DNA test proved negative. Why didn’t they show me the report of that test? They were lying. Peace process or no peace process – it means nothing for us,” Wali said.

Farooq was killed by the BSF in September 2003 and that day troops had claimed that a major *Fidayeen* attack was repulsed by it by killing a foreign militant of Jaish-e-Muhammad outfit. aggrieved, the old man had filed a case in the High Court on January 15, 2004 seeking whereabouts of his son and last year Farooq’s body was exhumed.

“I’ve five daughters – three of whom are of marriageable age – and a son. Who’ll look after my family? I want the suspense to end, but ...” Wali said in tears.

The latest figures released by APDP said 15 enforced or involuntary disappearances have been reported since Ghulam Nabi Azad took over the reigns of power four months ago. The APDP asked the government to appoint a commission to probe the disappearances.

Parveena Ahanger, chairperson APDP while rejecting peace process said, “It is the question of families of ten thousand people who have disappeared. Without solving it, no peace process can go forward. We want oppression to end and nobody should suffer in future like we people.”

“We ask Congress government to appoint a commission to probe the disappearances in the state otherwise we would be forced to appeal world community to come for our help. Over one lakh family members of disappeared are facing social, economical and mental problems,” Parveena said.

Bashir Ahmad Mir, brother of another disappeared person Manzoor Ahmad Mir, too isn't bothered about the outcome of peace process and instead wants justice be done with family of his brother.

"My brother was picked by the troops of 22 Rashtriya Rifles at Delina Varmul in 2003 and later killed. But we don't know where they threw his body. We had filed an FIR against it and Army several times coerced me to withdraw that. The responsibility of my brother's five children and wife lie on my shoulders. I want justice, not peace process," Bashir said.

COUPLE LANGUISHING IN JAIL

By: Perviaz Matta

Booked under Public Safety Act (PSA) Maroofa Jan Resident of Awgam Kulgam Anantnag serves 24 months detention on charges of being involved with militancy. Maroofa was allegedly arrested on September 14th 2005, and booked under PSA on 22nd November along with her husband Fayaz Ahmad Lone son of Late Ghulam Mohd Lone for 24 months. Their arrests have left behind three minor children in pity condition.

"Maroofa was arrested on September 14th 2005, while attending a marriage ceremony of her husband's cousin at Loroog Kulgam in district Anantnag at the house of Ghulam Mohd Bhat. At the ceremony, SOG and STF raided the house and picked up Maroofa. On the same day Maroofa's home at Awgam Kulgam and her maternal home at Bogund Kulgam were raided by the STF and SOG. The STF arrested her two brothers Abdul Rehman Bhat and Jala-u-din and tortured them severely and some one gave information to forces about Maroofa. Upon getting this information the forces went to Loru and arrested Maroofa," said Ghulam Qadir Bhat father of Maroofa

"The SOG and STF alleged that she is involved in militancy. The police ferociously filed an FIR vide number 156/05 against Maroofa, the FIR states that she is an accomplice in an attack of Mushtaq Ahmad Magray who is a renegade and works as informer for SOG and STF. Mushtaq Ahmed (a sumo driver by profession) was attacked by some unidentified gunmen in Anantnag on 3rd July 2005. Mushtaq had been injured in that attack and when he recuperated he arrested many suspected persons involved in the attack one of them was Shabir Ahmad. The Mushtaq Ahmed Magray killed his father. When Shabir Ahmad was arrested and got severely tortured, he confessed that he perpetrated the attack, because to avenge his father's death he had vowed to eliminate his father's killer. He gives the name of my sister, whereas my sister is totally unknown to him. My sister was further charged of carrying a pistol from Awgam to Kulgam village and according to SOG the same pistol was used in attack. On these fake and baseless allegations she was booked for 24 months under PSA vide Number Det/PSA/2162-65. The main accused Shabir was set after the few days of his detention." said Maroofa's brother Abdul Rehman Bhat.

Sitara mother of Maroofa said, "She was the only hope for her children's future as their father is already languishing in Jail. The three minors Uzma (10), Zahida (7) and son Muzamil (5) always ask about their parents, as they are too young to understand the brutalities meted out to their parents. Her father-in-law and mother-in-law had passed away and her brother-in-law Mohd Iqbal lone is residing separate with his family. Due to these circumstances Maroofa was alone feeding and educating her children at her in-laws house at Awgam. We often asked her to reside with us, but she dissented and said that my children are admitted in the Awgam School and if she leaves this place their education will be effected.

Ghulam Qadir said," when the SOG and STF took Maroofa, first time they tortured and thrashed her severely. After her released on bail. When she arrived at home her condition was very bad. She was so brutally and inhumanely tortured. There were blood clots all over her body. After a few days she was again detained and was sent to central Jail Jammu for remand. The Jail authorities of Jammu sent her back to Srinagar saying that there is no accommodation for women in the said Jail. From Srinagar she was send to Kathua Jail.

Abdul Rehman said, "My sister is a rustic housewife and illiterate. She do not speak understand the language that jail authorities speak due to this she faces a lot of problems in communication with the inmates of jail. She is not being treated properly there and she is given with one time food of breakfast only. Keeping in view such problems, we filed a petition in the Jammu and Kashmir High Court for the change of her lodgment from Jammu to Srinagar vides Number HCP-337/ 2005, CMP Number 67/05. But the high court stated that we are not vested to change the lodgment. The admonished we to go to the Divisional Commissioner for the change of lodgment and when we met him he told us he would help us in getting the shift of Maroofa to Srinagar central Jail, but no action was taken onwards".

Maroofa's brother-in-law Mohd Iqbal Lone said", "My brother and his wife were tormented to the extremity. My brother was arrested in 1998 for first time and got released in December 1999. At that time he had been charged of being a militant. After his release he started his work of carpentry but he was again arrested by the forces and was again charged with the same offence. The SOG and BSF picked him up from his house at about 8:30pm in the month of October 2004 and got him booked for 24 months under the tyrant PSA act. At present he is detained in Kathua Central Jail".

"The court has quashed his detention on 16th January 2006 but he is still in Kathua Central Jail. Both the husband and wife were booked unscrupulously, their guilt is that they are innocent", said Maroofa's younger brother Jalaludin Bhat.

Srinagar, Mar 17: Status of women in the valley whose husbands have gone missing is steadily going from bad to worse.

Zainab (name changed) a mother of three children hails from Humhama, Budgam. Her woes and sufferings started the moment her husband disappeared and her status is reduced to "maid" in her own family. Entire burden of the family has been shifted on her shoulders and she ekes out a miserable living. "Spinning", her only source of income fails to compensate the requirements of her family. She has been living with such circumstances for the last nine years now. "April 11, 2006 would complete nine years of his disappearance, nothing is known about him and I suffer from identity crisis", stated Zainab, a middle-aged woman.

Being illiterate she wanted to educate her two daughters, in particular, but things did not work her way and her children were left with no option. Poverty at home compelled her kids to quit their studies. Sensing the situation around Zainab finally decided to make her way out. She has to struggle hard to make her ends meet.

"Life for me is a bed of thorns and I have to struggle for petty things. In fact, life is very hard for us and it can not be put in black and white", she quipped.

Zainab's husband was a government employee who disappeared while he was on his job.

"There are 300-400 such cases where disappeared people are government employees. Either they are dismissed from their services or they are in the process of being dismissed", said Pervez Imroz, patron J & K Coalition of Civil Societies.

"Five severe cases have been identified by an American group. Let us see what will happen", he added. He however, questioned how a person made disappeared can appear before the court till his whereabouts are known.

According to Zainab sustenance allowance is denied to her on the ground that her husband is missing. "There was no such provision of enforced disappearance when the Act governing the employees was framed", says an advocate on the condition of anonymity. "So how can the Act cater to the requirements of such sufferers", he added.

"There is a service rule according to which if an employee remains absent unauthorized he is made answerable and can even be terminated. But how can a person who has disappeared make his presence available is also to be argued", he insisted.

In Zainab's case, government issued a notice to her husband who was a government employee for not joining duties and her family finds it difficult to make their survival possible. "Then we had to arrange for a lawyer and it is hard for the family to bear the expenses incurred on the whole process. Even basic requirements of the family are met with great difficulty", she added. "My pains cannot be gauged once I fail to fulfill the fundamental requirements of my family especially children but I too am helpless", Zainab.

Prince Ahmad, advocate argues, "Once whereabouts of any person are not known, his legal heirs file a writ of Habeas Corpus, then court gives direction to SSP who directs concerned SHO to give factual position. Government then files the counter before the court and in that court generally it is believed "*woh sarhad kay uus par gaya hai*" (he has moved to other side of border).

Now, in case he is a government employee, his service is terminated and his family lands in trouble. "Generally, in government services employee is entitled to go for leave but it should be known. In case the employee disappears, employer has the power to terminate otherwise the employee has to prove his existence otherwise he will be presumed dead", believed Mohammad Hussein, academician.

"In Kashmir such cases are a routine affair. Leaving aside the legal status of that person, certain relaxations ought to be provided to the kith and kin of that disappeared person at least on the humanitarian ground", maintained a social activist on the basis of anonymity. Adding further, the activist added that termination of that person may sound a logical step to few but what is thought provoking is how a person proves he has disappeared. "It is difficult to prove the innocence of a person in a situation where things can be easily manipulated", added a social activist.

Uri (Baramulla) March 17: More than 200 children in Uri sector alone who were orphaned or lost a single parent by the earthquake on October 8, 2005 are no longer going to school or college

Liaqat Gujar son of Sakhi Gujar resident of Basgran- Uri was reading in 6th standard. Sakhi used to provide everything does his son despite his poor income in order to build his future. "Sakhi used to provide every facility to his son so that he could study well. But fate had something different to offer for Liaqat, his father died under the heaps of debris on October 8. Since then Liaqat has stopped going to his school," said Zahid Shah a social worker of the village Basgran. Liaqat is residing now with his grandfather but his grandfather is not in a position to send him to school. "They hardly meet both the ends. THE October 8 has left everything devastated here so he is not able to do anything for his grandson," added Zahid.

This is not with Liaqat only a number of children have to narrate the similar story. Sadar Din son of Kaiser Din resident of Basgran lost his mother on October 8. Sadar's father was hit by a stone on October 8 and has now become handicapped. He is not able to work now and the responsibility has fallen on the weak shoulders of Sadar Din who was reading in 10th standard. He has stopped to go to his school and is sitting idle in his home looking for any work.

Despite all this devastation Sadar Din is hopeful for the best. "I am a firm believer of God. My domestic condition does not allow me to continue my studies but I am hopeful that a time will come everything will be ok," said Sadar Din. Though not familiar with the labour, Sadar Din has adapted himself in the circumstances where he is going to work hard to earn a livelihood.

Mohammad Amin son of Ismaiel Quershi a resident of Sultan Dhaki was reading in BA 1st year. Ismaiel expired on October 8 leaving behind his wife and only son Amin. Amin has stopped his further studies as he is in search of some work so that he can manage his family affairs.

"October 8 has left everything devastated here. Now as the people would start reconstruction I am hopeful that I will get some work." Said Amin.

When asked how he can manage this change from studies to labour Amin said, "Change is the law of nature. As there are less employment opportunities and until I get some job I have to work. I have to adapt myself in this situation. There is no other option left for me."

Zahoor Ahmad son of Rehmatullah Mir a resident of Sultan Dhaki was reading in 8th standard. He has also left his schooling. As Rehmatullah died on October 8, Zahoor had to shoulder all the responsibility of his home. Some of them nearly into their teens are now virtually heads of their families. Zahoor used to work hard so that he could achieve his goal to become a banker but he says that he has left dreaming now.

"Dreams can't be true. Look I was working hard to become a banker but fate had something different to offer for me. Now I am in search of some work to fetch some money to run my domestic affairs," added Zahoor.

October 8 not only devastated the area in terms of life and property but it has pushed the future of these budding blooms in doldrums. Naseer Ahmad Mir son of Kifaitullah Mir, a resident of Sultan Dhaki was reading in 9th standard.

Naseer used to be poor in his studies and in domestic work he had never satisfied his parents said his mother Zohra Bi. She added that after October 8 when her husband died under the debris of a house she has been a profound grief and was worried about his son too. "My husband would always advise Naseer but he was one boy who never took his father's advice seriously. But now he is my only hope. Wailed Zohra.

Naseer has left his studies and now he along with some other boys of his Mohalla are in search of some work. But the people here believe that until and unless the government comes to their rescue they can turn into delinquents, which would be more dangerous for their families as well as to this society. When contacted SDM Uri was not available for the comment.

Srinagar, March 26: In a bid to catch a glimpse of her son, Fazi Begum, 75, makes it all the way to the Saddar Court irrespective of time, money involved and the type of weather. Being aware of the fact that her son would be brought to the court for hearing, she leaves no stone unturned to make it to that place.

Rehti Jan, in her late sixties, often walks down the riverside to share her tears with the gushing stream flowing by. She lost her son to the ongoing insurgency in the state. Her son was the lone bread earner of the family and they lived a happy life. Immediately after his death their family went in the grip of miseries and pains. "Life has turned miserable for us and we are living from hand to mouth," exclaimed Rehti.

Mukta Bano, a middle-aged woman, remembers her last meeting with her son. Down the memory lane, she recollects the memories of the day when she was waiting for only son only to find that the wait would never end. Her eyes always look for that "familiar" face in the crowd. All my efforts fail to trace him. Now it seems an endless search still I will never give up," reiterated Mukta.

Another middle-aged woman, Zainab Begum still waits for her son who is believed to be dead. "I have not seen his grave or a dead body. How can I believe that he is no more? Show me either his grave of dead body. Only then I will believe your words. Till then I would continue my struggle the way I can", insisted the mother.

Sara Begum a young mother finds solace the moment she happens to pass by the graveyard of her son. "He is safe here. At least I know he is lying here and nobody can harm him here," she said.

To trace the whereabouts of her son, Fatima bi, an elderly woman, wishes to be tossed from post to pillar hoping that someday she might locate her son or get any information pertaining to him. "Only then I can die in peace", she stated.

The wait, however, seems unending for Zoon Akthar, a widow and mother of five children, who have put in all her energy, efforts and other resources to find out her son missing for years together now. Age seems not to be a barrier for Malla Jan 70, who moves from jail to jail to look for her son and to know about his well-being. "Back home I have to look for his family as well as there is no other source of income. I try to eke out a small living by doing petty jobs", she said.

Many such cases can be added to the list. This is the condition of most of the mothers living in this part of the world and the pathetic circumstances they are in because of the sufferings their sons have come across.

Does mother's day hold anything special for them or it is just any other day for them

TRAL VILLAGERS ALLEGE MOLESTATION OF WOMEN, BEATING, FORCED LABOUR ARMY SAYS NONE WAS BEATEN, MOLESTED OR ARRESTED

Dudkulian (Tral), Feb 3: A three kilometers exhausting backbreaking uphill climb on a rocky track leads to Dudkulian village. On either side of the track are denuded Walnut trees and terraced maize fields. In the overcast sky, the landscape was eerie and not a single bird hovered in sky or took a flight from naked trees. A group of soldiers accompanied by three policemen were descending from the village.

In combat dresses, black hair bands, and carrying AK-47 rifles, the soldiers asked a Gujjar youth, who was carrying another teenaged Gujjar boy on his shoulders, to hurry up. The boy being carried on the shoulders had a swollen face, his legs had given up. He had been severely thrashed outside his home in the village on the suspicion of working for militants and now he was being handed over to police.

Comprising 37 Gujjar households, half the village had fled in the morning when the group of soldiers allegedly ran amok and beat up every dweller excepting children. According to residents, many women (one of them pregnant) had been allegedly molested.

Scores of them had fled the village during the army raid and walked to Tral town where they were demonstrating in front of civil and police offices in Tral town against the alleged atrocities of 42 Rashtriya Rifles battalion of army. Army denies the allegations, terming them as baseless.

TESTIMONIES

Shakina Bano, 22, alleged that she along with few other women of the village were 'beaten and molested' by the troops of 42 Rashtriya Rifles Friday morning.

"Army came to our house at 5A M and arrested several villagers. My brother Gulzar Gujjar was also arrested and beaten ruthlessly. A trooper pushed me to the wall and beat me like a beast," Shakina, who was accompanied by two other girls of the village at district hospital Pulwama, alleged.

"I somehow fled from the clutches of troopers and saved my honor. Had I not shown the courage they would have raped me," Shakina alleged with tear rolling down her cheeks.

"If they are looking for militants let them find them; why are they victimizing us," she said. Women who alleged that they were beaten and molested by the troops are Fatima wife of Muhammad Shafi Khan, Zaitoon w/o Bashir Ahmad Khan, Sakina w/o Hanief Khan, Sakina w/o Gulzar Khan, Saira w/o Muhammad Shafi Khan, and Hajra w/o Muhammad Shafi Khan.

Suleiman, a handicapped middle-aged Gujjar, was sitting outside his ransacked house. Troops had dug out a floor of one of the rooms of his house. Men were filling it with stones again. He was hysterical with anger because his wounded son Shabir, had been taken away. "You might have seen what they did to my son. You saw another man was carrying him on shoulders; he couldn't even walk; you can't imagine how they beat him up; they brutalized every man of the village for the

sin of not knowing where militants are hiding. They found nothing here. My wife fainted and I have no information about her," Suleiman said.

He said, "As a routine they ordered all the men to be present at the army camp a few days back. We thought it was a call for forced labor to which we are routinely subjected. However, they freed all the men except Bashir son of Saidya, a mentally challenged person. This morning they brought him to the village expecting he would show them where militants had dumped weapons. It is nonsense; what do you expect a naïve person to do when he is detained in a garrison."

The villagers said the raiding party found no weapons in the village. "I told them if he (Shabir) is guilty, punish him legally but don't beat him savagely. If police hadn't come at appropriate time they would have killed us in a fake gunfight and dubbed us as militants," Suleiman said.

Suleiman's wife, Reshma Begum, 55, was sitting on a roadside outside District Hospital Tral. She said, "When Army started torturing Shabir in front of me, I couldn't bear the trauma and fell un-conscious. I was brought to the hospital by villagers."

"They (Army) came to our house and went on rampage. My son was taken to the lawn and tortured to an extent that blood oozed from his mouth. When I rushed to save my son, I was beaten by gun butts," Reshma alleged.

Showing her injury marks Reshma said, "I am concerned about the fate of my innocent son. For God's sake please save my son, they will kill him."

Ali Gujjar, 60, was worried about his son Gulzar because troops had snatched his identity card and asked him to bring his brother, Rashid, 26, along. "This means trouble; snatching cards and making us hostage is their favorite method because they know we can't move around without an I-card. How can I go to any civil officer or politician and complain because I would be searched everywhere and they would ask for I-Card," Gulzar said.

Ali said his son Rashid, sought by army, and was released after one and a half years of detention in November last year. "Now they don't want to let him live a normal life," he said. Rashid was returning home in the evening from the house of his in-laws where his wife is staying these days. Unaware of the day's turbulent happenings, Rashid wonders, "Why do they want me now?"

"They accuse us of feeding militants; we are starving and you won't find a household which has five kilograms of grains in store to feed his own family," said Nurya Gujjar.

"FORCED LABOUR,"

The villagers said for the past five days they have been made to cut and haul firewood to the 42 RR camp. Similar complaint was voiced by the protesters who were demonstrating in front of Tehsildar Tral's office. They said the Gujjar men, and even schoolchildren, of Kahlil, Nagbal, Zoreryar, Shajan, Nagpathri, were forced to carry firewood to the camp continuously for the past three days. They said forced labor was common during winters each year.

SOS TO DC

Amin Gujjar, 45, father of six girls, of Nagbal had arrived from Pulwama after meeting deputy commissioner with a plea to "come to my rescue". He said, "The major of the army camp asked me to come for a cup of tea on January 26 but I couldn't go because my child fell ill and I had to take her to a doctor. They had come for me again on Jan 27 and I went to the camp on January 28. The Major asked me to come again. When he told me not to tell anybody even my wife that I have been called to the camp I became suspicious and yesterday I went to see DC Sahib. He referred me to SSP Awantipora who in turn has given me this piece of paper and advised me to meet SHO Tral." On a yellow bit of paper, the SSP had written, "May please take care of the individual."

Station House Officer Tral, Muhammad Yousuf said: "Protesters allege that they have been beaten up. Police team has been sent to the area and we are investigating. Four ladies have come to us and their statement has been registered."

SHO denied that any body has come up with the complaint of rape or molestation. "There is no such report with us. Medical examination of four ladies has been done and it says there is no visible injury."

However, SHO said medical report confirms that ladies are facing pain in legs and other parts of body. Tehsildar Tral Gharib Singh said, "Law will take its own course. Investigation is on but it is clear that there is no rape. I have talked to Deputy Commissioner and he may come here to investigate the matter." BMO Tral said, "Police brought six ladies and two males to our hospital that had some minor injuries. They were later discharged after first aid."

Protest at Tral: Hundreds of people protested against the Army's atrocities outside Tehsildar Tral's office. Shouting slogans "We want freedom." The protesters alleged that Army has made their lives hell.

PRO Defense, Lt.Colonel VK Batra said, "To implicate Army, this has become a trend. We got information from our source that there is a hideout in the village and some weapons are there. Our search party took two local boys for help to identify the house. Villagers thought they had been arrested and raised hue and cry. Both the boys were released in the evening in presence of Police."

Lt. Col Batra said somebody had instigated the villagers and it is to malign the image of Army. "No women was touched or beaten by the troops," Lt. Col. Batra said.

Condition of women throughout the country is pathetic and her submissive character is largely responsible for the treatment meted out to her. She ought to come out of the cocoon, firmly believes SHABNAM HASHMI, social and political activist and executive member, ANHAD (Act Now for Harmony And Democracy). In an exclusive interview with a local daily KTNS, SHABNAM HASHMI stresses in giving more powers to NHRC and those who can hold state accountable and is determined to fight communalism at all levels. "Politics of hatred is to be countered", she emphasized. ANHAD plans to work for primary health and education in Tangdhar (Karnah) in near future.

Excerpts of the Interview

Q. How ANHAD came into being?

A. After Gujarat carnage senior activists in India felt the need to fight at the intellectual level. Consequently, in the first week of March 2003 ANHAD came into existence. ANHAD means without limits. It was conceived less as an organization and more as a platform and a very loose movement, which would be absolutely action oriented.

Q. How ANHAD works?

A. It organizes training camps basically countering politics of hatred. It works on various related issues involving youth and adopts the medium young generation is comfortable with, tries to act as a pressure group for the government and produces lot of material used by secular group across the country. ANHAD began its activities in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Orissa, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi and Andhra Pradesh. The endeavor is to create a fraternity of secular activists who would through their interaction with the local people bring into being small secular communities for ensuring peace and social understanding. Each locality would have its own peculiarities in cultural practices and social relations, which would be given particular attention while organizing the activities of ANHAD. What would bind the diverse and dispersed strands of the large secular alliance would be the resolute and shared defense of democracy, equity, secularism and justice.

Q. You have been associated with Communal Crime Separation Bill. Tell us something about that?

A. There are enough laws and powers given to state to curb communal crime. But at many places, government machinery itself involves in genocide. There is no law where state can be held accountable. Our demand is that they too should be held responsible. More powers should be given to NHRC or people who can hold the state responsible.

Q. Is it possible to make NHRC a pressure group for government?

A. Very much possible. Whether government does that or not but we will fight for that. Turning the pages of human history it can be seen that people have been exploited but even then they have struggled.

Q. Is ANHAD already working in the state of Jammu and Kashmir?

A. ANHAD got involved after the earthquake and worked in Tangdhar. 5-10 villages were identified where there is no medical facility available to the people and the education system is also very poor. ANHAD will concentrate on these two areas, primary health and education. Community work especially for widows of both sides would also be taken up to begin with. Besides, ANHAD will work at cultural and intellectual level, organize film festivals with media students, discussion forum among youth and provide platform for them. It will work at several levels. ANHAD would like to work for the rights of women and fight for their rights to the best maximum possibility. In fact women should unite and fight. Let me put this on record Kerala that is considered a progressive state in India is worst state for women. It is a conservative society and women face innumerable problems there.

Q. How do you see the condition of women in India as a whole?

A. Very pathetic. Domestic violence, dowry deaths and other crimes are inflicted upon her. Female foeticide is the biggest crime she faces. Women in India are not equal neither are they treated justly. They ought to fight for it.

Q. Usually women do not complain about domestic violence and prefer to suffer. Do you think she should come against it?

A. Definitely she should fight against domestic violence. Girl child from the very beginning receives secondary treatment. She is always treated the way that one day she has to get married. All this affects her mental state. Mostly in conservative societies she is made to suffer more. It is important that more women become economically

independent.

Q. Is women empowerment the only remedy available?

A. Empowerment has to be in terms of thinking as well. Somewhere women themselves have to assert. Their submissiveness is also responsible for their pathetic condition. Legal awareness among women is also important.

Q. How you view the situation in Kashmir?

A. The kind of atrocities people suffer with is extremely oppressive. A sense of hopelessness develops and prevails. Under such situation the role of civil societies and human rights organizations becomes all the more important. People should themselves fight for their rights.

Q. What sort of work ANHAD has been involved in at Tangdhar?

A. In Tangdhar about 95 percent of the houses were damaged owing to October 8 killer quake. ANHAD assisted both in relief and rehabilitation work. Tin sheets were provided to about 200 houses. ANHAD will hereafter concentrate more on education and primary health.

OPPRESSION INFLICTS TRAUMA ON WOMEN, STATE FORGETS THEM

Srinagar, Mar 30: On the face of it, the patients who regularly visit Psychiatric Diseases Hospital here carry no apparent signs of bruised psyches or destroyed lives on their faces. The tales of distress they tell reveal the extent of suppression and violence the people of Kashmir have been subjected to for the past 18 years. Hajra, 50, a half widow from Hadpora Varmul visits Psychiatric Hospital Srinagar regularly. Ghulam Rasool Chopan, her husband was subjected to Enforced Custodial Disappearance by troops ten years ago. A horseman who used to ferry tourists in world famous tourist spot, Gulmarg, Ghulam Rasool was the sole breadwinner for a family of five including three minor daughters.

Hajra bore the brunt of the trauma. The three daughters have now grown into women of marriageable age. The doctors have diagnosed her as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) patient. Ghulam Rasool disappeared in 1995 from Gulmarg. Hajra and her daughters came to know about his disappearance a fortnight later.

“I searched for my husband everywhere in all the jails of Kashmir and also in Indian jails but I couldn’t trace him out. I have three daughters who are of marriageable age. No one came forward to help us after my husband disappeared,” Raja told media at Psychiatric Hospital.

Raja said she went to Deputy Chief Minister Muzaffar Hussain Baig and former Minister of State for Education Late Ghulam Nabi Lone and begged them to find her husband.

“Both of them promised that they would help me in tracing my husband and also assured me that I will get compensation. It rekindled hope in me that at least I can marry my daughters but the promise was never kept,” she said.

Raja has been visiting the hospital for last eight years and doctors have advised her to take medicines regularly.

The produce from five Kanals of agricultural land that she owns is insufficient to meet the demands of the big family. The medicines that she has to take regularly consume a portion of the meagre income. Hajra has thousands of contemporaries in suffering. From downtown Srinagar, Fatima, a middle-aged woman, is one among thousands of PTSD patients in Kashmir who visit Psychiatric Hospital regularly. Fatima’s husband, a tailor, was shot dead by unidentified gunmen in front of her eyes seven years back. “Many gunmen entered our house and shot dead my husband at nine in the evening. I don’t know how many bullets they fired at him in front of my eyes. My two children also saw how their father was brutally killed. I fainted and when I regained my consciousness after two hours, hundreds of people had gathered,” Fatima said.

“My 16-year-old daughter is also suffering from depression. She faints whenever she hears gunshots or a loud voice. The incident just doesn’t get erased from our memories,” Fatima said, tears flowing copiously from sunken eyes.

“What was my husband’s sin? I became widow at the age of 30 and now our only source of income is my son who works as a labourer,” she said.

Zarifa's only son a militant was killed by the Army on the eve of Eid five years ago in Kupwara district. She developed psychiatric problems after that and visits Psychiatric Hospital regularly. She too has been diagnosed with PTSD by the doctors.

"I heard the news on radio that my son has been martyred. I wasn't knowing he is involved in militancy. He was just 18 and was the youngest after four sisters. I can't forget the moment when his body was brought for last rites," Zarifa said.

"My husband is a handicapped person and he was the only hope of his four sisters. Our whole family is in distress. He comes in my dreams and I see him in school uniform which he was wearing at the time when he left home last time," she added.

The plight of patients suffering from psychiatric disorders in Kashmir is not a secret though it has gone unreported in biased and conformist Indian media. The turmoil of last seventeen years has added as a catalyst.

Almost 10% patients treated in OPD of Psychiatric Hospital are being diagnosed with PTSD and other stress related problems.

Dr Mushtaq Margoob, Valley's leading Psychiatrist said, "Harsh realities of life are difficult to face and people aren't able to cope up with it. The brunt of losing their dear ones shows up on their faces." "Traumatized people continue to bear the brunt of this conflict of attrition and find they have nowhere to go to be safe," he added.

TANGMARG VILLAGERS ALLEGE MOLESTATION BY MAJOR, ARMY CHANGE

Srinagar, Mar 4: Residents of dozens of villages today protested against the security forces in Tangmarg following an attempt by an Army Major to molest a teenage girl.

Local people said that the personnel of 52 RR who are deployed at Trakpora Camp in Tangmarg, appeared around 7:00 pm in Tantraypora village and entered into the house of Abdul Gani Joo son of Ghulam Rasool who was not present in the house at that time. Projecting himself as Major Pervez, the Army officer started molesting his daughter, Mehmooda Bano.

The locals alleged that he dragged the girl out of the house due which she lost her consciousness. In the meanwhile the neighbours came to know about the incident and they rushed towards the house and attacked the Major and his men with *Kangris* (firepots). The security forces fired bullets in air to escape from the wrath of people.

Soon after this incident, hundreds of people including the people from adjacent villages, gathered and started shouting slogans against the incident in particular and the security forces in general. They also raised slogans against the government.

Local people said that despite the tall claims of the government, the security forces continue to enjoy a free hand and they do whatever they want. They said that the harassment of womenfolk at the hands of security forces is yet to come to an end despite the claims of government and security officials.

The SDPO of Tangmarg, who had visited the spot late last night following protests of the villagers, has assured the protestors that investigation will be carried out regarding the incident. However the residents staged a sit down strike on Saturday morning and protested against the security forces throughout the day. They demanded that the erring officer and those who were accompanying him should be taken to task. Hurriyat (A) leader and the chairman of National Front, Nayeem Ahmad Khan, who was also protesting in Tangmarg against the incident, termed the incident as a "barbaric act" and alleged that the security forces have made the life of women folk in villages miserable.

A local news agency, KNS however quoted the spokesman of Army, Juneja as saying that the search operation was a routine one and no woman was molested during the operation. He has further said that security forces have been warned against putting the people especially women to any sort of harassment. Colonel Juneja has said that details will be collected about the incident.

Deputy Inspector General of Police for Baramulla, Muhammad Subhan Lone said police has received complaint and was verifying the facts.

The Commanding Officer of 32 RR, E P Singh refuted the accusations of people. He said, "During search of the house a TV fell on the head of Hilal Wani and he was injured. We are not forcing him to work for us and in the

past he had links with militants. In fact army is treating his wounds at the camp.”
Meanwhile, shops and other business establishments in the area remained closed on Thursday in protest against the student’s torture.”

The situation was brought under control by police, which promised to probe the incident.

ONE MINOR GIRL KILLED, 2 INJURED IN ULTRAS' ATTACK

Jammu/Reasi, Jan 11: Eve of Eid-ul-Azha turned out to be a nightmare for three minor girls who became the target of the militants attack in Chakras village of Mahore tehsil last night. One of them died in an attack on the spot while two others including deceased's sister was airlifted to the Government Medical (GMC) hospital in serious condition for treatment.

Official sources said that the attack was carried out by two militants of Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) outfit. Family members of the victim, however, said that the militants to avenge the surrender of uncle of the victims carried out the attack.

The girl who died on the spot has been identified as Marium Jan, 11, daughter of Head Constable of Jammu and Kashmir Armed Police (JKAP) Mohammad Ayub, resident of Chakras (Mahore). Two injured were identified as Marium's elder sister Rafiqa Bano and her cousin Mumtaz Bano, 15, daughter of Mohammad Amin- both residents of Chakras.

Both injured were shifted to the Sub District Hospital (SDH) Mahore by her relatives in the morning from where after minor treatment both of them were airlifted to the GMC hospital in army helicopter.

Rafiqa Bano sustained bullet wounds on her stomach and leg while Mumtaz suffered injuries on his chest and right arm. They are undergoing treatment in the GMC hospital.

Mohammad Amin, father of injured Mumtaz Bano while talking to *Voices Unheard* team at the GMC hospital said that some militants lobbed a grenade at his house at 2130 hours last evening. The inmate got scared hearing deafening sound of grenade explosion and then ran helter-skelter.

The militants who were hiding behind a grease dump started indiscriminate firing from the window of the house.

He said all three girls who were in the room suffered bullet wounds. Marium Jan who was student of 5th class, he informed; died on the spot while two others were seriously injured. The injured, he added, remained in the house the whole night bleeding profusely without any medicare and they shifted them to SDH Mahore on foot in the morning.

The other relatives accompanying the victim regretted that no army or police assistance came to the village the whole night. They said that the army post is at least 10 kilometers away from the village Chakras and also there was no means of tele-communication available in the village, which helped the militants to escape easily without any risk. There was also no electricity in the village, which also helped the militants to move freely, they added.

Abdul Latief, uncle of Marium Jan, family sources said, was a militant of HM outfit and he surrendered before the security forces two years ago and joined the police force as Special Police Official (SPO). This irked the militants operating in the area and they shot dead Abdul Latief's brother Abdul Rashid-a businessman couple of months ago at the same village. Abdul Rashid, sources said played an active role in surrender of Abdul Latief.

Scared by the threats of the militants Marium's father Mohammad Ayub who is a Head Constable in JKAP migrated from the village last year along with his family. Family sources said that Marium Jan and her sister Rafiqa Bano came to their maternal uncle Mohammad Amin's house on January 11 to celebrate Eid.

Taking advantage of their arrival in the village Chakras, militants last night targeted them. The militants, family members said, fired at least twenty bullets targeting innocent girls.

Mohammad Shabir, another uncle of Marium Jan, family sources said, is still an active militant of HM outfit.

Reports said that army and police reached the village at 0930 hours twelve hours after the incident in the morning.

Army authorities, however, claimed that the attack was carried out by two foreign ultras of LeT outfit. A search operation of police and army has been launched to flush out the ultras, officials claimed.

FRISKING OF WOMEN INTRODUCED IN VALLEY

Srinagar, Jan 24: For the first time in the 17-year long Kashmir insurgency, women too were frisked on roadsides as the security noose on January 26 eve tightened. The areas in and around the Bakshi Stadium, venue of the main R-Day parade are under siege. Sharpshooters have taken positions in the attics and rooftops of residential houses and tall buildings at Haft Chinar, Sarai Balla, Maharaja Bazar and Goni Khan. Markets in the areas were too hit by the unprecedented security arrangements, as most of the people avoid these routes.

Heavy contingent of various security agencies frisked every vehicle and pedestrian at Lal Chowk, Hari Singh High Street, Naaz Crossing and Residency Road throughout Tuesday. No civilian who “cannot prove his identity” is allowed to cross the Hari Singh High Street (HSHS) bridge.

Eight companies of CRPF, troopers deployed for frisking have placed a unique identification tags displaying their names in the run up to the parade. Three more companies of women wing of CRPF have been specially deployed to frisk women at various routes leading to the Stadium. There were long queues of women and children at Lal Chowk who were stopped for frisking by the armed women troopers of paramilitary CRPF.

The frisking near Palladium crossing was so intense that a youth who had purchased a DVD player was asked to open its seal.

Troopers of CRPF, irked by the presence of media persons, had an altercation with a group of journalists at Lal Chowk after they detained a photojournalist of a Jammu-based English daily.

The incident occurred when the lensman was clicking pictures of women standing in queues for searches. He was later released after protests by media persons and intervention of senior police officials.

People have expressed strong resentment against the frisking.

“In the name of security now even women aren’t being spared. The security agencies are frisking the people in such a way as if to avert a war or a big attack,” Gulshan Jan, a government employee said after being frisked by troops.

Haft Chinar area, a residential area close to Bakshi Stadium, has been cut off from the rest of the city. Police has sealed all the entry points. Besides, top-floor of many houses have been occupied by sharp shooters. The area has witnessed a thorough search operation during the past few days.

The residents have been facing inconvenience due to deployment of cops into their houses. “ I’ve two daughters and as a mother I feel insecure in the presence of police who are in our house for two days,” a worried woman of Haft Chinar, wishing anonymity, said.

“Our only fault is we live near the parade venue. January 26 and August 15 bring miseries for us. We’re prisoners in our own homes. The security agencies should draw a line between security and harassment,” the residents told media while pointing towards their houses “taken over” by police.

Public Relations Officer (PRO) of CRPF said stringent security measures have been in place for January 26 parade.

“We’ve deployed three companies of women’s wing of CRPF for frisking women. For foolproof security arrangements frisking of women is necessary. Besides, we’ve asked our troops to display their names on their uniform to hinder movement of militants moving in uniform,” the PRO said.

RAPE A CRIME AGAINST BASIC HR, RIGHT TO LIFE: SC

New Delhi, Mar 5: The Supreme Court has observed that rape is a crime against basic human rights and is violative of the victim’s most cherished Fundamental Right namely Right to Life contained in Article 21 of the Constitution of India, A bench comprising Mr. Justice Arijit Pasayat and Justice S.H.Kapadia vide their judgment dated Feb 28, 2006 has held that a socially sensitized judge is a better statutory armour in a case of crime against women than long clauses of penal provisions, containing complex exceptions and provisos.

The court’s observations came while reducing life imprisonment awarded to the appellant Dinesh Buddah for raping an eight-year- old girl by the trial court and confirmed by the high court, to ten years’ Rigorous Imprisonment.

The crime of rape was committed by the victim on Feb 5, 1998 when the victim was returning home after witnessing a marriage procession. The state was also directed to pay a compensation of Rs.50000 to the victim by the court.

“Rape is not only a crime against the person of a woman, it is a crime against the entire society. It destroys the entire psychology of a woman and pushes her into deep emotional crisis. Where the victim is a helpless innocent child or a minor, it leaves behind a traumatic experience,” the court noted.

The convict had threatened to kill the victim if she disclosed the incident to anyone but when the pain became unbearable for the child she told her sister, mother and grandmother about the incident and the matter was reported to the police.

The minimum sentence prescribed for rape of a child less than 12 years of age is ten years’ RI.

The court also observed that the socio-economic status, religion, race, caste or creed of the accused or the victim are irrelevant considerations in sentencing policy.

“There are no extenuating or mitigating circumstances available on the record which may justify imposition of any sentence less than the prescribed minimum on the respondent and to show any mercy in the case of such a heinous crime would be a travesty of justice and plea for leniency was wholly misplaced,” the court concluded.

The compensation amount would be paid to the victim within 8 weeks if not already paid. (UNI)

HANDWARA RESIDENTS ALLEGE HARASSMENT

Handwara, January 8: Troops stationed at Handwara kept the people including the children in the open in freezing cold for hours on Saturdays evoking strong resentment against the army.

In the wee hours on January 8, the troops asked the people of Harl Maur and Kulangam to assemble at a school premises. " Even the children and the aged were not spared. The troops asked them to handover the militants to them" the residents told media persons.

Eyewitnesses sad many youth were taken by the troops along with them during the search operation. " Troops of Rashtriya Rifles (RR) made our lives literally a hell. W doesn't know why we are being subjected to this inhuman treatment in cold," the residents alleged.

POLICE CLAIMS ARREST OF WOMAN MILITANT

Srinagar, Jan 22: Jammu and Kashmir Police claimed to have arrested another woman militant in South Kashmir last evening, a senior police officer said today.

We have arrested a woman militant and recovered arms and ammunition from Bijbehara in Islamabad district last evening, Inspector General (IG) of Police K Rajinder Kumar said.

He said police conducted search operation at Bibehara and arrested Parveena. Kumar said she took a police party to a hideout in the nearby village. Later arms and ammunition including rockets were recovered from the hideout.

On January 22 police claimed to have arrested a woman militant of the Lashkar-e- Toiba (LeT) along with her two associates during a search operation at Sopur in north Kashmir.

The arrested 'militants' were identified as Shireen Jan and her two associates - Zahoor Ahmad and Suhail Gadoo. UNI.

2 WOMEN ARRESTED

Srinagar, Jan 31: Masarat Jan daughter of Ghulam Muhammad Anto of Sonigam during a raid at Yaripora Kulgam in Anantnag district. Another woman Parveena Akhtar was arrested by Troops of 24 RR during raids at Ari Kangan in Ganderbal.

GIRL ARRESTED IN TRAL

Srinagar, March 24: In Almar Tral 42 RR raided house of Ghulam Mohideen Sheikh and took his daughter Shahnaz into custody. She was later handed over to police station Awantipora. UNS said.

TREHGAM ON BOIL OVER WOMAN'S KIDNAPPING

Kupwara, Feb 8: Several thousand villagers on Feb 8 took to streets staging angry demonstrations over the kidnapping of a woman by police three days ago.

Rasing slogans against the police, the protestors asked why the police had failed to nab the accused who is missing along with the kidnapped woman.

Protestors said, the cop Muhammad Maqbool Sheikh alais Shangr son of Ghulam Hassan resident of Trehgam who works with police had abducted his former wife.

The woman's brother Nissar Ahmed says on Saturday night sheikh along with other gunmen barged into their house and ruthlessly beat the inmates.

"They had come in three sumos with AK 47 rifles. They beat all of us including my father and sisters like savages and later bolted us in a separate room and fled away with our sister," he said.

He also claimed to have identified another kidnapped.

Meanwhile, vehicular traffic on the main road to the area remained disrupted due to the *dharna* by the villagers who demanded police probe.

Later during the day the protestors were pacified by the additional Sp Kupwara Bashir Makhdoomi.

Commenting over the issue, SSP Kupwara Sunil Dutt told the reporters that an FIR has been registered.

“Kupwara police is raiding the suspected places. We have also asked the SP Baramulla to help tracing the culprit,” the SSP said.

RAPE ACCUSED GETS 7-YEAR TERM

Srinagar, Jan 30: The second Additional District and Sessions Judge Srinagar MN Fida on Jan 30 sentenced a rape accused to seven years of imprisonment.

The court sentenced the accused Iqbal Javid Khan son of Ghulam Rasool Khan of Nund Reshi Colony, Bemina Srinagar, for period of seven years under section 363/IPC and Simple imprisonment under section 376/IPC for kidnapping a minor girl and raping her. Both the sentences shall run concurrently.

Second Additional public Prosecutor Sheikh Muhammad Sultan conducted the prosecution case. “ the sentence will send strong message to anti-social elements,” Sheikh Muhammad Sultan told media

WOMAN KILLED IN FIRING AT KISHTWAR

Kishtwar, On Feb 10: Militants fired upon a search party during a cordon and a search operation at Bunjwa Kishwar. In the encounter a woman Naseema begum d/o Bashir Ahmed Sheikh of Kither was also injured in the shootout. Later she succumbed to her injuries in the hospital.

RR BEATS STUDENT IN BARAMULLA

Srinagar, Feb 3: “Army is compelling a student of 10th standard to work for them as informer and when he declined he was severely beaten twice in the past 10 days,” residents of Nadihal village in Baramulla said on Feb 2 while demonstrating in Baramulla town against 32 Battalion of Rashtriya Rifles troops.

The protesters said that at 9 am on Feb 2 a team of soldiers from 32 RR stationed at Tragpora camp entered the house of Taja begum, 55, a widow and asked for her son Hilal Ahmed Wani son of Late Abdul Qadoos Wani of Nadihal.

Hilal, a class 10th student, was severely beaten by the soldiers.

He sustained head injury and was brought to Baramulla district hospital for treatment. A few hundred villagers accompanying him carried him on the hospital bed and placed it on the road at Baramulla Chowk. Blocking traffic for some time, the villagers shouted slogans against army and demanded freedom from “Indian occupation.”

Hilal Wani, the victimized student, told media, “They are constantly asking me to work as informer for them. Shall I give up my studies and do the dirty work for them.”

Showing a fractured arm, Hilal said, “Ten days ago they beat me up and this broken beat me up and this broken arm is proof of that. The fracture hasn’t healed yet and they again came this morning and again reiterated their proposal.”

Taja Begum, mother of Hilal, said, “I am trying very hard to bring him up and educate him but they (Army) won’t let me.”

Deputy Inspector General of police for Baramulla Muhammad Subhan Lone said police has received complaint and was verifying the facts.

The commanding officer of 32 RR, E P Singh refuted the accusations of people. He said, “ during search of the house a TV fell on the head of Hilal Wani and he was injured. We are not forcing him to work for us and in the past he had links with militants. In fact army is treating his wounds at the camp.”

Meanwhile, shops and other business establishments in the area remained closed on Feb 2 in protest against the student’s “torture.”

The situation was brought under control by police, which promised to probe the incident.

OLD MOTHER SEEKS HER SON’S RELEASE

Bandipora (Handwara), Feb 15: Abdur Rashid Bujad, 28, was allegedly kidnapped by ‘government gunmen’ on December 26, 2005 from this village. His widowed mother Bibi had filed a case against the kidnappers in Police Station Handwara on December 31, but she says police is reluctant to take any action against the culprits. “My son was kidnapped by Bashir Khatana and Irshad Khatana before my eyes. The duo work for security

agencies. More than one and half month has passed but police is intentionally taking no action against them," Bibi told media.

"When I first went to Police on December 31, they told me that once snow will be cleared from the roads they will start searching my son. When I have identified the kidnappers, why isn't police taking action against them? They are roaming and police can arrest them anytime if they wish," Bibi said. Bashir is the only breadwinner of the family, which besides his widowed mother consists of three sisters and a younger brother.

"We have no source of income. For God's sake please bring my son back," Bibi pleaded with tears rolling down her cheeks.

Superintendent Police Handwara, Nistish Kumar denied that any person working with police kidnapped Bashir.

"Bashir was working as over-ground worker for militants and due to personal rivalry he was kidnapped by them. The duo which has been identified by his mother haven't kidnapped him," Nitish said. However, SP said that investigation is on and whosoever has kidnapped Bashir would be brought to book.

DARUL ULOOM STUDENT MISSING

Srinagar, Jan 22: A 16 year old student of Darul Aloom Goos Kupwara has gone missing under mysterious circumstances, Local News agency UNS reported on Jan 23.

Manzoor Ahmed Khan son of Abdul Rashid of Harray Pora Kalaroos, Kupwara is missing for the past over a week. Police has registered a case.

KUPWARA STUDENT MISSING

Srinagar, Feb 18: The family of a missing student has expressed graver concern over his disappearance in Machhil Dabal Kupwara.

According to CNS Feroze Ahmad Mir (16) son of Abdul Gani Mir of Machhil Dabal Kapwara, a class 10th student went missing from February 12. Feroze, according to the news agency, was the only son of his parents. The family is concerned over the disappearance. Police has registered a case.

Meanwhile, Nazir Ahmad Dakka of Daseva Kokernag has gone missing after the troops detained him at Lal Chowk on February 16. Nazir Ahmad was selling caps on a makeshift shop. The family has registered a complaint in the Kothi Bagh Police station.

STUDENT MISSING

Baramulla, March 8: A fourth standard student, Muhammad Ashraf Najar S/o: Khazir Muhammad R/o: Nihalora Pattan of Baramulla District disappeared mysteriously after he left his home in the morning.

MOTHER OF SIX MISSING

Tral, January 6: A mother of six children went missing in a mysterious committee in Tral. According to KNS 30 year old Begum Jan wife of Chandi Khan of Bethnoor Tral left her home to Tral six days back and didn't return. Quoting the family of the missing woman, the news agency said that when her brother visited Bethnoor, the in-laws told him that she was missing.

TEENAGE GIRL MOLESTED BY RR

Srinagar, March 3: A teenage girl, Mehmooda Akhtar D/o: Abdul Gani Joo R/o: Tantraypora Tanmarg was molested by an Army major of 52 RR battalion.

WOMAN RAPED BY SPO

Rajouri, March 7: An SPO (special police officer) Balwant singh raped a woman, Shah Bano W/o: Mohammad Sabzar R/o: Kalakote Rajouri.

STUDENT'S FINGERS CHOPPED

Srinagar, Mar 7: Unidentified persons chopped off fingers of an 11th standard student in Kulgam area of south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

News agency UNS reported that Mushtaq Ahmed Raina son of Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din was abducted from his residence in Muhammad Pora on March 6 evening.

He was whisked away to Batapora where the abductors who were three in number asked him to hand over arms and ammunition.

When Mushtaq pleaded his innocence, his abductors got annoyed and chopped his two fingers off. The abductors fled from the spot leaving him in a pool of blood. The boy managed to reach his home where he was removed to hospital.

WOMAN ABDUCTED

Budgam, Jan 29: A man kidnapped a woman in connivance with a policeman at Machahama Budgam on Jan 29. According to local media agency the man abducted Afra Bano d/o Abdur Rehman Ganai with the help of a policemen identified as Muhammad sultan. Police has registered a case and started investigation into the incident.

TREHGAM PROTESTS ABDUCTION

Srinagar, Feb 5: Trehgam villagers today staged protest demonstrations against the kidnapping of a woman allegedly by cops in the area. Police has filed a case against the accused.

A local news agency said Constable Muhammad Maqbool belt No 139B of Trehgam kidnapped his former wife Hanifa from her paternal home.

Maqbool kidnapped the mother of three kids when he learnt that she had filed a case of compensation against him.

After divorcing Hanifa, Maqbool had married another woman, but some years later divorced her as well. Now he was intending to go for the third one.

The abduction triggered protests in the area with people taking to streets and staging protests against Maqbool and other cops involved in the abduction.

Police has filed a case against Maqbool. However, he is yet to be arrested and woman is still missing

GIRL 'ABDUCTED' IN PULWAMA

Srinagar, March 3: The 13 year old girl went missing from her home at Shopian. Despite searching at all the possible places, she could not be located. The media quoted her parents in their complaint to police saying Shabir Hajam son of Habib Hajam of Tangmarg abducted their child. Police has registered a case and launched manhunt to nab the accused.

MINOR GIRL INJURED IN MYSTERIOUS BLAST

Kistwar, Feb 18: A minor girl sustained splinter wounds in a mysterious blast at Hardna Dewal area of Chatroo in Kistwar tehsil of Doda district.

She has been identified as Reena Devi 7 d/o Khushi Ram r/o Hardna Deewal.

She was shifted to sub-district hospital (SDH) Kishtwar from where she was referred to the government medical college (GMC) hospital for advanced treatment

WOMEN INJURED

Srinagar, March 10: Suspected militants lobbed a grenade at a vehicle of paramilitary CRPF troops at Naid Kadal Chowk. The device however missed the target and exploded on road causing minor injuries to a woman, Afshana d/o of Ghulam Mohi-ud-din Mir of Illahi Bagh, Buchpora.

WOMEN INJURED

Srinagar, March 13: Three women were injured when the soldiers of 42 RR severely thrashed them during a cordon and search operation at Largam Tral in Pulwama district on 13 March.

CALLOUS CLERKS AND WOES OF AN OLD MOTHER

Srinagar, Mar 14: The family of a taxi driver, who died allegedly in troops custody 10 years ago, lives a miserable life due to indifference of authorities in north Kashmir's Varmul district..

Narrating her woeful tale, aged Zaina Begum wife of late Sanaullah of Gojri Mohalla told a local news agency KNS that the troops arrested her son Bashir Ahmad Bhat on October 6, 1996 near Pattan. He was whisked, she said, to an unknown destination alongwith his taxicab (JKC/7151).

She said she visited security camps and police stations to know her son's whereabouts, but all in vain. Her hopes died when her son's body was recovered from Devr Yakhmanpora on March 7, 1997, the KNS said.

"Bashir was sole breadwinner of the family. My husband couldn't bear his death and he also passed away few years ago. We're now on the verge of starvation," Zaina Begum lamented.

Government had promised to give the family ex-gratia relief under SRO-43. But the promise remains a promise.

Meanwhile, Zaina, to provide better life to her five daughters and four sons, completed all the formalities for grant of relief in 1999. "Ironically, the relatives of civilians killed in 2000 and 2002 were provided jobs, but my file gathers dust in the office of Deputy Commissioner Varmul for unknown reasons," she said.

WOMEN – CHILDREN KILLED

DATE	INCIDENTS
January 11	Eve of Eid-ul-Azha turned out to be a nightmare for three minor girls who became the target of the militants attack in Chakras village of Mahore tehsil. One of them died in the attack on the spot while two others including deceased's sister was airlifted to the Government Medical (GMC) hospital in serious condition for treatment.
January 19	One woman namely, Shameema (29) wife of Ghulam Hassan Malla was injured in the exchange of fire between militants and troops at Surigam Lolab in Kupwara district.
January 23	Two women Sania daughter of Muhammad Ismail and Shakeela Akhtar daughter of Muhammad Maqbool both residents of Habak were injured when militants hurled a grenade on the picket of 96 battalion at Nowhatta, Srinagar.
February 2	10 th class student, Hilal Ahamad Wani son of Abdul Qadoos of Nadihal Baramulla was allegedly tortured by 32 RR.
February 3	Women at Dudkulian village Tral were beaten and molested by the troops of 42 RR. Twenty-two-year old Shakina Bano alleged that she along with other women of the village were beaten and molested.
February 10	In an encounter between militants and troops at Bunjwa Kisthwar a woman identified as Naseema Begum d/o Bashir Ahmed Sheikh of Kither injured critically. Later she succumbed to her injuries in the hospital
February 14	Shazia Bashir d/o Bashir Ahmad of Sopur Baramulla got injured in a grenade blast at Sopur.
February 18	A minor girl sustained splinter wounds in a mysterious blast at Hardna Dewal area of Chatroo in Kistwar tehsil of Doda district. She has been identified as Reena Devi, 7, d/o Khushi Ram r/o Hardna Deewal.
February 22	Two children out of 4 youth were shot dead by the troops of 33RR in Kupwara. Aamir

	Hajam (6) S/o: Mohd Akbar and Shakir Ahmad Wani (7) S/o: Gulam Hassan were shot dead while playing in fields at Doodhipora, Handwara Kupwara.
February 23	Sara Begum and her three kids were killed when troops fired a Mortar Shell on their House at Aragam Bandipora Baramulla.
March 5	Three teenage girls got wounded in a grenade attack at Pulwama. Two of the injured have been identified as, Shabina R/o: Shopian, Sahiba and Afroza R/o: Keegam.
March 6	10-year-old Lovely and 3-year-old Saqib were injured when militants entered in the house of an SPO Nazir Ahmed in Pakherpora Budgam.
March 10	Suspected militants lobbed a grenade at a vehicle of paramilitary CRPF troops at Naid Kadal Chowk. The device however missed the target and exploded on road causing minor injuries to a woman, Afshana d/o of Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Mir of Illahi Bagh, Buchpora.
March 13	Three women were injured when the soldiers of 42 RR severely thrashed them during a cordon and search operation at Largam Tral in Pulwama district on 13 March.
March 27	Nusrat Akhtat D/o: Mukhtar Ahmad R/o: Ajas Varmul was injured after troops of 13RR fired on her when she was walking.

Date	Women Killed	Children killed	Women / Children Injured
January 11	-	1	-
January 19	1	-	-
January 23	-	-	2
February 10	1	-	-
February 14	-	-	1
February 18	-	-	1
February 22	-	2	-
February 23	1	3	-
March 5	-	-	3
March 6	-	-	2
March 10	-	-	1
March 13	-	-	3
March 27	-	-	1
Total	3	6	14

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