



LEGAL FORUM FOR KASHMIR - LFK

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Press Release

Annual Human Rights Review - Indian occupied Kashmir, 2021.

Review: 257 killings, 195 CASOs, 130 residential houses bombed, 80 military operations, 163 freedom fighters killed, 48 Indian occupying forces killed in retaliation, and 46 civilians murdered by the occupying forces. And Indian right-wing regime arrests members of the Kashmiri Civil Society, journalists, and activists.

This **annual report** prepared by **Legal Forum for Kashmir (LFK)** on the situation of human rights in Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) covers the period from **January to December 2021**.

2021 again saw bloodshed of Kashmiris and silencing of Kashmir's civil society, arbitrarily arresting of human rights defenders, journalists, and members of the civil society.

The post-constitutional onslaught on August 05, 2019, in IOJK, everything seems to have come to halt, and the experience[s] have started to conjure images of unprecedented violence. The continuous Military Siege is considered to be the second-longest (880 days) after the 'Sarajevo' in the history of modern warfare. The unparalleled censorship on all forms of media coverage about the ongoing situation in the war-trampled region has made it more vulnerable for human rights organizations and media to work freely.

The year witnessed the casualty of 48 Indian armed force personnel and the killings of 163 freedom fighters besides the extrajudicial killing of 46 civilians.

From January to December 2021, Indian troops launched 195 Cordon and search operations (CASOs) and Cordon and Destroy Operations (CADOs), consequential in 80 military operations in which 163 freedom fighters died retaliating Indian occupying forces attacks. 48 Indian occupational forces were also killed during these military operations. The CASOs and CADOs also left 130 residential houses vandalized and destroyed at the hands of Indian occupying forces.

The right to access of information and expression continues to be severely restricted making Kashmir an information black hole. There were 127 instances of Internet blockade. Meanwhile, the Indian colonial state remains infamous as the '*Internet shutdown capital of the world*', ranking first globally for chronic Internet shutting downs.

On Feb 22, 2021, a seven-member team of multiple Special Rapporteurs of the United Nations expressed “deep concerns” over the arbitrary use of the ‘anti-terror’ laws by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) against human rights defenders and journalists in Kashmir “aimed at discrediting their work. On June 29, 2021, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, also urged India to end the use of pellets against children in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

India's counter-terrorism agency raided the office of Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS)—a local Human Rights defender group and arrested its program coordinator, Mr. Khurram Parvez, from his residence. Mr. Parvez is an award-winning Human Rights defender who has frequently published reports on Human rights abuses in the region, including enforced disappearances, torture, and mass graves. The United Nations and international organizations have repeatedly expressed concern over the arrest of the prominent human rights defender under the stringent anti-terror law and called for his immediate release.

The excessive use of force and impunity enjoyed by Indian forces in IOJK has increased the “Atrocity Crimes” manifold. There have been numerous cases of extrajudicial/custodial killings and denial of burial rites to the family members of civilians and rebels alike. On September 1, this year, nonagenarian war of liberation icon Mr. Syed Ali Geelani died after a decade under house arrest. His family was denied the last rites; Indian Police officials physically harassed the family.

In May 2021, Chairman of resistance Political amalgam Tehreek-e-Hurriyat and senior member of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, Muhammad Ashraf Sehrai was denied medical treatment and died in detention under the draconian Public Safety Act (PSA), an Act initially introduced against timber smugglers. His Son told Indian media “his father was murdered by jail authorities”. Later on, both of his sons were abducted and arrested under the notorious Unlawful activities and prevention Act (UAPA) for speaking up against the violations.

The year also saw a new PSYOP forced on the local populace by Indian intelligence agencies. Mass seizure of Private and public transport vehicles; including two-wheelers, three and four-wheelers leaving locals helpless.

Kashmiri prisoner of war continues to suffer in various Indian jails over rejection of Indian occupation.

Religious freedom remains curtailed for the Muslim majority region. It has been 150 weeks in the last six-year that Kashmir’s largest mosque, Jamia Masjid has not seen any believer praying inside the premise.

Massive administrative and legislative changes arming and aiding the Indian settler-colonial project saw massive land grabs by Indian defense and Hindu right-wing capitalists paving way for demographic change.