

KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN INDIAN-ADMINISTERED KASHMIR

April 1, 2026 – April 30, 2026

SUMMARY

In April 2026, Indian authorities continued to commit grave human rights violations in Indian-administered Kashmir (IAK). Indian authorities continued their systematic denial of free expression, including through the targeting of social media accounts addressing human rights issues in IAK as “anti-India content.” Indian authorities escalated their targeting of Muslim religious and educational institutions, seizing control of 58 independent religious schools and banning a major seminary, Jamia Siraj-ul-Uloom, pursuant to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). Indian authorities continued their systematic campaigns of mass detention and property expropriation, including through the re-arrest of self-determination activist Shabir Shah (granted bail in March 2026 after seven years of detention) and charging his wife, Bilquies Shah, with “terror financing.”

Numerous Kashmiri journalists, human rights defenders, activists, and dissenters continue to be arbitrarily detained. Emblematic cases include those of human rights defender Khurram Parvez—illegally imprisoned for four and a half years (1,641 days), journalist Irfan Mehraj—illegally imprisoned for over three years (1,157 days), human rights lawyer Mian Abdul Qayoom—illegally imprisoned for almost two years (695 days) and scholar Shafat Wani—illegally imprisoned for over a year (406 days).

Note: Due to ongoing repression by Indian authorities, key developments in the human rights situation in IAK have gone unreported. Indian authorities have criminalized independent journalism and human rights work; all reporting from IAK is state-controlled. Indian authorities label pro-human rights and pro-self-determination activity “terrorism” and systematically legitimate violations against people in IAK through unsubstantiated, demonizing labels, including: “terrorist,” “militant,” “secessionist,” “militant,” “overground worker,” “hybrid militant,” “hybrid terrorist,” “terrorist associate,” “militant associate,” “intruder,” and “infiltrator.”

VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

On April 2, 2026, *The Wire* [reported](#) that Indian authorities flagged seven X accounts reporting on human rights issues in IAK as “anti-India” (including the [#FreeKhurram](#) campaign) and ordered the disclosure of associated data, including subscriber details, IP addresses and GPS location data.

On April 28, 2026, Indian authorities [registered](#) a criminal case for posters depicting Pakistan’s army chief.

On April 30, 2026, J&K Police [registered](#) a criminal case for the circulation on social media of a video of the late pro-self-determination activist Syed Ali Shah Geelani.

ARBITRARY DETENTIONS AND RAIDS

On April 1, 2026, Counter-Intelligence Kashmir [charged](#) the arbitrarily detained couple, Drs. Umar Farooq Bhat and Shahzada Akther of Kulgam district, under the UAPA for Akther’s alleged pro-self-determination expression on social media.

On April 7, 2026, Indian authorities [arrested](#) five people, including Mohammad Naqeeb Bhat, Adil Rashid Bhat and Ghulam Mohammad Mir from Srinagar, and labelled them "[militants](#)" and "[over-ground workers](#)."

On April 9, 2026, Indian authorities [detained](#) Romelu Singh of Kathua district under the Public Safety Act (PSA) for alleged "anti-national activities." On the same day, Indian authorities [commissioned](#) a new high-security prison in Mahanpur, Kathua district.

On April 14, 2026, an Indian court [sentenced](#) Tawheed Ahmad Shah of Budgam district and two men from Lucknow to life terms for alleged involvement in "terrorist activities."

On April 16, 2026, the State Investigation Agency [charged](#) ten people, including Arif Nisar Dar, Yasir-ul-Ashraf Bhat, Maqsood Ahmad Dar, Irfan Ahmad Wagay, Zameer Ahmad Ahanger, Dr Muzamil Shakeel Ganaie, Dr Adeel Ahmad Rather, Dr Shaheen Saeed, Tufail Ahmad Bhat and Dr Umar Un Nabi of Pulwama, in connection with posters allegedly found in Nowgam on October 19, 2025.

On April 18, 2026, India's National Investigation Agency (NIA) [re-arrested](#) pro-self-determination leader Shabir Shah in a 1996 case (for sloganeering) a few weeks after the Indian Supreme Court and a Delhi court [granted him bail](#) (subject to onerous conditions) in separate cases (Shah was arbitrarily detained since June 2019).

On April 23, 2026, Indian authorities [arrested](#) Zahoor Ahmad Mir, Bashir Ahmad Bhat, Ghulam Mohammad Bhat, and Shazia Mohammad of Hazratbal, Srinagar and labelled them "overground workers."

On April 24, 2026, Indian authorities [imprisoned](#) Umar Akbar Hajam of Seelu, Salman Ahmed Shala of Shalpora, Altaf Ahmed Sheikh of Panzipora, Tarzoo, Mubashir Ahmed Gilkar of Naseerabad, Muzammil Mushtaq Changa of Arampora, and Majid Firdous Dar of Chinkipora, Sopore in District Jail Bhadarwah under the PSA, in connection with their alleged participation in a [protest against sexual abuse by a school teacher](#).

On April 27, 2026, the preventive detention of Mehraj Malik, an Indian-client elected politician, was [quashed](#) after more than six months as baseless.

On April 28, 2026, Indian authorities [arrested](#) five people in Khanmoh, Srinagar and labelled them "terrorist associates."

On April 30, 2026, a Delhi court [charged](#) Bilquies Shah, wife of Shabir Shah, for alleged "terror financing" in 2007.

TAKING AND DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY; ECONOMIC DISEMPOWERMENT

On April 14, 2026, Kashmir Times [reported](#) over 140,000 kanals (17,500 acres) of land have been expropriated by the state between 2019 and 2025, substantially driving the loss of incomes, ways of life, productive agricultural land, ecological stability and food security.

On April 22, 2026, Indian authorities [expropriated](#) a home and lands associated with Fayaz Ahmed Magray in Lethpora, Awantipora, Pulwama district.

On April 24, 2026, the NIA [expropriated](#) the real property of Tafazul Hussain Parimoo of Nowgam, Budgam district.

POLITICAL DISEMPOWERMENT, VIOLATION OF POLITICAL RIGHTS, AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE

On April 15, 2026, the Indian government [introduced](#) the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill seeking to further [gerrymander](#) assembly constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir which were most recently gerrymandered in 2022 (that exercise, the [sixth](#) in eight decades, exacerbated the structural privilege of pro-BJP Hindu-majority areas over Muslim-majority areas). Official data on “reservation” policies (which provide quotas and structural preferences to certain groups in education, employment and other areas) further evidenced the systematic privileging of pro-BJP groups over others, with 286,061 reservation certificates awarded to Jammu residents over the last two years, compared to only 35,104 awarded to Kashmir residents.

COLLECTIVE PUNISHMENT

On April 5, 2026, Indian forces [imposed](#) a cordon-and-search operation (CASO) in Samba district.

On April 8, 2026, Indian authorities [terminated](#) the employment of Farhat Ali Khanday of Ramban and Mohammad Shafi Dar of Bandipora for alleged links to “terrorism.”

On April 12, 2026, Indian forces [imposed](#) a CASO in Pangdour, Samba district.

On April 14, 2026, Indian forces [imposed](#) CASOs in various parts of Ramkote, Kathua district.

DENIAL OF ACCESS TO JUSTICE; LEGALIZED IMPUNITY

On April 4, 2026, a court in Srinagar [declared](#) Abdul Rashid Wani of Bemina, Srinagar legally dead—28 years after his enforced disappearance by the 2/8 Gorkha Rifles on July 7, 1997. The court found Major V.P. Yadav responsible for Wani’s murder. Wani’s case is detailed as Case No. 31 in IPTK/APDP’s seminal “[Alleged Perpetrators](#)” report (December 2012). Wani’s family pursued the case since 1997. People’s Union for Democratic Rights [published](#) a statement on the case, describing it as encapsulating “the human rights story of the past 36 years in Jammu and Kashmir.”

VIOLATIONS OF RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

On April 18, 2026, Indian authorities [seized](#) control of 58 independent schools which served economically disadvantaged families seeking an Islamically-oriented education for their children.

On April 27, 2026, Indian authorities [declared](#) the Jamia Siraj-ul-Uloom School, a Muslim school and seminary in Shopian district, an unlawful entity under the UAPA, authorizing the expropriation of its assets and the forcible relocation of its students. Also on April 27, in an emblematic case of the impacts on families of the ongoing denial of movement in Jammu & Kashmir, the family of Raja Liaquat Khan of Keran, Kupwara were denied the right to cross the [Line of Control](#) to participate in his funeral.

PUBLIC STATEMENTS, COMMUNICATIONS, AND REPORTS

On April 3, 2026, Anuradha Bhasin [published](#) “Kashmiri Protests over Iran and Palestine are Also Protests over Kashmir.”

On April 5, 2026, Gowhar Geelani [published](#) “One more controversial ‘encounter’ killing in the Valley” in connection with the March 2026 fake encounter killing of Rashid Ahmad Mughal.

On April 9, 2026, Al Jazeera [published](#) “Three Life Terms for Kashmir’s Aasiya Andrabi Fit India’s ‘Broader Pattern’”; and Nora Lindström [published](#) “Three Life Sentences, Zero Terrorism Convictions: The Paradox at the Heart of India’s Kashmir Crackdown.”

On April 21, 2026, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) [announced](#) the re-election of arbitrarily detained Kashmiri human rights defender Khurram Parvez as Deputy Secretary-General.

On April 28, 2026, Kashmir Times [published](#) Yasin Malik’s Affidavit vs NIA Rejoinder Before Delhi High Court.

On April 29, 2026, Mariya Nadeem Khan [published](#) “Tihar is a Place in Delhi.”

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