

# CLAWS Newsletter



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by Nomita Chandola

## **JAMMU AND KASHMIR NEWS**

### **1. J&K Reservation Policy Debate** ([The Indian Express, 15<sup>th</sup> March 2025](#))

People's Conference president Sajad Lone has claimed that J&K's reservation system favours Jammu, marginalizing Kashmiri-speaking people, STs, and EWS in Kashmir. He highlighted that all 67,112 SC certificates and 85% of ST certificates were issued in Jammu, while Kashmir received only 8% of EWS certificates. Other categories, including ALC and IB reservations, also heavily favoured Jammu.

Lone criticized the Centre's new policy, which raised total reservations to 70%, arguing it has further tilted the balance against Kashmiris.

### **2. Para on unfulfilled development promises in J&K** ([Daily Excelsior, 15<sup>th</sup> March 2025](#))

PDP legislator Waheed Para has slammed the government's failure to deliver on its post-abrogation promises of development and industrialization in Jammu and Kashmir. Speaking in the J&K Assembly, he pointed out that despite the justification for Article 370's abrogation, no major investments have materialized, and industrialization remains stagnant, with investment declining by 50%.

Para also raised concerns over J&K's resources, including land, water, and minerals, being sold under the pretext of development. He criticized the government for failing to conduct environmental assessments, warning that this threatens the region's ecology and marginalizes locals, who are not being included as stakeholders in the development process.

### **3. Mysterious deaths of Kulgam** ([Srinagar News, 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025](#))

The PDP has demanded a judicial probe into the mysterious deaths of two tribal youths in Kulgam, South Kashmir, amid public outrage and protests.

Three nomadic men went missing on February 13, and later, the bodies of two were found in Veshow Nallah, sparking suspicions. The search for the third missing person is ongoing.



Protestors blocked the Srinagar-Jammu highway, while legislators from the Gujjar-Bakerwal community raised the issue in the Assembly. Police have assured justice, and an official investigation is underway.

#### **4. Pakistani Terrorist killed in Kupwara encounter** ([NDTV, 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025](#))

A Pakistani terrorist, Safiullah, was killed in an encounter with joint security forces in Kupwara, Jammu and Kashmir. The operation, launched early in the morning by Handwara Police, 21 Rashtriya Rifles, and CRPF, was based on specific intelligence inputs.

During the operation, the terrorist opened fire, triggering a gunfight. Security forces neutralized him and recovered an AK-47 rifle, four magazines, a grenade, and other materials. The area has been secured, and investigations are ongoing.

Authorities sealed off the area and deployed reinforcements to ensure success. Civilians were advised to stay indoors for safety. Intelligence agencies suggest increased terror activities are linked to frustration among Pakistani handlers following peaceful elections in 2024.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha have conducted multiple security review meetings, directing zero tolerance for terrorism and dismantling its financial and operational networks.

#### **5. J&K govt. drafting new media policy for digital platforms** ([Kashmir Observer, 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025](#))

The Jammu & Kashmir government is formulating a new media policy to include social media, news portals, and websites for empanelment, aligning with Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity standards.

Addressing concerns over the Srinagar Press Club, the government stated it was vacated due to internal disputes and is now temporarily occupied by J&K Police. Meanwhile, the registration of Kashmir Press Club remains on hold, pending clearance from the Criminal Investigation Department, while the Press Club of Kashmir has been officially registered.

## **6. High security alert in J&K ([The Week, 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025](#))**

A high-security alert has been issued across Jammu and Kashmir following recent terror attacks in Pakistan, including the killing of top Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) commander Zia-ur-Rehman. Security forces have been ordered to intensify patrols, search operations, and surveillance to prevent potential retaliatory attacks by terrorists.

Protected persons, including politicians, have been advised to strictly follow security protocols, avoid public gatherings, and keep their movements confidential. Security agencies warn of possible "lone wolf" or targeted attacks as retaliation for Rehman's killing and the anniversary of Jang-e-Badr.

Security around vital installations has been enhanced, and people seeking protection have been instructed to notify security control rooms before travel, avoid last-minute route changes, and remain cautious of suspicious activity. The alert aims to prevent attacks on soft targets and ensure public safety.

## **7. NIA raids multiple locations in J&K ([NIA, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2023](#))**

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) conducted searches at 12 locations in Jammu on March 19, 2025, targeting overground workers (OGWs) and sympathizers linked to Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM). The operation was part of an investigation into a larger terror conspiracy involving recent attacks on security forces and civilians.

Intelligence reports suggested that terrorists were infiltrating through the International Border (IB) and Line of Control (LoC) with assistance from OGWs, who provided shelter, logistics, and guided them through difficult terrains into Kathua, Udhampur, Doda, Kishtwar, Reasi, Rajouri, Poonch, and Kashmir valley. Several incriminating materials were seized, and further investigations are underway to dismantle the network.



**8. Pakistani intruder along IB in Kathua** ([The Tribune, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025](#))

Security forces apprehended a Pakistani intruder, Qadir Baksh, along the International Border (IB) in Kathua district, Jammu and Kashmir. The suspect, a resident of Gafurabad, Tehsil Chiniot, Pakistan, was detected attempting to cross the border in the Hiranagar sector on Wednesday night.

Warning shots were fired before the intruder was taken into custody. Further investigation is underway to determine his motive and any possible links to cross-border activities.

**9. Three arrested under PSA in Kathua** ([Greater Kashmir, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2025](#))

J&K police arrested three individuals under the Public Safety Act (PSA) for their involvement in anti-national and criminal activities in Kathua.

In Kathua, Ghulam Haider and Mohd Saleem, both habitual offenders, were detained for their illegal and anti-national activities. Their dossiers were submitted to the district magistrate, who issued detention warrants, leading to their transfer to Udhampur and Jammu jails.

In Jammu, Happy Choudhary alias Guggli was arrested for violent crimes, including attempt to murder, snatching, and illegal arms possession. His detention aims to maintain public order and safety.

**10. Assembly Secretariat disallows resolution on Article 370** ([Kashmir Observer, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2025](#))

The J&K Assembly has disallowed resolutions on Article 370, detainees, and reservation, citing procedural rules. Article 370 resolutions were rejected as similar proposals cannot be raised within a year. Detainee-related resolutions were blocked as they fall under the Home Department, which is outside the Assembly's authority. Reservation-related resolutions were denied as the matter is pending in court. However, bills on reservation can still be introduced. A ballot on resolutions will be held on March 25, with discussions on April 7 and 9.

**11. Teen from J&K wins gold at Khelo India Para Games 2025** ([The Tribune, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2025](#))

Paralympian Sheetal Devi, 17, from J&K, won gold in the women's compound event at the Khelo India Para Games 2025 in New Delhi. She scored 137 in the final, defeating Payal Nag from Odisha, who secured silver with 129. Sheetal, born with Phocomelia, is India's first armless female para archer. Both athletes train at the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Archery Academy.

**12. Search Operation intensified in Kathua** ([The Tribune, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025](#))

A massive search operation is underway in Hiranagar, Kathua, after an encounter between security forces and terrorists. NSG commandos have joined the efforts. Arms, M4 carbine magazines, sleeping bags, and food packets were recovered from the Dolka forest.

The gunfight started when terrorists opened fire on police, leading to a half-hour-long exchange. A local couple was briefly held hostage but escaped. A seven-year-old girl was injured.

Security has been tightened along the border, with checkpoints, drones, and sniffer dogs deployed. Officials believe the terrorists recently infiltrated from Pakistan. Jammu and Kashmir DGP Nalin Prabhat visited the site, and search operations continue.

**13. Omar Abdullah supports protest against Waqf Bill** ([Hindustan Times, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025](#))

J&K CM Omar Abdullah defended protests against the Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2024, stating that targeting a particular religion creates tension. The All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) has announced nationwide protests, including sit-ins in Patna and Vijayawada.

A Parliamentary joint committee submitted its 655-page report on the Bill, suggesting amendments. However, opposition members disagreed, calling it an attempt to weaken Waqf boards. The BJP-led panel adopted the report by a 15-11 vote, and the Bill might be tabled in Parliament soon.

#### **14. Terror hideout exposed in South Kashmir** ([The Tribune, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025](#))

Security forces uncovered a terrorist hideout in the Sanglan forest area of Anantnag district, South Kashmir, in a joint operation by J&K Police's Special Operations Group, 19 Rashtriya Rifles, and CRPF. Acting on specific intelligence inputs, forces launched a search operation in the dense forest under Utersoo Police Station jurisdiction and discovered the hideout, suspected to be a logistical base for terrorists.

Recovered items include 200 empty AK cartridges, two gas cylinders, a Chinese grenade, and a night vision device, indicating its role in supporting terrorist activities. Authorities reaffirmed their commitment to combating terrorism and ensuring regional security.

#### **15. India slams Pakistan at UN** ([News 18, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025](#))

India has strongly rejected Pakistan's repeated references to Jammu and Kashmir at the United Nations, reaffirming that J&K is an integral part of India. India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish, condemned Pakistan's diversionary tactics during a debate on peacekeeping reforms, stating that such remarks do not justify Pakistan's cross-border terrorism.

Harish further asserted that Pakistan continues to illegally occupy parts of J&K and must vacate the territory. He dismissed Pakistan's attempts to use international platforms for divisive agendas, making it clear that India's sovereignty is non-negotiable. While refusing to engage in a detailed rebuttal, India reaffirmed its firm stance on the issue,

#### **16. Kathua Encounter** ([India Today, 29<sup>th</sup> March 2025](#))

Security forces in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district have killed two Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) terrorists during an ongoing operation. The search continues to locate more suspects.

Officials dismissed rumours that the terrorists had snatched weapons from slain policemen, confirming all arms were recovered.



The encounter in Safiyan forest on Thursday (27<sup>th</sup> March) led to the deaths of four policemen and two Pakistani terrorists. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Deputy CM Surinder Kumar Choudhary paid tributes to the fallen officers, calling for stronger actions against militancy.

At the wreath-laying ceremony for Head Constable Jagbir Singh, top officials and grieving families honoured the martyrs. Choudhary emphasized J&K's unity, stating that terrorism cannot break India's brotherhood.

#### **17. Kathua Gunbattle update** ([The Indian Express, 30<sup>th</sup> March 2025](#))

Security forces in Jammu and Kashmir have expanded search operations in Kathua district after recovering the bodies of two militants from the site of a deadly encounter that claimed the lives of four police personnel. The militants, suspected to have crossed over from Pakistan, are believed to be part of a fresh group linked to the People's Anti-Fascist Front, a shadow outfit of Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM). J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah attributed security vulnerabilities to the shifting of troops from Jammu to Ladakh to counter Chinese incursions, creating a temporary shortage. Officials, including Deputy CM Surinder Choudhary, condemned cross-border terrorism and reaffirmed their commitment to fighting militancy. The operation remains ongoing, with security forces vowing to eliminate terrorist threats.

#### **18. OGW network under surveillance for aiding terrorists** ([The Tribune, 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025](#))

Intelligence agencies are closely monitoring Over Ground Workers (OGWs) in Kathua and nearby districts for allegedly assisting Pakistani terrorists who infiltrated India through the International Border (IB). These terrorists were involved in two encounters within a week, first in Sanyal village on March 23 and later in Ghati Juthana, where four policemen were killed and two militants were neutralized. At least two terrorists escaped, one possibly injured. Security forces suspect OGWs may be providing food, shelter, and logistical support, as seen in past incidents in Rajouri and Poonch. Pakistan-based terror groups are believed to be reactivating OGWs, including those without prior records, making detection more difficult. Authorities remain vigilant to prevent further terrorist activities in the region.

## **PoK NEWS**

### **19. LeT operative killed in PoK** ([The Economic Times, 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025](#))

Abu Qatal, a key Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) operative and close associate of Hafiz Saeed, was shot dead by unknown assailants in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). Wanted by the NIA for orchestrating attacks on civilians and security forces in Jammu and Kashmir, he was involved in the January 2023 Rajouri massacre and the June 2024 Reasi bus attack, which killed multiple people.

Qatal had infiltrated India in the early 2000s and was instrumental in forming terror proxies like The Resistance Force (TRF). He played a major role in recruiting and dispatching LeT terrorists to India. His elimination marks a significant blow to LeT operations, as he was a high-priority target for Indian security agencies.

### **20. PoK authorities expose major terror plot** ([Dawn, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2025](#))

Authorities in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir arrested a suspect linked to Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), preventing a major terror attack. The suspect was intercepted near Azad Pattan, carrying weapons, ammunition, extremist literature, and supplies. He revealed working under Afghan-based extremist Dr Abdul Rauf and being part of a six-member group infiltrating PoK with heavy arms.

Five operatives who entered through a pulley bridge remain at large, prompting an ongoing search operation. Further investigations linked the network to past attacks, including the killing of a police constable and the March 3 motorway attack. Fugitive Ghazi Shehzad was identified as a key operative coordinating attacks via social media.

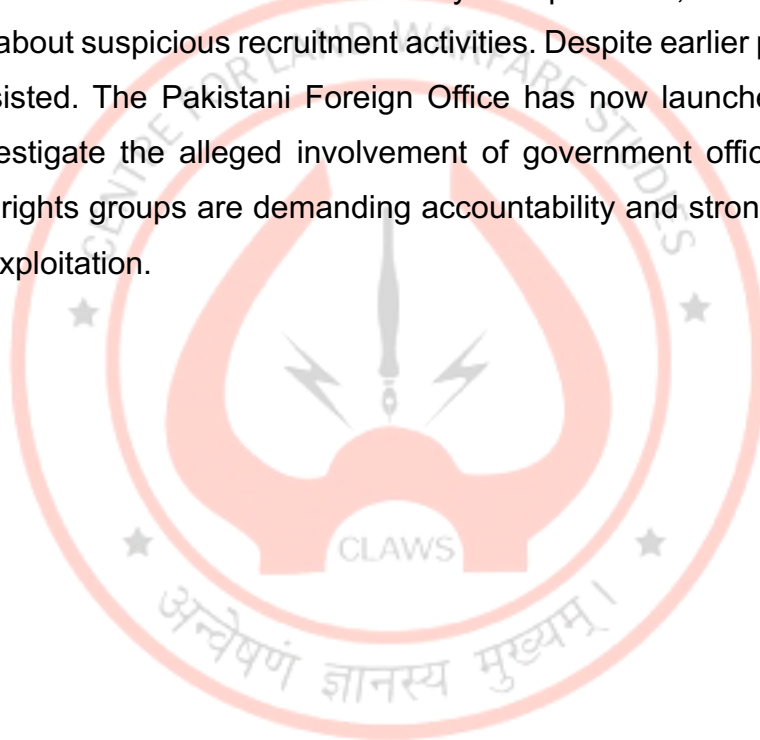
Officials assured efforts to dismantle the terror network, urging the public to stay vigilant and report suspicious activities.

### **21. Pakistani intruder caught in Rajouri** ([PTI, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025](#))

A Pakistani intruder, Mohd Yaqoob from Kotli, PoK, was arrested while crossing the LoC in Rajouri's Keri sector. Alert troops intercepted him, and he was taken into custody for questioning.

## **22. Human Trafficking Scandal** ([Pamir Times, 28<sup>th</sup> March 2025](#))

A human trafficking network has been exposed, smuggling women from Gilgit-Baltistan to Serbia under the guise of employment. The racket, allegedly facilitated by Pakistan's Ambassador to Serbia, Ali Haider Altaf, has led Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar to order an official investigation. The operation was run by Highreach International, owned by Saleha Rajpoot and Sajid Mumtaz, which advertised fake jobs for female farm workers in Serbia, charging applicants PKR 200,000. Once trafficked, the women were stripped of their passports and forced into harsh labor. The scandal escalated when two victims were arrested in Romania, prompting international concern. Warnings about the scheme surfaced as early as April 2024, with local journalists raising alarms about suspicious recruitment activities. Despite earlier police action, the traffickers persisted. The Pakistani Foreign Office has now launched a fact-finding mission to investigate the alleged involvement of government officials. As outrage grows, human rights groups are demanding accountability and stronger measures to prevent such exploitation.





## About the Author

**Nomita Chandola** is a dedicated scholar in International Relations, with a strong academic foundation and a passion for understanding complex global issues. She recently earned her master's degree in International Relations from the University of Leeds, where she focused on modules such as global governance and climate security. Prior to this, she completed her bachelor's degree in Political Science with a minor in Economics from Kamla Nehru College, University of Delhi.

Currently, Nomita is a Research Assistant at the Centre for Land Warfare Studies, where she delves into critical issues of strategic affairs and geopolitical dynamics. Her primary area of interest lies in South Asian studies, emphasizing security dynamics and their intersections with global politics. She aspires to pursue a PhD to further explore these themes. With a keen eye for policy analysis and research, Nomita aims to contribute meaningfully to the academic and policy discourse on international security and regional stability.

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