

42ndSESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

**General Debate under Agenda Item-4: Human rights situations that
require the Council's attention**

Remarks by Pakistan

17 September 2019

Mr. President,

A long night of repression has descended on the people of Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOK), and the rest of India, where lynching by cow vigilantes, burning of churches and raping of women including Nuns continues unabated.

Today is the forty fourth day of curfew in IOK, of a complete security lockdown, of widespread detentions, of extra-judicial killings and use of pellet guns, of lack of medicines, scarcity of food, and the burying of the dead inside homes.

The Guardian, in a recent editorial, has observed that IOK has “been turned into an open air prison, with the inmates cut off from the outside world”.

But, who better to tell their tale of misery and pain, than the Kashmiris themselves. Let me narrate some of their stories in their own words, but without taking their names so as to avoid reprisals. For, we have not forgotten the extrajudicial killing of journalist Shujjat Bukhari whose sole crime was a single tweet welcoming the High Commissioner's first Kashmir report.

A Kashmiri poet writes in what he calls his Diary of Silences, and I quote, “India has stationed its armies on our door steps at home. Our cities and villages have been turned into garrisons. No movement is allowed”. He adds, “On social media, the overseers of occupation are manufacturing normalcy to lie about

whatever is happening in Kashmir right now. We know what they are upto. The application of brute violence on people is not new to my countrymen”.

A Kashmiri civil society activist has tweeted and I quote “Many injured avoid hospitals, even if it means spending days in pain with iron pellets lodged in their bodies. They say policemen in civvies have been stationed in hospitals to record the names of injured – and later raid their houses.” Unquote.

A Kashmiri from the southern part of the Valley says, and I quote “They’re marauding our homes and hearths like a victorious army. They are now behaving as if they have a right over our lives, property and honor” unquote.

Another Kashmiri told an international news agency, that Indian soldiers came to his house after midnight. He was dragged out and blindfolded, along with his brother who had learning difficulties. He revealed, and I quote, “They gave electric shocks to my brother right on the road outside, I heard him scream painfully”.

Let me close these disturbing accounts with another excerpt from the Kashmiri poet’s diary. One of his relatives told him “if we have to die, if it is in our fate, come home, let us die together.”

This, Mr. President, is the plight of the people in Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

What does the Council propose to do to alleviate their suffering? How is the elaborate international human rights machinery going to respond to their misery? Will there be apathy, indifference and expediency, or will Council members, particularly those who endlessly proclaim their fidelity to human rights, demonstrate a resolute adherence to the norms and values that underpin the work of the Council?

Mr. President,

The Kashmiri people must be offered hope. Their suffering must be eased. The ground situation, now, is far worse than the last two years for which the OHCHR has published reports. We, therefore, urge the High Commissioner to continue closely monitoring the situation in IOK and reporting on the Kashmiri peoples' dire situation in accordance with her mandate.
