

Status of Stone Pelting in Kashmir

What is the issue?

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Stone-pelting in Kashmir has become a full-fledged industry systematically organized by Hurriyat group.

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Who are Hurriyat?

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- The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) was as a political platform of the separatist movement in 1993.

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- It was an extension of the conglomerate parties of disparate ideologies, held together by their common position that Jammu & Kashmir was “under occupation of India”.

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- At a time when militancy was at its peak, this conglomerate represented the political face of the militant movement, and claimed to “represent the wishes and aspirations of the people”.

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- It had brought together two separate, but strong ideologies: those who sought J&K’s independence from both India and Pakistan, and those who wanted J&K to become part of Pakistan.

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- Most of the groups that were part of the Hurriyat had their militant wings, or were linked to a militant outfit.

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What is the status of stone pelting in Kashmir?

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- The year 2016 witnessed 1,742 incidents of stone-pelting against CRPF

personnel.

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- January-April 2018 saw 245 incidents of stone-pelting on the CRPF alone, in which 71 personnel were injured.
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- This would roughly translate to an over 55% spike over the 162 such incidents in January-April 2017.
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- In 2018, the most incidents have occurred in Srinagar (145) followed by Baramulla (24), Pulwama (21), and Shopian (16).
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- Recently the suspension of security operations in Jammu & Kashmir during Ramzan has significantly brought down stone-pelting.
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- The first five days of the “ceasefire” had witnessed only five incidents of stone-pelting.

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What are the reasons behind stone pelting in Kashmir?

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- Stone pelting activity in Kashmir largely happens due to a spate of encounters of local militants with security forces.
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- Stone-pelting was systematically organised by members of the Hurriyat through WhatsApp groups and Facebook pages, and was funded by money flowing in from Pakistan.
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- Apart from Hurriyat, A large section of the youth in the Valley are spontaneously resorting to stone-pelting.
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- Stone-pelting typically rises in summer, between May and August. Before April, the cold and the snow restrict movements in the open.
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- With the melting of snow, Kashmir generally sees a spike in stone-pelting which continues until winter sets in again.

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What were the actions taken by the government?

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- In 2017, NIA had registered cases on various Hurriyat leaders and alleged that stone-pelting was organised by separatists at the behest of Pakistan.

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- NIA's action against Hurriyat leaders in a terror-funding case had considerably brought down stone-pelting incidents.

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Source: The Indian Express

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