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Bank Manager from...

do happen periodically with no solution about the security of bank staff," he said. Canara Bank Officers' Association general secretary Ravi Kumar, while condemning the incident, demanded strict action against those behind this killing.

The fresh killing comes barely two days after a Hindu woman teacher Rajni Bala, hailing from Jammu's Samba district, was shot dead by terrorists at a government school in Gopalpora, Kulgam.

The spate of targeted killings started in May this year which included that of Rahul Bhat, a clerk, who was shot dead inside the tehsildar's office in Chadoora tehsil of Budgam district.

Of the eight targeted killings in Kashmir since May 1, three victims were off-duty policemen and five were civilians.

"So very sorry to hear about the targeted killing of Vijay Kumar. Tweeting to condemn an attack and condole a death are becoming a mind-numbingly regular thing. It's heartbreaking to see families destroyed like this," NC vice-president Omar Abdullah said in a tweet.

Peoples Conference chairman Sajad Lone termed the killing a heinous act and said he was at a loss of words to express his condemnation for such a heinous act.

"Yet again extremely sad news coming in. An innocent civilian working as a manager in a bank in Kulgam has been shot dead," he said on Twitter.

In Jammu, the J&K BJP president Ravinder Raina said the recent targeted killings in the Valley is a conspiracy by Pakistan to create fear and sabotage the Centre's efforts to restore peace and normalcy in the Union Territory.

Fear-stricken Govt...

Bala and demand the government to ensure free education to her minor daughter and secure a government job for her.

We are frustrated by the deteriorating security situation as nobody, including Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs are safe there. Anyone can become a victim of terrorists anytime, he said and referred to the latest killing of bank manager Vijay Kumar from Rajasthan in Kulgam district on Thursday.

Another employee Anjana Bala, a teacher posted in north Kashmir's Kupwara district, said, We do not need government accommodation or promotion, we only want our transfer from the valley as providing security to each employee is not possible.

There is no safer place in the valley and we are not ready to accept the government proposal of relocation within the valley, she said, adding they have never faced any problem from the locals who have always supported them.

She said if the government can abolish decade-old Article 370 in August 2019, what stops them from making minor changes in the transfer policy and relocating them to their home districts.

We did not support the people of Kashmir who were against the revocation of Article 370. They were right and today we regret our decision as nothing changed on the ground except that we had lost the special status, she said.

Another teacher said they have gone there to earn their livelihood and not to settle there.

The government is saying that they will relocate us to safer places but even after that if something untoward happens, who will be responsible. Today a bank manager was shot dead inside his secured office, while recently a Kashmiri pandit employee was gunned down in his office chamber, he said.

He said they have lost faith in the administration and will not return to the valley to become scapegoats.

Looking forward to...

standoff began in early May of 2020. As a result of the military talks, the two sides completed the disengagement process last year on the north and south banks of the Pangong lake and in the Gogra area.

India has been consistently maintaining that peace and tranquillity along the LAC are key for the overall development of the bilateral ties.

Asked about media reports of back-channel talks between India and Pakistan, Bagchi said he would not comment on speculative reports.

He said India desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan in a conducive atmosphere, free of terror, hostilities and violence.

On India's trade ties with Pakistan, he said New Delhi never felt that trade relations should be stopped.

Court frames corruption...

section 5(1) (c)(d) r/v sections 5(2) J&K PC Act Svt 2006, 120-B RPC are prima facie establish the offences alleged it and framed charges against the accused.

Santoor maestro Bhajan...

crematorium here on Friday.

In a statement, Fortis Memorial Research Institute said the santoor exponent was diagnosed with "colon cancer stage IV" and was under treatment at the hospital since February this year.

"The disease had spread to the liver and bones... (He) had received chemotherapy, targeted therapy and immunotherapy over the last couple of months.

"He was admitted at FMRI on May 18, 2022, after his condition had deteriorated. In spite of the best efforts of the doctors, however, he succumbed to multi-organ failure on June 2, 2022," the hospital further said.

Sopori's death comes just weeks after santoor virtuoso Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma, who also belonged to Kashmir and took the stringed instrument to the classical music stage, died on May 10. And on Saturday, playback singer KK passed away on Saturday in Kolkata following a cardiac arrest.

Sopori received multiple awards through his career, including the Padma Shri in 2004, the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1992 and the Jammu and Kashmir

State Lifetime Achievement Award.

The musician-composer belonged to north Kashmir's Sopore district and came from the 'Sufiana Gharana'.

Sopori, who gave his first public performance at the age of 10, was initiated into the intricacies of santoor playing by his grandfather Pandit Samsar Chand Sopori and later by his father Pandit Shamboo Nath Sopori.

The musician is considered a pioneer in establishing the santoor on national and international platforms as a complete solo instrument. He is also credited with innovating the instrument to improve its tonal quality and range.

Sopori had a double Masters degree in Indian classical music, specialising in both the sitar and the santoor. The versatile artiste also had a Masters degree in English Literature and studied Western Classical Music at Washington University.

Sopori composed music for over 6,000 songs in almost all Indian languages, including Hindi, Kashmiri, Dogri, Sindhi, Urdu and Bhojpuri, as well as Persian and Arabic.

During his career, he composed music for 'ghazals' written by greats such as Ghalib, Daag, Momin, Bahadur Shah Zafar, Iqbal, Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Firak Gaurakhpuri. He also set to tune the works of Kabir and Meera Bai.

In 2011, Sopori was honoured with a Rs 5 stamp, a special tribute by the Indian Postal Department for his extraordinary work in the field of art and culture.

National Conference leader Omar Abdullah described him as a "colossus in the world of classical Indian music who made the santoor his own".

Condoling the musician's death on Twitter, the former chief minister of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir said he was "very sorry to hear about the tragic demise of Padma Shri Pandit Bhajan Sopori sahib. A great son of the soil..."

The Jammu & Kashmir National Conference also mourned Sopori's death in a tweet.

"Dr Farooq, @OmarAbdullah condole demise of Santoor Maestro Bhajan Sopori. They said 'He was a great human being, a very talented musician. His contribution to music will be remembered by generations to come. They prayed for peace to the deceased & strength to the bereaved family."

BJP leader Devender Singh Rana remembered Sopori as a humble person.

"Sad to hear about the demise of Santoor Maestro Pt Bhajan Sopori. Panditji was a very humble person. The music world will miss him. My heartfelt condolences to Mrs Sopori and @abhaysopori. May the departed soul rest in peace in heaven."

In its tribute to the santoor maestro, the Society for the Promotion of Indian Classical Music And Culture Amongst Youth (SPIC MACAY) remembered the musician as the cultural bridge of Jammu and Kashmir with the rest of the country.

"The #SaintofSantoor Pt. #BhajanSopori is no more. He breathed his last today. A cultural bridge of J&K with the rest of the country, he belonged to the fabled Sopori SufianaGharana, the traditional #Santoor family and was a huge supporter of SPIC MACAY. May God bless his soul."

"It's a shocking news for me and my wife Shameem to learn about the sudden demise of eminent santoor maestro and ace music composer Pandit Bhajan Sopori ji. He was family to us. Shameem and Sopori Sahib were dear brother and sister. Both took music lessons from Bhajan ji's late father Pt. Shambhu Nath Sopori ji," said senior Congress Leader Ghulam Nabi Azad.

"I am speechless as I have not only lost a great mentor but a dear brother. My long association with Guru-bhai in the field of music was more than four decades. I am short of words to express how deep a void I feel. Bhajan ji will live-on in my memory. My sincere condolence to his wife and sons. May his soul rest in peace. I pray Almighty to give strength and courage to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss," said Shameem Azad, wife of Ghulam Nabi Azad.

Maha ATS arrests...

specific information, the Kalachowky unit of the ATS had launched a probe against four suspects, including Junaid, in connection with recruiting new members for LeT and sending them to Jammu and Kashmir for training and terror activities, he said.

The ATS had registered an FIR under Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections 121A (conspiracy to commit offences), 153A (promoting enmity between different groups), 116 (abetment of an offence) and section 66 of the Information Technology Act was registered and Junaid was apprehended by the team led by police inspector Manjusha Bhusle, he said.

Targeted killings conspiracy...

Wave like we have seen the 'operation Tupac' in 1980-1990 under the leadership of then Pakistani military ruler Gen Zia-ul-Haq which brought death and destruction to Kashmir," the BJP leader claimed.

Raina said Pakistan is the biggest enemy of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and it wants to create an "Afghanistan-like situation" in the Valley.

He said the 'operation Red wave' will meet the same fate as the 'Operation Tupac' as police and security forces are determined to wipe out terrorism with active support of the people of Jammu and Kashmir who are nationalist by core.

Condemning the latest killing of bank manager Vijay Kumar in south Kashmir's Kulgam district, Raina said, "The coward Pakistan and its supported terrorists have once again committed a grave sin and they have to pay heavy price for this."

"Whether it is (Kashmiri pandit) Rahul Pandita, (Muslim artist) Amreen, (police-men) Riyaz Ahmad Thokar and Saifullah Qadri, (Dogra from Jammu) Rajni Bala or bank manager from Rajasthan, innocent blood was split and Pakistan is directly involved in it over the last 35 years. They have turned the valley into a graveyard," Raina said.

He said Pakistan-supported terrorists have committed grave human rights violations by killing innocents over the past three decades.

"When terrorism raised its ugly head in the valley (in 1989), nationalist Muslims and minorities were targeted to create a fear and they are trying same thing again to harm brotherhood and sabotage the progress towards peace and development," he said.

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