

## India: One month on shut-down continues in Jammu and Kashmir

(Kathmandu/Bangkok, 4 September 2019) – It has been one month since the start of the shut-down in India administered Jammu and Kashmir. The Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA) remains deeply concerned over these continuous restrictions on the freedom of expression and movement, and the further violations of human rights in the area.

India imposed restrictions on phone and Internet access on 5 August 2019, and services remain suspended till today. The black-out was imposed after the Indian Government decided scrap the ‘special status’ of Jammu and Kashmir.

Hundreds of political activists, human rights defenders and community leaders have also been reportedly detained under the draconian Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act (PSA) of 1978, which permits detention without any charges. There are reports of torture by security forces, which have been deployed in even more disproportionate numbers than before across Jammu and Kashmir. The education and livelihoods of people are at stake, as well as emergency services being adversely affected.

FORUM-ASIA strongly believes that severe and prolonged restrictions on communication, arbitrary mass detentions of social and political leaders, denial of freedom of expression and access to information will lead to the further deterioration of human rights and basic freedoms. FORUM-ASIA urges the Government of India to lift the communication restrictions immediately, and adopt remedial measures to restore normalcy in Jammu and Kashmir. FORUM-ASIA reiterates its call to the Government of India to resort to peaceful democratic means, and refrain from resorting to military force.

### About FORUM-ASIA:

*FORUM-ASIA is a regional human rights group with 81 member organisations in 21 countries across Asia. FORUM-ASIA has offices in Bangkok, Jakarta, Geneva and Kathmandu. FORUM-ASIA addresses key areas of human rights violations in the region, including freedoms of expression, assembly and association, human rights defenders, and democratisation.*

### For further information, please contact:

- South Asia Programme, FORUM-ASIA, [sasia@forum-asia.org](mailto:sasia@forum-asia.org)