

# INDIAN OCCUPIED JAMMU AND KASHMIR

## IMPORTANT EVENTS/ ACTIONS POST 5<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2019



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Since Aug. 5, 2019, when India moved to strip special constitutional status of Jammu and Kashmir, it has incorporated several legal changes in the statute book of the region. Some administrative measures were also taken in IOJK. Here is a timeline of various decisions / actions taken by the Indian government as well as the response of international community, Pakistan and people of Jammu and Kashmir

### 2019

**August 2**– Indian authorities ask tourists to leave disputed Kashmir citing "terror threats," while reportedly dispatching some 25,000 military reinforcements to the troubled Himalayan region.

**August 3** – Pakistan says India fired illegal cluster bombs — which emit deadly exploding shrapnel and are prohibited under the Geneva Convention — killing two civilians and wounding 11 others in its portion of disputed Kashmir, a claim India denies.

**August 5**- India revokes provisions of Article 370 of its constitution and other laws related to separate citizenship provision of its only Muslim-majority state, which was also split into two centrally administered territories.

Since then 143 Indian laws extend to the state, 7 local laws retain but with changes, 164 state laws annulled.

**August 13** – Indian apex court backs "security" crackdown and communications blackout in Kashmir. Some 69 Indian activists write a letter to

Indian PM Modi calling for an end to Kashmir lockdown. Protests in IOJK on the first day of Eid al Adha amid tighter curbs.

**August 15** – Fact-finding report by Indian activists say the situation in Kashmir "absolutely not normal" despite Indian claims of normalcy in the region.

**August 16-** UNSC Kashmir moot gives lie to Indian claim

For the first time since 1965, the UN Security Council (UNSC) held a meeting exclusively on occupied Jammu and Kashmir, nullifying India's claim that this was an internal matter.

Although the council did not agree on a statement, China's UN Ambassador Zhang Jun summed up the discussions, expressing serious concern over the situation.

"The UNSC members are concerned about the human rights situation there and they (want) the parties concerned to refrain from taking any unilateral action that might further aggravate the tension there since the situation is already very tense and very dangerous," he said.

**August 19** – US President Trump discusses Kashmir dispute with India, Pakistan premiers.

**August 20** – Pakistan says it has decided to take Kashmir dispute to the International Court of Justice at The Hague.

**Sep 5-** Amnesty International launches 'urgent campaign' to end blackout

Amnesty International India launched a global campaign in a bid to highlight the human cost of the month-long lockdown in occupied Kashmir.



"The draconian communication blackout in [occupied] Kashmir is an outrageous protracted assault on the civil liberties of the people of Kashmir," read a press release by the human rights watchdog.

"In response to this indefinite communication blackout, Amnesty International India has launched the campaign #LetKashmirSpeak on 5 September, 2019 – which marks a month of the communications blackout, to ask for immediate lifting of the lockdown," stated Amnesty International India.

**Sep 13** – Pakistan PM Imran Khan holds Kashmir rally in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, says India's crackdown in Kashmir could drive more of the world's Muslims into "extremism."

### **Sep 28- Pakistan, Turkey and Malaysia speak up for Kashmiris at UNGA**

Prime Minister Imran arrived in the United States for a week of global diplomacy, with his trip dubbed 'Mission Kashmir'. The highlight of his more than 45-minute-long speech at the 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York was intense criticism of India for its annexation of occupied Kashmir and the continued restrictions imposed in the region.

"(Nearly) 100,000 Kashmiris have died in the past 30 years because they were denied their right of self-determination. Eleven thousand women were raped. The world hasn't done anything," he said. "What is going to happen will be a blood bath. The people will come out."

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad at the forum said despite UN resolutions, the territory had been invaded and occupied. In his address, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan criticised the international community for failing to pay attention to the Kashmir conflict, which, he said, awaits solution for 72 years.

### **Oct 1- 9-year-old among 144 minors detained**

A police list seen by AFP showed that Indian authorities in occupied Kashmir had detained 144 minors, including a nine-year-old, since the government removed the region's special status in August.

Sixty of the minors were under 15, according to the document submitted to a committee appointed by India's Supreme Court to look into allegations of illegal detentions. Reasons given by the police for detaining the minors included stone pelting, rioting and causing damage to public and private property, the committee said in its report.

**October 9** – Chinese President Xi Jinping says he was watching the situation in disputed Kashmir and would support Pakistan in issues related to its core interests.

### **Oct. 22- Power shift**

The government of IOJK changes law related to transactions of immovable property. The powers to register such transaction shifts to the revenue department from Judiciary.

Impact: Less scrutiny and lack of judicial oversight in these transactions.

**Oct. 22** – Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad says he would not retract his criticism of New Delhi's actions in disputed Kashmir despite Indian traders calling for an unprecedented boycott of Malaysian palm oil.

### **Oct. 23- Abolishing of rights commissions**

The government orders closure of seven commissions like Jammu and Kashmir State Human Rights Commission (SHRC), State Information Commission, State Accountability Commission, State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission.

The SHRC was enquiring into various cases of human rights abuses.

**Oct 24** – Pakistan welcomes the US Congressional hearing in the Asia-Pacific sub-committee on the situation in Indian-administered Kashmir.

**Oct 27** – Pakistan denies India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi permission to fly through its airspace due to "ongoing grave human rights violations" in Indian-administered Kashmir.

### **Oct 31- Occupied Kashmir officially loses special status and is divided**

Shops and offices were shut in occupied Kashmir and the streets largely deserted as federal authorities formally revoked the restive area's constitutional autonomy and split it into two federal territories.

Just after midnight on Oct 30, the federal government's orders went into effect, dividing up occupied Jammu and Kashmir into two union territories; one Jammu and Kashmir, and the other the Buddhist-dominated high altitude region of Ladakh. "Everything changes on Thursday," said a retired Kashmiri judge, Hasnain Masoodi, a member of India's Parliament. "The entire exercise is unconstitutional. The mode and methodology have been undemocratic. People were humiliated and never consulted."

### **Dec 7- Resolution in US Congress seeks end to repression**

A bipartisan resolution moved in the US Congress urged India to end the restrictions on communications and mass detentions in occupied Kashmir as swiftly as possible and preserve religious freedom for all residents. Resolution 745 was jointly moved by Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal, a Democrat, and Congressman Steve Watkins, a Republican. Born in Madras (Chennai), Jayapal is the first Indian-American woman to serve in the US House of Representatives. The movers rejected arbitrary detention, use of excessive force

against civilians, and suppression of peaceful expression of dissent as proportional responses to security challenges.

**Dec. 27-** Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir government abandons observing birth anniversary (Dec, 5) of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, founder of the region's oldest political party National Conference (NC). The government also drops Kashmir's national day July 13 (Martyrs' Day) from its annual calendar of events. Pro India parties like Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and NC said that the government is out to delete the Kashmir's political history.

## 2020

### **Jan 16- UN Security Council reviews situation in occupied Kashmir**

The United Nations Security Council held a meeting on Jammu and Kashmir and reviewed the situation in the occupied valley. Although the meeting took place behind closed doors, Chinese Ambassador Zhang Jun spoke to journalists outside the chamber, confirming that the council had reviewed the situation in the occupied valley.

“We had a meeting on Jammu and Kashmir,” he said. “The Security Council heard a briefing from the secretariat on the situation.”

Asked what China's position on the situation in Kashmir was, he said: “Our position is very clear.” China recognises Kashmir as a territory disputed between India and Pakistan and openly supports Islamabad's demand for a plebiscite to enable the Kashmiri people to decide their own future.

**Jan. 25-** The government omits the prefix of Sher-i-Kashmir from police medals. Sher-e-Kashmir is a reference to the former chief minister and NC founder Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, who was the pioneer of Kashmir's accession with India.

**Feb. 6-** Authorities rename Public Health Engineering/Irrigation and Flood Control Department to Jal Shakti Department.

Impact: The renaming is seen as imposing Hindu names in a Muslim majority region.

**Feb. 26-** Indian approves adaptation and modifications of 37 laws to be made applicable to Jammu and Kashmir

**March 6** - The government of India set up the Delimitation Commission, headed by retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai, which was tasked with winding up delimitation in J&K in a year. As per the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Bill, the number of Assembly seats in J&K would increase from 107 to 114, which is expected to benefit the Jammu region.

**March, 31-** The government of IOJK notifies new citizenship laws by issuing domicile notification. A person residing in Jammu and Kashmir for 15 years now eligible to be a citizen of the region.

Before the Aug. 5, 2019 job, land and citizenship rights were reserved for the local population. The government orders repealing or amending 138 local laws, adopted by the region's assembly over the years.

**June 2-** IOJK government approves a new media policy for the region. The policy gives limitless powers to the administration to decide fake and anti-national news and to take legal action against journalists or media organizations.

In the recent past, several journalists in Kashmir have received police summons for their news stories.

**June 20-** The excise commissioner of IOJK submits a proposal to open 67 liquor shops in Kashmir Valley and 116 such outlets in the Jammu division. The



local religious leaders describe it as an attempt to interfere in the culture and beliefs of the Muslim majority region

**July 9- UN officials seek probe into torture, custodial deaths of Muslims in occupied Kashmir**

Four UN special rapporteurs have asked the Indian government to investigate the alleged torture and custodial killings of several Muslim men since January 2019, it emerged in July.

A report was sent to the Indian government over “the continued deterioration of human rights conditions” in occupied Kashmir, documenting several cases of “arbitrary detentions, violations to the prohibition of torture and ill-treatment and rights of persons belonging to minorities”.

“We remain deeply concerned about the ongoing human rights violations,” said the report shared on the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OCHCR) website.

They called on New Delhi “to conduct an impartial investigation into all the allegations of arbitrary killings, torture and ill-treatment and to prosecute suspected perpetrators.”

**July 17-** The IOJK government amends the Jammu and Kashmir Development Act. The move allows notifying “strategic areas” for the armed forces in the region. It will allow the Indian Army to construct infrastructure.

**July 24-** The IOJK government orders that army or paramilitary forces need not seek any special permission for acquiring land.

**July 31-** A committee set up to act against government employees involved in anti-national activities. The measure is seen to curb opposition from the local employees.

## **August 2- One year on, India's lockdowns ruin occupied Kashmir's economy**

“We’ve not earned a single penny for a year now,” said Ghulam Qadir Ota, a houseboat owner. “All we have are these boats. We don’t have any other means to earn.”

When India suddenly scrapped disputed Kashmir's semi-autonomous status in August 2019, followed by an unprecedented security clampdown, economic ruin ensued.

“It was not just a political change. It destroyed our livelihood,” said Abdul Rashid, 60, who has now turned to growing vegetables to feed his family.

The Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industries has pegged the economic losses in the region at \$5.3 billion and about half a million jobs lost since August last year.

**Oct 15** -After an all party meet of all pro India political parties of IOJK , that includes National Conference (NC), PDP, CPI(M), PC, JKPM & ANC, is to work towards restoring the special status of J&K after it was revoked in 2019 signed Gupkar Declaration.

**Nov 28**- In a Resolution adopted unanimously by the 47<sup>th</sup> Session of the OIC in Niamey the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) reaffirmed its strong support for the Kashmir cause. The OIC categorically rejected illegal and unilateral actions taken by India since 5 August 2019. The Resolution demands that India “cancel the issuance of domicile certificates to non-Kashmiris” as well as other unilateral and illegal actions, including “Jammu & Kashmir Reorganization Order 2020”, “Jammu & Kashmir Grant of Domicile Certificate Rules 2020”, “Jammu and Kashmir Language Bill 2020” and amendments to the landownership laws.

## 2021

**February 25-** India and Pakistan announced their recommitment to a ceasefire along the Line of Control and other disputed sections of the border between the archrivals.

**March 2021-** the Govt. of India informed that as per Jammu & Kashmir government's information, a total of 35,44,938 applications for issue of Domicile Certificate was received till December 31, 2020, out of which 32,31,353 applicants have been issued Domicile Certificates.

**May 05-** A prominent pro-freedom leader in Indian Occupied Kashmir, Muhammad Ashraf Sehrai, has died inside a hospital in southern Jammu city, where he was in detention for the last year. He was 77.

**May 28** - India and Pakistan should “refrain” from taking steps that would alter the status of the disputed territory of Kashmir, the president of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Volkan Bozkir .

**June 10** - India handed more than 3.4 million fake domicile certificates to non-Kashmiris in order to change the demography of IOJK . India continues with its design to change the demographic structure of the occupied territory in clear violation of international law, including the 4th Geneva Convention. Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri, spokesperson for Pakistan's Foreign Ministry.

**June 24-** Indian PM Modi met 14 so pro-Indian politicians from IIOJK in Delhi for the first time after the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35 A. It was not a surprise move as behind the doors, RAW was making preparations with these so called leaders while the actual leaders remain behind bars. Holding a conference with some so called politicians is not acceptable to Kashmiris as it gives a false impression to the international community that India is serious in bringing normalcy to IIOJK.

**July 21-** Officials in IOJK barred Muslims from offering prayers in the historic Jamia Masjid, Dargah Hazratbal, Eidgahs and other big mosques by erecting barricades. Kashmir's largest mosque, Jamia Masjid Srinagar, were closed, while Eid prayers were allowed only in a few small mosques located in peripheral areas of the Kashmir valley.

**July 21-** In a significant move, the Jammu and Kashmir administration has announced to issue a domicile certificate to the husband of a native woman. Earlier, the J&K women who were married outside the Union Territory, made their spouse ineligible for domicile certificate.

**July 30-** The vice president of European Parliament and its 15 members include; Fabio Massimo Castaldo (ni); Dino Giarrusso (ni); Javier Nart (renew Europe); Chiara Maria Gemma (ni); Salima Yenbou (greens/efa); Carles Puigdemont I Casamajo (ni); Antoni Comin I Oliveres (ni); Clara Ponsati Obiols (nd); Brando Benifei (s&d); Massimiliano Smeriglio (s&d); Manuela Ripa (greens/efa)); Idoia Villanueva Ruiz (gue/ngl); Rosa D'amato (greens/efa); Andrea Cozzolino (s&d); Doménec Ruiz Devesa (s&d); And Helmut Scholz (gue/ngl) sent a letter to the EU Commission president and the bloc's foreign policy chief regarding the "worrying humanitarian and human rights situation in Kashmir."

"As a champion of universal human rights, fundamental freedoms and the ruled-based international order, the EU must raise its voice against the violations of human rights affecting the people of Jammu and Kashmir. EU should use all its leverage and tools" to cooperate with India and Pakistan "to honour the pledge made to the Kashmiris by the international community" and to implement UN resolutions. The restraint of the rights to movement, access to information, health care, education as well as free speech has been intensified by the Covid-19 pandemic."

Arbitrary detention and prohibition on public assembly continues, journalists and human rights defenders have been increasingly targeted.”

“In addition to being a humanitarian crisis, the long-standing dispute over Jammu and Kashmir in south Asia also poses a major threat to peace, stability, and security in the region, It is extremely important that the voices of Kashmiri people are heard, their aspirations are responded to and they are granted the opportunity to decide their own future

**July 31-** The government of IOJK issued a circular that any person involved in stone pelting, law and order etc. must be denied the security clearance for passport, job, contract etc.

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