



Kashmir: Past, Present, and Future?

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Kashmir was once used as a metaphor for beauty and paradise by the poets of Iran and the Subcontinent. But today, the question arises: is this 84,000-square-mile paradise presenting the sight of hell? Are pellet gun shrapnel ever showered in paradise? Does lawlessness prevail in paradise?



Geopolitical Map of Kashmir

Figure 1: Geographic overview mapping the territorial boundaries and divided districts of the Kashmir region.

The Situation in the Occupied Valley and Human Rights Violations

The Armed Forces Special Powers Act (**AFSPA**) has been enforced in the occupied valley of Kashmir since 1990, under which this occupied territory has been declared a "Disturbed Area." Here, the occupying Indian army holds absolute, unchecked power—acting as an authority that can grant life or deal death whenever they please.

In ancient times, even for a few incidents of unlawful killing, the perpetrators were brought to justice, whether absolute proof was available or not. But in today's so-called developed era, when hundreds of thousands of bodies are laid down, the world remains a silent bystander, much like the people of Kufah. According to reports, **93,917 Kashmiris became victims of Indian aggression between 1989 and 2019**. This oppression gave rise to agonizing terms like "Unmarked Graves" and "Half Widows"—standing as living testaments to Indian atrocities. Surprisingly, while people are somewhat aware of the history from 1989 to 2019, the majority remain completely oblivious to the historical events between 1948 and 1989.

The Role of the United Nations and Ground Realities

The United Nations can be compared to clouds that thunder loudly but never rain. It passes resolutions for the right to self-determination, but the ink of its pen has dried while the blood of Kashmiris continues to flow to this day. It seems as though Kashmiris are not even considered humans or the descendants of Adam.

Public Demonstrations and Appeals to the United Nations

Figure 2: Human rights demonstrations calling upon international bodies and the United Nations to address regional crises.



A bloody line (the Line of Control) has been drawn across the 8 districts of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, separating loved ones from each other. As a result, 4 districts fall into Occupied Kashmir and 4 into Azad Kashmir. More than 600,000 people reside within a 10-kilometer radius of this bloody line, becoming the target of every small or large clash between Pakistan and India. The loss of human lives there is later measured merely in terms of monetary "compensation." A request is made to the governments of Pakistan and Azad Kashmir to relocate these people to safer places beforehand, rather than paying compensations later, so they can live a peaceful life. Living constantly under the shadow of death should not be their destiny.

Global Issues and the Neglect of Kashmir

In our country, politicians and senators act like Hatim Tai (philanthropists), raising their voices and traveling thousands of miles away for the issues of Gaza and Fallujah. However, Srinagar—located just 150 kilometers away from Islamabad—has been presenting a hellish landscape for years, yet no one reaches out to them. During the strict curfews, not even a single strip of medicine was sent there. The primary reason for this empathy for Gaza and detachment from Kashmir is social media; previously, politics was played in the name of Kashmir, and now politics is being polished in the name of Gaza.

Humanitarian and Medical Rights Rallies

Figure 3: Public protests and humanitarian visual representation detailing struggles with medical lockdowns and closures.



The Wounds of Kashmir and the Strategy of the Azad Government

Keeping the bitter experiences of the past in mind, there is an urgent need to formulate a strong and comprehensive strategy for the future. If we look at the policy of the Azad Kashmir government so far, it appears limited merely to issuing statements on February 5th and August 5th.

- **Before 2019:** The Azad government was quite active in raising the Kashmir issue on the global stage, examples of which include the protests held in Luton and initiatives like "EU-Kashmir Week."

• **Current Situation:** Now, a puppet government under Omar Abdullah has been established in the occupied valley, and Modi's rule prevails in the form of JKMC or BJP. The issue of Kashmir has been buried in the pages of history. While all political leaders maintained the traditional approach to resolving the issue, the question remains: what is the ultimate future of the Kashmir issue?

A misconception exists in certain circles that the occupied valley enjoys better facilities. But the question arises: if there are so many facilities there, why are more than two hundred thousand refugees living in a state of destitution in Azad Kashmir, having abandoned their concrete houses? Undoubtedly, that region might be developed due to being a central territory, but no blessing is greater than freedom.

The Need for a New Resolve

It is a matter of grief that during recent years, four Prime Ministers were changed in the State of Jammu and Kashmir (meaning four brains with different perspectives came into power), yet not a single one articulated a concrete and comprehensive strategy for a permanent solution to the Kashmir issue. Everyone is looking toward Pakistan with anticipation. The Azad government must understand that this issue primarily belongs to the inhabitants of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Since Pakistan stands by us at every moment with its defensive strength to protect us, it is the responsibility of the Azad Kashmir government to become the guarantor of resolving internal and external issues.

The Azad government needs to immediately establish a national alliance and bring forward an educated, capable, and strong leadership that unites the people of Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. Until the entire nation unites to devise a new strategy according to modern demands, we cannot move forward. Otherwise, this nation will either unite to reclaim its rights, or it will end up as a forgotten chapter of history.

"The State Comes Before Politics"