

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN IOK DEPLORABLE

Sardar Masood Khan, President Azad Jammu and Kashmir, has said that India is committing human rights violations in Indian Occupied Kashmir which is tantamount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.



The President made these remarks while addressing the Kashmir Self-determination Conference organized by the Nazriya-e-Pakistan Trust (marking Youm Ilhaq-e-Pakistan (Accession to Pakistan Day) here in Lahore. The event was attended by Justice (rtd.) Syed Sharif Hussain Bukhari, Justice (rtd.) Khalil-ur-Rehman, former Judge Supreme Court of Pakistan, Mujeeb-ur-Rehman Shami, senior journalist and Editor in Chief of Daily Pakistan, Shahid Rasheed, Secretary Nazriya-e-Pakistan Trust, Begum Safia Ishaq, Secretary Nazriya-e-Pakistan Women's Wing and Molana Shafi Josh, President Nazriya-e-Pakistan Kashmir Chapter.

The President while addressing his audience commended the efforts and dedication of the Trust for organising such an important event on this historic day. He said that on this day, 71 years ago, the people of

Jammu and Kashmir made a conscious decision to join Pakistan almost a month before Pakistan was made. This historic resolution was endorsed by 59 representatives from all over Jammu and Kashmir at the residence of Sardar Ibrahim Khan (Ghazi-e-Millat) in Srinagar.

This decision, said the President, was made keeping in mind the geographic, linguistic, cultural, religious and ideology linkages shared by the people of Jammu and Kashmir, and the people of Pakistan.

He said that Quaid e Azam had rightly called Kashmir the jugular vein of Pakistan as all our waters flow through Jammu and Kashmir, and due to its geostrategic importance. Today, Azad Kashmir serves as a defensive bastion against the 700,000 Indian forces deployed in IOK, said President AJK.

The President said that despite a passage of 71 years our brothers and sisters in IOK are still in chains and are being oppressed by the Indian occupation forces. The innocent Kashmiris are being harassed, murdered, tortured, maimed and subjected to sexual violence, he said.

President AJK welcomed UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights report o IOK and commended Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for compiling and releasing this comprehensive report on human rights violations taking place in IOK despite pressure from various quarters. He urged the participants to share the report on all social media platform in order to expose the horrid face of India.

He said that India is propagating a false narrative of terrorism in Kashmir. The only terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, he said, is the state terrorism of the Indian forces. Kashmiris are the most unarmed people on earth and their struggle is peaceful and indigenous, said the President.

Another falsehood propagated by India, he said, was that Kashmir is a bilateral issue between Pakistan and India. "This is not a bilateral matter and any resolution of this matter without the consent of the Kashmiris is not possible. They (Kashmiris) are the key constituent to this conflict", he said.

President Masood Khan reiterated that the only democratic and amicable solution to this conflict is allowing the people of Kashmir to exercise their political will through a free and fair plebiscite as acknowledged by the United Nations Security Council in its resolutions. He said that the right to self-determination is a fundamental right of every human being enshrined in Article 1 of the UN Charter.

The President paid rich tribute to Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, Yaseen Malik and Syed Ali Gilani for their resolute stance in the face of the occupation forces. He also deplored the illegal detention of Aasiya Andrabi, Fahmeeda Sofi and Naheed Nasreen.

India, said the President, believes that by using brute force and making the lives of the Kashmiris unbearable, they would be able to quell the freedom struggle in Kashmir. He said India does not recognise the Kashmiri leadership and avoids engaging in any dialogue with the Hurriyat leadership and Pakistan.

President Masood Khan said that despite a barbaric reign of terror by the occupation forces, the spirits of the Kashmiris have not been dampened and today they still wave the flag of Pakistan and chant

slogans demanding India to leave their homeland.

Lamented the eerie silence of the International community over the human rights abuses in IOK, the President said that India must be brought to task for the war crimes being committed in IOK. He added that as citizens of this global community, it is our duty to raise our voices against the oppressors.

The President appealed to all the political parties of Pakistan to comprehensively include the issue of Kashmir in their election manifesto. The President thanked the people and government of Pakistan for its continued political, diplomatic and moral support, and its steadfast stance on Kashmir despite the pressure they faced from the diplomatic community.

The event was concluded with a special prayer for the martyrs, ghazis, and people of IOK.