

## WASHINGTON, NOT NEW YORK, DOORWAY TO RESOLVING KASHMIR ISSUES, SARDAR MASOOD



MUZAFFARABAD, May 28: Describing the situation in Illegally Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) as horrendous, AJK President Sardar Masood Khan said Kashmir has been under military siege for almost two years where state terrorism is being perpetrated systematically by alien troops to eliminate the defenseless people of the occupied territory.

He made these remarks while addressing a webinar on “The Vaccination of Freedom: Kashmir in the Age of Double Detention” organized by Center for Security, Strategy and Policy Research (CSSPR), University of Lahore (UOL).

“The situation in IIOJK is horrendous, with one side being laced with weapons and the other with no arms,” the President told the audience of the webinar. The webinar was also addressed by Ms. Victoria

Schofield, a British author, and biographer, former federal minister Javed Jabar and Mr. Awais Raoof, Chairman Board of Governor, University of Lahore and Dr. Rabia.

The AJK President said Indian troops, armed to the teeth have besieged the Kashmiri people for the last two year, and have let loose an unprecedented reign of terror in the occupied territory. The young men and teenagers that flee their homes to seek refuge in the forests or orchards are their prime target.

“Every day people are being killed and detained with impunity. The younger people are the main target of the occupying forces,” Khan said.

Highlighting the steps India has taken since August 5, 2019, he said India was engaged in colonization of the territory and brutalization of its people. He said since the adoption of the New Domicile Rules in April last year, more than 3.2 million Indian citizens have been issued domicile certificates in the disputed Jammu and Kashmir state.

“Due to many a distraction, India has a window to race ahead to implement its fascist agenda in Kashmir,” said Masood Khan. He went to say that the ongoing demographic changes are war crimes and we need to understand this dynamic in totality. He argued that ground realities have changed precipitously post-August 5 and Pakistan also needs to shift.

However, he said people of Jammu and Kashmir were grateful to Pakistan for highlighting the Kashmir dispute and fighting their case at international forums. Sardar Masood Khan also urged political parties to play their role in creating a critical mass to turn the Kashmir movement into an international campaign so that India is forced to stop its repression in Occupied Kashmir.

“We must activate the political pincer with the participation of the diaspora community and international civil society to demand justice for Kashmiris. Politicians and political parties should transcend their differences to reach out to common citizens of the world”, he argues.

The key to the Kashmir dispute is not in New York but in Washington, enunciated President Masood while alluding to Washington’s influence and power in the comity of nations.