

Kashmir seminar urges UN to ensure early grant of Right to Self-Determination to Kashmiris:

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MIRPUR (AJK): Dec. 10: International Kashmiri rights outfit Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR) and the Kashmiri Policy Research Institute (KPRI) jointly organized a seminar titled “People of Kashmir Are Rights Holders, Not Mere Subjects” at Jammu & Kashmir House in the State metropolis to mark International Human Rights Day commemorated the world over on Wednesday.

The event brought together political leaders, former diplomats, rights experts, and students to review the situation in Indian-occupied Jammu & Kashmir.

Minister for Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit-Baltistan, Engineer Amir Maqam, the chief guest, reiterated that Kashmir remains a disputed territory and its final status must reflect the will of the Kashmiri people. He paid tribute to Kashmiri martyrs and lauded the resilience of the people living under Indian occupation. He said recent developments have renewed global focus on the issue and applauded KIIR and KPRI for their efforts.

Former AJK President Sardar Masood Khan, Minister Nabeela Ayub Khan, former Law Minister Ahmer Bilal Soofi, FO Spokesperson Ambassador Tahir Andrabi, Ambassador Zamir Akram, Altaf Hussain Wani, Dr. Raja Muhammad Sajad Khan, and Aima Afraz also addressed the seminar.

Speakers voiced deep concern over continuing human rights violations in occupied Jammu & Kashmir, including extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detentions, demolition of homes, and confiscation of property. They criticized the use of AFSPA, PSA, and UAPA as tools of repression and rejected India's attempts to alter the region's demographic, cultural, and religious identity.

The panel noted that UN Security Council and UNCIP resolutions clearly recognize Kashmir as an unresolved international dispute and uphold the Kashmiris' right to self-determination. They condemned harassment of Kashmiri students and professionals in India and abroad, and rejected India's unilateral actions of 5 August 2019, including the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35-A.

The speakers welcomed the UN Human Rights Commissioner's 2018 and 2019 reports and urged the release of all political prisoners, repeal of draconian laws, and immediate end to systematic abuses. They called on the UN Human Rights Council to establish a Commission of Inquiry and demanded that India be held accountable for violations of international law and its refusal to allow UN observers into the region.

Urging the UN Security Council to ensure implementation of its resolutions, the speakers warned that failure to resolve the dispute could lead to severe instability after May 2025, threatening regional and global peace. They stressed that lasting peace in South Asia depends on a just and peaceful settlement of the Kashmir issue in accordance with the aspirations of its people.

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