

## Kashmiris take to street protest in Geneva against India's illegal occupation and systematic HR violations in Kashmir:



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MIRPUR (AJK): March 15: Led by a high lever Kashmiri delegation, a large number of Kashmiris staged a strong protest demonstration outside the UN office in Swiss cuty of Geneva late Friday against India's unlawful occupation and the ongoing human rights abuses perpetrated by Indian

forces in the occupied region of Jammu and Kashmir.

Besides representatives of the delegation, the protest demonstration was attended and addressed by APHC convener Ghulam Muhammad Safi, Chairman Kashmir Institute of International Relations Altaf Hussain Wani, Executive Director KIIR Sardar Amjad Yousuf, Advocate Parvez Shah, Zaid Hashmi, Asif Jaral, Shugufta Asharaf and others, says a message reaching and released to the media here on Saturday

In light of the rapidly worsening political and human rights conditions in occupied Kashmir, the speakers called for the immediate intervention of the UN Commission to avert further bloodshed and protect human rights in the restive region.

Highlighting the woeful plight of Kashmiri prisoners, the speakers noted that thousands of Kashmiris who were taken into preventive custody on and after 5th August were still languishing in Indian prisons located thousands of kilometers from their homes.

They said that dozens of Kashmiri women prisoners who have been lodged in notorious Tihar jail and other prisons were forced to face dire situations.

Indian occupying authorities, they said, have since long been using arbitrary detentions as a tool of repression against Kashmiri political leaders, civil society members, journalists, lawyers, and

human rights defenders.

The authorities in Indian-Occupied Kashmir, they said, have been employing arbitrary arrests and prolonged detentions under anti-terror laws as a strategy to suppress dissent and instill fear among the indigenous population.

Calling for early release of all illegally held prisoners, they said that it was high time that the council should raise the matter with government of India to help secure early release of all Kashmiri Hurriyat leaders and activists booked under trumpedup charges.

They also appealed to the UN Human Rights Council and other international human rights organizations to take effective notice of the Indian government's totalitarian measures that seek to change the demography of the Muslim majority state and convert it into a minority.

Drawing world community's urgent attention towards the dire situation in Indian held territory, they said, human rights situation in the region has further worsened following the Indian government's unlawful decision to revoke Articles 370 and 35A in August 2019.

The speakers also raised alarm over the Indian government's strategy to stifle political and democratic opposition in the region, particularly in light of the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs' decision to prohibit more than a dozen political parties in Kashmir.

Terming India's imperialistic presence in the region as a biggest threat to, they called on the UNHCR and other relevant institutions and bodies to play their due to seek early settlement of the lingering dispute.