

## Kashmiris Observe Right to Self-Determination Day, Renew Pledge for Cherished Birth right



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MIRPUR (AJK), January 5 – People of Jammu and Kashmir, both in the region and abroad, on

Monday observed Right to Self-Determination Day, renewing their pledge to continue their

indigenous struggle for the internationally-recognized birthright of self-determination. The

commemoration marked the 76th anniversary of the United Nations resolutions passed on January 5, 1949, calling for a plebiscite to allow Kashmiris to decide their political future.

This year's observance came amid India's ongoing violations of international norms, particularly the August 5, 2019, unilateral abrogation of Articles 370 and 35-A of its constitution, which stripped the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. The act has confined civilians in Indian-administered Kashmir under strict restrictions and a prolonged information blockade, turning the region into what participants described as the "world's largest prison," according to AJK correspondents in Mirpur.

In Azad Jammu and Kashmir, special gatherings were held in Muzaffarabad, Mirpur, and Rawalakot. Civil society groups, political organizations, lawyers, trade unions, students, and educators highlighted the importance of implementing the UN resolutions to ensure the early grant of self-determination. Speakers condemned repeated violations along the Line of Control (LoC) and unprovoked firing by Indian forces, warning that escalating aggression could spark a broader regional conflict.

APHC leaders, including Syed Yousaf Naseem, Ch Muneer Hussain, and Shakoor Mughal, along with members of the Mirpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry, District Bar Association, journalists, and civil society representatives, led mass rallies calling for immediate UN

intervention. Protesters demanded that the international community hold India accountable for its 2019 actions and ensure a free and fair plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir.

Speakers criticized the United Nations for failing to implement its Security Council resolutions over the past 76 years. They stressed that Kashmiris would continue their principled struggle until their birthright is fully realized. The rallies reaffirmed solidarity with Pakistan's armed forces, with participants chanting slogans of Pakistan Zindabad and Pak Army Zindabad.

"The Right to Self-Determination Day is a reminder to the world, especially the UN, to act without delay," said speakers. They urged international legal action against India's "sinister and unlawful" steps and called for the issue to be brought before the International Court of Justice.

Participants highlighted the humanitarian impact of India's occupation, citing human rights violations, restrictions on movement, and the suppression of civil liberties in Indian-administered Kashmir. They stressed that the right to self-determination remains the legitimate aspiration of the Kashmiri people, and that international law must be upheld to prevent further suffering and injustice.

The day's events included rallies from Kachery to Chowk Shaheedan in Mirpur, with thousands joining to demonstrate unity, reiterating the demand for a UN-supervised plebiscite and the implementation of resolutions passed on January 5, 1949. Organizers called for global attention to

ensure Kashmiris can decide their destiny through a free and fair vote, ending decades of occupation and denial of fundamental rights.

Speakers also emphasized the role of the international community, particularly the United Nations and regional organizations, in monitoring the situation and pressuring India to comply with international law. They underlined that failure to act could embolden further violations and destabilize South Asia, and urged consistent global engagement to protect the human rights and political freedoms of the Kashmiri people.

In addition, participants highlighted the resilience of Kashmiri society and the importance of preserving cultural, educational, and social institutions under occupation. They urged global media to report accurately on the situation in Kashmir and ensure that the voices of ordinary Kashmiris are heard internationally.

“This is not just a commemoration, but a reaffirmation of our ongoing struggle for justice,” speakers said, emphasizing that the fight for self-determination continues until the ultimate goal is achieved. They called on the United Nations and the international community to take immediate steps to uphold the principles of justice, sovereignty, and human rights in Jammu and Kashmir.