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India Denies Fundamental Rights to Kashmiris, Has No Moral Justification Republic Day



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ALTAF HAMID RAO

MIRPUR (AJK), January 25—Senior Vice Chairman of the Jammu Kashmir National Front (JKNF),

Altaf Hussain Wani, has said that India has no moral grounds to celebrate its Republic Day while

thousands of Kashmiris, including politicians, human rights defenders, journalists, and ordinary

citizens, remain imprisoned for demanding freedom for their homeland.

In a statement issued Sunday, the National Front leader highlighted that ground realities in Jammu and Kashmir expose a grave and continuing human rights crisis. He noted that arbitrary detentions, suppression of dissent, excessive militarization, and systematic silencing of political and journalistic voices have become routine.

Referring to the unilateral revocation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status in August 2019, Wani said Indian authorities have intensified repressive measures. The widespread use of preventive detention, prolonged communication blackouts, mass surveillance, cordon-and-search operations, and collective punishment of civilians has created an atmosphere of fear and insecurity among the indigenous population.

Condemning the ruthless suppression of dissent, Wani stated that peaceful political activity, protests, and even online expression are routinely criminalized. Political leaders and civil rights activists have been detained for years without charge, while civil society organizations documenting human rights violations have faced raids and arrests, dismantling independent advocacy in the region.

Wani further noted that while Indian media portrays a façade of normalcy, authorities rely on draconian laws such as the Public Safety Act (PSA), Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), and

Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) as tools of repression. Global human rights organizations have repeatedly highlighted the disproportionate application of these laws in Jammu and Kashmir.

Highlighting press suppression, he said Kashmir has become one of the most repressive environments for journalists in South Asia, where independent reporters face arrests, interrogations, raids, equipment seizures, travel bans, and repeated summons under anti-terror and preventive detention laws.

“Media policies imposed by the occupation authorities have institutionalized censorship, forcing self-censorship and undermining the public’s right to information,” Wani added. Despite repeated international calls, independent investigations into human rights violations remain obstructed, and accountability remains elusive.

“A country that has denied fundamental rights and freedoms to the people of Kashmir has no moral justification to celebrate Republic Day,” he concluded, adding that depriving Kashmiris of their birthright stands in direct contradiction to democratic principles and international human rights obligations.