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## AJK commemorates 53rd anniversary of London martyrs with solemn ceremonies



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MIRPUR (AJK), Feb. 20—Azad Jammu and Kashmir observed the 53rd martyrdom anniversary of the Kashmir-origin London martyrs, Hanif Shaheed and Basharat Shaheed, with solemn ceremonies and renewed pledges to continue their mission until the liberation of Indian-occupied

Jammu and Kashmir.

Special commemorative events were held at the mausoleums of Basharat Shaheed in Palak village and Hanif Shaheed at the central Eidgah in Mirpur city. Floral wreaths were laid at both sites to honor the young martyrs who sacrificed their lives on Feb. 20, 1973, in the pursuit of Pakistan and the Kashmiri people's ultimate freedom. Their courage continues to inspire generations of Kashmiris and supporters worldwide.

The participants strongly condemned India's August 5, 2019 revocation of Articles 370 and 35-A, which stripped Jammu and Kashmir of its special status and intensified the suffering of its residents. The ceremonies highlighted the ongoing human rights violations in the region, describing the valley as the world's largest open-air prison and emphasizing the prolonged oppression of the Muslim-majority population over decades.

Representatives from civil society and the AJK government—including District Council Chairman Raja Naveed Akhter, Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Chaudhry Naeem Akhter, Mirpur District Bar Association President Babar Ali Khan, Secretary of the London Kashmiri Martyrs Society Babu Sideeque, and City Councillor Ch. Muhammad Razaq—participated in the wreath-laying and paid tribute to the martyrs, expressing solidarity with the Kashmiri cause. The ceremonies featured full-dressed contingents presenting salutes, along with high school

students and local residents echoing patriotic slogans such as “Pakistan Zindabad,” “Kashmir Baney Ga Pakistan,” “Down with India,” and “La ilaha illallah.”

Participants called upon the international community, major powers, and the United Nations to exert pressure on India for a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue. They emphasized the need for meaningful dialogue between Pakistan and India to secure the right of self-determination for the Kashmiri people, in accordance with UN resolutions, for the establishment of lasting peace, justice, and stability in South Asia.

The anniversary served as both a tribute to the bravery of the London martyrs and a reminder of the continuing struggle for justice, freedom, and human rights in the occupied valley of Kashmir, inspiring renewed hope among the youth and future generations.