

# **FRAUD ON CONSTITUTION**

## **KASHMIR BETRAYED**

### **Introduction**

On August 5th, 2019, the Modi Government conducted a lightning strike against the Constitution, democracy, federalism and the principles of secularism. Through a Presidential order, through resolutions and through the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act it has abrogated the special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 and the subsidiary provision stemming from it Article 35 A.

J&K has been robbed of its right to Statehood and has been divided into two Union Territories, namely Jammu and Kashmir with a legislative assembly, and Ladakh as a separate UT which also includes Kargil without any legislative assembly. Both will be subject to the authority of the Central Government. Thus the 29 States of India have been reduced to 28, courtesy the Modi Government.

The CPI(M) has strongly opposed these unprecedented legislations and measures. They are unconstitutional, illegal and authoritarian. They constitute an attack on the principle of unity in diversity. It is not just an abrogation of the special status under Article 370 but an abrogation of democracy itself.

Till now any discussion about changing the rights or the boundaries of a State has been through prolonged discussion. For example take the division of the States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. The discussions went on for years and only after the views of the legislatures were taken into account were the States divided. This is mandatory under Article 3 of the Constitution of India. But the BJP Government blatantly violated this provision in Jammu & Kashmir.

Thus for the first time in the history of independent India, the future of the people of a State has been decided without any reference to their opinion or even giving them a chance to debate and discuss their own future. It thus sets a dangerous precedent. The centre under the Modi-Shah duo using its brute majority in parliament can ride roughshod over the rights of the States. Any state can now be dissolved and made into a virtual colony of the central government, using its majority in the Parliament. It thus also constitutes an assault on the very federal structure of the Constitution.

The parallel exercise in this context for the delimitation of constituencies also points to the actual game plan of the Modi Government. It is to change the demographic nature of the State, beginning with a reordering of constituencies

through delimitation to give more weightage to the non-Muslim areas. With the removal of the permanent resident status under Sec 35A this can be easily manipulated.

It should also be remembered that apart from the valley, the substantial Muslim population both in Jammu (33.45 per cent) and in Ladakh (46.4 per cent) has expressed its strong opposition to the Central Government's actions. The people of Kargil, on the border of Pakistan who fought courageously against Pakistan have opposed the abrogation of the special status under Sec 370. Thus this is a dangerous move, which will have far reaching consequences.

The method used is also an assault on the Constitution. A Presidential order under the very article which was being scrapped—Article 370—was used to modify another Article 367—which in turn was utilised to revoke the essence of Article 370. By this ploy the mandatory concurrence of the State legislature was usurped by the Governor since the state is under President's rule. There is no doubt that this is a fraud on the Constitution and murder of democracy.

The entire state of J&K was put under a lock-down. More than 10 million phone lines have been disconnected; public transport has been stopped. Internet has been suspended; offices and shops are closed; people can go out only for emergencies and navigating barbed wire and barricades manned by armed troops; newspapers and cable TV has been virtually suspended. J&K is now being treated as a virtual occupied territory.

All the leaders of all major parties in J&K including two former Chief Ministers and CPI(M) Central Committee member and four-time MLA Yusuf Tarigami, along with hundreds of others, are either in custody or house arrest. If indeed, as the Modi government claims, it is doing this for the betterment of Jammu & Kashmir, why then are they afraid of the people? National integration cannot be done at the point of a gun or through coercion. The country will have to pay a heavy price for measures which are not only a betrayal of the people of J&K, but also of the secular and democratic values of the country.

The BJP and its various "allies" including certain television channels have started a massive disinformation campaign, about the history of Kashmir, the leaders of the national movement, the people of Kashmir and are falsifying history. Troll brigades on WhatsApp and other social media platforms are spewing out venom against all those who oppose these draconian measures.

We give below the historical facts that led to J&K's accession to the Indian Union meriting a special status, and the political context that led to Article 370.

**Question: Why was special status given to Kashmir?**

At the time of independence when India was being partitioned, the State of Jammu and Kashmir was a princely State under the rule of the Dogra Maharaja Hari Singh. There were three distinct regions, Jammu, the Kashmir valley and Ladakh. As far as religious belief is concerned, the majority population were Muslims. At the time most of the princely States acceded to India and joined the Indian Union, signing an Instrument of Accession.

The situation in Kashmir was different.

Here Hari Singh, Maharaja of Kashmir refused to do so. He wrote a letter to the British Governor General Mountbatten in early October 1947, two months after India gained Independence. It stated "As your Excellency is aware, the State of J&K has not acceded either to the dominion of India or to Pakistan. Geographically my State is contiguous to both the dominions. It has vital economic and cultural links with both of them. Besides my State has a common boundary with the Soviet republic and China. In their external relations the dominions of India and Pakistan cannot ignore this point.

*"I wanted to take time to decide which dominion I should accede, whether it is not in the best interests of both dominions and my State to stand independent, of course with friendly relations with both."*

The British were interested in keeping Kashmir independent for strategic reasons, maintaining the Monarchy. But the people of Kashmir had already experienced the cruelty of the feudal order under the Maharaja. In Kashmir, as in most of the princely States, the freedom movement was directed not only against the British but also against the rulers of the princely states. Their feudal rule was largely based on huge concentration of land and extreme exploitation of the peasantry.

Maharaja Hari Singh appropriated fully one-third of the total revenue of the state for his "personal" expenses. Similarly, big landlords owned most of the lands, leading to an impoverished peasantry. There was a huge movement led by the National Conference and its leader Sheikh Abdullah which culminated in the slogan of Quit Kashmir against the monarchy. The basis of the movement was entirely secular, the culture of Kashmiriyat which is a confluence of Sufism and local traditions and practices.

The people of Kashmir thus strongly opposed Hari Singh's plan to remain independent under the patronage of the British. They also rejected the call of Jinnah to join Pakistan in the name of Islam. In Kashmir only a few people led by the All J&K Muslim Conference wanted to accede to Pakistan. In fact the leaders of the anti-feudal movement in Kashmir saw Pakistan not only as a majoritarian Islamic state, but also one which would be dominated by the feudal interests. The primary plank of the National Conference was the

abolition of feudal landholdings, which they knew the Pakistani state would not support.

Pakistan with the help of the British, organised armed groups from the North-West Frontier Province to invade Kashmir. These raiders fought through area after area, committing atrocities, looting the local population both Hindu and Muslim and reached the outskirts of Srinagar. It was at this stage that the peoples militia led by heroic leaders of the then National Conference, mobilised to fight back the invaders. They defended Srinagar at tremendous sacrifice and the loss of hundreds of lives of Kashmiris.

Hari Singh, his relatives and nobles fled to Jammu. It was only then that he wrote to Mountbatten asking for help from the Indian army. This was possible only if he acceded to India and it was in these circumstances, under the pressure of the people's resistance, that he signed the Instrument of Accession on October 26, 1947. The Indian army landed in Srinagar, and with the help and support of the people of the valley drove the invaders out. They stopped only at the Uri border under pressure from the British, who still had a role in the Indian Army.

The United Nations got involved. Pakistan army continued to occupy one third of the State. The issue of plebiscite was accepted. And the Kashmir "dispute" was born.

The plebiscite was not held because Pakistan refused to withdraw its army from the occupied territory. However the valley stayed firm in the belief that India would ensure protection of their cultures, their way of life, their autonomy, representing what is termed as Kashmiriyat.

It is these circumstances which are very specific to Kashmir which gave rise to the special status given to the State of Kashmir. This arrangement also prevented international intervention through the UN. It ensured that Kashmir would remain a part of India while assuring the people of Kashmir that they would retain their autonomy within the Indian Union.

### **Question: Who were the forces supporting the Maharaja?**

In this entire period while Kashmiris across religious lines were mobilising on anti-feudal democratic demands of justice, democracy and freedom against the autocratic rule of the Maharaja and against the British, the RSS was mobilising all the reactionary feudal elements in support of the monarchy. Taking forward its commitment to a Hindu Rashtra it tried to divide the struggles of Kashmiris on communal lines. It came out openly in support of the machinations of the Maharaja and in defence of the feudal order, in the name of defending Hindus. It was working under the banner of the Praja Parishad in Jammu where it tried to curb the growing influence of the National Conference.

In June-July of 1947 on the eve of independence it supported the demand of the Maharaja for an independent State and was in opposition to accession. It was nowhere in the picture when Kashmiris of the valley mobilised to fight back the Pakistani backed raiders. But even worse, it was training youth and giving them arms with communal aims. Thus during partition when India burnt, it was the Kashmir valley which did not see any communal violence. But in the neighbouring region of Jammu under the leadership of the Praja Parishad backed by the Maharaja, there was a terrible communal conflagration in which a large number of innocents, Muslims of Jammu, were massacred.

After the Instrument of Accession was signed, the Praja Parishad started its communal two nation theory based agitation to carve out a separate State of Jammu. Even after independence, when the Maharaja's flag flew alongside the Indian flag there was no problem for the RSS to accept two flags. It was only after the abolition of the monarchy by the newly formed constituent assembly of J&K when the Maharaja's flag was replaced by that of the state, representing the struggle of the entire people of the State, that the RSS raised the demand of one flag, one nation. Just as in Nepal where the RSS has been actively in touch with the pro-monarchy elements and has always supported the monarchy, in those days when the struggle in Kashmir was against the atrocities and exploitation of the feudal raj, the RSS sided with the Maharaja, under the guise of religion.

It weakened the struggle for unity of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

**Question: What is Article 370 and 35A and when was it enacted?**

On October 30, 1947 the Maharaja made an order appointing Sheikh Abdullah as the head of the Emergency Administration which was replaced on March 5, 1948 with an interim Government with the Sheikh as Prime Minister. It was enjoined to convene a National Assembly to frame a Constitution for the State. However the Maharaja remained the titular head.

The Government of India started the discussions with the Kashmir leadership over the special status which had been pledged to them.

The RSS-BJP propaganda is that Vallabhbhai Patel was opposed to any special consideration for Kashmir. The opposite is the case. On May 15 and 16, 1949 at his residence a meeting was convened in which Nehru and Abdullah were present. They all agreed as recorded in a letter from Nehru to Abdullah that, "it will be for the Constituent Assembly of the State when convened to determine in respect of which other subjects the State may accede." Shyama Prasad Mukherjee was a member of Nehru's cabinet at the time and was party to the decisions regarding Kashmir. Dr Rajendra Prasad was presiding over the session when the Article 370 (306A in the draft Constitution) was adopted.

Thus the entire leadership at the time was agreed regarding the special status of Kashmir.

These discussions crystallised in Article 370 which was passed by the Constituent Assembly in October 1949. It provided a framework of autonomy to the state of Jammu and Kashmir. It allowed for its own Constitution and flag and jurisdiction over all matters apart from the three mentioned in the Instrument of Accession (Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communications). For central laws on subjects included in the Instrument of Accession (IoA), it required only "consultation" with the state government, but for all other laws to be applied in Kashmir, specific concurrence and consent of the State Government was required. N.Gopaldaswamy Ayyangar in his speech on October 17, 1949 in the Constituent Assembly explained when the Article was passed: "this (special status) is one of our commitments to the people and to the Government of Kashmir." Today under the BJP, that commitment lies in shreds.

Article 370 embodied the aspirations of the Kashmiri people to maintain their own identity and way of life known as *Kashmiriyat* within the Indian Union. This is the genesis of the Constituent Assembly incorporating Article 370 in the Constitution. This was followed by the Delhi Agreement signed in 1952 between the representatives of the Union Government and the Kashmir Government

Article 35A derives its power from Article 370 and was passed by a Presidential Order in 1954. It empowers the J&K legislature to define the state's permanent residents and their rights and privileges.

Earlier, during the Maharaj's rule, the local population led by the Kashmiri pandits had demanded some protection from outsiders, including the British and the rich Indian bourgeoisie who wanted to buy land in the beautiful State. The 1927 Hereditary State Subject Order was adopted which granted to the state subjects the right to government office and the right to land use and ownership, which were not available to non-state subjects. This Act was repealed and in 1954 Article 35 A was introduced which gave the legislature the right to decide the parameters of permanent residents.

The removal of this article even while the case is pending in the Supreme Court reflects the BJP's haste to change the demography of this Muslim dominated State. The campaign of the BJP that now everyone can own a piece of land in Kashmir is precisely to achieve this objective. This is much like Zionist policy of the Israel Government to encourage Jewish settlers in the West Bank to change its demography.

As we shall see later, most of the provisions have been diluted over time and Central governments over the years including Governments led by the Congress have eroded J&K's autonomy significantly.

### **Question: Are special provisions only for J & K?**

Unlike what the BJP propaganda has painted, J&K is not the only state to have special provisions. Similar special provisions exist in Article 371 for other states, from 371 to 371(A) to 371 (I), including prohibition of buying of land and employment by others except permanent residents. The states in Article 371 and its sub-clauses are: Maharashtra, Gujarat, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Goa and Karnataka.

Apart from this Schedule 5 and 6 of the Constitution specifically is for the protection of adivasi/tribal owned/occupied land. No non-tribal is allowed to buy that land.

The utter hypocrisy of the BJP can be seen by the dual position taken by the BJP leaders on the scrapping of Section 35 A. While a vicious campaign started in the rest of India as to how they are going to Kashmir to buy land, the BJP leaders in Jammu have made a demand that special protections to protect land from outsiders must be made. They scrap 35A and then demand special protections which were guaranteed by 35 A!

These special provisions exist in the Indian Constitution to help address specific needs of a particular area or a state and are a part of its federal character. India is a country with vast diversities of language, cultures, castes, religious beliefs and also reflects uneven development. The Constitution of India provides various clauses for affirmative action to recognise these diversities.

The needs of Jammu and Kashmir arose from the way its accession to India took place in the period of 1947, when a Muslim majority state preferred to accede to a secular India and not to a Muslim majoritarian state that Pakistan had set out to be. Article 370 was a solemn guarantee that the Indian State gave to the people of J&K, that we would respect their identity, as we have done for many other states and regions under Article 371. The Modi government has now betrayed this promise by virtually scrapping Article 370, striking a body blow to the federalism in the country. Tomorrow under this or that pretext the special provisions for other States may also be scrapped.

### **Question: How was "special status" implemented in J&K?**

The constituent assembly set up to draft the Constitution for Kashmir was an elected body of 45 members. It was set up with the concurrence of the Central Government and convened on November 5, 1951. The constituent assembly after completing its mandate of framing a Constitution for the state, dissolved itself in November 1956.

Article 3 of that Constitution stated that “Kashmir is and will be an integral part of India.” How then can it be said that this leads to separatism?

Importantly, all the freedoms in the Indian Constitution including the freedom to practice any religion of one’s choice was also part of Kashmir’s Constitution. In other words this Constitution was a secular document far removed from the propaganda that it encourages Muslim fundamentalism or encourages separatism.

On the contrary the constituent assembly using the advantage of special status took radical measures which at that time were not allowed in the rest of India. First, it passed a resolution to abolish the system of monarchy and the special privileges of the monarch. It thus took democratic positions which benefited the people of Kashmir far ahead of similar legislation for abolition of privy purses in the rest of India. Second, it adopted the Abolition of Big Landed Estates Act and the Distressed Debtors Relief Act of 1950. Through this the State embarked on the most radical land reform programme which abolished the landlord’s estates without compensation. This could be done because Article 31 of the Indian Constitution which protected the rights of landlords was not applicable to the State because of its special status under 370.

These two measures enraged the reactionary feudal forces. It became one of the main reasons for the pro-monarchy RSS lobbies to step up their campaign against the special status of J&K.

If there were any gaps as for example the absence of reservation for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the political sphere, these could have been raised and resolved through political dialogue especially since such reservation does exist for employment in J&K. However in all these decades, such issues were never raised or resolved. Now they are being used as a pretext to rally the oppressed social sections into supporting the draconian measures.

### **Question: Did Article 370 prevent Kashmir’s integration with India?**

One of the arguments set out by Home Minister Amit Shah in Parliament for the scrapping of Article 370 was that Article 370 had prevented the integration of J&K with India. In fact, the people of Kashmir willingly joined the Indian Union on the basis of the assurances which were later encapsulated in Article 370. It was this Constitutional safeguard which assured the Kashmiri people that their future lay with India. But Article 370 was under attack by successive Central Governments right from the beginning.

From 1953 onwards, the centre took steps to erode the autonomy provided to Jammu & Kashmir under Article 370. The process of centralization and denial of autonomy to the state advanced throughout the sixties, seventies and eighties. Article 370 was subverted to eliminate most aspects of the autonomy

accorded to the state. From the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order of 1954 onwards, there were 42 such orders up to 2010, which widened the scope of the Central intervention and laws which was not envisaged at the time of the adoption of Article 370.

Through the centralizing process, Article 370 was denuded of its real essence. 94 of the 97 entries (of topics of legislation) in the Central list and 26 of the 47 in the concurrent list were extended to J&K.

Accompanying the erosion of autonomy was the denial of democracy and the suppression of democratic rights in the state. Elected governments were toppled and elections blatantly rigged time and again under Central auspices such as during the 1987 election. The people of the State, in particular in the valley have faced the most brutal forms of repression with firings, arrests, pellet injuries which have blinded scores of young people. The largest contingent of armed forces and para military forces have been stationed in the State. The draconian Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) continued to be applied in all civilian areas. The CPI(M) had demanded it should be lifted in all civilian areas

It is these blatantly unjust steps which have led to increasing alienation of its people.

Integration can never be through coercion and repression. It can only be achieved through political dialogue. However in spite of repeated assurances the central Government has refused any political dialogue with the people of Kashmir and their representatives.

The central Government has been extremely selective in its policy. On the one hand, it opens negotiations with representatives of the Naga separatists, that also on foreign soil, but refuses to speak to all sections in Kashmir. It is this absence of political initiative on behalf of the Modi Government which has worsened the situation in the State.

Yet, Article 370 in spite of all its dilutions still remained a symbol of the autonomy of Kashmir and the political possibility of restoration of Kashmir's rights. This has been now extinguished by the Modi government.

**Question: Is Article 370 responsible for terrorism and also the suffering of Kashmiri pandits?**

The BJP claims that Article 370 had bred separatism and terrorism in J&K. This is an entirely self-serving argument like that given for demonetisation. Remember the Prime Minister had said that demonetisation would stop terrorism but that has proved to be utterly bogus. Other States have also seen prolonged periods of terrorism. There was no Article 370 when Khalistani elements wrecked havoc through terror acts in Punjab. There was no 370 when

large parts of the north east were wrecked by terror acts. There were and are political and economic circumstances which create grounds for terrorist groups and acts.

The fact is that it is the erosion of autonomy under Article 370 and brutal suppression of democracy which sparked off the discontent and alienation that led to the rise of separatism and the growth of terrorism aided and abetted by Pakistan and the Pakistani-backed Islamist forces such as the Hizbul Mujahiddin and later the hardcore Pakistan-based terrorist groups like the Jaish-e-Mohammed and the Lashkar-e-Taiba.

The growth of fundamentalist forces in the valley over this period of time has had the most disastrous consequences. The secular basis of Kashmiriyat has been eroding and has now been suppressed by hardcore Islamicist forces with the full backing of Pakistan. The first mass example of this was the terrible targeting, coercion and violence against the Kashmiri Pandits in the early nineties. It happened when the State was under President's Rule under the Governorship of Jagmohan. The central Government and its Governor utterly failed to give protection to the Kashmiri pandits. In fact there was a collapse of law and order under Jagmohan. Subsequently, the same Jagmohan who utterly failed to protect the Kashmiri pandits joined the BJP and was promoted as a Union Minister.

It was a shameful chapter in the history of the State. Even now the large majority of Kashmiri pandits are forced to live as refugees in their own country. Their return to their homes to live in the peace and harmony they have historically enjoyed in the valley, is a fundamental right. This can be guaranteed by the strengthening of secular forces and communal harmony and not the hate politics being practiced by the Islamicists on the one hand and the communal Sangh Parivar forces on the other.

The most dangerous aspect of the increase in incidents of terror in the last five years under the Modi rule is the increase in the recruitment of local militants. This has nothing to do with Article 370. The frustration and alienation of the youth is being fanned by the continuing absence of any political initiative by the Modi Government.

The consequences can be very grim not only for Kashmir but for the rest of India. For how long can people's voices be suppressed? How long will the additional security forces sent to Kashmir continue to block all normal activity and interaction? It is not a tenable solution.

### **Question: Has Article 370 stopped Kashmir's development?**

J&K was the first state in India to carry out extensive land reforms, without paying compensation to the landlords. This was possible as Article 370 was used by the National Conference to pass Acts enabling thorough land reforms

and debt relief to the peasantry in J&K. This is the reason that contrary to Amit Shah's false claims in Parliament, J&K's socio-economic indicators are better in most cases than the Indian average and compare favourably with even those States held to be more developed. In a recent article, Haseeb Draboo, the former Finance Minister in the PDP government, has shown some of these socio-economic indicators:

- Only 10% households live below the poverty line in J&K as against the all India average of 22%
- J&K has the second lowest incidence of indebtedness in the country
- Only 2% of the work force in J&K is agricultural labour as against the all-India average of 23%
- Life expectancy at birth in J&K is 73, compared to 68 at the national level
- The infant mortality rate is 32 per 1,000 live births in J&K as against the national average of 40

The argument that industrial development in J&K was not possible is similarly bogus. J&K government offers a 90-year lease to any industry willing to set up there and at very low rates. The issue is – and this is true for any border state – that such states need central investments and locating public sector undertakings in such areas. This was the vision of Indian planning that led to public sector undertakings being set up in economically backward areas. That is why BHEL, SAIL had plants in regions that were not where earlier industrial development existed but in Hardwar, Bokaro, Ranchi, etc. This is why an HMT unit was set up in Srinagar also, which shut down in 2013. Unfortunately, in all its 73 years, J&K has seen only three such central public sector units, with a total investment of a meagre Rs. 165 crore and employing currently only 21 people!

The paucity of private investments has far more to do with its alienation, the growth of militancy and frequent imposition of Section 144, curfews etc. The unprecedented lock-down we are seeing now, does not auger well for any industrialisation of Kashmir.

Finally, Article 370 is being blamed for the widespread corruption and loot of public funds in the state. Corruption in other States including BJP ruled States is rampant. It has nothing to do with Article 370. It is true that Jammu & Kashmir suffers from corruption and a venal administration. However, the reality is that such a state of affairs stems from lack of accountability and democratic processes. Jammu & Kashmir has been more or less a police state for long and subject to Central rule for prolonged periods (altogether for a period of ten years). The centralised bureaucratic-security apparatus and their

political accomplices, who are unaccountable, are the main source of corruption in the state.

## **Conclusion**

As we have seen, the Hindutva communal forces were from the beginning against the movement led by the National Conference against feudal rule. The Praja Parishad, the predecessor to the Jana Sangh, had supported the Maharaja when he wanted J&K to remain an independent country. After accession of J&K, the Jana Sangh and the Hindu Mahasabha were totally opposed to any autonomy for Jammu & Kashmir. The ideology of the RSS-backed Jana Sangh and later the BJP, was based on a majoritarian, centralized vision of India and therefore there was opposition to any state autonomy. Their hostility of course also stemmed from the fact that the Kashmir valley was a Muslim majority area.

In the RSS-BJP narrative, the Kashmir valley is a hotbed of separatism and terrorism because of its religious composition. Their inherently anti-Muslim bias makes them hostile to any democratic aspirations of the Kashmiri people. When they advocated the abolition of Article 370, what they meant was that the people of the valley have to be suppressed under a security-State apparatus.

For the RSS and the Modi-Shah duo, Kashmir is a piece of land that belongs to Akhand Bharat, while its people have to be treated as aliens because they are Muslim. They want Kashmir, not Kashmiris: their nationalism is of the land, not its people. For them, it is not people who make a nation, but only its borders and its land.

The RSS and the BJP has been assiduously working to heighten the communal divide between Jammu and the valley. After the Modi government came to power at the Centre in 2014, these efforts were scaled up significantly. The hardline approach of crushing civilian protests by force, treating them like militancy, and shunning all political dialogue has worsened matters in the state. In the past few years, it is the local youth who have joined the militancy in ever increasing numbers. The figures show a steady rise in the number of security forces and militants killed.

The abrogation of the special status to J&K under Article 370 and breaking up of the state of J&K has more to do with breaking the will of the people of Kashmir and to change the demography of Kashmir. This is the real intent of the Modi-Shah measures in Kashmir.

Further, under Modi rule the federal character of India has come under attack. The rights of the States in the political and financial spheres are being eroded and all powers are being taken by the centre. The attacks on the rights of J&K

are part of this centralizing authoritarian trend.

The CPI(M) is committed in its fight against this and asserts that these measures are totally against the unity and interests of India as a whole. This is the time for all citizens who believe in the values of the Indian Constitution to come together and unitedly stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of Jammu & Kashmir for the restoration of democracy in J&K and for its full autonomy.

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