**G-20 Summit in IIOJK**

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In a world with interconnected economies and shared economic interests, international collaboration is the need of the hour. Due to the economic and financial crisis towards the end of the 20th century, the Group of Twenty (G-20) emerged as a significant platform for intergovernmental cooperation in the economic domain. The forum, consisting of the top 20 economies, was established in 1999 to focus on tackling global challenges, encouraging economic growth and advancing sustainable development. It initially comprised Central Bank Governors and Finance Ministers of member states. However, in the aftermath of the 2008 global financial crisis, the stature of the G-20 was enhanced through the inclusion of the Heads of the States or Governments. The G-20 is a significant economic platform that caters for two-thirds of the world’s population and 85 per cent of the global GDP.

Recently, India hosted G-20 moots in various cities. Moot on tourism was planned and hosted in the contentious region of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJ&K), which was against the established norms of G-20. India misused its host status in selecting a contentious zone as a venue in a bid to depict heavily militarized IIOJK as a peaceful and conflict-free zone. It rather ended up highlighting the disputed status of IIOJK on the global canvas, warranting an objective and immediate response from the comity of nations. Concurrently, the venue for this important international gathering has raised awareness of the current territorial dispute between India and Pakistan

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Holding of Summit in a region which has recently witnessed draconian steps like abrogation of Articles 370 and 35-A, has posed a serious challenge to the global champions of Human Rights. A region replete with HRVs should not have been a venue for such an event. The decision by China, Turkey, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and Egypt not to attend the summit in IIOJK is not only a diplomatic reversal for India but also highlights global concerns about the disputed region. On the other hand, abstaining from these important countries is a diplomatic success for Pakistan. China strongly opposed any G-20 summit being held on the disputed land. Turkey has consistently sided with Pakistan regarding the Kashmir dispute and has raised the issue at several international forums. Turkey raised the matter in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the UN General Assembly, encouraging the international community for a proactive role in resolving the conflict and addressing the human rights issues in Kashmir. Similarly, the absence of Saudi Arabia, Indonesia and Egypt was a major setback for the Indian stance on IIOJK. By holding this Summit in IIOJK, India not only wanted to showcase a peaceful Kashmir but also wanted to make the world believe that the region belongs to India. Though India failed to achieve desired results, holding such an event in a contentious region raises multiple questions not only on India but also on global consciousness for not raising appropriate voices against Indian atrocities against innocent Kashmiris.

Residents of IIOJK complained about the increased security where hundreds were imprisoned in police facilities, and thousands received calls from officials advising them not to show any “signs of protest or trouble.” Ahead of the G20 summit from May 22-24, Mehbooba Mufti, a former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, claimed that the Centre was converting Kashmir into the ‘notorious’ American military jail, Guantanamo. She said, “To tell you the truth, if you go to Kashmir today you will notice that the area that was changed to an open-air prison (after Article 370 was repealed) has been changed to ‘Guantanamo’… Even homes are now under control. Residences have been occupied. Three, four, and five tiers of security exist. The People’s Democratic Party (PDP) leader remarked during a news conference in Bengaluru on Sunday that “everything at home is being turned upside down.” The G-20 meeting held in Kashmir has reignited discussions over the region’s status and the possible repercussions of hosting a global event in a disputed region.

According to UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues Fernand de Varennes, the summit was used by New Delhi to “portray an international seal of approval” on a situation that “should be decried and condemned,”.

The Kashmir conflict between India and Pakistan dates back to the partition of British India in 1947. Both countries claim the region in its entirety, resulting in wars and ongoing tensions. The dispute has attracted international attention, with calls for dialogue and peaceful resolution. This recently held Summit has extremely sensitive repercussions for the world where hegemonic states like India can suppress minorities with impunity and no fear of global reaction.

The deterioration of democratic values and human rights in India is a depressing development and a continuous trend. In June 2018, the UN Human Rights Chief released the first-ever report on the HR situation in both parts of Kashmir, which was immediately dismissed by India. According to officials, the Kashmir dispute has moral and legal dimensions, and Pakistan has successfully explained how international law applies to both Ukraine and Kashmir. The Indian occupation troops have killed 639 innocent Kashmiris in extrajudicial killings since August 5, 2019. The Modi Government’s recent fascist acts depriving basic human rights to the people of Kashmir, by no means, are in consonance with global principles of justice and freedom. It is high time that the global community stands up to their principles and raises its voice for the just resolution of this long-awaited dispute according to UN resolutions.

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