

KASHMIRIS WILL HAVE THEIR FREEDOM FROM INDIAN OCCUPATION: MASOOD KHAN



Sardar Masood Khan, President Azad Jammu and Kashmir, has said that the Kashmiri people will have their freedom from Indian oppression and we will not be intimidated by torture and repression. We will fight this war imposed on us, he said.

The AJK President made these remarks while addressing a Kashmir Conference organized by the Pakistan Association Bristol and the Bristol Kashmir Foundation. The event was attended by Abdul Rashid Turabi, Member of the Public Accounts Committee of the AJK Legislative Assembly, Tim Bowles, Mayor of the West of England, Fahim Kiani, President Tehreek-e-Kashmir UK, Councillors, local notables, civil society members and journalists.

The President on the occasion also thanked Fahim Kiani for organizing a conference on Kashmir at the House of Commons which was attended by numerous MPs, MEPs, journalists, student leaders,

academics and human rights activists.

President Masood Khan informed his audience of the recent human rights situation in IOK. He said that after the 05 August siege imposed in IOK the occupation forces have unleashed a new wave of tyranny. Indian occupation forces, he said, have illegally detained thousands of Kashmiri youth and are subjecting them to torture, The Kashmiris are being killed in extra-judicial encounters, protestors are blinded with pellet-firing shotguns and the women are molested and these measures are taken by the Indian occupation forces in a systematic and pre-meditated manner, he said.

The President while appreciating the role of the international media, international civil society and the human rights organizations said that despite India's imposition of a communication blackout in IOK, reports have been coming out of IOK about the human rights abuses taking place at the hands of Indian occupation forces. Indian government's efforts to quell the peaceful protests of the Kashmiris were not successful and they were unable to hide the humanitarian crisis in the territory. He also appreciated parliamentarians and lawmakers of UK, European Parliament, France, Norway and other leading countries for raising their voice in support of the Kashmiris. "This space given to us is a breakthrough", he said.

On the other, he said, global capitals have been ambivalent in their stance towards Kashmir and have instead tried to maintain an artificial balance between Pakistan and India. He urged that humanity must prevail instead of valuing strategic and economic ties that various countries have with India.

The AJK President said that we the people of IOK and Azad Kashmir will fight tooth and nail to oppose the illegal occupation, colonization and bifurcation of the Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir territory.

He also highlighted the growing ideology of Hindutva – an extremist Hindu Ideology – which is purely based on Hindu religious supremacy. He said that we will have to unite and fight of this extremist doctrine rooted in hatred, xenophobia and fascism as this policy of exclusionism is pure evil, satanic and dark and we must take every measure to thwart it from engulfing our region and world.

“In the previous century democratic powers of the world defeated Nazi Hitler and Fascist Mussolini. This century, we will have to defeat Hindutva”, he said.

The President urged the participants to raise their voices in support of the Kashmiris so that it resonates all over the UK including the Parliament, across the world and especially in the UN. Grass root communities, he said, are pertinent in opinion formation and we must also not ignore the civil society as it is an important voice in shaping the future of the world that too based on humanity. “Forge unity and with steely determination we must move forward to save the people of Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir from genocide and ethnic cleansing. Speak up for the truth and save the souls of the people being crushed under this new colonial power”, he pleaded.

Responding to a comment made by a previous speaker, the President said that the Jammu and Kashmir dispute is not a bilateral issue but it is a trilateral issue in which the Kashmiris are the key party to the dispute. “It is the Kashmiris that will have to decide their political future and destiny in a free and democratic manner”, he argued.

He said that there is a humanitarian crisis in IOK and a humanitarian

corridor has to be established to help the Kashmiris who are facing severe shortages of food, medicine and other essential supplies. He urged the participants to use modern means of communication to help mobilize support for the Kashmiri people and also reach out to their Councilors, party leaders and MPs so as to put pressure on the FCO-UK to take note of the ever-deteriorating conditions in IOK.