



# Indo-American Kashmir Forum

[www.KashmirForum.org](http://www.KashmirForum.org)

Vijay K. Sazawal, Ph.D.  
International Coordinator  
[vks@iakf.org](mailto:vks@iakf.org)

---

## **IAKF WELCOMES THE HISTORIC DECISION TAKEN BY INDIA TO REORGANIZE THE STATE OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR**

The President of India signed an order (Constitutional Order 272) on the 5<sup>th</sup> August 2019 allowing unfettered application of the full Indian Constitution to be extended to the State, superseding the previous Presidential order that had established the incumbent structure of the State in 1954. Following that historic decision, the Indian Parliament debated on a Treasury Bill to reorganize the State into two Union Territories – Ladakh and Jammu-Kashmir. The former will not have an Assembly but two Hill Councils, whereas the later will have an elected Assembly with assembly Governor as its administrative head.

This change is an extremely welcome development for a number of reasons. First and foremost, the status quo in the State, under the Article 370 dispensation, had failed utterly in bringing peace, security, development and human rights to its people, especially religious minorities in the Kashmir valley.

Second, the State had fallen into a rut of dynastic rule led by a few prominent Muslim families that had looted the State of its wealth which led the Transparency International (TI) to label the State as the most corrupt in India. In fact, a classified cable (leaked by Wikileaks) from Ambassador David Mulford to the US State Department in February 2006 called Kashmir a “money game” and stated that, “Kashmir Politics is as filthy as Dal Lake.”

But the biggest reason why our organization, and our sister organizations, the Indo-European Kashmir Forum (IEKF) based in London and Geneva, and the Indo-Canadian Kashmir Forum (ICKF) based in Ottawa, support the decision by the Government of India is because finally Kashmiri minorities, particularly the Kashmiri Pandits, will receive justice and be able to reclaim their ancestral lands from where they were driven out in 1989-1990. The ethnic cleansing of Kashmiri Hindus from Kashmir valley is a disgraceful chapter in the history of free India, and it happened because all successive democratically elected Kashmiri Muslim politicians in Jammu and Kashmir took an umbrage under the Article 370 to resist any Central Government efforts to address the plight and suffering of Kashmiri Pandits and other minorities in the State and reverse their ethnic cleansing. Pandits have been living as refugees in their own country for the last 30 years.

The move by the Indian Government will also improve the security situation with respect to cross border terrorism and bring peace, harmony and stability in Jammu-Kashmir, now a new Union Territory of India.