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### J&K loses special status, divided into two UTs

The provisions of Article 370 will cease to exist from the date the President of India issues a notification after the Lok Sabha passes the resolution on Tuesday.

Mr. Shah termed Article 370 discriminatory on the basis of gender, class, caste and place of origin, adding it was "temporary in the first place and it has to go in the larger interest of the people of the State." He said that from 2004 to 2019, the Centre sent over ₹2,77,000 crore to the State, but it did not percolate to the masses.

"In 2011-12, the Centre spent ₹3,683 per person in

the rest of India and ₹14,255 per person in J&K. In 2017-18 the Centre spent ₹8,227 per person in the rest of India whereas in J&K it spent ₹27,258 per person. Even then there was no development in the State because of corruption. 370 stopped anti corruption bodies to function in the State. A monopoly was there," Mr. Shah said.

Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad described the move as murder of the Constitution and democracy by the BJP-led government, stating that the accession of J&K to India had happened through Article 370.

### India briefs envoys on J&K move

"Senior MEA officials are briefing the envoys of several countries, including permanent members of U.N., on proposals related to Article 370 of the Indian Constitution and administrative reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir that were introduced in Parliament today," said a source, indicating that the envoys were told that the legislative procedure was an "internal" affair of India.

Diplomats were told that the Indian parliamentary move was aimed at ensuring "good governance, promoting social justice and ensuring economic development" in Jammu and Kashmir.

Following India's move, Pakistan maintained that the territory continues to remain an international dispute. "No unilateral step by the Government of India can change this disputed status, as enshrined in the United Nations Security

Council resolutions Nor will this ever be acceptable to the people of Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan, As a party to this international dispute, Pakistan will exercise all possible options to counter the illegal steps," said the Official Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Islamabad. On Sunday, Prime Minis-

ter Imran Khan had called for international mediation on Kashmir, citing escalating tension over Kashmir between India and Pakistan.

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said that Islamabad would display "abiding commitment to the Kashmir cause." Continuing the Pakistani argument, the statement from the spokesperson of the Foreign Ministry reiterated that Islamabad would continue to extend support in the quest of "inalienable right to selfdetermination" of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

### Kashmiris fear new bout of violence

mad Bhat, the uncertainty in the Valley meant closure of his establishment indefinitely and loss of bread and butter.

"We don't know how the situation will develop after the curfew-like restrictions are withdrawn. We feel we are heading for the worst of times," he said.

He expressed disappointment over snapping of phone and internet connectivity and said people in the Valley have totally been disconnected from the outside

"My two children are studying outside the State and there is no contact with them. I know they will be worried about the situation here and I also don't know how they are doing," Mr. Bhat, who was in Jammu,

Fatima Bano, a middleaged entrepreneur, said she has been praying for normalcy ever since she came to know about the government's decision to revoke Article 370

"Will revoking Article 370 end the decades-long unrest in Kashmir? I don't believe in this theory," she said, asserting that Article 370 or Article 35A was no hindrance for the return of Kashmiri migrant Pandits to their homes as they have been natives of the Valley for centuries.

"It was the law and order

For businessman Jaleel Ah- situation which is the biggest hurdle in their return, she added.

Kashmiris who have moved to Jammu permanently were also worried about their families back home after the government made its decision on Article 370 public.

"We don't know what is happening in Kashmir. I have talked to my family there on Sunday night and came to know about heavy deployment of forces," Nusrat, a housewife, said.

Fayaz Ahmad Dar, who was returning from Delhi after shopping for his sister's wedding, said the developments in the Valley have left him heartbroken. "My younger sister is getting married on August 13 and we have made all necessary arrangements. I don't know whether the marriage will take place or not given the sudden developments over the past few weeks," he said.

### **Prohibitory orders**

Massive security deployment was made with prohibitory orders clamped across the State before the government announced the decision to scrap Article

As per the article, except for defence, foreign affairs, finance and communications, Parliament needs the State government's concurrence for applying all other

#### says P.Chidambaram Asserting that the Bill "It will be internationalshould be rejected lock stock and barrel, Vaiko (MDMK) said he feared that

A fatal legal error,

the move would lead to Kashmir becoming like "Kosovo, South Sudan and East Timor" in future.

ised by the UN. There are countries which are opposed to us. There are enemies of India. They will use this card. The UN and Human Rights Council will definitely interfere," he said.

## Cong. MPs tear resolution copy

Cracks in Opposition seen as BJD, BSP, TDP back scrapping of special status for J&K

NEW DELHI

Protesting over the manner in which Union Home Minister Amit Shah introduced the resolution to amend Article 370 in the Lok Sabha on Monday, Congress members Hibi Eden and Ramya Haridas tore up a copy of the resolution on the floor of the House.

Opposition MPs from the Congress, including Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, the Trinamool and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) walked out of the Lok Sabha since the government only placed the resolution nullifying Article 370 that provides for special status to Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).

Deputy leader of the Lok Sabha and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh accused the Opposition of disrespecting the Chair.

Cracks in the Opposition could be seen as parties such as the Biju Janata Dal, the Bahujan Samaj Party and the Telugu Desam Party supported the resolution, while others such as the All India Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (AIMIM) did not walk out despite their opposition



Opposition leaders (L-R) Manoj Jha (RJD), Tiruchi Siva (DMK), P. Chidambaram (Congress), Ghulam Nabi Azad (Congress), Derek O' Brien (TMC) and others in New Delhi . • R.V. MOORTHY

to the government move. Mr. Shah introduced the presidential resolution soon after the Lok Sabha passed the Surrogacy Bill. Though Congress members protested, Speaker Om Birla allowed the introduction by a voice

However, loud protests began after Mr. Birla started

T.R. Baalu of the DMK asked the Speaker to give protection to the Opposition members to express themselves, while the AIMIM's Mr. Owaisi asked why the Speaker allowed a division of

"Whenever the Opposition asked for division, I have allowed division," Mr. Birla said.

#### 'In the dark'

National Conference member Hasnain Masoodi, who represents the Anantnag Lok Sabha seat in J&K, said the people of the State were in the dark about the development, with all channels of communication cut off and former Chief Ministers Omar Abdullah, Mehbooba Mufti and Farooq Abdullah all in detention. "Where is the Bill? This House doesn't have a tradition of bringing a resolution before a Bill," said Trinamool's Saugata Roy.

Responding to the Opposition's points, the Speaker said all their apprehensions could be answered on Tuesday when the House takes up the debate for passage.

## Two PDP MPs seek Opposition help

'Govt. needs to break its silence'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Two Peoples Democratic Party members of the Rajva Sabha have written to the Opposition parties seeking their support to get answers from the government in Parliament on the situation in Kashmir. Nazir Ahmad Laway and

Mir Mohd Fayaz, in a joint letter to the parties, said their own attempts to seek answers all of last week failed and they needed the Opposition to help amplify the issue. They were evicted by marshals from the Rajya Sabha after one of them tore the copy of the Constitution. Sporting black band on his arm, Mir Mohammad Fayaz trooped into the well of the House as soon as Home Minister Amit Shah announced the resolutions and introduced the two

"The people do not know as to what is cooking in the top brass of the present government vis-a-vis the Kashmir issue," they noted in the letter. The government needed to "break its si-



Mir Mohammad Favaz and Nazir Ahmed Laway in Parliament on Monday.

lence" and make a statement to settle the matter. Over the past few days, there had been the "most irresponsible speculation" on the revocation of Article 35A, Article 370 and trifurcation of the State, the PDP MPs said. The Kashmir problem was a political one and could only be settled politically, they said. "But the present political dispensation in our country is hellbent upon browbeating the concerted efforts of mainstream leaders and thwarting all political efforts which are seeking answers from the Centre," they said.

## Opposition divided, Rajya Sabha passes Bill

BSP, TDP and AAP support the government, while NCP member chooses to abstain from voting

SOBHANA K. NAIR NEW DELHI

After a day of high drama in the Rajya Sabha, the Opposition lost the vote against the J&K Reorganisation Bill, 2019, with just 61 votes against 125 in favour. Three key Opposition parties, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), supported the government, while a Congress ally, the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), chose to abstain.

The AAP, which has three

Congress chief

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The strength of the Opposi-

tion in the Rajya Sabha is

down to 100 with two more

resignations on Monday af-

ter Congress chief whip

Bhubaneshwar Kalita and

Samajwadi Party member

Sanjay Seth resigned. On

Friday, another Samajwadi

Party member, Surendra

Mr. Kalita, who was

"I am totally disillu-

elected to the Rajya Sabha

in April 2014, would have

sioned with these develop-

ments and I thought I

Singh Nagar, had quit.

retired next April.

whip in RS

resigns

members, was with the Opposition when it trooped inside the Well in the morning, protesting the legislation. The AAP's Sanjay Singh had even moved a motion to suspend business to discuss the Kashmir situation. But an afternoon tweet by Delhi CM and AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal saw the party change tack. "We support the government on its decisions on J&K. We hope this will bring peace and development in the State," Mr. Kejriwal posted on Twitter.

"Telugu Desam Party sup-

ports the Union Govt as it seeks to repeal Article 370. I pray for the peace and prosperity of the people of J&K," TDP chief N. Chandrababu Naidu tweeted. TDP has two members.

BSP president Mayawati is yet to explain her party's support for the Bill. The BSP has four members.

#### JD(U) walks out

The parties which opposed the Bill included the Congress, the DMK, the SP, the RJD, the CPI(M), the CPI, the Muslim League, the Kerala

Congress and the MDMK. The Trinamool Congress walked out at the last minute, just before voting. The Janata Dal(U), a key NDA ally, walked out in the middle of the debate after opposing the legislation.

The AIADMK, Lok Jan Shakti Party, Republican Party of India, Akali Dal, Shiv Sena, YSR Congress Party, Telangana Rashtra Samithi and Biju Janata Dal all voted in support of the legislation.

Two MPs from the J&K Peoples Democratic Party, Nazir Ahmad Laway and Mir Mohammad Fayaz, were marshalled out for tearing the Constitution in the House.

Of the NCP's four members, only Vandana Chavan was present during the vote, and she abstained.

"From 11 a.m. we have been seeing procedural hara kiri and constitutional immorality," Trinamool floor leader Derek O'Brien said. "On behalf of the Trinamool, we can't see this any more. Our MPs are stuck in midair somewhere. In anguish we walk out," Mr. O'Brien said.

### SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT Despite strong protests

NDA has cut

off India's

head:Azad

from Congress members in the Rajya Sabha against taking away the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, opinions were divided in the Congress on the issue.

Former Rajya Sabha member and veteran Congress leader Janardan Dwivedi said a historical wrong has been corrected. "A mistake of history has been corrected today, albeit late," he said.

Former Lok Sabha member Milind Deora too did not oppose the Centre's move. "Parties should put aside ideological fixations and debate what is best for India's sovereignty and federalism, peace in J&K, jobs for Kashmiri youth and justice for Pandits," he said.

Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Ghulam Nabi Azad, on Monday accused the government of doing votebank politics over Article

At a press conference in the Parliament complex, Mr. Azad said the BJP government had "cut off India's head and weakened the country". August 5 would be written in black in India's history, he alleged. "The NDA has cut off India's head and the BJP is responsible for weakening India ... People of Jammu and Kashmir and the people of India - from Srinagar to Kanyakumari, from Sikkim to Gujarat - will fight against this," he said.

"We had never dreamt that the NDA would go to this extent of finishing off the identity and existence of J&K," he said.

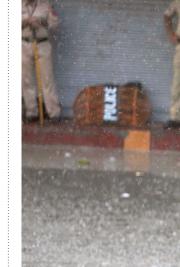
### Darjeeling parties seek U.T. status

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Taking a cue from the Centre's decision to reorganise Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories, the political parties in the Darjeeling Hills on Monday demanded a similar status for the region in West Bengal. They argued that the status of Union Territory would be the best solution to the demand for a Gork-

Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (leader Bimal Gurung congratulated the Centre. and hoped that it would also consider the demand of

# Total shutdown



should not continue in Rajya Sabha," he said. "He was supposed to be the first speaker during the zero hour. He quit when the party needed him the

most," a top party MP said.

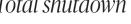
### Centre issues alert to all States, UTs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Home Ministry issued an alert to all States and Union Territories to ensure the safety and security of Kashmiris, especially students, in the wake of the Centre's decision to remove the application of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir.

The J&K administration was also asked to keep a watch on the possibility of "rebellion among the uniformed personnel".

The Ministry also asked all States and Union Territories to inspire confidence among Kashmiris and to "sensitise the public against any mischief or breach of peace".





Safe hands: A woman walking with her child past security personnel during the curfew-like restrictions in Jammu on Monday. All forms of communication networks have been suspended in Jammu and Kashmir. • AP

## Chidambaram: idea of India is in danger

'Every State in the country could be dismembered like Jammu and Kashmir'

What they have done is a

I want to warn every party, every

State, every citizen of India that the

idea of India as a union of States is in

constitutional monstrosity.

SANDEEP PHUKAN NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader and former Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram on Monday said the government move to amend Article 370 was "the beginning of the disintegration of India if the current government continues to be in charge.'

Monday was the worst day in the constitutional history and "the idea of India as a union of States is in grave danger," he said at a press conference. Though he anticipated a misadventure, he did not expect this "catastrophic decision".

"What they have done is a

constitutional monstrosity.

People of India, people of ev-

ery State must wake up to

the grave danger that was set as an example today by these completely unconstitutional and illegal resolutions. I want to warn every party, every State, every citizen of India that the idea of India as a union of States is in grave danger," he said.

grave danger

Mr. Chidambaram accused the government of "dismembering" Jammu and Kashmir, and claimed that every State in the country

could be similarly dismembered. "They can dismemtory of India."

"All that they have to do is to dismiss the elected government, impose President's rule, dissolve the

ber every State and break it up. This is the beginning of the disintegration of India. I am sorry to use such strong words, but this is the worst day in the constitutional his-

elected Assemblies, the Par-

mischievously interpreting both Article 3 and Article 370 of the Constitution. If this can be done in J&K, then let me caution you that it can be done to every other State. Every State can be broken up into two or three or more Union Territories by mischievously misinterpreting Article 3 and Article 370 and

said.

liament takes the power of

the State Assembly, the go-

vernment moves a resolu-

tion and Parliament ap-

proves it and the State can be

broken up," said Mr. Chi-

dambaram, who is also a

noted constitutional lawyer.

"What have they done.

They dismembered the State

of Jammu and Kashmir by

haland state. they won't stop at that," he

## the people of Darjeeling.