[Kashmir – A burning hell](https://nation.com.pk/03-Oct-2019/kashmir-a-burning-hell" \t "_new)

Muhammad Tahir Iqbal October 03, 2019

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Shehla Rashid, a rights activist from Habba Kadal locality of Srinagar, says that huge support has erupted for Pakistan from some nooks of Kashmir in the form of celebrations and protests with mixed feelings of angst and glee. Angst – for being incarcerated for last two months without mobile network, internet, health and education services. Glee – as the Prime Minster of Pakistan spoke for them with all energy divulging the callous face of those who have shoved them in their homes.

In the aftermath of the speech, BBC ran its camera where scores of protestors in Kashmir came out to see the light of the day with renewed energy. One of them said that they believe in Allah in the first place, after that they believe Imran Khan. The report is making vigorous rounds with those speaking for the human rights violations in Indian Occupied Kashmir.

On the other side stands the Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Modi. Yes, the same that was banned from entering the US some while ago for charges of fomenting violence in Gujrat as its CM.

Now winds have changed. Atmosphere has gone congenial. Cheers & verve in Houston city’s NRG Stadium welcome him effusively as he enters with hands clasped into the fingers of the most powerful man on earth, the US President Donald Trump. Here, addressing the charged crowd of well-nigh fifty thousand Indian Americans, he says, “When you say ‘Howdy, Modi’, my answer is that everything is fine in India.” Is really everything fine in India? What does international media says as to the growing sense of ultra-patriotism, nay, uber-nationalism or hyper-chauvinism in India?

There are series of articles published in The New York Times, Washington Post & BBC entailing the tales of suppression, intolerance and hatred for the minorities in India. Days ago, American Indians also protested outside the office of Washington Post for letting a report published on the sad plight of Kashmiris.

Detention centres are being erected. Joe Wallen, having spent some days in Kashmir, writes in The Telegraph that around 13,000 boys have been detained since Kashmir’s autonomous status was revoked on August 5. Heaven knows where they are kept. A similar report by Jean Dreze details illegal detention and torture of boys.

An eerie menace of fear lurks in the valley. The young boys are going through mental issues. Every third child in Shopian district, Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), has a clinically diagnosable mental disorder, said a survey published in the Community Mental Health Journal.

Just lately, a team of women activists presented a fact finding report accusing Indian army of committing atrocities in Occupied Kashmir. The report was submitted at the Delhi Press Club. The team visited Srinagar and several villages in the districts of Shopian, Pulwama and Bandipora. Their report incorporates eyewitness accounts of the restrictions imposed on the people since the Centre’s abrogation of Article 370.

According to the report, in some places, lights must be switched off in homes by 8 pm. It reads, “In Bandipora, we saw a young girl who made the mistake of keeping a lamp lit to read for her exam on the chance that her school may open soon. Army men got angered by this breach of ‘curfew’, and jumped the wall to barge in. Father and son, the only males in the house were taken away for questioning.”

According to media reports, at least 4000 elderly people have also been arrested since August 5 under the Public Safety Act, which allows preventive custody for two years without trial or charges.

In colleges, universities and elsewhere in India, the Kashmiris are looked upon suspiciously as if they are aliens. They are denied accommodation in hotels and lodgings on the heels of scrapping article 370.

In such menacing atmosphere, where should they go? India does not accept them in big cities, and in the valley, they are rendered paralysed. Many have died in last two months for want of means to call ambulances as mobile and internet services are suspended. The other day, a house was gutted because the dwellers could not call for help.

Doesn’t it present quite a sharp dichotomy that on one side, India is celebrating 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma, and Mr. Modi eulogizes Buddha for teaching the ideals of peace; but on the other side, this effigy of peace is set ablaze in the vast square of the dale of Kashmir.

In protest to exacerbating rights violations, the civil servants are resigning. Last month, an Indian Administrative Services (IAS) officer, Kannan Gopinathan submitted a letter of resignation to Indian Home Secretary saying that clampdown on fundamental rights in Jammu and Kashmir had prompted him to resign.

In these circumstances when Kashmir is burning like hell, it becomes the moral obligation of the United Nations to play its due role and intervene in the matter – as Imran Khan also emphasized in his UNGA speech – so that the fatal flames of inhuman treatment with the defenseless citizens of the valley may be doused. This may set a good example for the nations to build up their confidence on this justice-dispensing agency.