

ENVIRONMENTAL COLONIALISM IN JAMMU & KASHMIR

India's occupation of Kashmir intensifies as India takes control of Kashmir's forest department and non-local companies win rights to mine in Kashmir.

Indian control of Kashmir's forests presents a threat to Kashmir's environment and people. The settler colonial project will only intensify as land is sold to private entities.

SETTLER COLONIALISM:

With the Indian government's abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019, the rights for extraction of the minerals that were exclusively reserved with local contractors, are now open to non-local contractors.

The continued plunder of Kashmir's resources will be an important feature of India's settler-colonial project in Kashmir

EXTRACTION OF MINERALS:

For the first time ever, non-local companies have bagged a majority of contracts for the extraction of minerals from the water bodies of Kashmir. With the bidding process being held online, many local businessmen were left at a disadvantage as high-speed Internet connectivity remains restricted in Kashmir since the abrogation of the Article 370 (351 days and counting).

"It seems the government wanted us out of this business to leave the field open for outsiders. Else, how will they justify inviting tenders online when there was no Internet in Kashmir?" asked Ahad, who has been working as a contractor for the past 26 years.

After securing a majority of mining contracts in Kashmir, the non-local contractors have already started their operations on various mineral blocks even before obtaining environmental clearance which is mandatory for extraction work

Resources will now be controlled and extracted by non-Kashmiris, and the forests of Kashmir will be at the disposal of the Indian occupation.