

# HOW HAS INDIA ADVANCED ITS SETTLER-COLONIAL PROJECT IN KASHMIR SINCE AUGUST 2019?



Photo: Canberratimes

## DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

- India rolled out the Domicile Law in March of 2020. The law extended residency rights to Indians, who can now reside in Kashmir as colonial settlers.<sup>1</sup>
- In October 2020, another law was passed that allows any Indian citizen to buy land.
- Indian officials have suggested that “Israeli-like” settlements should be introduced, transforming the region’s Muslim-majority into second-class citizens as a demographic minority.<sup>2</sup>
- Through delimitation exercises, India is attempting to re-order boundaries of election constituencies to favor Hindu-majority areas more.<sup>3</sup>

## EMPLOYMENT

- Since August 5th, 2019, the Indian government has used multiple strategies to remove Kashmiri Muslims from government jobs, ensuring that only Indian settlers and Kashmiris who comply with the Indian state’s directives will have secure employment.
- Kashmiri government employees were recently fired for “showing anti-national tendencies.”<sup>1</sup>
- Given the unemployment rates are extremely high, it will be easier for Indian settlers to take advantage of financially insecure Kashmiri Muslims, who will be forced to sell their land and properties.

## LAND GRABS

- Following the events of August 5th, land reserved only for local Kashmiris was being advertised as an “investment paradise.”
- The Indian army has been grabbing land and expanding their military structure.
- Tribal peoples & local Kashmiris have been forcefully evicted from their lands.<sup>1</sup>
- Investors now can lease land for a period of 40 years, extendable up to 99.<sup>2</sup>
- India is identifying tracts of land for tourist ventures, Indian corporates, Hindu settlements, & housing for Indian laborers.

## ECONOMY

- The compounded effects of the revocation of Article 370 and of COVID-19 have been devastating for Kashmir’s economy. It has been reported that a single day of the lockdown costs the J&K economy 150 crore (20\$ Million)<sup>1</sup>
- The initial lockdown following August 5th, 2019 cost the region’s economy at least 18,000 crore (2.4\$ Billion).
- In July 2020, the unemployment rate was at a staggering 17.9%.<sup>2</sup>
- Suicide & drug addition, associated with the poor economic circumstances and the consequences of colonization, are rising.<sup>3</sup>

## HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

- The use of preventive detention & anti-terror legislation has continued to be utilized by India to detain, torture, & kill Kashmiris without any due process.
- Extrajudicial killings, home demolitions, fake encounters, preventative detention, & the use of torture are rampant - all constitute war crimes.<sup>1</sup>
- Kashmiri rebels killed by the Indian army are not allowed an appropriate burial.
- Kashmiri political prisoners, including women, face horrific conditions in jails across India and in Kashmir. A number of Kashmiri political prisoners have been killed in jail due to torture or deliberate negligence.

## CENSORSHIP

- A fascist unit called the 'cyber police' has been arresting Kashmiris for using social media. Some have reported to be tortured for tweeting.<sup>1</sup>
- In December 2020, the police installed 3000 CCTV cameras across Kashmir.<sup>2</sup>
- Journalists face attacks and beatings daily. They have been subject to draconian anti-terror laws simply for doing their job.<sup>3</sup>
- Offices of newspapers and prominent human rights orgs are regularly raided.
- In July 2021, an order was passed that denies Kashmiris who have protested the occupation a passport.



**On August 5, 2019, India launched the final assault on the homeland of Kashmiris. The plan is, and always has been, to rob Kashmiris of their land, flood it with settlers, and eventually render the natives into a disempowered minority that's not fully human, but human object, a thing.**

(Muzamil Jaleel, Inverse Journal)



## HINDU-IZATION

- In May 2021, an Indian government site, InvestJK, called Kashmir "predominantly Hindu," when in reality the Kashmir Valley is 97% Muslim.<sup>1</sup>
- Projects to accommodate Hindu settlers are prioritized. 62 acres was recently allocated to build a large temple complex.<sup>2</sup>
- In September 2020, Urdu ceased being the only official language, adding others including Hindi (India's official language).<sup>3</sup>
- Hindu pilgrims & Indian tourists were encouraged to visit Kashmir during COVID's peak. Meanwhile, religious places of worship such as mosques remained shut.<sup>4</sup>

## ECOLOGY

- Land continues to be misused by the military & by industrial development.<sup>1</sup>
- Kashmir has become a hotspot of illegal riverbed mining of beds auctioned to foreign companies. As a result, many rivers have run dry due to this illegal mining.<sup>2</sup>
- In June 2020, India entitled itself to sell public land to foreign corporations. Outsiders have been flocking to extract resources from Kashmiri land, ignoring all environmental regulations.<sup>3</sup>
- Local wildlife continues to be in danger. Deforestation has also lead to an increase in wild animal-human encounters.<sup>4</sup>

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